

**School Lane Charter School
2400 Bristol Pike
Bensalem, PA 19020**

Board of Trustees Policy

Student Attendance Policy

Philosophy:

School Lane Charter School's goal is higher standards and higher academic achievement for all our students. In pursuit of this goal, it is essential to teach the benefits of and encourage good attendance and punctuality during our student's educational career. Attendance habits begin early, are critical to student achievement, instill self-discipline and are vital to insuring a quality learning experience and a successful and productive future for all students. Learned in the process of attending school, good attendance habits generally remain with students and serve them throughout their adult life.

Since students have limited control over circumstances in the home which may prevent them from getting to school regularly and on time, School Lane believes that the primary responsibility for student attendance lies with the parents/guardians.

Frequent absences or lateness interferes with the learning process and puts students at high risk for academic failure. Thoughtful consideration should be given to the effects on student learning of any absence other than one of a medical or family emergency. Whenever possible, medical or dental appointments should be scheduled at times outside of the school day.

Classroom instruction is an essential part of the learning process; hands-on and cooperative group learning is a significant part of the School Lane Charter School curriculum. To be meaningful and effective, quality education requires continuity of instructions, regular contact among students in the classroom and participation in well-planned instructional activities. Many learning experiences that take place during the School Lane Charter School's school day are difficult to duplicate elsewhere.

Lateness: Students are expected to arrive on time for school promptly at 8:00 a.m. Any student who reports to school after that time is considered late. All late students must report to the school office.

Minutes after 8:00 am will accumulate with 240 minutes (4 hours) equaling one half day absent and recorded as such.

Early Dismissal: Students who must leave school during regularly scheduled hours should bring a note from the parent/guardian stating the time the student needs to be excused and indicating if someone other than the parent is picking up the student. This note should be presented to the teacher. Phone calls to the school are not accepted for this purpose. Parent, guardian, or designated adult is asked to meet and sign the student out in the school office.

In case of illness during the school day, the student should report to the school nurse who will then contact the parent/guardian.

Students who are dismissed early will accumulate minutes of out school with 240 minutes (4 hours) equaling one half day.

Half days are accumulated into full days in regard to absence (i.e., two half days equal one full day of absence).

Students must be in attendance for the entire school day to be eligible to participate in any extracurricular activities at any time on that given day.

Students who are absent in excess of 19 days (10% of the school year) during one school year are considered at risk for retention.

Excused Absence

Parents are responsible for providing school officials with verification of the reason (notes and/or documentation) for each absence within three (3) days of the student returning to school.

The following may be designated as valid excuses for absence of a student from school provided satisfactory evidence or documentation for the excuse is provided to school officials:

- 1. Death in the Immediate Family.** An absence resulting from the death of a member of the student's immediate family. The immediate family of a student includes, but is not necessarily limited to, parents, grandparents, brothers and sisters.
- 2. Medical or Dental Appointments.** An absence resulting from a medical or dental appointment that cannot be scheduled outside of regularly scheduled school hours. Notice should be given to the teacher prior to the absence, except in the case of an emergency.
- 3. Illness or Injury.** An absence resulting from illness or injury which prevents the student from being physically able to attend school. Any student missing more than three consecutive school days requires a note from a physician.
- 4. Quarantine.** An absence that is ordered by the local health office or by the State Board of Health.
- 5. Court or Administrative Proceedings.** An absence resulting from the attendance of a student at the proceedings of a court or an administrative tribunal if the student is a party to the action or under subpoena as a witness.
- 6. Observance of a Religious Holiday.** An absence may be considered excused if the tenets of a religion, to which a student or his/her parent adhere, require observance of a religious event.

All absences will be treated as unlawful until School Lane Charter School receives a written excuse explaining the reason(s) for an absence. Parents/guardians and students should submit the written explanation within three calendar days of the absence. If the Parent/Guardian fails to provide a written excuse within three days of the absence, the absence will be permanently counted as unlawful/unexcused. School Lane Charter School will inform parents/guardians in writing after third unexcused absences is recorded. To clarify, in order for the absences to be considered excused, one of the above valid reasons for absences must be noted from the parent with three days of the student absence.

A maximum of ten (10) days of cumulative lawful absences verified by parental notification shall be permitted during a school year. Once a student accumulates ten (10) lawful absences covered by parental written excuse, all subsequent absences shall require an excuse from a medical provider or licensed practitioner of the healing arts. If a student is sent home by the nurse after they already reached the 10 cumulative days, and are absent the following day because they have to be fever free for 24 hours before returning to school, a note from the parent will be needed for that day, but doctor's note will not be required.

Missed Assignments and Projects

Students are expected to make up assignments and projects missed when absent. Students are allowed an equal number of days as they have an excused absence to complete the necessary make-up assignments or projects. In cases of extended illness, the student/Parent should ask for help in establishing a make-up schedule.

Unexcused Absences

Truancy: A truancy is any absence from school or from any scheduled class without an acceptable reason (see acceptable reasons above). This also includes any student who leaves class without the permission of the teacher. Unexplained absences are recorded as truanies. Truancy is an unexcused absence.

Any absence not verified by a parent/guardian, physician, court, or other agency, within three days of the student's return to school, is considered unexcused.

By Charter School Law any student that is absent from school for 10 or more consecutive days without appropriate documentation must be removed from School Lane Charter School's rolls.

School officials have the option to waive any action if there are documented chronic health conditions or other serious problems. Parents/Guardian must petition the Board of Trustees by submitting a written request and providing evidence to support the request.

For the third unlawful absence, School Lane Charter School will send the parent/ guardian a notice of unexcused absences by providing the parents/guardians with official notice via US postal mail of child's third illegal/unexcused absence. The school shall attach an explanation of the penalties for violation of compulsory attendance requirements as they pertain to both the student and the parent/guardian. After three days after giving such notice, the student/ parent/guardian who again violates the compulsory attendance requirements shall be liable without further notice.

When a student reaches six or more unexcused absences, School Lane Charter School will schedule a school/family conference to discuss the cause of the child's truancy and develop a mutually agreed upon Attendance Improvement Plan (ATP) to resolve truant behavior. The plan can include a myriad of options for elimination of truancy mutually agreed upon by the participants. (See SLCS Truancy Policy for more information)

After agreeing to an Attendance Improvement Plan, or if there is not agreement on a Attendance Improvement plan and 3 days have passed since the parent/guardian received the official notice of the child's third illegal absence, if a child is unlawfully absent, at any point within the school year, the school will send an official notice of unlawful absence to inform the child's parent/guardian that the child has

violated the Attendance Improvement Plan or, if there is not an Attendance Improvement Plan, to inform the child's parent/guardian that the child has again violated the compulsory attendance requirements. The notice will likewise advise the parent/guardian that the school will send a citation to the magisterial district judge. After this notice, all future incidents of truancy will be referred by SLCS directly to the magisterial district judge.

By Charter School Law any student that is absent from school for 10 or more consecutive days without appropriate documentation must be removed from School Lane Charter School's rolls. Children who are habitually and without justification truant from school while subject to compulsory school attendance are subject to an assessment to determine if there is a need for general protective services. Children shall not be referred to the county children and youth agency for assessment as possibly needing services until after the school has made a formal effort to involve the family and child in resolving the cause of the truant behavior.

TO THE EXTENT THAT ANYTHING IN THIS POLICY COULD BE CONSTRUED TO CONFLICT WITH APPLICABLE STATE AND/OR FEDERAL LAWS, THE APPLICABLE STATE AND/OR FEDERAL LAWS CONTROL.

Adopted with updates on the 26th day of January, 2023



President



Attest