

Penny Creek Elementary School Family Vacations and Attendance Policy

Everett Public Schools' attendance policy (3122P) states that – “Families should not schedule vacations or travel while school is in session. If a family vacation or travel must occur while school is in session, it must be prearranged prior to the absence and approved by the principal (or designee)... the principal (or designee) may excuse up to five (5) school days for a prearranged absence per student each school year. Assignments requested for a prearranged absence will be provided to the student or parent if requested five (5) school days prior to the absence.

In summary, the district policy does not indicate that a family vacation is a valid reason for an excused absence.

We of course, understand there are exceptional circumstances that, on rare occasion, preclude families from being able to avoid pulling students out of class (a family event that you do not have control over, like a wedding, etc.) and we take this into consideration when reviewing absences to determine if it will be considered excused.

If you must take your student out of class, **please fill out and return to the office the [Prearranged Absence Form](#) at least one week prior to the vacation date.**

Teachers will not create supplemental instructional activities to compensate for the time your student is away from class. Most likely, your student will have to catch up when he or she returns to school.

Additionally, the length of the absence and the potential impact that it would have on the student's academic progress is reviewed. When a student misses a day of school, they are missing six hours of instruction, each school day, delivered by a teacher and other instructional staff. A packet of work to take home can help a student complete some of the tasks that they will miss in the classroom, but a packet of work cannot make up for lost instructional time. Upon his or her return to class, a student will inevitably be behind in the course because they have missed instructional experiences that cannot be replicated outside of the classroom setting.

REPORTING ATTENDANCE:

When a student is absent from school, in order to be considered excused, we expect an email/call from a parent or legal guardian as soon as possible on the morning of the absence. Students may have their absence excused one of three ways:

- Email PCEattendance@everettsd.org (an email link is on our school's website home page)
- The parent or legal guardian must call the attendance line at (425) 385-7205. Additionally, please submit an email or written note of explanation to school within 30 days.
- Send a written note the day he/she returns to school.

Please include the student name and ID number, date(s) and reason for the absence, parent/guardian name, signature and phone number.

The preferred method of reporting attendance is to email PCEattendance@everettsd.org If an email is sent regarding your student's absence, you will not need to follow up with a message on the attendance line. Please make sure you are sending the email from the email address that is on record with the school.

Once your student returns to school, he/she is expected to participate fully in school activities, including outside recess.

If a student is absent 3 or more days due to illness, they are expected to return to school with a note from a doctor in order to be considered excused. According to state law, any student with **7 unexcused absences in a month or 10 unexcused absences in a year** will receive a BECCA petition from the juvenile court.

Please refer to the Everett Public School's attendance [procedure 3122P](#) to review the absence qualification and reporting process.

We appreciate your understanding that your student's education is our highest priority. We would like him or her to attend regularly, every day, in order to maximize his or her learning opportunities at Penny Creek Elementary.

The following are some examples of valid excuses for absences and tardiness:

- **Illness, health condition or medical appointment** including, but not limited to, medical, counseling, dental or optometry.
- **Family emergency** including but not limited to a death or illness in the family.
- **Religious or cultural purposes** including observance of a religious or cultural holiday or participation in religious or cultural instruction.
- Absence directly related to the **student's homeless status**.
- **Principal (or designee) and parent/guardian mutually agreed upon approved activity**. This category of absence will be counted as excused for purposes agreed to by the principal (or designee) and the parent/guardian.

Tardy/ Part Day Absence - A student's attendance will be recorded as a part day absence from school if the student is more than thirty (30) minutes late (arriving after 9:45am) or if the student leaves thirty (30) minutes or more early (leaving before 3:00pm).

Full Day Absence - A student's attendance will be recorded as a full day absence when the student misses more than 50% of the instructional minutes scheduled for that school day. On a regularly scheduled school day, there are 6.5 total hours per day.

RESPONSE TO STUDENT'S FAILURE TO ATTEND SCHOOL:

A. Notice to Parent/Guardian

If a student fails to attend school, the student's parent/guardian will be informed by a notice in writing or by telephone whenever the child has failed to attend school after one (1) unexcused absence within any month during the current school year.

B. Required Conference for Elementary School Students

If a student has **five (5) or more excused absences** in a single month during the current school year **or ten (10) or more excused absences** in the current school year, Penny Creek Elementary will schedule an individual/group conference with the parent/guardian and student at a reasonably convenient time. The individual/group conference is intended to identify barriers to the student's regular attendance and to identify supports and resources so the student may regularly attend school.

An individual/group conference is not required for students with five (5) or more excused absences if:

- (a) Written notice of the prearranged excused absence was provided to the principal (or designee); or
- (b) If a doctor's note was provided and an academic plan was in place to ensure the student did not fall behind while absent.

If a regularly scheduled parent-teacher conference day is to take place within thirty days (30) of the absences, Penny Creek Elementary may schedule the conference on that day. If the student does not have an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or a Section 504 Plan, the conference must include at least one (1) district employee, such as a nurse, counselor, social worker, teacher or community human services provider. If the student has an IEP or a Section 504 Plan, the team that created that program must reconvene.

C. Required Conferences for All Students relating to Unexcused Absences

After **three (3) unexcused absences** within any month of the current school year, an individual/group conference will be held between the principal/designee, parent/guardian, and student to analyze the causes of the student's absenteeism. At some point after the second and before the fifth unexcused absence, Penny Creek Elementary will take data-informed steps to eliminate or reduce the student's absences.

D. After Five (5) Unexcused Absences

Not later than a student's fifth unexcused absence in a month, Penny Creek Elementary will:

1. Enter into an agreement with the student and parents/guardians that establishes school attendance requirements;
2. Refer the student to a community truancy board; or
3. File a petition with juvenile court (see below).

E. Petition to Juvenile Court

For students under the age of seventeen (17), **no later than the seventh unexcused absence within any month during the current school year, or upon the tenth unexcused absence during the current school year**, Penny Creek Elementary will file a petition and supporting affidavit for a civil action in juvenile court alleging violation of the State's school attendance laws.