

## LAKE LURE CLASSICAL ACADEMY ATTENDANCE POLICY K-12

Lake Lure Classical Academy believes that regular school attendance is of crucial importance for educational achievement, that learning experiences that occur in the classroom are essential components of its learning process, that time lost from class tends to be irretrievable in terms of opportunity for instructional interaction, and, therefore, that each student should attend school every day. The State of North Carolina requires that every child in the State between the ages of seven (7) (or younger if enrolled) and sixteen (16) attend school. Lake Lure Classical Academy believes the primary responsibility for regular attendance resides with the parents/guardians and the individual student. Students are expected to arrive on time and remain in school the full day. Tardies and early dismissals cause students to miss important information and are strongly discouraged. The school attendance team will develop appropriate interventions for students who are chronically tardy or who leave early. Tardies and early dismissals will be considered excused for the same reasons allowed for excused absences listed below in section B. II. Lake Lure Classical Academy shall adhere to the North Carolina General Statutes pertaining to student attendance except to the extent this policy imposes stricter regulations. Furthermore, LLCA is committed to the implementation of a student attendance policy that is nondiscriminatory, discourages dropouts, and encourages regular attendance.

- A. ATTENDANCE RECORDS-Lake Lure Classical Academy shall keep accurate records of attendance, including accurate attendance records in each class. Attendance records will be used to enforce North Carolina's compulsory attendance statutes (G.S. 115C-378 through -383).
- B. B. ABSENCES- Attendance Requirements by Grade Level

1. **Elementary Grades K-5** have a maximum combined total of sixteen (16) excused and unexcused absences in a school year. Students must be in school one half of the day to be counted as present. Any absences over 16 must be made up in accordance with the school's Attendance Make-Up Program which will be held after school.

2. **Middle School Grades 6-8** may only have a maximum combined total of sixteen (16) excused and unexcused absences per school year. Any absences over sixteen (16) must be made up in accordance with the school's Attendance Make-up Program which will be after school or Saturday Make Up Academy. Students must be in attendance one half (1/2) of the day to be counted present for the day. For students taking any courses resulting in high school credit, students taking those classes must follow attendance rules for High School.

3. **High School Grades 9 – 12** Students enrolled in Year-Long Courses Students in grades 9-12 may only have a maximum combined total of ten (10) excused and unexcused absences per class. **Absences are considered for each class and students must be present two thirds (2/3) of the class to be counted as present.** Absences over ten (10) days may be made up in accordance with the school's Attendance Make-up Program held after school or Saturday Attendance Academy.

### **LAWFUL (EXCUSED) ABSENCES**

When a student must miss school, the parent or legal guardian must supply documentation regarding the reason for the absence to the school upon the student's return to school.

**Absences are listed as unexcused until documentation is received.** Documentation will not be accepted after thirty (30) days without prior approval from a school administrator or the attendance team. Absences due to extended illnesses generally require a statement from a physician if there is a history of chronic absences. As soon as a parent anticipates a student's extended absence because of a severe, prolonged, or chronic illness under a physician's care, the parent shall notify the Division Dean. In the case of excused absences and short-term out-of-school suspensions, the student will be permitted to make up any tests or other work missed. The teacher will determine when work is to be made up. The student is responsible for finding out what assignments are due and completing them within the specified time period.

An absence may be excused for any of the following reasons

1. Personal illness or injury that makes the student physically unable to attend school.
2. Isolation ordered by the local health officer or the State Board of Health.
3. Death in the immediate family.
4. Medical or dental appointment.
5. Participation under subpoena as a witness in a court proceeding.
6. At least two (2) days of excused absences must be allowed each academic year for religious observances required by the faith of a student or a student's parents.
7. Participation in a valid educational opportunity, such as travel or service as a legislative or Governor's page, with prior approval from the Division Dean.
8. Pregnancy and related conditions or parenting, when medically necessary.
9. A student whose parent or legal guardian is an active duty member of the uniformed Children of Military Families; and (b) has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or has immediately returned from deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting will be granted additional excused absences at the discretion of the Executive Director or designee to visit with his or her parent or legal guardian.

