Adopted/Ratified: _____
Revision Date: _____

CITIZENS OF THE WORLD CHARTER SCHOOLS LOS ANGELES
ATTENDANCE POLICY

It is the intent of the Governing Board of Citizens of the World Charter Schools Los Angeles ("CWC LA") to ensure that students attend school every day on time. Consistent school attendance is critical to school success. Being present for classroom instructional time is essential for students to reach their goals and achieve their dreams. Chronic absenteeism has been linked to an increased likelihood of poor academic performance, disengagement from school and behavior problems.

Excused Absences for Classroom Based Attendance

Absence from school shall be excused only for health reasons, family emergencies and justifiable personal reasons, as permitted by law or Board policy.

A student's absence shall be excused for the following reasons:

1. Personal illness;
2. Quarantine under the direction of a county or city health officer;
3. Medical, dental, optometric, or chiropractic appointments;
4. Attendance at funeral services for a member of the immediate family:
    a. Excused absence in this instance shall be limited to one (1) day if the service is conducted in California or three (3) days if the service is conducted out of state.
    b. "Immediate family" shall be defined as mother, father, grandmother, grandfather, spouse, son/son-in-law, daughter/daughter-in-law, brother, sister or any relative living in the student's immediate household.
5. Participation in religious instruction or exercises in accordance with Charter School policy:
    a. The student shall be excused for this purpose on no more than four (4) school days per month.

In addition, a student's absence shall be excused for justifiable personal reasons such as:

1. Appearance in court;
2. Attendance at a funeral;
3. Observation of a holiday or ceremony of his/her religion;
4. Attendance at religious retreats for no more than four hours during a semester.

Method of Verification

When students who have been absent return to school, they must present a satisfactory explanation verifying the reason for the absence. The following methods may be used to verify student absences:

1. Signed, written note and/or email correspondence from parent/guardian or adult caregiver;

2. Conversation, in person or by telephone, between the verifying employee and the student's parent/guardian or adult caregiver. The employee shall subsequently record the following:

    a. Name of student;
    b. Name of parent/guardian or adult caregiver;
    c. Name of verifying employee;
    d. Date or dates of absence; and
    e. Reason for absence.

3. Visit to the student's home by the verifying employee, or any other reasonable method, which establishes the fact that the student was absent for the reasons stated. A written recording shall be made, including information outlined above.

4. Healthcare provider verification

    a. When excusing students for confidential medical services or verifying such appointments, school staff shall not ask the purpose of such appointments but may contact a medical office to confirm the time of the appointment.
    b. When a student has been absent for more than five (5) consecutive days, a healthcare provider's note must be provided upon the student's return to school in order to be considered excused.
    c. A healthcare provider's note of illness will be accepted for any reported absence. When a student has had 14 absences in the school year for illness verified by methods listed in #1-#3 above without a healthcare provider's note, any further absences for illness must be verified by a healthcare provider.

Insofar as class participation is an integral part of students' learning experiences, parents/guardians and students shall be encouraged to schedule medical appointments during non-school hours.

Students should not be absent from school without their parents/guardians' knowledge or consent except in cases of medical emergency. Student absence for religious instruction or participation in religious exercises away from school property may be considered excused subject to administrative regulations and law.

Unexcused Absences/Truancy for Classroom Based Attendance

Students shall be classified as truant if the student is absent from school without a valid excuse three (3) full days in one (1) school year, or if the student is tardy or absent for more than any 30-minute period during the school day without a valid excuse on three (3) occasions in one (1) school year, or any combination thereof. Such students shall be reported to the Principal or designee.

In addition, students shall be classified as a chronic truant if the student is absent from school without a valid excuse for ten (10) percent or more of the school days in one school year, from the date of enrollment to the current date.

The Principal, or designee shall implement positive steps to reduce truancy, including working with the family in an attempt to resolve the attendance problem. A student's progress and learning may be affected by excessive unexcused absences. In addition, each CWC LA School is fiscally dependent on student attendance and is negatively impacted by excessive unexcused absences. If all attempts to resolve the student's attendance problem are unsuccessful, CWC LA will implement the processes described below.

PROCESS FOR UPHOLDING THE ATTENDANCE POLICY

First Day of School Process:

When students are not in attendance on the first five (5) days of school, CWC LA will attempt to reach the parent/guardian on a daily basis for each of the first five (5) days to determine whether the student has an excused absence, consistent with the process outlined in this policy. If the student has a basis for an excused absence, parents must notify the school of the absence and provide documentation consistent with this policy. However, consistent with process below, students who are not in attendance due to an unexcused absence by the fifth (5th) day of school will be disenrolled from the school roster, as it will be assumed that the student has chosen another school option.

1. Students who are not in attendance on the first day of school will be contacted by phone to ensure their intent to enroll.
2. Students who have indicated their intent to enroll, but have not attended by the third day will receive a letter indicating the student will be disenrolled after the fifth day of school if the student has not attended school without valid excuse.
3. Students who have indicated their intent to enroll, but have not attended by the fifth day will receive a phone call reiterating the content of the letter.

4. Students who have not attended by the sixth day, and do not have an excused absence as defined above for not being in attendance will be disenrolled from the roster.
5. The School will use the contact information provided by the parent/guardian in the registration packet, or updated information received by the school since the registration packet was completed.
6. The District of Residence will be notified of the student's failure to attend the school and the disenrollment of the student.

