

Important Attendance Information

Below you will find an overview of the Wando High School attendance policies. It is highly recommended that parents review the [2019-2020 CCSD Middle and High School Parent Resource Manual and Student Code of Conduct](#) and [CCSD website](#) for important information regarding guidelines and policies.

As state, district and school policies are revised, updated information will be made available online.

Text messages and emails are not acceptable documentation for student absences.

Attendance Fax Number: 843-881-8222

Attendance Clerks

Student Last Names A - D

Lisa Evans

843-881-8231

Lisa_Evans@charleston.k12.sc.us

Student Last Names F; H - K; W

DeeAndria Brown

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Student Last Names G; M - P

Tiera Grant

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Student Last Names E; L; Q - T; U; V; Y; Z

Christie Campbell

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School Achievement Begins With Regular Attendance

Parents/guardians have the responsibility to ensure that all school-age children in their care are in school and on time every day. Students have the responsibility to be on time and attend all classes. *Students are expected to attend school for 180 days.*

Lawful absences (excused) shall include but are not limited to:

- absences caused by a student's own illness and whose attendance in school would endanger his or her health and the health of others
- absences due to an illness or death in the student's immediate family; the principal shall require a physician's certificate from the parent/legal guardian of a student reported continuously absent for illness
- absences due to a recognized religious holiday of the student's faith
- absences due to activities that are approved in advance by the principal

Approved activities include the following:

- state and national competitions
- ceremonies honoring outstanding students
- work approved or sponsored by the school, the school district or the state department of education, accepted by the associate superintendent or school principal or designee as reason for excusing the student
 - out-of-school suspension
 - in-school suspension

– field trips approved by the principal or designee

Unlawful absences (unexcused) include but are not limited to:

- absences of a student without the knowledge of his or her parents
- absences of a student without acceptable cause with the knowledge of his or her parents
- family vacations

Absences and School-Sponsored Events

No student who misses any portion or all of a school day, unless excused by the principal, shall be permitted to participate later that day or that evening in any extracurricular or school-sponsored, authorized or related activity or event.

Chronic Absenteeism

As defined by the Office of Civil Rights (OCR), chronically absent students are those absent 10 percent or more school days during the school year. According to the OCR, an absent student is one who misses 50 percent of the instructional day for any reason and regardless of whether the absence is excused or unexcused. In other words, students who are absent for any reason – including suspension, illness, and death in the family – AND miss 10 percent or more of the school year will be considered chronically absent.

Documentation of Absences

All absences require a written explanation from the parent/guardian within three (3) school days of return from the absence. A written explanation of absences must include

the student's name, parent/guardian's full name, parent/guardian's signature, date(s) of absence(s), and documentation of the reason for absence(s).

Text messages and emails are not acceptable documentation for student absences.

All documentation required by the school is subject to review and must be approved by the principal.

Absences in excess of ten days per year will not be considered excused with a parent/guardian note unless they are accompanied by official medical or legal documentation.

All unlawful absences, tardies, and sign-outs will result in school-based and district level interventions.

Tardies

Good attendance and punctuality correlate to higher academic achievement and success in life and careers. Wando High School teachers and administrators emphasize both. Tardiness interrupts learning for everyone in the classroom. Students should be inside the classroom by the conclusion of the tardy bell. Teachers are required to record all absences and tardies in PowerSchool. According to CCSD policy, parents must come into the school to sign their children in if they are late to school. Student drivers should proceed directly to an attendance office.

[Click here for Wando High School Tardy Policy](#)

LAWFUL TARDIES: In order for a tardy to be excused, written documentation must be provided.

- Doctor or dentist appointment (note submitted with medical documentation)
- Late bus arrival
- Teacher, guidance or administrator conference
- Observance of a religious holiday
- Court appearance or court-ordered activities (note submitted with medical documentation)

UNLAWFUL TARDIES:

- Illness on part of the student without a written excuse
- Oversleeping
- Traffic / Car trouble
- Personal reasons
- Missed bus / Carpool trouble

Credit Denial

High school students will be counted absent for a full period if they miss more than half of the class period. The principal may determine the lawful or unlawful nature of the absences. Students in grades nine through twelve must attend:

- Quarter Course: 42 out of 45 Days
- Semester or 4 x 4 Course: 85 out of 90 Days
- Year Long Course: 170 out of 180 Days

Credit for any course may be denied if a student does not meet attendance requirements. Credit may be denied regardless of whether absences are lawful or unlawful.

Absences: Truancy

Per state law, there are three levels of truancy:

1. Truant: A child who has accumulated three consecutive unlawful absences or a total of five unlawful absences.

2. Habitual Truant: A child who (1) fails to comply with the intervention plan developed by the school, the child, and the parents or guardians, and (2) accumulates two or more additional unlawful absences.

3. Chronic Truant: A child who (1) has been through the school intervention process; (2) has reached the level of a habitual truant and has been referred to family court and placed under an order to attend school; and (3) continues to accumulate unlawful absences.

BE VERY CAREFUL WITH YOUR ABSENCES (EXCUSED AND UNEXCUSED). REMEMBER, THERE ARE LEGAL REQUIREMENTS FOR ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOL. A parent's note for early dismissal or absence is not excused unless it falls under the guidelines for a lawful absence and documentation is provided to the attendance office. Regardless of the reason, parent notes count against the 10 days of allowable absences for class credit.

Early Sign-Outs

When students are signed out early on an ongoing basis, their academic performance may be negatively impacted. The school system strongly encourages parents to ensure their student is in school for the full school day every day. *Students shall not be released within the final 30 minutes of the school day unless the principal or designee determines that it is an emergency, or the student has a medical/dental appointment that cannot be reasonably scheduled at another time.*

Late Pick-Ups

Students are required to leave campus at dismissal. Students who are consistently picked up late (30 minutes after dismissal) will be addressed on a case by case basis.

