

DaVinci Academy of Science and The Arts

Policy Number: 203

Policy Section: 200 -

Instruction POLICY TITLE:

Attendance Revision History

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Attendance Policy

Effective Date: 12 August 2009

Revision Date:

Utah's Compulsory Attendance Laws state that all school age children must be in attendance at school unless there is a valid and legitimate excuse (Utah Code 53-A-11-101).

1. Philosophy: At DaVinci Academy of Science and the Arts (DASA) we, the participants and patrons, exemplify an environment of mutual respect and cooperation, a commitment to excellence in all endeavors, and the encouragement of positive character traits. The State of Utah requires that all children achieve mastery in the basic skills, and any absence from school interferes with the child's opportunity to master these skills. In an effort to increase student success, to prepare students for attendance expectations in their future careers, and to exemplify our commitment to excellence, DASA has established the following attendance policy.

Our school philosophy concerning absences, tardies and truancy centers on several important citizen-building concepts:

1. Frequent absences and tardies disrupt the learning processes and are unfair to those students who are on time and seated. The classroom experience is a critical part of our students' education. While make-up work can be done, it does not equal lectures, discussions and classroom activities. When students graduate from our high school, we want them to know they have received the best education possible. That can only happen when students are in class.
2. Much of what is taught in a classroom is not textbook-centered and many aspects of education are not evaluated by tests and assignments. These processes are in the realm of class participation and the teaching of responsible habits. These benefits of instruction, once lost, are difficult to regain.
3. Our schools are charged with the task of teaching effective work ethics for our students. Businesses say that one of their primary problems with employees is poor attendance patterns. At DASA, we want our students to learn that being effective in school or work requires regular attendance.
4. Society expects promptness by its citizens. Business especially demands that employees arrive on time and function without excessive absenteeism. School is a training ground for society and, as such, it is

important that attendance and promptness be stressed. In any productive organization, persons suffer consequences for undesirable habits. At DASA unexcused student absence is unacceptable.

5. As a small school, each student has a significant impact on school culture. Students not in attendance affect the critical mass of responsibility to education that we endeavor to instill in our student body. We strive to build a culture of learning dedicated to students understanding their role in the greater good of the school.

2. References

1. Utah Annotated Code 53G-6-202 (Compulsory Attendance—under 14)
2. Utah Annotated Code 53G-6-203 (Truancy Law)
3. Utah Administrative Rule R277-419-5c (10 day drop rule)

3. **Attendance Policy Goals:** DASA's attendance policy will help students accomplish the following goals:

- Develop student responsibility
- Develop quality citizenship
- Increase respect for teachers, other students, and learning
- Achieve success in their courses
- Prepare for future employment

Roles and Responsibilities **The Role of the Student**

- The student shall gain the most of their educational experience by regularly attending and being on time to all classes.
- Students shall be present in assigned or designated areas at all times.
- Students shall follow proper check-in/check-out procedures.
- Students shall obtain make-up assignments from the teacher due to absences and shall turn them in according to arrangements made with the teacher.

The Role of the Teacher

- Teachers shall keep an accurate roll of all absences and tardies. • Teachers shall emphasize the importance of punctuality by beginning class promptly with meaningful instruction.
- Teachers shall discuss attendance issues with students as they arise and inform the school administration if attendance does not improve.

The Role of the Parent/Guardian

- DASA believes strongly that parents bear considerably responsibility in helping to ensure that students are in school when they are required to be there.

- Parents/guardians should avoid interruptions of the academic year and plan medical appointments and vacations at times that will not require students to be out of school.
- Parents/ guardians will show support regarding district policies and state law by expecting regular school attendance for student success.
- The parents/guardians shall contact the attendance office and notify the school of student's absence, in the case of illness or other legitimate reasons for absences, within five (5) days of the absence.

The Role of the Administration

- The administration shall enforce and uphold Utah State Compulsory Education law that may include a referral to juvenile court for excessive absenteeism.
- The administration shall identify students with attendance issues and work cooperatively with parents/ guardians and students to improve attendance.
- The administration shall use earnest and persistent effort to improve student attendance.

The Role of the Attendance Office

- The attendance office shall keep administrators and parents/guardians informed of attendance problems.
- The attendance office shall notify parents/ guardians of excessive absenteeism by phone message, calling machine, or letter.
- The attendance office shall review attendance daily and resolve discrepancies in student attendance records.
- The attendance office shall provide check-in /check-out slips upon authorization by phone or in person by a student's parent/ guardian.

