

4.7 ABSENCES

Education is more than the grades students receive in their courses. Important as that is, students' regular attendance at school is essential to their social and cultural development and helps prepare them to accept responsibilities they will face as an adult. Interactions with other students and participation in the instruction within the classroom enrich the learning environment and promote a continuity of instruction that results in higher student achievement.

At Hermitage Elementary School, the student must return to school with a signed and dated note from the parent, guardian, or person in loco parentis that states the date and the reason for the absence. If the note is not turned into the office within one (1) day of returning to school from the absence, then the absence(s) shall be treated as unexcused. **Excuses may be presented up to three (3) days subsequent to the student's return to school, no later.** Any medical or extenuating documentation should be attached to this note.

According to Arkansas Legislative Act 1223 of 2011, schools are no longer to differentiate between excused and unexcused absences. This Act removes the term "unexcused" from the current language of "excessive unexcused absences."

- Students will be allowed a maximum of six (6) absences per semester (12 per year).
- Students who check out of school during the day will be counted absent for the periods missed. Students arriving more than ten minutes late to any class will be counted as absent for that class period.
- **Students exceeding the total allotment of absences (6/semester or 12/year) will not receive credit for that course.**
- Parents or guardians may petition the administration for special arrangements to address the student's absences. If special arrangements are granted by the school, they will be formalized into a written agreement of conditions and consequences for not fulfilling the requirements. This agreement is to be signed by a school administrator, parent, and student.
- Vacations and other prolonged trips may not form the basis for a petition to the administration.

Excused absences are those where the student was on official school business or when the absence was due to one of the following reasons and the student brings a written statement upon his/her return to school from the parent or legal guardian stating such reason:

Awarding Attendance: Perfect Attendance for each quarter will be rewarded with certificates or ribbons. Students with Perfect Attendance for the semester will receive an attendance pencil. Perfect Attendance for the year will be rewarded with a trophy.