

**ARHS**  
**Attendance**  
**Frequently Asked Questions**

**Why did I get an email/phone call saying my child was absent?**

- Our attendance system automatically informs parents when their student is marked absent to the first period class. A student is considered absent to first period if he/she has missed 20 or more minutes of class (arrives after 8:05am).

**Can I call the absence line if my child is going to be late to school?**

- The absence line is for full day absences only. Any student who comes into school part-way through the day is considered tardy to school, even if he/she has missed a full class period in the morning.

**What do I do if my child is absent all day?**

- A phone message from a parent/guardian that is received on the same day as the absence will excuse it. Students can not call in their own absence. The attendance line phone number is 362-1718.  
This line can only excuse all day absences. If your student is coming in part-way through the day, you must follow the tardy policy.
- A note from a parent/guardian can be turned in to the Main Office within 48 hours after the absence.
- Phone calls and emails to teachers/guidance counselors do **not** excuse a child's absence.

**How can I excuse my child's early dismissal from school?**

- A note from a parent/guardian must be turned in to the Main Office before your student exits the building. Any student who leaves without a valid note will be considered cutting class. Notes for dismissals can not be brought after the fact.
- If your child is dismissed through the health office, they must turn in the purple pass from the nurse's office to the Main Office before they leave school.

**What if a student is late to school after 8:05?**

- If a student is late to school after 8:05, she/he should go to the Main Office to check-in before going to class. Excuse notes will only be accepted in the following cases:
  - Bring a parent note a day ahead—this must be for a critical appointment that cannot be scheduled after school.
  - An emergency medical appointment—the student must bring a note from a parent and a note from the doctor identifying the time and date the student was seen.
  - A court appearance—the student must bring a note from the court identifying the time and date of the appearance.
  - Any other request for a late arrival to school to be excused must be approved by the student's Dean. These will only be considered for true emergency circumstances. In the case of extenuating circumstances at home, a student

can bring a note from a parent/guardian to be approved by one of the deans (Ms Custard or Mr McGraw). **Because of the number of this kind of notes, the deans will only sign them in the cafeteria during a lunch period. There is at least one dean on duty in the cafeteria during all lunches.**

#### **What happens when the school bus is late?**

- When the school is responsible for students being late, they will not be marked tardy. Those students should check-in with the Main Office to receive a pass to class.

#### **Why does my student have a detention today?**

- The most likely reason is that your student was tardy to their first period class this morning. Each student who arrives late to school must sign up for a detention, to be served that day or the next. Due to the number of detentions that are assigned because of tardiness to school, ARHS does not notify parents when a student receives a detention for being late to school.
- All disciplinary detentions that are a result of Code of Conduct infractions are assigned through the dean's office. You will receive a copy of the discipline referral in the mail if a detention or suspension is assigned for that reason.

#### **When and where is detention held?**

- Detention is in the Cafeteria from 2:30 to 3:00 on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday. There are no administrative detentions on Wednesday or Friday.

#### **Can a student who has detention participate in athletics?**

- Practices start at 3:15. Students can participate in practices or games after serving detention.

#### **What if a student can't attend detention on the day it has been assigned?**

- Students can arrange a one-time courtesy re-scheduling of an assigned detention with their Dean (Ms. Custard for grades 9 & 11, Mr. McGraw for grades 10 & 12).

#### **What attendance will show on a report card?**

- Report cards will show the total number of tardies and absences for each period.

#### **What will be on a transcript?**

- Currently our transcripts include daily attendance: tardies and absences. Remember that 12<sup>th</sup> grade report cards which will include period attendance are sent to colleges as part of the admissions process.

#### **Is attendance taken for students who have ALPs or community service projects?**

- Yes. Teachers must submit period attendance for every student with a class A through E periods in the building. Students who have work study, internships or college classes have attendance taken at those sites.

**What happens to unexcused absences that are not cleared by a parent?**

- These can lead to detentions. Students must bring excuse notes for full day absences on return from that absence. There is a 48 hour grace period for bringing a note.

**What does “20 Min. Missed” (code: Q) mean? What does “20 Min. Excused” (code: W) mean? Do these count in the attendance limit of 8 absences?**

- A student who misses 20 minutes of a class is counted as absent in our attendance policy for credit. The absence can be excused, if the student was called to a school office or goes to the nurse for a legitimate illness. However, ALL absences, excused or unexcused, count towards the absence limit.

**What counts towards the absence limit and what does not count?**

- In general the principle is that absences that are at the student’s and family’s discretion count, while absences that the school requires or expects do not. For example, MCAS, AP or Special Education testing do not count (code: R), suspensions do not count (code: IS and OS). **Field trips do towards the attendance limit, as the student can choose to not participate if he/she will be missing another class period.**

**Do we still have attendance waivers?**

- Yes. Any student who has exceeded the absence limit in one or more classes can apply for an attendance waiver. **These are approved by Michael Bardsley, and forms are available in the Guidance Office or from Erika Grundstrom in Room 309.** Attendance waivers can restore lost credit, but will not erase the number of absences that are shown on report cards/transcripts.

**Can 18 year old students excuse their own absences?**

- No. Eighteen year old students cannot excuse their own absences without prior approval from their guidance counselor or a principal.

**Additionally:**

- One point that is confusing to many students and parents is that teachers take attendance on the computer for each class period. If your student is marked absent to just one class period, and you think it may be in error, ask your student to double check with the teacher regarding that day's attendance.
- 3 tardies to a class period = 1 absence. Excessive tardiness can result in loss of credit to a class.
- All notes must be turned in to the Main Office.