

September 7, 2012

Dear Parents,

DoDEA's Attendance Policy is in full effect and the important message we want to convey is, we want your child in school every day, on time, and ready to learn. Knowing that circumstances don't always allow for this, it is very important for you to be familiar with the policy and how we implement it.

We have provided some essential points of the policy and recommend that you read the policy in its entirety ([www.dodea.edu](http://www.dodea.edu)). Please contact either Dr. Knight or me for clarification, questions, or specific circumstances.

Please sign and return this form to your child's teacher by September 21 acknowledging that you understand the contents of this policy. Thank you for your attention to this very important matter.

Deborah L. Carlson, Ed.D.

Principal

Amelia Earhart Intermediate School

---

Parent Signature



School attendance is important and in order to receive the best education, students need to Be Here! DoDEA's system-wide attendance policy for students is consistent with those found in many public schools throughout the United States.

School attendance issues have been identified as a serious issue for children throughout the country and military children are no exception. DoDEA's attendance policy provides specific guidance on attendance, absences and identifies support services for students at-risk for not fulfilling the grade or course requirements.

It's not surprising that regular school attendance correlates directly with success in academic work, improves social interaction with adults and peers and provides opportunities for important communication between teachers and students. Regular attendance also has a cumulative effect of establishing life-long positive traits — responsibility, determination, respect for rules of society -- that are critical for developing career readiness skills, success in college and in life.

#### Here are a few of the highlights of the policy:

- All students are required to attend school for 180 instructional days per school year.
- Academic penalties will not be imposed for excused absences.
- Whenever a student needs to be out for more than five days, the teacher will provide a Student Educational Monitoring Plan to lessen the impact of a student missing instruction in class.

#### Excused absences can include:

- Personal illness
- Medical, dental, or mental health appointment
- Serious illness in the student's immediate family
- A death in the student's immediate family or of a relative
- Religious holiday
- Emergency conditions such as fire, flood, or storm
- Unique family circumstances warranting absence and coordinated with school administration.
- College visits that cannot be scheduled on non-school days
- Reasonable amounts of time surrounding deployments and reintegration providing missed schoolwork is obtained in advance and completed upon return.

The policy establishes a balance between the need for military families to spend time together following deployment, while emphasizing the importance of education. We have and will continue to be as flexible as possible in accommodating the precious time families have together but flexibilities and accommodations have limitations, especially when they impact on student performance and attendance at school.

Procedures for monitoring daily student attendance and communicating with families are established in this policy. Academic penalties will not be imposed for excused absences. Students at-risk will be monitored by the Student Support Team and school administration to include the identification of supports and interventions.

Many families—both military and non-military—underestimate the importance of regular school attendance for young children (kindergarten and first grade) but even missing just 5% of kindergarten—that's just nine days—can be an indicator that a child will fall behind by the fifth grade.