4. **Attendance Expectation:** To earn credit, a student must be in class a minimum of 90% of the days of the quarter. If a student has a combination of five or more tardies or unexcused absences, or one (1) truancy per class per quarter that are not made-up or excused based upon allowable excused absences, the student will receive a no grade (NG) for the quarter grade in that class. The director for the school program will notify teachers when to input a NG for a student with attendance problems. A **NG** can only be removed after a parent meeting with the program director to discuss the reasons for the excessive absences and it is determined that there were legitimate reasons for the absences; otherwise, the NG will remain and be changed to a letter grade of 0 in elementary, or an F if in middle or high school.

Students are required to ensure that all absences are verified through the attendance office *WITHIN FIVE DAYS* of the absence through one of the following methods.

- 1) Bringing in a signed note by parent/ guardian.
- 2) By having a parent/ guardian call the office.
- 3) Have a parent/ guardian stop by the office in person.

Parents/guardians may excuse up to four (5) absences per class per quarter where a valid excuse for an absence exists. Absences must be excused within 5 days of the absence. Excused absences in excess of five must be "made-up" in order to receive credit.

Students who are absent with no valid excuse for ten consecutive school days will be removed from DaVinci Academy's attendance membership according to Rule 277-419-7(4)(c), This process includes all students, whether onsite, online, distance or a learner validated educational program.

5. Other Consideration: Special arrangements or pre-approval must be made for absences due to athletics, school activities, hospitalizations, or verified medical convalescence.

Students can petition the school administration to miss up to ten (10) school days of each year for pre-approved education/vacation release. These pre-approved release days will not contribute to the accumulated total of absences. Forms are available in the attendance office and must be picked up at least two days prior to the absence.

Students may take no more than ten.

Students who wish to visit colleges, technical colleges, or other post-secondary institutions will be marked as present in class if they follow the proper procedure. The procedure is:

- a. Make an appointment with a post-secondary institution.
- b. Obtain a "College Visit Permission Form" from the counseling department and return it at least one calendar week before the visit. A parent and all of the student's teachers must sign the form before it is returned to the counseling office. The time and date of the proposed visit is entered on the form before it is given to the student, consequently the student must make an appointment before requesting the form.
- c. When the student returns the permission form to the counseling office, he/she is given a "College Visit Verification Form." The student must have a college official complete that form before leaving the post-secondary school's campus. Upon return to school, the student must have each of his/her teachers sign the verification form. He/She then returns the form to the counseling office.
- d. When the student is absent from class, the teachers record that as an absent which will count against the five allowed days for absences. The student's absence is also entered into the school's

attendance records. When the student returns the verification form, the

absences are removed by the teachers and from the school's attendance records.

- e. Students may take up to five college visit days each year. If a student wishes to make more than five days for visits, he/she must obtain permission from the director.
- f. Students who miss classes to be inducted into the United States armed forces will be counted present if proof is provided by the student's recruiters.

6. Attendance approved distance, online, blended or learner validated programs

All distant, online, or blended students will be approved for a learner validated program offered through Davinci Academy by the counselor or designated LEA employee. An LEA employee and highly qualified teacher will have regular contact either face-to-face or by virtual means with all students in a learner validated program. These contacts will be recorded and student attendance will be monitored based on these regular LEA contacts or individual student progress in relation to the Utah State Core Curriculum Standards or demonstrated mastery of content. Regular contact means that the LEA has personally engaged with the student in the prior ten consecutive days. Progress means coverage of at least 3% of the required curriculum each week; which equates to roughly 25% of the required curriculum each quarter. This equates to 247.5 hours of instruction each quarter and 990 hours for the entire 180 day school year. These instructional hours will be recorded by the LEA employee. Mastery of content means any of the approved methods as outlined in R277-705-3C and according to DaVinci Demonstrated Competency Policy. Distant or online students will be required to participate in end-of-year state mandated tests, unless parents opt them out according to legislative policy.

