



**STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
PALOLO ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
2106 10th Avenue
Honolulu, Hawaii 96816-3099**

Attendance Policy

Philosophy

Students need to attend school daily and be in class on time so that optimum benefits of education can be achieved. Unexcused and/or excessive absences and tardies are unacceptable and prevent maximum teaching and learning from taking place.

Hawaii State Compulsory School Attendance Law:

Hawaii revised statutes, Section 302A-1132: requires a child who is six years of age and not yet eighteen on January 1st, of any school year, to attend either a public or private school unless properly excused from school, and any parent, guardian, or other person having the responsibility for, or care of, that child shall be accountable for sending the child to school.

Hawaii revised statutes, Section 302A-1135: Father or mother, guardian, or person having charge of the child who persists in being absent from school may be referred and summoned to court.

Hawaii revised statutes, Section 302A-1136: places the responsibility for enforcing compulsory attendance in accordance with the plans and policies of the Department of Education.

Definitions

As used in this document:

1. **“Absent”** means that the student is not physically present in school or in a scheduled class for at least half of the school day: (Parent/guardian(s) are **required** to call if their child is absent)
 - a. Students who exit school before 11:00 am will be marked absent
 - b. Students who report to school after 11:00 am will be marked absent

Absences include the following but not limited to these activities which may happen during the school day:

- a. Students who are quarantined to the health room for other health related reasons*
- b. Sick*

- c. Doctor/Dental appointment*
- d. Family Vacations (on/off island, trips) or events

Note:

- 1. Parent/Guardian(s) must make an appointment to conference with administration as soon as they have plans for their child to be out of school for 10 consecutive school days or more or 14 consecutive calendar days
 - a. Parent/Guardian is required to bring a completed **Request for extended absence form** to the conference. Form is available in front office or can be requested through the homeroom teacher.
 - b. Administration has the discretion to determine if the absences will be excused or unexcused if student academics are adversely affected
- 2. Unauthorized vacations will be considered “unexcused”
- e. Babysitting siblings or other children
- f. Caring for the elderly or family member
- g. No transportation
- h. Personal business (parent, child)
- i. Work schedules (parent)
- j. Suspensions

***Note:** Palolo Elementary will only excuse absences when written documentation (doctor’s note) is submitted within 3 days upon the student’s return to school

- 2. **“Excused Absence”** an absence that is approved after administration review
 - a. Proper paperwork from parent/guardian must be forwarded to the school within 3 days upon the student’s return to school, or the absence will not be excusable. Keep in mind that this is a safety issue as well.
 - b. Administration has the sole authority to change an “unexcused absence” to an “excused absence”
 - c. An excused absence is defined as an absence with notification from parents/guardians. Please make sure to check for any notification beforehand, the day of the absence, or following the child’s return to school. Notification may be in the form of:
 - 1. phone call to office or teacher
 - 2. parent note
 - 3. doctor’s or dentist note
 - 4. early release from school before 11:00am
 - d. Phone calls will be documented to include both the reason for the absence and who notified.
 - e. Written documentation will be kept in student cumulative file.
- 3. An **“Unexcused Absence”** is when student does not attend school when school is in session and a notification is not received. Teachers are not required to provide advance work and/or make-up work for unexcused absences.

4. **“Tardy”** means that the student reports to school or class after the starting time designated by the school
 - a. Students are required to be in class no later than 8:00 am
 - b. Students will be marked tardy from 8:00 -11:00 am
 - c. After 11:00 am, students will be still allowed to enter class but will be marked “absent” rather than “tardy” – (refer to 1b)
5. Requesting **Homework for Absences**:
 - a. If a child is absent from school for two (2) or more consecutive days, the parent/guardian may request for homework by calling the school office.
 - b. A 24-hour notice is needed for teachers when a homework request is made. You may pick up the homework at the front office after 2:30 pm of the day following your request. You may call the front office to confirm that there are assignments for your child before coming to the school.

School Guidelines and Procedures for Pupil Accounting

In accordance with the Department of Education policies §302A-1132 and §302-1136 regarding attendance and pupil accounting, Palolo Elementary School has developed the following guidelines and procedures to assist teachers, counselors, and administration in carrying out their roles and functions. The policy is designed to help students who are **chronically** absent.

TEACHERS PLEASE NOTE: Do not make a distinction between excused and unexcused absences. For documentation purposes (INFINITE CAMPUS/Attendance card) all absences are required to be marked unexcused unless notification is given. Any notification by the parent to the school will be considered as “excused.” Please remember to tally ALL absences (cumulative throughout the whole school year and not by quarter). Finally, please file all attendance documents in each student’s respective cumulative folder.