Absences: Early Dismissal

Students are expected to attend all classes each day of the school year. Once a student arrives on campus he/she is present for the day and may not leave unless properly dismissed. Parent requests for a student's early dismissal should be sent to the Attendance Office in a note with the student and should include the student's full name, time and reason for the absence, parent name, contact phone number, date, and parent signature. The student should bring the appropriate excuse back upon his/her return to school. Example: Parent request for early dismissal due to student's doctor's appointment followed by a doctor's excuse when the student returns to school. In cases where a student must leave school before the end of the school day, please adhere to the following procedures:

1. A student should present a note written by a parent/guardian for early dismissal to the Attendance Office before first period. Notes presented after first period may require verbal confirmation from a parent/guardian or may not be honored.
2. Each note should include the student's full name, the reason for dismissal, signature of parent/guardian, and a phone number where the parent/guardian can be reached for verification. If the student is leaving with someone other than the parent/guardian of record in PowerSchool, that individual's name must be included in the dismissal note from the parent. Electronic mail or telephone requests for early dismissal will not be honored.
3. Dismissal notes for the end of class periods are encouraged to avoid class interruptions.
4. Students who drive to school must sign out at the Attendance Office before leaving school grounds. Students who do not drive to school must have a parent/guardian report to either Attendance office to verify he/she is authorized to sign out his/her student. If a student returns the same day from an early dismissal, he/she must sign back into school through an Attendance Office immediately upon returning to campus.
5. After checking out with the Attendance Office, the student must present an exit pass to the Welcome Center attendant. Drivers are responsible for all students in their vehicles.
6. Except in emergency situations, students should not be checked out early after 3:15.

Note: Once a student arrives on campus he/she is present for the day and may not leave unless properly dismissed.

Illness at School

Students who become ill may report to the Clinic in the Main Building or CAS for evaluation.

Students should always obtain a pass to go to the clinic. Students who fail to report to class or to the office because of illness are subject to disciplinary action. If the student's condition warrants leaving school, the nurse will try to contact a parent or designated person on the emergency card. If a student leaves school through the nurse's office, he/she will be permitted to return to school that day only with prior administrative approval.

Make-up Work

Absence from school for any period of time will result in the loss of learning, so each student is expected to be in school and on time every day to take full advantage of educational opportunities. All students who are absent, regardless of the reason, are required to make up work missed. Students who know in advance that they will be absent must check with their teachers to determine what assignments could be completed early. This applies to all school-sponsored activities.

Upon returning from an absence, the student is responsible to initiate immediate action to make up missed work.* The teacher will decide the day and time when work will be made up within five (5) days; failure to meet a teacher-imposed deadline is grounds for awarding no credit for missed work unless the teacher agrees to a change before the fact or unless a bonafide emergency exists. * Pre-scheduled tests must be made up on the date of return unless arranged with the teacher before-hand. Long-term assignments are due on the original due date; teachers may assign a late-penalty to any long-term assignment not submitted by the original due date. In the event of a dispute over make-up rights, appeals should be directed to an Associate Principal. If a student is absent for several days, the parent should contact teachers through phone, email, or by visiting teacher links on www.wandohigh.ccsdschools.com

Absences: College Visits

Wando juniors and seniors are permitted two college visit days each year with official documentation. Official College Visit forms are available in the Guidance Office or from the college. These forms should be completed, stamped and signed by college officials. Catalogs, brochures, parking stubs, and parent notes are not sufficient to document an official college visit.

Absences: Homebound Instruction

Homebound instruction may be provided to students who cannot attend public school because of illness, accident, or pregnancy, even with the aid of transportation. The parent/guardian should request a medical homebound instruction application prior to or immediately following the start of the student's non-attendance.

The application for medical homebound instruction may be obtained from the WHS Homebound Office (whshome_bound@charleston.k12.sc.us). The application must be fully completed and certified by a licensed physician.

Homebound services will not be approved for periods exceeding 45 instructional days. If it is necessary for homebound instruction to continue beyond this period, a new medical homebound instruction form and physician verification will be required. A completed and signed medical homebound instruction form does not guarantee approval for the student to participate in the homebound program. The district superintendent/designee will review all applications for approval or denial.

Homebound instruction does not guarantee that students will pass courses or advance to the next grade. Seniors on homebound status who plan to participate in the graduation ceremony and/or be listed in the graduation program must complete all requirements for graduation by the time senior grades are finalized. Homebound students must adhere to CCSD attendance policies or homebound services may be terminated. Questions regarding homebound should be referred to the administrator in charge of Homebound Services.

Absences: Special Circumstances

In rare cases, students may be absent due to extenuating circumstances but the absence does not fall within the State list of defined lawful absences. In such cases, the parent should send a written request with an explanation of the need for the absence to the student's assistant principal as soon as possible. The administrator will review the information, the length of the proposed absence, the student's academic record, his/her attendance record, and may confer with the student's teachers regarding the academic

impact of the proposed absence. Missing instructional time must be minimized as much as possible.

If the absence is approved, the student is expected to seek assignments from his/her teachers well in advance of the absence and take full responsibility to make up any work missed promptly. In some cases, the total number of absences for the course may exceed the state requirement for "seat" time to award credit and the student will have to make up the time in order to salvage the credit.

Absences for family vacations, trips, and other activities which may be scheduled during school holiday periods will not be approved nor will absences during final exam periods.