

## STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICY

Regular attendance and punctuality are essential to good performance in school. Absence from school is often the single greatest cause of poor or failing performance or academic achievement. Since the learning process is a progressive activity, each day's lesson is built upon those class activities which took place on previous days. This is compounded with the Block schedule with classes meeting on an every other day schedule. Since responsibility is a learned behavior, and regular school attendance patterns encourage the development of responsible patterns of behavior, each student attending Lake Central High School is expected to make every effort to be in school every day. **A student will be expected to be in attendance ninety (90%) percent of each semester to earn credit. For a semester, this equates to being absent no more than 5 days. On the sixth absence a student will be identified as not meeting the 90% attendance requirement.** On normal school days, a late students who are signing in ten (10) minutes after the start of school day is recorded as absent for that class period. Students failing to meet this attendance expectation will be referred to the administration for possible loss of credit or removal from class. Factors taken into consideration will be: academic performance, classroom behavior, unexcused absences/truancy, and teacher contact/conferences with parents. Students who lose credit may be allowed to audit the class but will be expected to be a positive participant in the classroom, requiring the student to do all homework, class work, and follow the directives of the classroom teacher. Failure to comply with this arrangement will result in withdrawal from class and face consequences as written in the student code of conduct. Through the combined efforts of students, parents and school personnel, the goals of punctuality, self-discipline and responsibility can be developed as we prepare students for the adult world. So that all parties involved can assist in the maintenance of excellent attendance and the development of self-discipline, the following types of absences are defined into one of three categories:

- (1) Excused
- (2) Unexcused
- (3) Truant

Issues with excessive absences/late arrivals will be handled first by phone contact with parents, and then by written notifications requesting written documentation for additional absences. If this does not correct the excessive absence issue, a parent and student will be requested to attend a conference with an Administrator. At this conference, the attendance policy, and current academic progress will be reviewed.

### EXCUSED ABSENCE

An excused absence is an absence from school all day or for any portion of the day, under circumstances granted by Indiana Code or by Lake Central High School.

- (1) Absence granted by law: Indiana Law provides that excused absence shall be granted for: witness in a judicial proceeding, duty with the Indiana Army National Guard, service on precinct election board, service for political candidates or service for political parties.
- (2) Absence recognized by the school: It is highly recommended that absences be avoided whenever possible; however, we recognize that on occasion such absences are necessary. The school may excuse absences for student's illness, death in the immediate family, doctor appointments, family absences, emergency family situations, personal religious observance, or other similar reasons. Excused family absences should be requested at least five (5) days before the absence. Excused family absences should not be requested during final exams.
- (3) Regular attendance at school is required of all participants in extra-curricular activities. Students must attend school all day on the day of a contest or practice in order to participate in the event unless permission is granted for unusual circumstances by an administrator. Students must be in school on Friday in order to participate in weekend events unless excused by an administrator.
- (4) Vocational Students where school corporation transportation is not provided will be allowed one (1) excused absence per semester related to vehicle problems. Additional absences related to vehicle problems will NOT be excused.

### UNEXCUSED ABSENCE

An unexcused absence is an absence from school all day or for any portion of a class period(s) under circumstances not covered by law or recognized by the school, such as oversleeping and car problems. The deadline to establish an absence as excused is within 48 hours of the absence. The parent/guardian should call to report an absence on the day of the absence. Unexcused absences will receive appropriate disciplinary action including but not limited to:

1st Unexcused absence – 1 day After School Detention (1 hour)

2nd Unexcused absence – 1 day Wednesday School (3 hour)

3rd Unexcused absence & subsequent unexcused absences – Truancy referral (see Truancy)

**NOTE: Unexcused absences are accumulated for the school year.**

### TARDINESS

All students are expected to be in their assigned classrooms when the bell sounds at the start of each class. Tardiness per semester per class will be handled in the following manner:

1st - verbal/written warning

2nd- detention

3rd - detention

4th and subsequent - Wednesday School/Suspension

**NOTE: Tardies accumulate per semester.**

A student is limited to three (3) assigned Wednesday School sessions per semester. Subsequent infractions normally resulting in Wednesday School will result in a suspension.

## TRUANCY

Truancy is absence from school for all day or for any single portion of the day initiated by the student without parental consent under circumstances not covered by law or recognized by the school. Students not in their assigned classes/area are considered truant.

1st Truancy = 2 Alternative to Suspension Plan (see below)

2nd Truancy = 3 Alternative to Suspension Plans (Also, Student is not allowed to go to any dances or Senior Banquet).

3rd Truancy = 2 Days of OSS (Out of School Suspension)

4th Truancy = 4 Days of OSS (student put on truancy discipline contract and will be considered a habitual offender).

5th Truancy = 10 Days of OSS and a request for expulsion.

