

# 2009-10 RED DEVIL PARENT RESOURCE

## A Guide to Frequently Asked Questions

### ATTENDANCE QUESTIONS

Note: Complete information regarding the Attendance Philosophy and Procedures can be found on pages 16-21 in the Student Handbook and in the back of the monthly calendar. You can also link to the Student Handbook on-line through the home page of the school website. Further questions can be answered by your child's dean by calling 570-8225.

#### ***1. What is the procedure for reporting student absences?***

Attendance procedures are established by the Hinsdale Central administration in order to minimize disruption to your child upon his/her return to school. Therefore, it is the parent's or guardian's responsibility to call the Hinsdale Central **Attendance Line at 570-8090 within 24 hours of the day of the absence.** Only calls from parents or legal guardians will be accepted. If no call is received by that time, the absence will be considered unexcused, making it necessary to pull your child from class to determine the cause for the absence, thus, disrupting the educational process.

**The following information must be provided to excuse the absence for valid cause:**

- Student name
- Student ID number
- Reason for the absence

**Note: If a parent/legal guardian anticipates being out of town** and, therefore, will be unable to provide official notification of a student absence, the parent/legal guardian must provide written documentation of the adult designated to approve student absences. This written notification must be turned into the Attendance Office prior to the parent/legal guardian leaving town.

#### ***2. What is considered a "valid" reason for my child's absence or late arrival?***

According to Illinois School Code, Article 26, the parent or legal guardian can have his/her child excused from compulsory school attendance for the following reasons:

1. Illness
2. Observance of a religious holiday
3. Death in the immediate family
4. Family emergency
5. Circumstances which cause reasonable concern to the parent/guardian for the safety or health of the student

#### ***3. Is a visit to a college considered an excused absence?***

Hinsdale Central accepts a college visit as a legitimate reason for a student to miss school even though it is not specified in the Illinois School Code. The absence will be excused **as long as the "Pre-arranged Absence" procedures** are followed, as outlined in the Student Handbook on page 18

NOTE: allow your student a week to process these forms and get them turned into the Attendance Office in order to ensure an excused status for the absence.

#### ***4. Can my student be excused from school for a family vacation while school is in session?***

Family vacations are not recommended due to the impact on student learning and the educational environment. No classroom activity or experience can ever fully be replicated outside that time and place of its environment, so students need to miss as few classes as necessary. Student absences due to a voluntary vacation will lead to increased work for the absent student and an undue burden on his/her teachers. **Therefore, the school administration reserves the right to determine whether or not to excuse a student who misses due to a personal vacation.** Contact your child's dean to discuss such a situation.

#### ***5. How do I excuse my child if he/she needs to leave school during the day for an appointment?***

Due to the negative impact that missing school can have on your child, you are encouraged to set up appointments outside of the school day. When this is not possible, follow these procedures:

- Parents/guardians **must call the Attendance/Deans' Office before the student is to leave the building** for the appointment.
- Students must report to the Attendance/Deans' Office, Room 125, and sign out.
- Students must verify that they were at a medical appointment by **providing documentation** from the doctor's office when they sign back into the Attendance/Deans' Office.
- If students return the following day, they need to bring appointment verification into the Attendance/Deans' Office that morning.

*Remember:* Your child cannot walk off of school property without prior permission from you. They must **ALWAYS sign out** in the Attendance/Deans' Office, Room 125, and get a pass.

#### ***6. What should I do if my child left for school with the understanding that I was going to arrange an appointment for him/her that day?***

- If your child knows that you are attempting to set up an appointment that day, tell him/her to check the message board in Guidance between classes.
- Call the Guidance Office at 570-8252 to leave details for your child, and they will post the notice on the **student message board**.
- Follow up with a call to the Attendance/Deans' Office at 570-8090 to excuse your child for the appointment so that he/she will be able to sign out to leave the building when they go to the Attendance/Deans' Office.

#### ***7. How do I excuse my child from school for an appointment or for an emergency situation when he/she has no prior knowledge of the arrangements?***

Unexpected situations that require students to be pulled from class without their prior knowledge can be stressful for them. In addition, this is a disruption to the educational environment. Nonetheless, we recognize that emergency situations do arise. In this event, **contact the Deans' Office** at 570-8225 in order to receive assistance.

