

THE SOUTHWEST LEARNING CENTERS' ATTENDANCE POLICY

Regular class attendance by school age persons at all grade levels is not only an essential component in the learning process, in the development of self discipline, and in preparation for post-secondary training, education and employment, it is also a requirement New Mexico's Compulsory School Attendance Law, NMSA 1978 §22-12-1, et seq. ("Law"). The Southwest Learning Centers' Governance Boards and Administration are responsible for the enforcement of this law.

Habitual truant students and parents are subject to the provisions of the Children's Code [32A-1-1 NMSA 1978]. New Mexico law dictates that:

- (1) Students between the ages of 5 and 18 years of age are mandated to attend public school, private school, home school or a state institution.*
- (2) Schools will provide intervention strategies that focus on keeping students in school.*
- (3) Habitual truants are reported to appropriate authorities such as CYFD staff, Juvenile Probation and Parole, District Attorney, Truancy Court and the State of New Mexico.*
- (4) Parents may be subject to criminal sanctions for violation of the law.*

The Southwest Learning Centers (SLC) encourage parents to ensure their child attends school to maximize their learning and increase their chances of having a successful academic career. The schools understand families may need support to help their child be successful. The Governance Boards, Administration and Staff will work so that all concerned will be provided the guidance and resources necessary to assure success.

The Southwest Learning Centers' attendance policy has the following components:

- The Southwest Learning Centers' goal is 94% attendance for all students in each grading period. On time daily attendance is mandatory for students to derive maximum benefit from any instructional program. **This means that no more than the equivalent of 5 absences per student, per semester, is acceptable.** Parents will be notified by mail on a student's 5th and 10th absence.
- Attendance will be taken every day in each class and session.
- The parent/guardian will notify the school when the student will be absent by sending an email or calling 505-296-7677.
 - Southwest Secondary email – secondaryattendance@sslc-nm.com
 - Southwest Intermediate email – intermediateattendance@sslc-nm.com
 - Southwest Primary email – primaryattendance@sslc-nm.com
- The Southwest Learning Centers will contact parents/guardians informing them of their child's absence when the school does not receive prior notification.
- Absences that are not excused beforehand and cannot be verified by parent contact will be considered unexcused. Parents may subsequently excuse absences.

- Absences will be excused for the following reasons:
 - Illness
 - Family emergencies
 - Medical condition/emergency
 - Religious Commitments
 - Death in the family
 - Diagnostic testing
 - Medical appointment
 - School sponsored activity
 - Extenuating circumstances approved by school administration
- School-related absences are not included when evaluating excused, unexcused and excessive absences.
- Parents should notify the school of all situations that will result in prolonged absences.
- Parents are discouraged from taking their children out of school for vacations. While students missing school due to vacations is not condoned, it is recognized that there are situations when a student must be absent due to parental vacation or travel requirements.
- Students will be encouraged to make up all absences by attending extra main lab sessions in addition to their regularly scheduled sessions.
- A student who falls below a 94% attendance rate may be excluded from intramural activities at the school.
- Southwest Secondary Learning Center students will be encouraged to make up all absences by attending extra main lab sessions in addition to their regularly scheduled sessions.
- Southwest Intermediate Learning Center and Southwest Primary Learning Center students should make up all academic work promptly in accordance with the classroom teachers guidelines.
- The Southwest Learning Centers will provide ten days of excused absences for students providing documentation of the birth of a child and a correlating number of days for make-up work. SSLC will also provide four days of excused absences for students providing documentation of pregnancy or is the parent of a child under the age of thirteen needing care.

In accordance with the New Mexico Compulsory Attendance Law, parents will be notified by mail on the student's 3rd, 5th, 7th, and 10th unexcused absence. Parents are requested to contact their child's sponsor teacher upon receipt of the 5th unexcused absence notification letter to discuss remedies. Following a student's 7th unexcused absence, parents will be contacted to arrange a conference with their sponsor teacher to develop possible interventions. On a student's 10th unexcused absence, parents will meet with the SLC administration. Parents will be advised of their legal obligation to ensure their child's regular attendance. The SLC administration will continue to work to resolve the issues leading to the student's excessive absenteeism. Further unexcused absences will be referred to the Children's, Youth and Families Department for investigation and potential prosecution by the District Attorney's Office (Children's Court Attorney) with the Judicial District Court of the State of New Mexico and to the Juvenile Probation and Parole Office in our community.

All parental notifications shall be respectful and in a language and in manner that is understandable to the parent and student.

The Southwest Learning Centers will be considerate and respectful of the sovereignty of Native American students' tribal laws and traditions in carrying out duties of early identification, intervention, and parental notification. The Southwest Learning Centers will be cognizant of tribal customs, religious practices and laws.

No out of school suspension or expulsion shall be imposed on a student as a penalty for truancy, however, a student may be withdrawn from the Southwest Learning Centers if he or she is a habitual truant and all other efforts have been exhausted.

TARDIES

Excessive tardies will be dealt with through progressive discipline procedures. Consequences and remedies for habitual tardiness will be addressed by the Administration with individual students and parents.

[The above policy is a compilation of the Southwest Learning Centers' attendance policies. For any questions, please call 505-296-7677.]