

## Fairfax Academy for Communications and the Arts

### 2018-19 Attendance Policy

***Students need to be present in class every possible minute throughout the year. YOU are responsible for work and time missed in Academy classes due to absences. (See course syllabus for details)***

Fairfax Academy's attendance policy follows FCPS guidelines, however, there are some procedures that are unique to the academies. Ultimately, it is the student's responsibility for making sure their attendance record is accurate. Work closely with the teacher to monitor any discrepancies. Our Policy is:

- We must hear from a **Parent/Guardian** for ALL absences. We will not accept notices directly from students. The Parent/Guardian **must notify BOTH the Academy and the base school** when students are absent for any reason.
- We require students to submit a **Pre-Arranged Absence Form** for all absences known in advance (doctor appts., vacations, college visits, etc.). These forms can be found on our website, office, and classrooms.
- These forms require signatures from 1) Academy Class Teacher; 2) Base School attendance office or counselor and 3) Parent/Guardian.
- These forms are required when students must attend a base school activity such as AP/SOL testing, assemblies, meetings, or other bell-schedule changes that cause you to miss your Academy class. It is impossible for Academy staff to know and track all the different school schedules.
- **NOTE: Students must complete and return the Pre-Arranged Absence Form at least TWO DAYS IN ADVANCE of the upcoming activity. Forms not filled out correctly will not be accepted.**
- Email notices are discouraged and if received, will be followed up with a phone call to the parent/guardian for confirmation.

**Absences and Tardies:** An absence is defined as:

- Failure to attend class or classes
- Tardiness of 20 minutes or more

***The reason for an absence or tardy must be reported to the Academy office on the day of the absence when possible, but no later than within two school days of the absence. Notes and phone calls to excuse an absence received after the 48 hour period may not be accepted and the absence will be marked as unexcused.*** While it is the parent/guardian's responsibility to inform the Academy of the reason for their student's absence, it is the Academy's responsibility to determine if the absence is excused or unexcused. If a student has 5 or more absences, they may be put on an attendance contract.

**\*\*PLEASE NOTE: BASE SCHOOLS DO NOT REPORT ATTENDANCE TO THE ACADEMY\*\*.** It is the Parent/Guardian's responsibility to report attendance to Fairfax Academy. It is not the responsibility of the base schools to report attendance to us. The Academy has students from high schools across the county, all with different schedules, so it is impossible to track student activities each day. Please do not rely on the base schools to let us know your student is absent. Thank you.

(over)

## Attendance Policy (cont.,)

**Fairfax Academy Attendance Line (24/7):**  
**703-219-4060**

### **If reporting an absence or tardy by phone:**

- The Parent/Guardian should call the day of the absence or tardy, if possible, but ***no later than two school days after the absence.*** Otherwise, the absence may stay unexcused.
- To report an absence, ***call the Academy Attendance Line: (703) 219-4060, available 24/7.***  
Please leave the following information, and speak clearly and slowly:
  - Student's First and last Name; please spell out the Last name.
  - Student's school ID number.
  - Student's Academy class.
  - Student's Base School.
  - Date(s) of the absence(s) and specific information such as illness, travel, college trip, etc.
  - Your First and Last name and contact number.

### **If reporting an absence or tardy by note:**

- If absent, the student should bring a signed and dated note to the Academy office the first day back from the absence if possible, but ***no later than two school days after the absence.*** If the student is absent on multiple consecutive days, the parent/guardian must confirm the absence within two days of the student's return to school. When arriving tardy with a note, the student should report to the Academy office ***prior to*** reporting to their class. *All attendance notes must be written, dated, and signed by the Parent or Legal Guardian with a daytime phone number included.*

### **Please NO Emails:**

- We do not encourage reporting absences by email. If done so, we will follow up with a phone call directly to the Parent/Guardian for confirmation. If you receive a KIT email in response to an absence, please reply directly to the email to explain the absence.

### **Multiple absences:**

- Students with absences of 10 or more days in the same class, excused or unexcused, may receive attendance letters and the Academy may require doctor's notes or written documentation to excuse further absences.

### **If a student misses a shuttle bus:**

- If a student misses a shuttle bus from their base school to the Academy and does not attend the class, it is considered an unexcused absence. Students should report immediately to their attendance office, sub-school office, or counselor. A base school staff member must then call the Academy office to report the absence to verify the student is safe and accounted for.

### **Check-Outs:**

- If students need to leave early from Academy, please have them bring a signed and dated note to the Academy office, stating the reason and time for dismissal, so students can sign out and receive a check-out pass.
- Students who become sick and leave their base school during the school day and, as a result, miss their Academy class, must inform the Academy. The attendance office and/or clinic is not always able to tell us, therefore a parent/guardian should call us directly to let us know.

### **Multiple Absences:**

- If a student has missed 5 or more classes, they may be put on an attendance contract, with notices sent to the parent/guardian and the base school counselor.

*Thank you for your cooperation!*