## ***8. What is the policy regarding students arriving late to school?***

Our goal is to assist you in developing your students into responsible young adults. Promptness and good attendance are desirable behaviors which our policies seek to reinforce. Therefore, the following reasons in this non-inclusive list are examples of **absences without valid cause**, thereby, resulting in an **unexcused** status:

1. Oversleeping
2. Car trouble
3. Missing the bus
4. Missing one class to study for another or make-up test and quizzes
5. Babysitting
6. Shopping
7. Extending prom weekend

## ***9. What does an unexcused status mean?***

For most students, there is a direct correlation between their attendance and achievement. Regular class attendance not only helps to develop habits of self-discipline and responsibility but also translates into greater achievement academically and in all areas of life. For this reason, unexcused absences are handled as significant behavioral infractions.

Unexcused absences are defined as those absences which are not authorized and/or school related. **No make-up privileges** are allowed for the period(s) in which the unexcused absence(s) occurred. Unexcused absences are subject to **disciplinary action**, including detentions, Saturday detentions, and withdraw with loss of credit from impacted classes. Additionally, a school curfew ordinance exists in the Village of Hinsdale, and unexcused students may be considered truant. Refer to the Student Handbook, pages 19-20, for details.

## ***10. What if my child is late to school because he/she was at a medical appointment?***

If your child arrives late due to a medical appointment, he/she should follow these procedures:

- Students must report to the Deans' Office, Room 125, and sign in upon arriving to the building.
- Students must verify that they were late due to a medical appointment by **providing documentation** from the doctor's office when they sign in.
- Parents/guardians **must call the Attendance Office by 4:00 p.m. on the day** the student arrives late in order to verify that they were aware of the appointment and want it excused.

## ***11. What if my child is late to school due to another valid cause, such as feeling ill when he/she awoke?***

For other valid causes, the student may proceed directly to class after signing in at the Greeter's Desk, but a **parent/guardian phone call must be received in the Attendance Office by 4:00 p.m.** that day in order for the partial day absence to be excused.

*Note:* All students arriving to school past 8:00 a.m. will need to enter through the front door and sign in at the Greeter's Desk. Students will be asked to produce a valid student ID card.

### ***12. Do the procedures change if my child has an extended illness or is hospitalized?***

In order to relieve some daily burden during situations such as this, Hinsdale Central allows a parent to make special arrangements with the Attendance Office to alleviate the need to call in each day. Once your child has been absent three consecutive days, if he/she is able to complete homework, contact the Guidance Office and your child's counselor will obtain assignments for you to pick up.

### ***13. What does it mean if a student is considered excessively absent?***

Any student who is absent 10% of the attendance days in one semester, excused or unexcused, will be considered as having excessive absences. Absences that result from participation in a school-related activity, such as a field trip or in-school meeting, will not be counted in determining excessive absences.

- Once a student has been absent for 10% of the semester, a doctor's note (licensed M.D. or nurse practitioner) will be required before an illness-related absence will be excused. The doctor's note must be the original, legible copy on physician's stationary signed by the doctor or nurse, and presented to the Deans' Office upon the student's return. The note must state the date(s) the student was not able to attend school.
- A student who is excessively absent will be referred to the building Support Team, which will develop an individualized intervention plan designed to remediate the attendance pattern. Parents/guardians will be a part of this planning process.

### ***14. If my student's absence is classified as excused, can all of the work be made up?***

Students who have excused absences will be expected and allowed to make-up missed work in a reasonable amount of time, to be determined by their individual teachers. Nevertheless, there are some classes that, due to the content or nature of an assignment, will not permit make up of particular assignments. **Such assignments will be clearly identified in the course syllabus distributed to students the first week of class.** It is the student's responsibility to contact his/her individual teacher about his/her make-up assignments.

### ***15. Can my student's attendance record impact his/her ability to participate in co-curricular activities or athletics?***

Students' primary responsibility is to attend school during the day in order to achieve their full academic potential. Therefore, student participation in any athletic or co-curricular activity **requires a student to be present in school all day on the day of a practice, event, contest, or competition.** Therefore, Hinsdale Central students will need to adhere to the Participation Policy as a part of their Athletic and/or Activity Code agreement, which is signed by all student participants and their parents/guardians.

### ***16. What will happen to my student if he/she is absent from school on the day of an activity or a sport?***

- Students **must contact their coach or sponsor on the day** of a practice or event to report that they missed part or all of the school day due to illness. *This is true whether the practice is before or after school.* The goal is to have the students stay home in order to get well, to concentrate on lessons they missed that day, and to limit the spread of illness to teammates.

