

MIRA COSTA HIGH SCHOOL

Attendance Policies and Procedures

Regular attendance and class participation are an integral part of our students' learning experience and together determine student success. Mira Costa High School is committed to cultivating exemplary attendance habits.

A student is **tardy** when he/she is less than 30 minutes tardy to a single scheduled class period.

A student is **absent** when he/she is more than 30 minutes tardy or is not present during a scheduled class period.

A student is **truant** when he/she is absent from class without school and parent/guardian knowledge or permission, or when he/she leaves class or school campus without permission before the class or school day is officially over. All *unverified* absences will be considered *truant* after 3 school days.

TARDY POLICY

A student is considered tardy if he/she is not seated when the bell rings. With the **3rd tardy** in any class, a student may be assigned an hour of **detention**. Subsequent tardies will result in further detentions and/or assignment to the Study Zone, a 4-hour study period on a pre-arranged Saturday morning. See **Discipline Matrix**.

ABSENCE POLICY

Students are expected to be in class and on time. If a student is absent for any reason, parents have 3 school days to verify the absence through the Attendance Office (see section on **Reporting and Clearing Absences**). All *unverified* absences will be considered *truant* after 3 school days. If an absence is verified by the parent but the reason for the absence is not categorized as *excused* per state policy, the absence will be considered *unexcused*. We will notify parents when their student accumulates 3, 6, and 9 unexcused absences, trancies, or a combination of both in any one class. When a student accumulates 9 unexcused absences, trancies, or a combination of both, he/she may meet with the Student Attendance Review Team (SART). The SART, which includes the student and parent, will develop an attendance contract for the student, and may issue consequences for noncompliance of school attendance policy. If the SART contract is broken, the student will receive a referral to the Student Attendance Review Board (SARB) with possible loss of extracurricular activity participation.

Parents may also access their student's attendance on a daily basis via the PowerSchool *ParentPortal* using their PowerSchool password.

TRUANCY

A student is truant when he or she is absent from school without the permission of the parent/guardian and/or without the knowledge of the proper school authorities. Truant students may still receive a citation from the School Resource Officer for even 1 instance of truancy. Students who

forge notes will be considered truant and will receive an assignment to Study Zone. Chronic truancy (4 or more) will result in a referral to the **School Attendance Review Board (SARB)**.

ATTENDANCE CONTRACT

Students who reach **5 *unexcused* absences in the 2nd semester** will be required to sign an attendance contract in order to maintain eligibility for end of year activities.

MAKE-UP WORK POLICY

Students may not be allowed to make up quizzes, tests, and/or other school work if students have *unverified* or *unexcused* absences in their class. Please consult PowerSchool records and contact the Attendance Office if an *unverified* absence is not cleared after 3 days and is prohibiting a student from receiving credit for an assignment. **If a student needs to make up work with a teacher during a time that interferes with another class, the student must first obtain prior approval from the teacher whose class the student will miss and a signed absence clearance form.** Failure to do so may result in an *unverified* or *unexcused* absence.

REPORTING AND CLEARING ABSENCES

Absences can be reported in two ways: **1) Parent note 2) Parent e-mail.** The Attendance Office will not accept phone calls reporting a student's absence or requesting an Off Grounds Permit. Upon returning to school the day following an absence, the student should report to the Attendance Office with a note signed by the parent that includes: **legal name, date/periods of absence, and reason for absence.** Parents may also e-mail with this information or respond to the SchoolMessenger e-mail alert notifications as directed. Notes or e-mails lacking any of the required information (name, date/periods, reason) will remain *unverified*. It is the student's and parent's responsibility to ensure all necessary information is included **prior** to submitting. Please note that parents have 3 school days following the absence to verify and clear absences. After 3 days, any *unverified* absences will be automatically considered *truant*.

School-sponsored field trips, athletic events, or other *school business* absences can only be cleared by a school official. Parents are unable to clear these absences, but students should follow up with the appropriate school staff member if they find out their absence has not been cleared after 3 school days.

If students are marked absent or tardy in error, they should obtain an Absence Clearance Form from the Attendance Office to have their presence verified by the teacher for whose class they were recorded absent or tardy.

Students who arrive more than 30 minutes late to school should check in with the Attendance Office with a note excusing their partial-day absence. Tardiness to any given class cannot be excused by parent note, e-mail, or personal visit. Only a verified medical excuse provided by a doctor will be accepted for clearing a tardy.

PLEASE NOTE: Allow up to the 3 school days for absences verified by parent note, e-mail, Off Grounds Permit, or school official to be reflected in PowerSchool records. If after 3 school days your verification is not reflected in PowerSchool, please contact the Attendance Office.

EXCUSED AND UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

Per state policy, *excused* absences include only the following:

1. Illness
2. Quarantine
3. Medical, dental, optometric, or chiropractic appointment
4. Funeral for a family member of the immediate family
5. Jury duty
6. Observation of a religious holiday
7. Justifiable personal reason (2 weeks prior approval from the principal or designee is required)

Absences which do not fall into one of the above categories must receive prior approval from the school principal or designee 2 weeks in advance to be considered an excused absence. Parents may submit requests for approval through e-mail or written note to the principal or designee.

COLLEGE VISITS

Juniors and Seniors must receive prior approval from the principal or vice principal of attendance for all college visits. Documentation may be required for approval.

EXTENDED ABSENCES

Students and parents should speak with the Attendance Office concerning absences that will extend 5 school days or more but for less than 2 weeks. With prior approval from the principal, many of these absences may qualify for a Short-Term Independent Study Agreement through the Attendance Office. **For absences that extend longer than 2 weeks, parents are advised to speak with students' guidance counselors so that proper accommodations can be made and work provided.** Medical documentation may be required for extended absences due to illness.

OFF GROUNDS PERMITS

Any student who has a medical/dental appointment or who needs to leave campus for any reason after he/she has arrived at school **must first acquire an Off Grounds Permit** from the Attendance Office on the day of the appointment in order for the absence to be properly verified. The Attendance Office will not issue a pass unless the student has a signed, handwritten parent note or the parent signs the Off Grounds Permit in person. E-mails and phone calls are not an acceptable means for requesting an Off Grounds Permit. Students who wish to obtain an Off Grounds Permit with a signed note must come to the Attendance Office before school, at nutrition/ lunch, or between passing periods prior to leaving campus. When leaving campus, students should sign out on the Attendance Office clipboard roster. If students return to campus the same day, they must sign back in on the roster before going to class.

Students who are sick may not leave campus without an Off Grounds Permit from the Health Office. If for any reason the Health Office or Attendance Office is closed, a student should go to the Guidance Office for assistance. Students found off grounds without a pass may be cited by the School Resource Officer and will be considered truant. **Please note: parents cannot excuse their son/daughter after he/she has left campus without an Off Grounds Permit.**

STUDENTS WHO ARE 18

Students who are 18 years of age and older may sign their own notes to clear their absences or leave campus. However, students who abuse this policy may lose senior privileges. **Medical documentation may be requested at any time to support absences due to illness or medical appointments.** Students who are unable to provide documentation when requested will be considered *truant*.