7. Excused Absence or Valid Excuse: A student shall be excused from school for the following reasons as specified in the New Compulsory Attendance Laws for the State of Utah, but that student is required to make up any assignments missed:

1. An illness;
2. A death of a family member or close friend;
3. A documented medical appointment;
4. A family emergency;
5. An approved school activity;
6. A pre-approved family activity or travel, consistent with District policy;
In determining whether to pre-approve a family activity or travel as a valid excuse, the district shall approve the absence if the District determines that the absence will not adversely impact the student's education; or
7. Other absences may be considered as "valid excuses" as determined by the school.

It is the student's responsibility to work with the teachers in making up work for absences. Individual teachers may set the time to be allowed for make-up work. A student who has been absent from class has lost some of the content of the course. If

credit is in jeopardy due to content lost, the teacher will be responsible to inform the student and the parent or guardian in sufficient time for corrective action to take place.

8. Check in/check out procedures

Student Check Out: Any time a student needs to leave school before the end of the school day, he/she must check out at the Attendance Office. The school is required by law to have a responsible person approve student check out. Therefore, parents should notify the school prior to check-out.

A. Students who leave campus without proper check-out will be marked truant.

B. Students who are ill will be checked into the sickroom if parents or other responsible adult cannot be contacted.

Student Check In: Students arriving more than 10 minutes late to any class must check at the attendance office. These tardies will be counted as excused absences. Students arriving less than 10 minutes late to any class should go directly to class.

9. Perfect Attendance:

Students who have perfect attendance (zero absences and zero tardies) for the entire year will be eligible to receive a **free** yearbook. To qualify:

- A. Teachers must verify perfect attendance
- B. Be a full time student all year
- C. Turn in a perfect attendance application
- D. Attend Award Ceremony

10. Truancy:

Truancy is the deliberate absence from school without the knowledge and consent of a parent/guardian. One (1) truancy will result in an unsatisfactory "U" grade of citizenship and a truancy notice with a fine of \$10. A truancy notice will be issued each time a student is truant up to their 5th truancy, where the DASA administrator will then serve the parents of the school-age minor with a Notice of Truancy (see Notice of Truancy below). Multiple truanies may result in disciplinary action according to DaVinci Safe Schools Policy.

11. Notice of Truancy: (Utah Code 53G-6-203)

A designated school administrator may issue a "Notice of Truancy" to the parent of the school-age minor, who has been truant five (5) times or more during the school year. The notice of truancy must be served on the parent either in person or by mail. This "Notice of Truancy Citation" shall include the following:

1. Direct the student and his/her parents/guardian to meet with a designated school administrator;

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2. Cooperate with the school in securing regular attendance; and
3. Establish a procedure for the student and/or parent to appeal the absences which have resulted in the "Notice of Truancy."

Failure to cooperate or meet the requirements of the Notice of Truancy under UCA 53G-6-206 may result in administrative penalties. This Notice of Truancy will be issued only after reasonable efforts have been made by the school to resolve the school attendance problems.

Notice of Compulsory Education Violation:

A designated school administrator may issue a "Notice of Truancy" to the parent of the school-age minor who has been truant five (5) times or more during the school year and is grades 1-6.

A Notice of Compulsory Education Violation shall direct the parent to:

1. Meet with school authorities to discuss the school-age child's school attendance problems; and
2. Cooperate with the LEA in securing regular attendance

It is a Class B Misdemeanor for the parent to intentionally or without good cause:

1. Fail to meet with the LEA; or
2. Fail to prevent the school-age child from being truant five or more times during the school year.

If a LEA has reason to believe that after a notice of compulsory education violation is issued, or the parent failed to make a good faith effort to ensure attendance then the LEA shall report it to the Division of Child and Family Services.

1. Identifying information of the school-aged child and the parent who received the notice of compulsory education violation;
2. Information regarding the longest number of consecutive school days the school-age child has been absent or truant from school and the percentage of school days the school-age child has been absent or truant during each relevant school term
3. Whether the school-age child has made adequate education progress;
4. Whether requirement for 53G-6-206 have been met;
5. whether the school-age child is two or more years behind the local public school's age group expectations in one or more basic skills; and
6. whether the school-age child is receiving special education services or systematic remediation efforts.

12. Access:

DASA provides computerized attendance information updated daily to assist parents/ guardians and students. Students and parents/ guardians may check class grades and attendance records through SIS. A link is provided at www.davinciacademy.org. In addition, parent/ guardians may check attendance by calling 801-409-0700 between 7:30 AM and 3:30 PM.