

The Galapagos Rockford Charter School Attendance and Truancy Policy was created in accordance with Section 22-92 of the School Code. The Code sets forth four required components of an absenteeism and truancy policy. 1.) A definition of a valid cause for being absent. 2.) The diagnostic procedures that will be used to identify the causes of unexcused absences. 3.) The identification of interventions and supportive services for truant or chronically truant scholars. 4.) Incorporation of the chronic absenteeism report and support provisions of School Code.

Attendance

Daily attendance supports academic success. The habit of regular and punctual attendance is a quality that will follow scholars throughout life. We expect all GRCS scholars to arrive on time and attend school daily.

The 2024-25 school year calendar consists of 177 instructional days for scholars. A full day of attendance for kindergarten-eighth grade scholars included a minimum of five clock hours of instruction.

On a regular school day, scholars who received less than 480 minutes of instruction but at least 300 minutes are claimed for a half-day of attendance. Lunch hours and recess are considered non-instructional times.

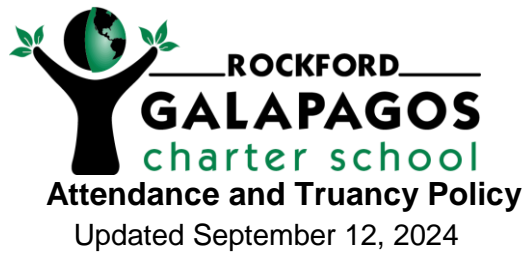
Absence

Parents/guardians are expected to use the *Pick Up Patrol* website to report any and all absences prior to the beginning of the school day. In addition to the reporting of absence on the website, GRCS may require notes from home following the scholar's absence. All absent scholars who have not been reported through the Pick Up Patrol website will be contacted by office personnel to ensure the scholar is absent and the reason for the absence. After three days of no contact between the school and a scholar's guardian, the school social worker will do a home visit to check on the welfare of the scholar.

Valid Causes of Absences

Excused absences are those with a valid cause and which have been reported to the school by a parent/guardian. Unexcused absences are absences for which there is no legitimate cause, such as truancy. The following are valid causes for absence:

- Illness with doctor notice
- Observance of a religious holiday
- Death in the immediate family
- Family emergency



- Circumstances that cause reasonable concern for the parents/guardians for the safety or health of the scholar. (The reasonableness of the concern shall be subject to evaluation by the Dean of School Culture, on a case by case basis.)

Truancy

The Dean of School Culture has the responsibility for monitoring scholar attendance and potential truancy. Truancy is excessive unexcused absences.

Chronic truancy refers to a scholar who is absent without valid cause for 12 or more days during the school year. Warning letters are sent to parents/guardians when absences have reached 5, 7, and 10 days absent. A phone call will be made to families when a letter is being sent home. Through the attendance letters, parents are notified of their scholar absences and an attendance improvement plan meeting is scheduled with the parents, scholars, dean, social worker, and instructors. At the attendance improvement plan meeting, barriers are identified which may be contributing to the scholar's current attendance issues. Through collaboration with the parent/ guardian, we identify ways to increase attendance and support the scholar's academic growth. If truancy continues, a referral will be made to the county attendance officer for further action and support.

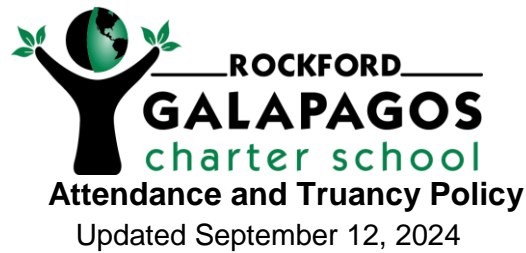
In addition to letters being sent home to inform parents/guardians on numbers of absences, supportive services through parent phone calls, parent conferences, home visits, student/family counseling will be provided by the Dean of School Culture and/or School Social Worker to assist in the scholar's attendance.

Monthly meetings occur on the third Tuesday of each month for attendance review with the Dean of School Culture and School Social Worker. During this meeting, the staff will discuss chronic absence data to determine systems of support and resources needed for chronically absent students and their families to encourage the habit of daily attendance to promote success. Detailed minutes of this meeting will be presented to the administrative team including the CEO.

Extended Absences

In cases of an extended absence due to illness, the scholar's parents/guardians should contact the Dean of School Culture so that arrangements can be made to discuss the scholar's progress and homework with the classroom teacher.

Parents/Guardians are discouraged from taking vacation during the school year, except during regularly scheduled breaks in the school calendar such as fall break, winter break, spring break, and summer vacation. Such absences/vacations will be marked as unexcused.



Request for Early Dismissal

We encourage parents/guardians to schedule scholar appointments such that they do not conflict with regular school hours. If an appointment must be scheduled during school hours. The parents/guardians must notify the school of the time, the purpose of the appointment, and the name of the person who will be picking up the scholar.

Review of this Policy

Per Section 26-18 of the School Code, Galapagos Rockford Charter School will collect and review its chronic absence data quarterly and determine what systems of support and resources are needed to engage chronically absent students and their families to encourage the habit of daily attendance and promote success. The review shall include an analysis of chronic absence data from each campus of GRCS. GRCS will collect and regularly review its chronic absence data in order to identify the scholars who most need support and how best to support them.