

1. What reasons does the Shelby County School Board accept for absences? The state of Alabama recognizes the following excused reasons for a student's absence:

- a) Illness
- b) Death in the immediate family
- c) Inclement weather which would be dangerous to the life and health of the child as determined by the principal
- d) Legal quarantine
- e) Emergency conditions as determined by the principal
- f) Prior permission of the principal and consent of the custodial parent or legal guardian (a parent's prior notification to the school does not automatically excuse the absence)

2. How long do I have to turn in an excuse upon my child returning from an absence?

Students have three (3) days to submit an excuse for an absence. After that time period, an unexcused absence remains coded as such even if an excuse is submitted.

3. How long does my child have to make up any assignments he or she missed?

- a. If a student is absent for any excused reason as defined above, the student **shall be allowed** the opportunity to make up all assignments missed during said absence or absences at a time agreeable to the teacher(s).
- b. Given the number of days missed due to excused absences, students shall be given an appropriate time period in which to complete the assignment(s).
- c. For assignments that were due on the day in which the student was absent, provided that the due date was previously communicated prior to the student's absence, the student should be prepared to turn-in the assignment upon returning to school.
- d. Work missed on days that are unexcused shall not be made up for credit.

4. Is there a limit on the number of parent excuses a child may have?

When a student in grades 9-12 has accumulated more than 6 absences in a class during the semester (12 for the year for middle school students), the principal shall evaluate the attendance record and may recommend loss of credit. A student who has **4 unexcused absences** out of a total of 7 or more absences during a semester shall be denied academic credit for excessive absences. A maximum of

six parent notes will be accepted per semester. All absences beyond that will require a doctor's note.

5. If I check my child in or out and sign the check in/out log, do I still need to provide a written excuse?

Yes, signing the log sheet simply creates a record that you or your designee was the one to pick your child up. He or she still needs to supply a written excuse in order for that time to be excused.

6. What are the consequences on my child's grade for unexcused absences?

- a. Students will receive a zero for any assignments they miss for an unexcused absence. This has a tremendously negative effect on students with multiple unexcused absences.
- b. Furthermore, students who accumulate 5 or more unexcused absences in a year will be referred to truancy court.

7. What are the consequences on my child for excused absences?

Students whose absences are excused will be allowed to make their work up. However, research suggests that students with poor attendance (whether excused or unexcused) have a significantly lower graduation rate. One study looked only at total absences for freshman year. 87% of students with four or fewer absences during their freshman year successfully graduated from high school. However, only 59% of freshman with 10 or more absences successfully graduated from high school. In short, even excused absences have a negative impact on student performance. There is no substitute for being in class.

8. If my child misses school, can he or she still attend extracurricular practices and events?

Students must be present for one-half of the school day in order to participate or attend any extracurricular events. At Vincent Middle High, one-half day means a minimum of four periods.

9. What constitutes truancy?

Students with five or more unexcused absences are considered truant from school and will be referred to truancy court. Parents are required to attend with the students.

10. What are the positive consequences for regular attendance at school?

Students who regularly attend school benefit in many ways including but not limited to the following:

- a. A better understanding of class material having the benefit of hearing the presentations and explanations first hand.
- b. Opportunities to ask the teacher questions as new material is being presented and hear other students' questions which may help clarify new concepts.
- c. Opportunities to work with peers in groups, which may help the student grasp concepts quicker.
- d. A greater sense of belonging among peers and within school organizations (clubs, teams, etc.).

11. Are there any special recognitions or awards provided for student attendance?

The Shelby County Board of Education recognizes the following two distinctions each year:

The **Perfect Attendance Award** will be given to students who have been present every complete day of the school year with no tardies, checkouts, or early dismissals.

The **Exemplary Attendance Certificate** will be given for those students who attend school each day of the school year. Excessive tardies, checkouts, and/or early dismissals resulting in a detention may prevent a student from earning this award.