

NCA Student Absence Protocol & Procedures

Regular attendance is critical to individual student learning, as well as to a healthy school culture. If your child is absent, it is NCA policy that you must notify the office of the absence, the reason, and the expected date of return.

Consistent with State Law, below are the only accepted reasons for **excused** absences:

1. Participation in a school approved activity
2. Illness, health condition, or medical appointment
3. Family emergency
4. Religious observance
5. Court, judicial proceedings
6. State recognized search and rescue activities
7. Absence resulting from disciplinary/corrective action (e.g. short of long term suspension)
8. Principal and parent/guardian mutually agreed upon approved activity.

Planned absences:

For a pre-arranged, planned, or extended absence to be excused, a parent request must be made **in writing to the office prior to the absence**. If the principal (or designee) approves the absence, it will be recorded as a pre-arranged excused absence. The school principal or designee has the authority to determine if an absence qualifies as an excused absence.

Families sometimes take trips/vacations during the school year. While our philosophy is to support parents, these absences often cause difficulties, especially with students who struggle academically. For this reason, we recommend avoiding these types of absences if possible. Many times students who miss school for planned absences have already missed days due to illness, and the negative effect on learning is compounded. The following requirements must be met in addition to the requirements already mentioned for a vacation/trip to qualify as an excused absence:

- The parent must give 2 weeks written notice to the office prior to the first day of the absence;
- The absent student is allowed 24 hours to turn in work upon return for absences of 3 days or more. Work for planned absences of 1 or 2 days is due upon return.

- Additional work such as science labs, some tests, and some types of teacher monitored work may be given upon return.

Even though an absence may be labeled excused, a negative effect on learning and grades can occur. **Five (5) unexcused absences** will be considered significant or excessive in that it triggers a response from the school to the parent

School Responsibilities Regarding Student Attendance:

1. Teachers record absences and tardies;
2. The school will have homework available for pick up by 3:00 pm on the day of absence at the office IF a parent request was made for it by 8:30 am that day.
3. The school office/principal will follow the process below for both “unexcused” absences as well as for a significant number of excused absences;
 - Step 1: Upon **five** cumulative absence days (school year to date) the student’s attendance record will be reviewed and monitored, and a reminder letter will be sent to the parent/guardian regarding the absences and the negative impact on learning.
 - Step 2: Upon **twelve** cumulative absence days (school year to date) the parent/guardian will be asked to come in for a conference the purpose of which will be to establish an “Action Plan” to help mitigate the problem. A letter of verification from a Health Care Provider may be requested.

These steps are in accordance with RCW 28A.225. After 5 unexcused absences in one month or 10 in one school year, the school *may* file a truancy petition with juvenile court.

Parent/Guardian Responsibilities Regarding Student Attendance:

1. A parent is to notify the school office on the morning of the absence and to send a signed note of explanation with the student upon his/her return to school. In order for an absence to be “excused”, a note or email from the parent giving the reason for the absence must be received by the school office within 24 hours. Absences will only be excused if appropriate documentation is received.
2. At the discretion of the principal/designee, a verification of illness may be required in order to excuse excessive absences.

3. All homework requests must be submitted by 8:30 am on the morning of the absence. Any homework will be available by 3:00 pm in the school office. The student has 1 day to return work to the teacher for *each* day absent. This policy is in regards to illness and should *not* be confused with the policy regarding pre-arranged, planned or extended absences.

If you have any questions regarding these protocols, please do not hesitate to contact the office nca@ncslacey.org or 360-493-2223.

