

Christopher Columbus Charter School
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PHILADELPHIA, PA 19147
WWW.CCCS.K12.PA.US



Christopher Columbus Charter School
Truancy Policy

2018-2019
School Year

CCCS Truancy Policy

- The Board of Directors and the Administration of CCCS understands that academic success is predicated upon the stable attendance and punctuality of the student, and the willingness of the family to participate in the school community.
- Attendance shall be required of all students enrolled at CCCS during the days and hours that the school is in session, except when the CEO may excuse a student for temporary absences when s/he receives satisfactory evidence of such mental, physical, or other urgent conditions which may reasonably cause the student's absence. Urgent reason is to be strictly construed and shall not permit irregular attendance.
- The CCCS Board may report to appropriate authorities infractions of the law regarding the attendance of students below the age of seventeen. The CCCS Board shall issue notice to those parents/guardians who fail to comply with the statutory requirements of compulsory attendance that such infractions of the statute be prosecuted.
- Truancy cases are to be reported by the staff to the CEO. Upon referral to the CEO, the CCCS Truancy Policy will be enforced. Please refer to its points of reference in the separate policy book. The Truancy Policy is in conjunction with the School District of Philadelphia.
- If a child has accumulated 10 (consecutive/nonconsecutive) unexcused absences, the parent/guardian will be notified in writing that the child is truant and a meeting will be arranged to meet with the CEO and a Board member to inquire about reasons for the truancy. A plan will be devised to help remove the barriers that keep a child from attending school on a regular basis. Non-compliance upon the part of the parent/guardian will result in a truancy referral to either DHS or Family Court, dependent upon the age of the child/ren.
- An Attendance officer will be designated by the CEO to review and submit Truancy referrals for students with ten (10) or more unexcused absences. The referral will either be sent to Philadelphia Family Court or Department of Human Services (DHS) for interventions and services. The interventions and services are designed to help remove barriers that promote inconsistent attendance at school.
- The Pennsylvania School Compulsory Law requires students from the ages of 8-17 to attend school on a daily basis. As Christopher Columbus Charter School is a member of a District of the First Class, the requirement for school attendance is between the ages of 6-17. Once a student is enrolled in school, he/she can only be withdrawn if he/she transfers out of Christopher Columbus Charter School. The student will remain on the roll and the child/family is subjected to

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Truancy Court if they do not attend school. This statute is the criteria upon which the policy is written.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

The CCCS Board is cognizant of and endorses the efforts of the administration in executing such regulations on attendance. Administrative regulations include the following:

- Each classroom teacher shall personally take attendance. Students are not to be given this responsibility.
- Students are responsible for **submitting excuses** to the teacher on the day that they return to school. If a student has returned to school without bringing an absence excuse, the student shall be granted **(3) days** to submit it. **The absence becomes unlawful or unexcused if no absence note is submitted to the school during this time frame.**
- **Excused absences** shall include those due to illness of the student, death in the family, medical or dental appointment that cannot be scheduled outside of the regular school day schedule, observance of religious holidays approved by the CCCS Board, or any other reasons approved by the administrative officer.
- **If a child is sick for 3 or more consecutive days, a doctor's note must be presented.**
- **Absences, due to a family vacation when school is in session, will be considered as unexcused absence.**

PROCESS FOR UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

- Parents **must submit** an absence note to the school **within three (3) days** of the child's unexcused absence. After 3 days, the School Principal/Attendance Officer will make a determination if the note will be accepted. There is no guarantee that the school will accept the note. If the note has been accepted, corrections will be made in the student's records.
- At the 3rd unexcused absence, a notice will be sent to the Parent/Guardian to make them aware that the child has missed 3 days (consecutive/nonconsecutive) of school.

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- At the 6th unexcused absence the school will utilize the Attendance and Truancy Interventions and create an attendance plan for the student.
- Christopher Columbus Charter School will also arrange a meeting with the parent/guardian of the child to inquire about the truancy and come up with a plan to help remove any barriers to the student's truancy.
- At the 10th unexcused absence, the Truancy Referral should be submitted to the Office of Attendance & Truancy at the School District of Philadelphia.
- Once the referral has been submitted to the Office of Attendance & Truancy, it may take up to 6 weeks for the student/family to receive a citation for Truancy Court.
- Grades K-3 must be submitted on the DHS Referral Sheet, which is available on the SDP web site.
- Grades 4-11th must be submitted on the Family Court Referral Sheet, which is available on the SDP web site
- Siblings from CCCS should be submitted together on the referral sheets.

