

COUNCIL ROCK SCHOOL DISTRICT

August 2017

Dear Parent or Guardian,

Please read this communication carefully as the attendance law has changed.

Regular school attendance is necessary for a successful school experience. Instructional continuity is interrupted and the valuable interaction that occurs with teachers and among fellow students is lost when a student is frequently absent, tardy or dismissed early from school. Realizing that regular attendance in school is necessary for students to gain maximum benefits from public education, the Board urges all parents/guardians to stress punctuality and regular attendance habits with their children. Policy No. 204 of the Council Rock School District regulates attendance in the schools of Council Rock. In addition, the school laws of Pennsylvania, specifically Act 138 of 2016, requires every parent, guardian, or other person having control or charge of a child or children between the ages of eight and seventeen to send them to school. The laws further require that, "Once a parent elects to send his child to school, the child must attend continuously until seventeen years of age, has graduated from a senior high school or has secured legal employment at age sixteen." As we begin the 2017-2018 school year, we want to inform you of our policies regarding attendance.

Excused Absence:

Any child who is absent from school must present a **written excuse** signed by the parent or guardian immediately upon his/her return. The note must clearly indicate the **reason for absence** and must be presented **within three school days** from the child's return to school. Please note that a phone call does not excuse your child's attendance.

The school will classify an absence as "excused" for one of the following reasons only:

- Illness
- Death in the immediate family
- Quarantine
- Exceptionally urgent reasons (will be used only in such unavoidable absences as affect the welfare of the child directly and not for the convenience of the parent)
- Religious observances WITH prior approval
- Tutorial work
- Educational tours or trips WITH prior approval (not to exceed five days per year)
- Health care

Any absence that can be anticipated beforehand should be brought to the attention of the building principal well in advance of the absence.

Secondary students who are absent in excess of twenty days from any year-long course may be denied academic credit for that course. Credit for semester courses may be denied if ten days of absence are exceeded. Special consideration will be given to those students who are seriously ill.

Religious Observation: For full or part-time absence of a student to observe a religious holiday, it is necessary that a written request for absence be presented to the school prior to the religious holiday(s). Under these circumstances, the student will not be deprived of eligibility to compete for any award.

Tutorial work: Upon written parental request, a student may be excused during school hours for the purpose of receiving tutorial instruction in a field not offered in the district's curriculum. The excused absence shall not interfere with the student's regular program of study and the qualifications of the instructor shall be approved by the school district.