### **NOTE: Truancies are accumulated for the school year and carry over from first into second semester.**

When a student has amassed four (4) truancies, he/she is defined as a habitual truant by Lake Central High School. A student identified as a habitual truant is subject to the consequences as defined in the Lake Central High School Student Code of Conduct as well as all applicable state laws and statutes, specifically the revocation of Indiana driver's license.

*Truancy-Habitual* – A habitual truant is a student who is chronically absent, by having unexcused absences from school for more than ten (10) days of school in one (1) school year. The Bureau of Motor Vehicles will be notified in compliance with Indiana Code 20-33-8-33 with a recommendation to disqualify student from obtaining a learner's permit or driver's license, or to invalidate the driver's license for a period of 120 days, completion of semester or until reaching age eighteen (18).

**NOTE: Truancies are accumulated for the school year.**

## SUSPENSIONS

Students should contact teachers for assignments to complete while on suspension. Credit will be granted for work completed and returned to teachers within 24 hours after returning to school. Suspension days will not count as unexcused absences.

**NOTE: Suspensions are accumulated for the school year.**

## CERTIFICATE OF INCAPACITY

Chronic absenteeism is a significant issue for students, parents, teachers, and administrators. In addition, both federal and state laws require Lake Central to have written procedures for the identification, location and evaluation of students with disabilities as defined by the various statutes (See Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (34 CFR § 104.32), the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 USCA § 1412 (a) (3)) and 511 IAC 7-25-2 (Indiana Administrative Code)). The Lake Central School Corporation recognizes some students will have health issues preventing their attendance at school. The form found at: <http://www.doe.in.gov/sservices/docs/ChildsIncapacityForm.pdf> was developed by administrators and attendance officers to provide a response to chronic absences due to health complaints. The form is more elaborate than the usual notes from physicians. It was developed for use as a last resort when a student is experiencing an extraordinary number of absences for health reasons and the Lake Central school administration needs more detailed information. Parents are required to produce a completed certificate of the incapacity for an attendance officer within six (6) days after it is requested (IC 20-33-2-18).

## PRE-ARRANGED ABSENCES

The school ***strongly discourages*** students from taking family trips/vacations during the school year. In a ***Block 8 matrix*** schedule, extended absences place students at academic risk. If there is a need for a pre-arranged absence, the school must be notified at least one week in advance. Approval for pre-arranged absences as an excused absence will be based on student attendance, disciplinary record, grades, specific reason, and length of the requested absence. The absence may not be excused, especially during final examinations.

Prior to leaving, it is the student's responsibility to make arrangements with his/her individual teachers for the work he/she will miss during the pre-arranged absence. Approved Vacation and College days, although they may be excused, count as absences that jeopardize the student's 90% required attendance. College days (limited to 1 per semester) are granted only to seniors and second semester juniors and will only be excused if the visit is verified in writing on the Admissions Office letterhead and returned to LCHS Attendance.

## OFF CAMPUS PASS TO LEAVE SCHOOL

Appointments including doctor, dentist, orthodontist, or counseling, should be made outside of the school day. If a student must leave during the school day, the student should present a written request from the parent or guardian to the Attendance Office before the first bell in the morning. Students must provide verification of ALL dental and doctor visits upon their return in order for the absence to be recorded as "excused". A note from the doctor's office or a professional's signature on the "early dismissal slip" MUST be brought in to the Attendance Office no later than 48 hours after the visit. Off campus passes are at the discretion of the LCHS Attendance Office.

## PROCEDURES FOR CALLING OFF STUDENTS

The parent/guardian of any student has the duty and responsibility to notify the high school attendance office of each student's absence within 48 hours of the absence. Although the deadline to establish an absence as excused is within 48 hours of the absence, the parent/guardian should call to report an absence on the day of the absence. However, it is not necessary to call each day of an extended illness. An estimation of the length of illness with a periodic update will be satisfactory. A student's parent/guardian should contact the attendance office (219-365-8551 x 3) during school hours to verify an absence or fax the information to 219-365-7156. A student can also bring in written notes and turn them into the Attendance Office.

## MAKE-UP WORK

Make-up work is recommended for all absences. It is the student's responsibility to get missed assignments from the day of absence upon his/her return. Extended illnesses will be handled on an individual basis. Work previously assigned is due upon a student's return to class.

Homework assignments may be requested from guidance by a parent/guardian if a student is out for two consecutive days. Teachers are given 24 hours to prepare the assignment request. Assignments that are not picked up at the guidance office are returned to the teacher. Homework requests for high school students can be made via phone at 219-365-8551 x 4. Students and parents may contact teachers directly for assistance with make up work by email or voice mail. The following link provides teacher directory information: <http://lake-central.lcsc.us/staff-directory.php>

#### PHYSICAL EDUCATION ATTENDANCE

Physical education is a non-traditional class requiring students to dress appropriately and physically demonstrate the required skills. Therefore, students enrolled in physical education will lose credit after the 10th failure to dress without the proper documentation exempting them from participation. Participation in PE will be handled as an assignment would be in the traditional classroom. Missing participation can be made up according to the school late work/make up work policy.