- If a student fails to report an absence, the coach or sponsor will levy a **sanction** against that student for a lack of responsibility and respect for the Participation Policy.
- If a student misses part of the school day due to a dental or medical appointment, funeral, observance of a religious holiday, or family emergency, the student must notify the coach or sponsor, who will determine if participation will be allowed on that day or not.

### HEALTH RELATED ISSUES

Note: Complete information can be obtained on the Health Services website, at <http://central.hinsdale86.org/departments/health-services/health-services.htm>. You can also refer to page 54 of the student handbook or call the school nurse, Mrs. Connie Dolan, at 570-8596.

#### ***1. What do I do if my child forgot to take his/her medication or needs an initial dose of medication during school hours?***

It surprises some parents to find out that the school nurse cannot administer medications to students without a Medical Authorization form signed by both a doctor and a parent/guardian. This District 86 school policy, which is in compliance with state law, is designed to safeguard students' health. For unanticipated medication needs where no form is on file:

- If your student is aware of the need for medication but no form is on file, prior to school, arrange for a time to meet your student in Health Services, Room 123, where you will administer his medication
- If your student is unaware of the need for medication, please call Health Services at 570-8596 for assistance in getting your child down to the office so you can administer the medication.

#### ***2. What should my child do if he/she gets ill during the school day?***

Tell your child to ask his/her teacher for a pass to go to the nurse when feeling ill while at school. The nurse will contact you if it is necessary to send your child home for the remainder of the day. She will coordinate with the Attendance/Deans' Office to have your child properly signed out of school so that the absence will be recorded as excused for medical reasons. If your child calls you directly asking to go home ill, please instruct him/her to go to the Nurse's Office rather than the Attendance/Deans' Office. It is important that the school is aware of the number of students absent each day due to medical reasons.

### MISCELLANEOUS QUESTIONS

#### ***1. Where should I park when I come to visit when school is in session?***

You may park in the semi-circle drive on 55<sup>th</sup> Street in front of the school from 8:00 a.m. until 2:30 p.m. Before or after these times, this space is reserved for school buses. If no spots are available or if you come during a prohibited time, please park in the teacher/visitor lot east of Grant Street. Regardless of where you park, you will need to provide the license plate number of your vehicle when you check into the building.

## ***2. What are the procedures for parents visiting the building during the school day?***

In order to maintain a secure environment, all visitors must enter the school at the main entrance on 55<sup>th</sup> Street and sign in at the Greeter's Desk. Prior to proceeding to their appointment, visitors will need to provide their driver's license, which will be scanned into a computer in order print out a visitor's pass. This pass must be worn while the visitor is present in the building.

## ***3. Am I allowed to deliver an item to my child in his/her class?***

The academic environment needs to be maintained. Thus, lunches, flowers and other such items can not be delivered to classrooms. **You may drop off important items in the Guidance Office, Room 113, if your child will know to check for the item there.** Athletic items should be brought to the Athletic Office, Room 159. Therefore, it is helpful to discuss these arrangements with your child before a situation occurs so he/she will know what to do if the need ever arises.

## ***4. How do I find out if there is no school due to inclement weather or an emergency situation?***

To determine a school closing, please call the HCHS switchboard line at 570-8000.

Through a centralized system, school district closings are posted at [www.emergencyclosings.com](http://www.emergencyclosings.com), as well as announced on the following radio and television stations:

- WGN 720AM, and WBBM 780AM
- CBS – Channel 2, NBC- Channel 5, ABC- Channel 7, WGN – Channel 9, Fox TV – Channel 32, and CLTV News.

## ***5. What is the school phone #, address, and website?***

- HCHS main switchboard line – 570-8000
- HCHS school address – 55<sup>th</sup> and Grant Streets, Hinsdale, Illinois 60521
- HCHS website address -- <http://central.hinsdale86.org/>
- HCHS key phone numbers –

Principal	570-8210	Athletics	570-8241
Guidance	570-8253	Activities	570-8580
Deans	570-8225	Nurse	570-8596
Social Workers	570-8571	Bookstore	570-8227

- FAX Numbers -

Main Office	887-1362	Deans Office	655-4017
Guidance Office	887-9518	Athletics	887-9638