

Policy: Attendance



Developmental Research School
at the University of Florida

P.K. Yonge's mission as a developmental research school is dependent on student attendance at school. Students are expected to attend school regularly and punctually in order to be successful and to take advantage of all the educational opportunities offered at P.K. Yonge.

Attendance is required of all students enrolled at P.K. Yonge during the days and hours that the school is in session. School attendance is the responsibility of families and students.

All children who have attained the age of six (6) years or who will have attained the age of six (6) years by February 1st of any school year or who are older than six (6) years of age but who have not attained the age of sixteen (16) years, except as otherwise provided in Florida statute, are required to attend school regularly during the entire school term. A student who has attained the age of sixteen (16) years and who has not graduated is subject to compulsory school attendance until s/he files a formal declaration of intent to terminate school enrollment with the school.

Student attendance is critical to P.K. Yonge's educational research mission. Enrollment at P.K. Yonge is a choice. Attendance is a requirement.

School Responsibilities

The school has the responsibility to encourage regular student attendance, to maintain accurate attendance records, and to follow reporting procedures.

Provision shall be made for promoting school attendance through education of parents, and enforcement of compulsory attendance laws and related child-welfare legislation. Accordingly:

A. teachers shall take attendance at the beginning of the school day for elementary, and at the beginning of each class period for secondary, record and report absences, excused and/or unexcused

B. insofar as possible, parents will be contacted each time their child has an unexcused absence, or an absence for which the reason is unknown, to prevent the development of patterns of nonattendance;

C. when a student has five (5) unexcused absences or absences for which the reasons are unknown, within a calendar month, or ten (10) unexcused absences or absences for which the reasons are unknown, within a ninety (90) calendar day period the child may be exhibiting a pattern of nonattendance. Unless there is clear evidence that the absences are not a pattern of nonattendance, the Principal will refer to the case the school Student and Family Services team to determine if early patterns of truancy are developing. If the child Student and Family Services team finds that a pattern of nonattendance is developing, a meeting with the parent must be scheduled to identify potential remedies. If the problem is not resolved, the child study team will implement interventions as provided in F.S. 1003.26.

Administrative Procedures

The Principal shall develop administrative procedures that:

A. provide the student and his/her parents the opportunity to challenge the attendance record prior to notification and that such notification complies with applicable school rules;

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- B. govern the keeping of attendance records
- C. identify the habitually truant, investigate the cause(s) of his/her behavior, and consider modification of his/her educational program to meet particular needs and interests;
- D. require that students whose absence has been excused have an opportunity to make-up assignments they missed and receive credit for the assignment, if completed; and
- E. require that any student who, due to a specifically identifiable physical or mental impairment, exceeds or may exceed the school's limit on excused absence is referred for evaluation for eligibility either under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 or other appropriate accommodations.

Parent and Student Responsibilities

Parents or guardians are responsible for providing documentation regarding student absences to the school as soon as practical. Failure to report and provide documentation for a student's absence(s) within two (2) school days of a student's return to school shall result in unexcused absence(s).

The school reserves the right to verify such documentation and to investigate the cause of each single absence. It is up to the principal's discretion as to whether documentation provided after the required two (2) school days will be accepted.

The principal or designee shall determine whether a student's absence is excused or unexcused under the criteria of this policy.

Tardiness

It is important to be at school on time. If students arrive late, they miss class time and may disrupt the learning of others. Students are tardy if they come to school after the beginning of the school day or if they are not in their classrooms when the tardy bell rings.

If students are tardy to school, they or their parent/guardian must sign in at the Attendance Kiosks at the Front Office or in ISD (K331).

Administration will decide whether or not to excuse a student's tardiness to school. Administration will not accept the following reasons for being tardy: heavy traffic; oversleeping; returning home for forgotten items; and non-educational appointments other than doctor/dentist.

Parents or guardians will be notified in the event that a student is habitually tardy/absent.

Six (6) unexcused tardies to school or unexcused early releases from school will result in one absence.

Excused Absences

Excused absences shall include the following:

- A. Absence due to sickness, injury, death in the family, or some other insurmountable condition. The fact that attendance was impracticable or inadvisable due to any of these reasons must be attested by a written statement from the student's parent/guardian or licensed physician to

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school officials normally within two (2) school days of the student's return. A parent/guardian may document up to six (6) days of absence for illness per semester, after which such absences will be unexcused unless documented by a physician or health care provider.

- B. Documented appointments with health care professionals.
- C. Documented absence for religious instruction or a religious holiday.
- D. Absence due to participation in an academic class or school-sponsored activity approved by the principal.
- E. Court appearances (copy of court documentation must be provided).
- F. Attendance at a center under Children and Families Services supervision.
- G. All other absences are considered unexcused, including out-of-school suspensions

Students may not be given excused absences to remain out of school for the purposes of working, unless the job is an integral part of the student's instructional program.