SUBMITTING A TRUANCY REFERRAL

- Submitting a Truancy Referral:

Schools are required to submit Truancy Referrals to the Office of Attendance and Truancy at 440 North Broad Street on the 25th of every month. The referrals can be submitted via email at attendanceandtruancy@philasd.org, fax at 215-400-4223, or hand delivered to the Office of Attendance & Truancy.

- After the truancy referral has been submitted:

The family will receive a subpoena/citation from Philadelphia Family Court to appear in Truancy Court. The subpoena will have the date, time and location of where the family should appear. In addition, a DHS contracted truancy provider will make contact with the family to arrange a meeting. The meeting is to extend services to help reduce/remove any barriers that are contributing to the truancy. The provider will work with the family until the case is discharged

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from truancy court. The truancy court process can last up to 120 days depending on the severity of the case. Each case is handled individually and different factors are taken into account.

➤ Corrections to a student's attendance record:

If a parent or guardian feels that there is an error/discrepancy on their student's attendance record, they have the right to address it with the school. They must provide proper documentation in order for a change to be made. This documentation should consist of a handwritten note from the parent if it is less than 3 days from the date of absence. A doctor's note is required if the absence totals 3 consecutive days or more. Once the information is given to the Christopher Columbus Charter School, either the principal or attendance officer will approve the change. If the change is approved, the change should be reflected on the roll sheet as well and then submitted to the Office of Attendance & Truancy for correction.

➤ Please refer to the CCCS Attendance Policy for information regarding:

- Excused Absences
- Half-Day Absences
- Early Dismissal Procedures
- Lateness (Tardy) Procedures

Subject to revision:

Board of Directors and CEO
August, 2018

- The following are the absence codes utilized for attendance verification at CCCS.

Christopher Columbus Charter School
Attendance Verification Forms
Codes

- #1. All official record-keeping documents of CCCS should be kept in BLACK INK. These are considered to be legal documents and must be utilized with appropriate discretion.
- #2. If a student is absent, please mark an empty circle in the designated space for A.M. and/or P.M. session(s).
- #3. When you receive a note for the absence, please code the absence accordingly by placing the correct number in the circle. Please file and keep all absence notes in your homeroom monthly files for one year.
- #4. All calendar holidays are marked for you with an X. These include teacher in-service days as well as regular holidays.
- #5. If a student arrives late for school, please write the time of arrival in the empty circle along with an "L."
- #6. The attendance summary on the back of the verification form must be completed for each quarter of the academic year for each student.
- #7. All report cards grades should be recorded on the back of the verification form.
- #8. **Teachers should sign each verification form in black ink and mark the year beside their signatures.**

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- #9. Daily attendance sheets should also be completed and handed into the secretary in each site. See personnel book and the attendance policy for other directives concerning attendance.
- #10. Please update PowerSchool DAILY with regards to attendance information.

#11. CCCS Codes for absence:

- 1. Illegal – Unexcused age 6-17. CCCS does not designate a separate code for Kindergarteners. ALL absences are marked as unexcused unless or until we receive a note from parent or doctor.
- 2. NOT USED- Unexcused – SDP Only.
- 3. Immunization non-compliance – Unexcused
- 4. Excessive Lateness – Unexcused
- 5. Illness – (Documented by parent note/doctor's certification as specified by policy.) - Excused
- 6. Quarantine – Excused
- 7. Recovery from Accident – Excused
- 8. Required Court Appearance – Excused
- 9. Death in Family – Excused
- 10. Educational Trips or Tours – Excused
- 11. Other Urgent Reason – Excused
- 12. Authorized School Activities – Excused
- 13. Religious Holiday – Excused

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14. Excessive Lateness as excused-On the occasion when the lateness has been excused, CCCS DOES NOT indicate the lateness on the daily attendance sheets, so do not use this code. Example: Counseling appointments.