1. Teachers begin counting absences from the start of the **1st** official school day for students.
 - a. In order to avoid the need to enter an “E” for all students, the assumption is that the majority of students will enter on the first day of school. Thus an “E” need only be entered for students attending school for the first time after the first day of school. Students who fail to attend on the first day of school will be marked “absent” (/) until they enter.
2. Teachers take daily attendance using INFINITE CAMPUS.
 - a. If a student is absent, please remember to document any pertinent information on the back of the attendance card. Also, please document all calls made, this includes unsuccessful calls (answering machine) and non-working numbers. It is important to notate time, date, phone number called, and outcome.
 - b. **By 8:15 am**, teachers input or change daily attendance information to INFINITE CAMPUS. If changes are required to be made, please notify the attendance clerk (Phone, LN, or note to office).
 1. Students are marked tardy once the bell rings.

2. All students must have a tardy slip if entering school after 8:00 am. Students must be directed to report to the attendance office.
 3. For those students who come to school after 8:00 am, the attendance clerk will automatically update INFINITE CAMPUS, and notify the teacher through a tardy note given to the student.
 - c. Teachers can also check INFINITE CAMPUS daily to see if any changes have been made.
- *administration will look into tardy procedures
3. **At 3 absences**, teacher makes a phone call to parent/guardian(s):
 - a. Document on the back of the attendance card
 - b. Please note all calls (include: date, time, phone number(s), and outcome) even if you were unable to make contact.
 4. If unable to make contact by phone, please attach (***Request for New Phone Number letter***) to home/school notebook when student returns. After 5 absences or more, teacher continues to follow up with parent/guardian(s). Attendance letters will be sent out using increments of 5 as a guideline for absences and increments of 10 for tardies:
 - c. Letter 1 will be sent after 5 absences.
 - d. Letter 2 will be sent after 8 absences
 - e. Letter 3 will be sent after 10 absences or (letter 1) tardies
 - f. Letter 4 will be sent after 15 absences.
 - g. Letter 5 will be sent after 20 absences or (letter 2) tardies.
 5. Attendance clerk to complete all **Attendance letters** (electronic copy or hard copy)
 - a. Attendance clerk will run the attendance report on Friday and compile a list of student that will be receiving a letter for that week. An email will be sent out to the assigned grade level and counselor with the list of students
 - b. Teachers need to notify the attendance clerk (through LN by every Thursday) if there are any corrections that need to be made to a student's attendance numbers.
 - c. Letters will be generated and given to the assigned counselors for signatures. Letters will be mailed out to parent(s) or guardians.
 - d. Attendance clerk will keep an electronic copy of the letter, and will place 1 hard copy in the teacher's box that will be put in student cumulative folder. Counselors will receive 1 hard copy of letters which will be used for attendance meetings that are scheduled with parents.
 - e. Attendance clerk will mail out a missed conference letter if a parent does not attend their scheduled meeting, call to reschedule their meeting, or have a phone conference will counselor. An electronic copy of the letter will be kept by the attendance clerk, 1 hard copy will be placed in the teacher's box to be filed in the student's cumulative folder, and 1 hard copy will be placed in the counselor's box for their record.
 - f. The teacher and attendance clerk will review the attendance records to ensure that excessive or recurring absences and tardies are correct.

- g. Attendance clerk will input student's attendance information and parent attendance meeting information into ECSSS. Permanent record to follow student until graduation.
 - h. An attendance database will be kept by the Attendance clerk
6. **After 10 absences**, attendance meetings will be held. Counselor to schedule and facilitate attendance core meeting with parent/guardian.
- Possible follow up actions:
- a. Counselor and parent/guardian contact (phone or home visit)
 - b. Counselor to notify social worker of student and absences (phone or LN)
 - 1. Social worker, administration and/or Public health nurse will be invited to the meeting depending on availability and circumstance
 - a. Counselor to have parent sign "***Consent to Release of Information form***" in order to receive records, documents and interventions by the public health nurse or doctor if needed.
 - 2. Fill out "***Attendance Plan of Action***" form during 2nd or 3rd meeting depending on attendance history
 - 3. Parent/Guardian(s) can also be requested to sign "***Attendance contract***" after any core meeting
 - 4. Counselor to make 1 copy of all documents for teachers to place in student's cumulative file
 - 5. Counselor to make 1 copy for their own records
 - 6. Counselor to make 1 copy for parent/guardian(s)
 - 7. Attendance clerk to input core meeting into ECSSS
7. After 20 or more absences continue to accumulate, a Family Court Petition may be filed.
- a. Letter explaining possible legal actions will be sent home with Principal's signature home (certified mail or home visit).
 - b. Teacher and counselor continues to work with parent/guardian(s) and student
 - 1. Teacher continues to record all documentations
 - c. Team to follow the plan discussed at the attendance core meeting #3 – refer to "***Attendance Plan of Action***"
8. The teacher and counselor will review and monitor the attendance records to ensure that excessive or recurring absences are followed up upon for ALL students.