# REQUIRED NOTICE: ATTENDANCE/ABSENCES

Regular attendance is essential for a student to make the most of his or her education. Absences from class may result in serious disruption of a student's mastery of the instructional materials; therefore, the student and parent should make every effort to avoid any unnecessary absences.

Please be aware that the term "the student's parent" is used throughout the document to refer to either or both parents, a legal guardian, or any other person who has agreed to assume school related responsibility for a student. It is the duty of the parent to monitor their child's attendance.

**Compulsory Attendance:** State law requires a student six years of age, or who is younger than six and has previously attended first grade, and who has not yet reached their 19th birthday to attend school. Upon enrollment in prekindergarten or kindergarten, a student is required to attend school every day school is in session.

To receive credit for a class a student is passing, a student must attend the class at least 90 percent of the days the class is offered for the entire period of instruction.

State law requires all enrolled students to attend school on time, all day, everyday school is in session. The Dallas Independent School District requires a written explanation to excuse an absence.

Attendance officers will file a truancy complaint against the parent and/or a truant conduct referral against the student in court if the compulsory attendance law is violated including periods of non-enrollment. Exemptions from the law may be found in Policy FEA (LEGAL).

**Doctor's Note After An Absence for Illness:** When a student's absence for personal illness exceeds five consecutive days or a total of ten days in a six-week grading period, the student may be required to present a statement from a physician or health clinic verifying the illness or other condition requiring the student's absence from school. If the student has established a questionable pattern of attendance, a physician's or clinic's statement may be required after a single day's absence. [See FEC (LOCAL)] Forged or altered doctor statements may be reported to the authorities.

**Note After An Absence:** To excuse legitimate student absences, including days or parts of a day resulting from a nurse sending the student home, a written excuse signed by the student's parent, physician or health clinic is required. Notes must be submitted to the proper school authority preferably no later than three school days after the student returns to school and shall describe the reason for the absence. (see **Unexcused Absences**) Any absences may be investigated to determine if the absence should be excused.

**Unexcused Absences:** The parent or guardian should be encouraged to submit notes within three school days after the student returns to school. However, notes may be accepted prior to the end of the semester when the absence occurred at the school where the student was enrolled during the absence. Failure to submit an acceptable written note may result in unexcused absences; this includes late arrival and unexcused early departures. Absences not eligible to be excused and absences for which a written excuse is not received within the time allowed shall be counted as unexcused absences. Students who are absent from school for the following reasons are not given an excused absence: aptitude and achievement testing by outside agencies, truancy, non-school instruction, vacations, non-school club, youth, or other organization's activities.

**Truancy Prevention Measures:** Section 25.0915 of the Texas Education Code requires the Dallas Independent School District to adopt truancy prevention measures to address student truant conduct. A student accumulating unexcused absences is subject to one or more truancy prevention measures that may include behavior contracts, school-based community service, counseling, mentoring, community-based programs, or other in-school or out-of-school services aimed at addressing the truant conduct. Participation by the student's parent or guardian may be mandated.

**Violation of Compulsory School Attendance:** If truancy prevention measures fail and the student is absent ten or more unexcused days or parts of days within a six-month period in the same school year, the student's parent is subject to prosecution and the student is subject to a truancy court referral for truant conduct. (Texas Education Code 25.093 and 65.003(a) Texas Family Code)

The district shall notify a student's parent in writing if the student has been absent without an excuse three times for any part of the day in a four-week period. The fact that a parent did not receive the notice described is not a defense to prosecution.

The Student Handbook and the district's policy manual is available for review online at http://www.dallasisd.org

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Student Name: _____ ID Number: _____

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____