Truancy Process:

1. Each of the first two (2) unexcused absences will result in a call home to the parent/guardian by the Principal or designee. The student's classroom teacher may also call home.
2. Each of the third (3rd) and fourth (4th) unexcused absences will result in a call home to the parent/guardian by the Principal or designee. In addition, the student's classroom teacher may also call home and/or the school may send the parent an e-mail notification. In addition, upon reaching three (3) unexcused absences in a school year, the parent/guardian will receive "Truancy Letter #1" from the school. This letter must be signed by the parent/guardian and returned to the school. This letter shall also be accompanied by a copy of this Attendance Policy. This letter, and all subsequent letter(s) sent home, shall be sent by certified mail, return receipt requested, or some other form of mail that can be tracked.
3. Upon reaching seven (7) unexcused absences, the parent/guardian will receive "Truancy Letter #2 – Conference Request," and a parent/guardian conference will be scheduled to review the student's records and develop an intervention plan/contract. In addition, the school will consult with an appropriate school employee (e.g., school counselor, administrator, etc.) regarding the appropriateness of a home visitation and/or case management.
4. Upon reaching ten (10) unexcused absences, the student will be referred to a Student Success Team (SST) and the School Attendance Review Team (SART). In addition, the parent/guardian will receive a "Habitual Truancy Re-classification Letter #3," and will be asked/invited to attend an evening meeting for parents/guardians of chronically absent students.
5. The SART panel will be composed of the school Principal and/or Assistant Principal and at least two (2) certificated staff members appointed by the Principal. The SART panel will discuss the student's issue with chronic absences with the student's parent/guardian in an attempt to develop solutions and strategies, discuss appropriate support services for the student and his/her family, and establish a plan to resolve the attendance issue.
    a. The SART panel shall direct the parent/guardian that no further unexcused absences or tardies can be tolerated.

b. The parent/guardian shall be required to sign a contract formalizing the agreement by the parents/guardians to improve the student's attendance or face additional administrative action. The contract will identify the corrective actions required in the future, and indicate that the SART panel shall have the authority to order one or more of the following consequences for non-compliance with the terms of the contract:
    i. Parent/guardian to attend school with the child for one (1) day;
    ii. Student retention;
    iii. After school detention program;
    iv. Required school counseling;
    v. Loss of field trip privileges;
    vi. Loss of school event privileges;
    vii. Required remediation plan as set by the SART;
    viii. Notification to the District Attorney;
c. The SART panel may discuss other school options.
d. Notice of action recommended by the SART will be provided in writing to the parent/guardian.

6. If the conditions of the SART contract are not met, the student may incur additional administrative action up to and including disenrollment from the school and notification of the disenrollment sent to the student's district of residence.
7. For all communications set forth in this process, the school will use the contact information provided by the parent/guardian in the registration packet, or updated information received by the school since the registration packet was completed. It is the parent or guardian's responsibility to update the school with any new contact information.
8. If student is absent ten (10) or more consecutive school days without valid excuse and the parent/guardian cannot be reached via the contact information received by the school (telephone number or address) as provided in the student's enrollment packet and does not otherwise respond to the school's communication attempts, as set forth above, the student will be in violation of the SART contract, and the SART panel will recommend that the student be deemed to have voluntarily disenrolled and notification of the student's disenrollment shall be sent to the student's district of residence.

Removal from Charter School

If, after the above procedures have been followed, the student continues to have unexcused absences, the parent/guardian may receive notice that the student is in in violation of the SART contract. The student will then be required to appear before the

SART panel again to discuss the unexcused absences. After such meeting, or after reasonable attempts are made by the SART panel to schedule the meeting, the parent/guardian continues to be nonresponsive, the SART panel may recommend that the student be deemed to have voluntarily disenrolled from the school. The parent will receive written notice of the SART panel's recommendation.

The SART panel shall then forward its recommendation to the CWC LA Board for review of the matter and to reach a final decision regarding the student. The parent/guardian will receive written notice of the date and time of the Board review. Such notice shall be sent at least five (5) days prior to the Board review. The Board's decision shall be final as to that recommendation.

If there is a Board decision to disenroll the student, notice will be sent to the student's district of residence within thirty (30) days.

A Board decision not to disenroll the student does not prevent the SART panel from making a similar recommendation in the future.

Referral to Appropriate Agencies or County District Attorney:

It is the school's intent to identify and remove all barriers to the student's success, and the school will explore every possible option to address student attendance issues with the family. For any unexcused absence, the school may refer the family to appropriate school-based and/or social service agencies.

If a child's attendance does not improve after a SART contract has been developed according to the procedures above, or if the parents fail to attend a required SART meeting, the school shall notify the District's Attorney's office, which then may refer the matter for prosecution through the court system. Students 12 years of age and older may be referred to the juvenile court for adjudication.

These policies will be enforced fairly, uniformly, and consistently without regard to the characteristics listed in Education Code Section 220 (actual or perceived disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth in Section 422.55 of the Penal Code or association with an individual who has any of the aforementioned characteristics).

Reports

When appropriate, the Principal or other administrative designee shall gather and report to the Executive Director the number of absences, both excused and unexcused, as well as students who are truant, and the steps taken to remedy the problem.