

2007-2008

Oliver Wendell Holmes/Business Careers High School Attendance Procedures



The goal of Oliver Wendell Holmes/Business Careers High School is to ensure that all students:

- Have access to a *quality education* that enables them to *achieve their potential* and
- *Fully participate* now and in the future in the social, economic, and educational opportunities of our state and nation.
- *Acquire a general diffusion of knowledge* that is essential for the welfare of this state and for the preservation of the liberties and rights of citizens.

**This can only be accomplished by
a student being in class!**

What does the law say about attendance?

Texas School Law states that students must be in attendance at least 90% of the time to receive credit for a course.

If the student is in attendance less than 90%, the highest grade he or she may receive is a 69. Students may not miss more than *nine (9) days* to a first semester course, *nine (9) days* to a second semester course, or *eighteen (18) days* for a year long course.

Please be advised that if a student is absent without an excuse for 3 or more days or parts of days in a four-week period, or 10 or more days within a six-month period, the student's parents and/or the student are subject to prosecution under the Texas Education Code.

For further explanation of attendance, refer to section A and D of your Student/Parent Handbook.

What is a student's responsibility when he or she is absent?

If a student does miss school, even for just one class, he or she must bring a note with the following information to the attendance office before 8:35, their lunch or at the end of the school day: date of the note, name of the student, student **ID number**, date(s) of the absence, the specific reason for the absence, the doctor or parent/guardian's signature, and a phone number where they can be reached.

Upon the students return to school all absences must be cleared with a note ***within three school days of absence***; otherwise, each absence will remain as unexcused. **Even if a parent/guardian call the school, a note must still be provided! If a note is not provided within three days of absence, the absence will remain unexcused.**

Remember: An excused absence note is the student and parent/guardian responsibility!

*It is advised that students inform their teachers about any ***PLANNED absences*** prior to the absence. These ***PLANNED absences*** must be approved by Mrs. Bohlken, attendance administrator.*

What absences are excused and which are unexcused?

EXCUSED absences are: personal illness, family funerals, medical appointments, court appointments, truancy court, church/religious trips with documentation, and family emergencies with explanation.

UNEXCUSED absences are: car trouble/flat tire, missing the bus/ride, oversleeping, renewing a driver's license, caring for a sibling, busy traffic, family field trips, notes without all pertinent information, and of course, a confirmed truancy.

ABSENT TARDY (AT): Students who arrive after 9:05 a.m. due to tardiness must sign in the attendance office and receive an absent tardy to class.

How does a parent/guardian check a student out of school?

If a student must be checked out of school for a medical appointment, family emergency, etc., a parent/guardian needs to contact the attendance secretary, Mrs. Hernandez either by phone at 397-7008, or provide a detailed note in which the student needs to bring to the attendance secretary before school to have verified. **The parent/student must sign out before leaving campus and bring an early dismissal slip back to the attendance office in order to be excused.**

If a student becomes ill at school, he or she needs to report to the nurse, Mrs. Olson. She will then determine if he or she needs to be excused due to illness. The parent/guardian will be contacted, asked to come, and then check the student out of the nurse's office. Student must bring the early dismissal slip for excused absent.

Unless a student is 18 and has a signed "Parent Relinquish Rights Form," a parent/guardian must sign him/her out of school, otherwise he/she will be considered **truant**.

What is a "Health" (H) excuse?

A student who has a health care appointment will not be marked as absent and will receive a "Health" or "H" excuse, if all the following criteria are met:

- The student is present for at least part of the day (comes to school and checks out early or comes to school after a medical appointment and reports to Mrs. Hernandez in the attendance office upon returning).
- Documentation from the health care professional confirming the appointment.
- Attendance secretary, Mrs. Hernandez will decide approval for the "**H**" excuse. Teachers **CANNOT** change an absence to an "**H**" excuse. This can only be done by the attendance secretary.

If a student is gone all day for a medical appointment, he or she will receive an ***excused absence not an "H"*** with the proper documentation. ***These notes must also be brought into the attendance office upon the student's return to school within three days; otherwise, the absence will remain unexcused.***

What is attendance Recovery and how does it work?

Attendance Recovery is a means for students to accommodate absences accrued during the school year. Holmes offers an Attendance Recovery session almost every Saturday from 9:00 am. – 12:00 pm. and other 1 hour sessions during the week. Please refer to our website for a schedule of sessions. The successful completion of one **3** our session will "make up" one day in all classes. All other **1** hour

sessions will credit the student one class period. **Students must 1) be on time, 2) sign in with their student I.D. card, 3) be in NISD dress code, and 4) bring work to do for the entire session (1 or 3 hour).** Be sure to use this time to make up work you may have missed due to absences. **Students may also count verified tutoring time with any of their teachers.**

What is the School Messenger?

School Messenger is an automated phone call generated when a student is absent from at least one class. It calls the number determined by the parent/guardian to communicate with them if their child misses a class. If a parent/guardian feels the need to have this number changed for more accurate communication (i.e.: cell phone or work phone), he or she should contact Ms. DeLua at 397-7014.

What are attendance waivers?

If a student has an extraordinary circumstance (i.e. a hospital stay due to an emergency illness), the student may apply for an attendance waiver so that these absences are not counted against the student for credit. In order to apply for an attendance waiver, a student must:

- Pick up an attendance waiver application from the attendance office.
- Complete the form and provide copies of all documentation (copies of excused medical notes) supporting reason(s) for the absences.

Once all information is submitted, an Attendance Committee will review all pertinent data to determine acceptance or denial of the waiver.

What are attendance letters?

At the end of each third-week period, any student who has accrued **6** or more absences and is on a pace to possibly be denied credit will receive an informative attendance letter from Oliver Wendell Holmes High School. The purpose of this letter is to reiterate the compulsory attendance law, attendance recovery, attendance waivers, and provide details of the student's attendance.

What does school attendance have to do with a driver's license?

If a student who is under 18 wishes to obtain the TEA Verification of Enrollment and Attendance form in order to earn a Texas instructional driver's permit, receive a Texas driver's license, or renew a Texas driver's license, he or she must be in attendance for at least 90% of the days classes are offered.

If a parent/guardian has questions or concerns about his or her Oliver Wendell Holmes student's attendance, he or she should contact:

Brenda Hernandez – Attendance Secretary 397-7008

Ada Bohlken – Assistant Principal 397-7017