



For optimum learning to occur it is important that students arrive on time and attend as much of the school day as possible.

Regular attendance provides students the opportunity to master required skills at each grade level. Many integral activities, including class discussions, group learning experiences, field trips, guest speakers, lab activities, and direct instruction, cannot be simulated or replicated through written work. Therefore, with the goal of promoting student success, LPS has adopted the following attendance policy. It is our intent to encourage honest, accurate, and consistent adherence to this policy by all students, parents, teachers, and administrators.

“Each public K-12 student must remain in attendance throughout the school year, unless excused by the school for illness or other Good Cause...” Florida Statutes 1003.04; 1003.21; 1003.24; 1003.26

Absence--Defined

For grades PK-5th if a student is present for any part of the day he/she is considered present. For grades 6-8 attendance is taken during each class period and absence is defined as missing at least 50% of the class time.

Notification Policy—Elementary

The Board of Directors of Liza Jackson Preparatory School has developed the following guidelines to ensure that students benefit from regular school attendance:

- When a student has accumulated more than nine days (both excused and unexcused), the parent/guardian will be formally notified.
- After the 18th absence (excused or unexcused), a letter will be sent to parents informing them of the necessity of bringing an excuse from a doctor or official agency. The note must state the times/days and the reason the student was absent. In addition, the letter will inform parents that further absences will result in a review of the case by the school Family Support Team for their recommended action.
- All absences after the 18th must be reviewed by the Family Support Team.
- When a student has accumulated 5 unexcused absences in a calendar month or 10 absences within any 90-day period, he/she will be considered truant and appropriate action will be taken.

Notification Policy—Middle School

The attendance policy differs for grades 6-8 in that absences are counted per semester rather than the entire year.

- When a student reaches 5 absences (excused or unexcused), in any class period, the parent will be notified.
- When a student reaches 9 absences in one semester (excused or unexcused), in any class in any semester the school will notify the parents of the necessity for a doctor's excuse or an excuse from an official agency. The student must have an excuse from a doctor or an official agency for each subsequent absence. In addition, a letter will notify parents of the consequences of any further absences.
- The principal may review any absence caused by some insurmountable situation or event that placed an undue hardship on the student.
- After the fifteenth absence per semester, no make-up work will be allowed. He can still pass the class, if at the end of the semester he has a passing grade.
- After the fifteenth absence per semester, the student's legal guardian may appeal to the school's Family Support Committee for permission to make up the missed work.
- A student who is not in class for at least one-half of the class period shall be counted absent.

Excused Absences

Reminder: Within 3 days of your child being absent, send a note to school with your child giving the reason for the absence, so that it can be marked "Excused".

An excused absence is defined as one of the following:

1. Death in the family or other bona fide family emergency;
2. Illness or injury requiring medical or dental attention;
3. Appointments for medical or dental care; or
4. Religious holidays (Good Friday, Yom Kippur, Passover, Rosh Hashanah, Hanukkah or others when parents request, in writing five days prior to the absence, their child to be excused for religious holidays).

Verification of Excused Absence

Students will have three school days, including the day they return, to bring in verification for an excused absence. The absence will be considered unexcused if the school does not receive written verification for the absence.

Unexcused Absences

Unexcused absences are absences resulting from:

1. Unverified absence
2. Truancy
3. Suspension
4. Expulsion

Florida law places responsibility for school attendance on the parents/guardians and imposes sanctions on the parents/guardians for non-compliance. Actions to be taken when a student fails to attend school regularly are stated below in Section 10.

Make-up Work for Excused Absences

For excused absences, the student is required to make up the work missed during the time of absence within five (5) school days after the student returns to school. However, the teacher may grant additional time for the make up work if the individual situation warrants. Students absent the day of a test or the day a project is due should be ready to take the test or turn in the project on the day he/she returns, providing the test/project date was announced before the absence. Teachers may grant extra time if circumstances warrant it.

Students may not make up work for unexcused absences.

Tardiness

For optimum learning to occur it is important that students arrive on time and attend as much of the school day as possible.

Parents will be notified when a student accumulates 5 unexcused tardies or early checkouts within a semester. When unexcused tardies/early checkouts reach 7 in a semester the student may be referred to the school Family Support Team for evaluation.

Special Note: Tardies will be reflected on students' report cards, and any student with six or more unexcused tardies will not be eligible for Principal's List or Honor Roll recognition.

Tardiness is recorded when students have no bona fide reason for not being present and prepared for class at the appropriate time.

Truancy and Intervention

Definition of Truancy

According to 232.19 F.S., a habitually truant student is a student who has accumulated a total of 15 unexcused absences within a 90 day period with or without the knowledge or justifiable consent of the child's parents or legal guardian and is not exempt from the attendance by virtue of the criteria in F.S. 232.06, or any other exemptions specified by law or the rules of the Florida Department of Education.

Excessive Absences - Intervention

1. If a student has had at least five unexcused absences, or absences for which the reasons are unknown, within a calendar month or 10 unexcused absences, or absences for which the reasons are unknown, within a 90-calendar-day period, the principal shall, unless there is clear evidence that the absences are not a pattern of nonattendance, refer the case to the school's Family Support Team to determine if early patterns of truancy are developing.
2. A letter will be mailed to the parent/guardian informing them of the Family Support Team meeting and inviting them to attend.
3. During the Family Support Team meeting, causes for the absences will be discussed as well as interventions and strategies to prevent further missed class time.
4. If an initial meeting does not resolve the problem, the Family Support Team shall implement interventions that best address the problem. The interventions may include, but need not be limited to:
 - Frequent communication between the teacher and the family;
 - Changes in the learning environment;
 - Mentoring;
 - Student counseling;
 - Tutoring, including peer tutoring;
 - Placement into different classes;
 - Evaluation for alternative education programs;
 - Attendance contracts;
 - Referral to other agencies for family services; or
 - Other interventions, including, but not limited to, a truancy petition pursuant to s. 984.151.

The Family Support Team shall be diligent in facilitating intervention services and shall report the case to the LPS Board of Directors when all reasonable efforts to resolve the nonattendance behavior are exhausted.