

ATTENDANCE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s):

At Seaside Elementary School, we strive to promote high achievement, academically, socially, behaviorally, and emotionally in all our students. The time your child interacts with his or her teacher during instructional time is a precious commodity. As a result, your child's attendance is most important. Listed below, please find the most up-to-date information pertaining to the Horry County Schools' (HCS) attendance policy and procedures. The information is also found at the [HCS ATTENDANCE WEBPAGE](#).

Attendance Policies and Procedures

Consistent school attendance is critical for student achievement. If students are not present, they cannot benefit from classroom instruction. State attendance laws require student attendance for course credit and grade-level promotion. Additionally, state attendance laws require intervention when a student is deemed truant.

Attendance for Promotion/Retention Purposes

To be promoted to the next grade or receive credit for high school courses, students may not be absent from school or class for more than ten (10) days for year-long courses or five (5) days for semester courses, unless the absences are excused.

Excused Absences

- An absence is considered excused if a valid medical doctor's written statement is provided within **3 school days after the absence**.
- An absence for bereavement, due to a death in the student's immediate family, may be excused if an obituary or program of service verifying the death is provided to the attendance clerk within 3 school days after the absence.
- An absence for a nationally recognized religious holiday of the student's faith may be excused if a request is made in writing to the principal and written approval is received prior to the absence.
- A parent may request approval of an absence for a Hardship or Educational Trip, in writing, utilizing the Request for Approval form. There is a maximum of 6 days that may be excused per year for hardship and/or educational trips. This [EDUCATIONAL TRIP/HARDSHIP ABSENCE FORM LINK](#) may be assessed or the form may be obtained from Hillery Zabec, SSE Data Quality Clerk. The form must be completed and submitted **prior to the absence or within 3 days in the case of a hardship absence**.
- All Educational Trips must be pre-approved by the principal and a project relating to the trip will be submitted upon return to school and a plan for recovery of all academic missed instruction due to the absence). **All make up work is due within the equal number of days missed and returning to school.**

Attendance for Truancy Intervention Purposes

A student is considered truant:

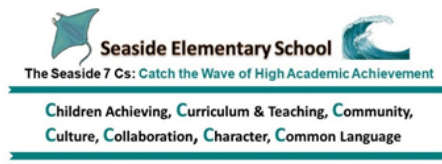
1. After three (3) consecutive all-day absences, five (5) cumulative all-day absences, or five cumulative class absences within the same class period, which are not excused by a medical doctor's written statement, proof of bereavement, or principal's approval; or,
2. After an elementary school student has accumulated ten (10) or more unexcused tardy or early release days. (Note: Tardiness in middle and high schools is considered a disciplinary issue.)

After a student reaches truancy status, the principal or his/her designee will immediately attempt to establish contact with the parent to arrange a conference. During this conference, the principal or his/her designee will develop a written plan with the parent to insure that the parent, the student, and the school have an understanding regarding the future attendance of the student. The plan will help to establish goals for regular school attendance and will be monitored for one calendar year to ensure compliance. Failure to comply with the plan may result in legal proceedings through family court. If a conference is held, and the student is

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Robert J. Homer, Principal (rhomer@horrycountyschools.net)
Morgan Emsley, Assistant Principal (memsley@horrycountyschools.net)



unlawfully absent again, he/she will be referred to the District Attendance Coordinator. The District Attendance Coordinator may refer the student to family court for a motion for court-ordered attendance. No student who is lawfully absent will be referred.

Appeal Process for Attendance Records

If a parent believes that his/her child's attendance record is incorrect, he/she may meet with the principal to present the reasons why the record should be changed along with any documentation relative to the disputed day(s). After the above, if the parent is not satisfied with the principal's decision, an appeal may be made to the Executive Director of Student Affairs. To request an appeal, the parent must write a letter to the Executive Director of Student Affairs within five workdays after the conference with the principal, advising the Executive Director of Student Affairs why it is believed that the principal's decision should be reversed.

The appeal hearing, which should be held within ten workdays of receipt of the request for an appeal, will be conducted as an informal hearing by the Executive Director of Student Affairs (or his/her designee) or other Superintendent's designee (hereafter referred to as "Hearing Officer"). The principal (or his/her designee), parent, and student may be present. If the Hearing Officer and the parent agree, the student may be dismissed during portions of the hearing. The parent, student, and principal (or his/her designee) will be allowed to address the Hearing Officer.

Within ten workdays of the hearing, the Hearing Officer shall render a decision as to whether the attendance record should be changed. The Hearing Officer shall report his/her decision in writing to the parents and the school. The decision of the Hearing Officer ends the appeals process in such matters.

Transfer Students

Some students may be attending SSE as transfers from other HCS schools. Open enrollment is considered a privilege in the HCS. As per HCS transfer guidelines, transfer students can lose their transfer attendance privileges to SSE due to excessive absences, tardies and/or early dismissals.

Attendance Tracking Table

At the following [ATTENDANCE TRACKING TABLE](#), you may use it to assist in monitoring your child's attendance. A whole year has 365 days and a school year has only 180 days. That leaves 185 days to spend on family time, visits, holidays, shopping, household jobs, vacations, and other appointments. It is most important to remember, your child has the best chance for academic success by attending school on a regular basis!

Should you have any questions regarding attendance you may either contact me or Hillery Zabec, Attendance Clerk at 843-903-6300 or by email at the following email addresses: Robert J. Homer at rhomer@horrycountyschools.net and Hillery Zabec at hzabec@horrycountyschools.net.

Sincerely,

Robert J. Homer
Principal

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