

ATTENDANCE

It is important that students attend class regularly except in cases of illness or emergency. Excessive absences from class and failure to complete makeup work can result in a grade of "FAIL".

According to state law, students are expected to attend school regularly until age 18 unless they:

- Graduate from an accredited high school.
- Pass the California High School Proficiency exam.
- Obtain written parental permission to withdraw, due to full-time employment with continuing education in adult school.

A district calendar of school days and an OPHS calendar of events for the 2008-2009 school year are included with the registration packet sent to all students in the summer mailing. Students attend school for 180 days a year and it is important that they make a strong commitment to attend regularly. There are certain days during the year where the schedule will be modified to accommodate final exams, teacher in-service, etc. These are clearly marked on the calendars students and parents receive at the beginning of the year. In the case of changes to the calendar, parents will be notified at least two weeks in advance of the change.

School Attendance Policy

Oak Park High School faculty and staff are dedicated to providing a high quality instructional environment where class time and the discussion, demonstrations, and presentations done in the classroom setting are considered highly valuable. If a student is not present to participate fully in the activities of the classroom, he or she cannot expect to gain the knowledge, experience, and understanding needed to assimilate the subject matter. ***Note: It is a student's responsibility to log on regularly to Zangle in order to be aware of his/her attendance record.***

Please note that a student who accumulates 8 absences in any one class per semester will be required to clear all additional absences with a medical doctor's note or court document. Failure to provide a written excuse by a medical doctor or a court will result in the absence being recorded as UNEXCUSED.

Parents will continue to be notified of all absences on the student's record through the automated telephone message system, which will deliver calls at approximately 5 – 7 p.m. daily. In addition, parents will be sent attendance warning letters, automatically generated by the computer system, following the third, fourth, and fifth absence in any class. Please note that good attendance alone will not automatically qualify students for passing grades.

Additional Procedures

- Habitual tardiness, along with poor attendance, is also detrimental to the student's academic performance and disruptive to the classroom environment. Continued or persistent tardy problems will be referred to the assistant principal as disciplinary issues. Prior to that, the teacher may issue detentions, call the student's parents, or otherwise deal with the tardiness issue in keeping with the OPHS concept of progressive discipline.
- If the student arrives 15 minutes late to class, or more, he or she will be sent to the Attendance Office for a readmittance slip before being allowed in class. The time will be logged in the Attendance Office and the student will be marked absent on the teacher's official record.

- Parents will still be required to call the Attendance Office at 735-3311 if an absence occurs. Absences that can be EXCUSED (see definitions below) will entitle the student to obtain makeup work during the 7th period session designated for that purpose.
- Habitual Truants will be reported to the School Attendance Review Board (SARB), which is a countywide process to investigate non-attendance and to enforce the state laws of compulsory school attendance until the age of 18. According to the State Education Code (Sec. 48260-64.5), a truant is defined as a student with three unexcused absences. On the sixth unexcused absence, the student is classified as an habitual truant and is subject to strict penalties as defined by law, including mandatory attendance at a truancy prevention program and suspension or revocation of driving privileges.

The teacher's permanent record/roll book is the legal document that will be used to determine the student's absence record in any class. Teachers will update their records regularly to show the disposition of each absence, according to reports furnished by the attendance office. Parents may call the Attendance Office to verify student's attendance standing.

DEFINITIONS

Excused Absence – illness, medical doctor's appointment, court appearance, religious event; Parent must report the reason to the attendance office within 72 hours of the absence. Students will be permitted to make-up any work missed due to an excused absence.

Unexcused Absence – An absence reported to the office within 72 hours that is NOT defined as excused. Students will not be permitted to make up work from an unexcused absence. Students who accumulate excessive unexcused absences will be subject to administrative disciplinary action and may receive a grade of "FAIL" due to poor attendance in that class. If a student receives a grade of "FAIL" due to poor attendance in any class, it will be noted on the student's report card that the failing grade was due to poor attendance. Make-up work will be NOT be allowed in the case of unexcused absences.

Examples of unexcused absences include:

- Oversleeping
- Work scheduled during class time
- Non-medical appointments
- Personal reasons (i.e. family vacations)
- Cutting school/truancy
- Leaving class/campus early
- Leaving class/campus without properly checking out through the office
- Leaving campus at lunch without an off-campus pass
- Not returning to school after lunch.
- "Cutting" class in any way

Truancy – an absence not reported by a parent within 72 hours of the absence. Students that have a truancy on their attendance record will be required to make-up the time they missed at Saturday School. Students will not be permitted to make-up work from a truancy.

Truant – Any student with 3 truancies or unexcused absences at any point within the school year.