Unexcused Absences/Truancy

When a student has accrued more than six (6) unexcused absences or tardies in a semester, the school will request from the parent/guardian a statement explaining such absences or tardies. Documentation of the request and the parent/guardian statement will be maintained at the school.

Six (6) unexcused tardies to school or unexcused early releases from school will result in one (1) absence for purposes of determining truancy.

A student who has five (5) or more unexcused absences (including accumulated unexcused tardies/early releases) in a calendar month or fifteen (15) unexcused absences (including accumulated unexcused tardies/early releases) within ninety (90) calendar days, with or without the knowledge or consent of the parent, shall be considered habitually truant. The principal will inform the student and his/her parents of the record of excessive absences, the school's intent to notify the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles, if appropriate, and the intent to file a truancy petition or a child-in-need of services petition.

Student attendance is critical to P.K. Yonge's educational research mission. Enrollment at P.K. Yonge is a choice. Attendance is a requirement. A student may be dismissed or not permitted to re-enroll at P.K. Yonge if minimum attendance requirements are not met.

Pre-Arranged Absences

Parents/Guardians planning ahead for a student's absence from school must apply for pre-arranged absence approval from the Principal including requests for absences for religious instruction or religious holidays.

Pre-arranged absence applications must be submitted to the Front Office seven (7) days in advance of the absence. Applications turned in late may NOT be approved and may be considered unexcused absence(s).

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Application forms are available in the Front Office and online under the Attendance tab on the website (<http://pkyonge.ufl.edu/information/attendance/>).

Prearranged absences may be requested for medical procedures, significant family events (e.g. weddings or funerals), school-sponsored events/activities. Prearranged absences will NOT be granted for family vacations or leisure activities.

Missed Assignments and Examinations

Upon a student's return to school from an excused absence, the student shall have a reasonable amount of time, up to five (5) school days after the date of return to school, to complete the missed assignments or examinations. The principal may grant extensions to the time limit for extenuating circumstances. It is the responsibility of the student to pursue this option with the teacher.

Upon a student's return to school from an unexcused absence, the receipt of missing or late work or completion of examinations is contingent upon a teacher's late work/exam policy as defined in the course syllabus.

For required state assessments, the assessment will be taken on a scheduled make-up day.

Discipline

No student will be suspended for unexcused tardiness, lateness, absence, or truancy, but the student may be assigned consequences based on a progressive disciplinary model. Disciplinary action will include notification to parents or guardians.

Grades/High School Credits

A student's grade in any course is based on his/her performance in the instructional setting and shall not be reduced for reasons of conduct. If a student violates the attendance or other rules of the school, s/he should be disciplined appropriately for the misconduct, but his/her grades should be based upon what the student can demonstrate s/he has learned.

A student will not be awarded credit unless the student demonstrates mastery of the student performance standards in the course by doing one or more of the following:

- A. show knowledge of the course content
- B. earn an overall passing grade in the course
- C. pass a comprehensive final examination

The school will provide opportunities for students who exceed six (6) unexcused absences per semester to demonstrate mastery of the student performance standards.

A student's mastery of performance standards will be determined by the teacher with the principal's approval.

Driver's License

In accordance with State law, the school principal or designee will notify the Director or designee and the Director or designee will notify the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (DHSMV) of any minor student who accrues fifteen (15) unexcused absences in a period of ninety (90) calendar

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days. The DHSMV may not issue and shall suspend any previously issued driver's license or learner's driver's license for any such minor student.

A. Hardship Waiver Request

A minor student or the parent/guardian may request a hardship waiver hearing before the principal or designee. The request for hearing shall be in writing, signed by the student or parent/guardian, and delivered to the school office within fifteen (15) calendar days after receipt of the department's notice of intent to suspend. The school will notify the DHSMV within twenty-four (24) hours or the next school day after receiving the request for a waiver hearing.

B. Waiver Hearing

The principal or designee will conduct the hearing within thirty (30) calendar days after the school receives the request for a waiver hearing. The principal or designee shall waive the school attendance requirements for any minor student for whom a personal or family hardship requires that the minor have a driver's license for his/her own or his/her family's employment or medical care.

C. School-Level Decision

The principal or designee will render a decision in writing explaining the reasons for granting or denying the waiver. The principal or designee will also notify the DHSMV of the decision in writing within twenty-four (24) hours or on the next school day after conducting the hearing.

D. Appeal

Any student denied a hardship waiver by the principal or designee may appeal the decision to the Director. Request for appeal shall be in writing, signed by the student or parent/guardian, and delivered to the office of the Director within fifteen (15) calendar days from receipt of the principal's decision. The Director or designee will review the student's waiver request and the principal's decision and will recommend action, either to affirm the denial or to grant the waiver. Hearings will be held and the Director will notify the DHSMV of the Board's action.

E. Reinstatement

Once suspended or denied, a minor's driving privilege will be reinstated if the minor subsequently is in compliance with attendance requirements. The school will, upon request, provide the minor student with verification of compliance with attendance requirements for reinstatement of the minor's driving privilege.