**UNLAWFUL (UNEXCUSED) ABSENCES** For students who are entitled to attend public school and who have enrolled in a public school, unlawful absence is defined as:

1. A student's willful absence from school with or without the knowledge of the parent
2. A student's absence from school for any reason other than those listed in Section B under "Lawful Absences"
3. When students are not permitted to attend school because they lack proper immunization. The Division Dean or the Division Dean designee must notify the parent, guardian, or custodian of his/her child's excessive absences after the child has accumulated **three** unlawful absences in a school year. After not more than six (6) unlawful absences, the Division Dean or the Division Dean designee must notify the parent, guardian, or custodian by mail that he or she may be in violation of the Compulsory Attendance Law and may be prosecuted if the absences cannot be justified under the established attendance policies of the State and local boards of education. (G.S. 115C-378) In the case of unexcused absences, the student will be permitted to make up any tests or other work missed. The teacher will determine when work is to be made up. The student is responsible for finding out what assignments are due and completing them

within a specified time period. Mandatory Attendance and Truancy Unexcused absences may include any reasons not covered above. Students are considered truant after the tenth (10th) unexcused absence. **Upon the tenth (10th) unexcused absence, a conference is required to develop an attendance improvement plan.** Truancy charges may be filed against the student, the parent, or both if unexcused absences continue. "After 10 accumulated unexcused absences in a school year, the Division Dean or the Division Dean's designee shall review any report or investigation prepared under G.S. 115C-381 and shall confer with the student and the student's parent, guardian, or custodian, if possible, to determine whether the parent, guardian, or custodian has received notification pursuant to this section and made a good faith effort to comply with the law. If the Division Dean or designee determines that the parent, guardian, or custodian has not made a good faith effort to comply with the law, the Division Dean may notify the district attorney and the director of social services of the county where the child resides. If the Division Dean or designee determines that the parent, guardian, or custodian has not made a good faith effort to comply with the law, the Division Dean may file a complaint with the juvenile court counselor pursuant to Chapter 7B of the General Statutes that the child is habitually absent from school without a valid excuse." (NCGS 115C-378(f)) This statute applies to students up to age 16.

**C. SCHOOL-RELATED ACTIVITIES** All classroom activities are important and difficult, if not impossible, to replace if missed. Division Dean shall ensure that classes missed by students due to school-related activities are kept to an absolute minimum. The following school-related activities will not be counted as absences from either class or school:

1. field trips sponsored by the Lake Lure Classical Academy
2. school approved job shadows and other work-based learning opportunities, as described in G.S.115C-47(34a), which are not to exceed two (2) days without prior principal approval
3. school-initiated and -scheduled activities
4. athletic events that require early dismissal from school
5. in-school suspensions/ completions of alternative to suspension program. Assignments missed for these reasons are eligible for makeup by the student. The teacher will determine when work is to be made up. The student is responsible for finding out what assignments are due and completing them within the specified time period.

### **EXCESSIVE ABSENCES**

Class attendance and participation are critical elements of the educational process and may be taken into account in assessing academic achievement. Students are expected to be at school on time and to be present at the scheduled starting time for each class. Students who are excessively tardy to school or class may be suspended for up to two (2) days for such offenses. The Division Dean shall notify parents and take all other steps required by G.S. 115C-378 for excessive absences. Students may be suspended for up to two (2) days for truancy. Each Division Dean will establish a school attendance team to monitor school-wide attendance and design interventions to reduce individual student excused and unexcused absences. Lake Lure Classical Academy will collect and review data regularly to make decisions about individual interventions, targeted group interventions, and school-wide incentives for improved attendance.

If a student is absent from school for five (5) or more days in a semester, the attendance committee shall **consider** whether a specific plan to improve attendance is necessary. The Division Dean or committee shall review other measures of academic achievement, the circumstances of the absences, the number of absences, and the extent to which the student completed missed work when developing a plan. Interventions could include:

1. parent education/counseling sessions;
2. individual/student counseling;
3. referral to appropriate community agencies;
4. positive behavior supports for students and parents;
5. assigned time to make-up missed work. Students may be required to attend after-school or summer school or Saturday Attendance Academy to make up missed days

Parents must receive notification (documentation required) when students have accumulated three (3) unlawful absences. Once a student has been absent for any unlawful reason for six (6) cumulative days, the Division Dean or designee shall notify the student's parents in writing, in accordance with the NC Compulsory Attendance Law. Subsequently an individual attendance intervention plan will be developed through the school based attendance committee in cooperation with the parent, guardian, or custodian. The principal shall recommend the revocation in writing to the Superintendent or designee.

Lake Lure Classical Academy will provide the opportunity for attendance make-up through an Attendance Make-up Program, which may include Saturday school, after school make-up tutoring sessions, Attendance Summer School, or other make-up requirements as identified by the Division Dean and attendance teams.

**Occasionally unique or unusual situations arise which are not specifically addressed by this policy.** The Executive Director, upon written recommendation from the Division Dean may authorize alternatives to the policy in order to achieve fairness to the student without weakening the effect of the policy.

**Non-Promotion Pursuant to this policy, students failing to meet attendance requirements in any required course for promotion shall neither be promoted nor allowed to participate in promotion exercises.**

.Legal References: G.S. 115C-47, -84.2, -288(a), -375.5, -378 through -383, -390.2(d), -390.5, -407.5; 16 N.C.A.C. 6E .0102, .0103; State Board of Education Policies TCS-L-000 through -003; NC Board of Education School Attendance and Student Accounting Manual.

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