Habitual Truant – Per Ed. Code Section 48262, a habitual truant is described as any student with 9 truancies or unexcused absences at any point within the school year. The school will report

habitual truants to the School Attendance Review Board (SARB) for possible prosecution by the District Attorney for violation of compulsory attendance laws.

Administrative Consequences for Unexcused Absences

In addition to a student not being able to make up work from unexcused absences, he/she will also be subject to administrative consequences after the third unexcused absence.

- After a student has accumulated his/her 3rd unexcused absence in any block period course or 4th unexcused absence in any zero period course, a Saturday School will be assigned.
- After a student has accumulated his/her 4th unexcused absences in block periods or 6th unexcused absence in zero period, an additional Saturday School will be assigned and a parent conference will occur.
- After a student has accumulated his/her 5th unexcused absence in block periods or 7th unexcused absence in zero period will result in a two Saturday Schools.
- After a student has accumulated his/her 6th unexcused absence in a block period or 8th unexcused absence in zero period, the student may receive a grade of “FAIL” due to poor attendance.

Tardies

Students at Oak Park High School are expected to arrive to class on time. Any student not in his/her seat when the bell rings will be considered tardy. Students arriving 15 minutes or more late for class will be considered absent for that class period. Excessive tardies, like excessive unexcused absences may result in a student receiving a grade of “FAIL” due to poor attendance. **Note:** There are **NO** excused tardies. Students are expected to review their attendance in Zangle on a regular basis in order to know how many tardies they have accumulated.

Administrative Consequences for Tardies:

In addition to classroom consequences administered by teachers for tardies one through five, students are subject to administrative consequences after the 5th tardy.

- After a student has accumulated his/her 6th tardy in any one course, three hours of discipline will be assigned.
- After a student has accumulated his/her 8th tardy in any one course, a Saturday School will be assigned.
- After a student has accumulated his/her 10th tardy in any one course, two Saturday Schools will be assigned.
- After a student has accumulated his/her 11th tardy in any one course, he/she may receive a grade of “FAIL” due to poor attendance.

To Avoid Absences

Because there have been changes in the way the state funds short-term independent study, we would like to discourage parents from taking students out of school for vacations or personal business. However, if your family business will occupy 5 days or more, you may request prior permission for your student to be absent through the process of SHORT-TERM INDEPENDENT STUDY. This provision in state law allows the student to be absent without penalty as long as all classwork is completed as agreed by student and teachers. The form for approval of Independent Study must be requested from the Attendance Office and completed IN ADVANCE of the planned absence. The form must be signed by all teachers, a parent, and a school official prior to the absence. A copy of work completed must be filed with the completed form in the Attendance Office no more than five days after a student’s return to all classes.

18 Year Old Students

Students who turn 18 during the school year may request a waiver form to call in their own absences and to sign themselves out of school when ill. Waiver forms must be signed by a parent or guardian, in person, at Oak Park High School. This special privilege does not exempt the student from all the policies regarding attendance at OPHS. **Since compulsory education is only required until the age of 18, students who have reached the age of 18 and have excessive absences may forfeit their right to attend our comprehensive high school.**

School Activities

Students are required to be in school a minimum of two 95-minute block periods in order to be eligible to participate in any school activity for that day. This includes, but is not limited to, athletics (including practice sessions), and events such as the homecoming dance, prom, drama productions, and variety show. In addition, a student who is marked truant to any period is not eligible to participate in school activities that day. Students who are not present at school due to a school activity (e.g., field trip) are considered, for attendance purposes, to be in school.

Exclusion

The Board of Trustees may exclude a student whose physical or mental disability is such as to cause his or her attendance to be detrimental to the welfare of others; students who have filthy or vicious habits or contagious or infectious diseases may also be excluded from school. Prior to excluding a child from attendance, the Governing Board shall send a notice to the parent or guardian.

OFF CAMPUS PASSES

Temporary Passes

Parents must call 735-3311, the Attendance Office, to request off-campus passes for doctor's appointments during the school day. However, parents are discouraged from scheduling appointments for their students during school hours.

The off-campus lunch privilege will be extended ONLY to SENIORS. Underclassmen will be expected to remain on campus for lunch and to make appropriate arrangements for doing so. No temporary off-campus lunch passes will be issued to freshmen, sophomores, or juniors. A parent who wishes to take his/her student off-campus for lunch must come to the office **in person** to check the student out.

Long-term Passes (LUNCH PASSES):

As a privilege of becoming a senior, **SENIOR STUDENTS** may be issued one-year passes to leave the campus for lunch ONLY. At all other times, as noted above, all students must have appropriate permission to leave campus. **Students may not leave campus at any other time during the day (including nutrition) without checking out through the office.**