

ATTENDANCE, ABSENCE, TARDIES, AND VACATION

ATTENDANCE

No matter how old your student is, school attendance is important. Children who are in school on time every day, unless they are sick, are more likely to be successful in school in every way. In fact, many studies indicate that attendance is a more accurate predictor of future high school graduation than academic performance! While we are here to help with school attendance, YOU are the most important factor in making sure your child is successful. The biggest contribution you can make is valuing your child's education and making sure she/he is in school.

Children who miss school, miss learning opportunities. Even if your child "makes up the work" he/she missed, they can never make up the classroom experiences that enrich and enliven learning.

Kindergarten and early grades attendance is every bit as important as middle school and high school attendance. At each level, children learn academics as well as social and emotional skills. Those skills help them navigate both school and life. We would like you to take time to look at the school calendar posted on our website, and provided at Before School conferences. ***Please thoughtfully plan family vacations to align with Cannon River STEM School scheduled breaks, and to the best of your ability, schedule student appointments after school hours.***

Remember that it doesn't matter if absences are excused or unexcused; they all represent lost time in the classroom and a lost opportunity to learn. Because regular school attendance is such an important factor in academic success, the Cannon River STEM School is eager to work with students, parents and families to ensure that all students come to school on a regular basis and on time. While students are expected to make up work that they miss, there is no substitute for being in class. We are eager to work with you to make sure your child is in school and learning to the best of his/her ability.

Minnesota law states that all students are required to attend school from age 7, or when they enter kindergarten (whichever comes first) until they are 18 years old. It also states that a student's failure to attend school may lead to legal action for the parents/guardians and the student. Schools and parents/guardians are expected to work together to ensure that students are in school. At Cannon River STEM School we would rather work to address attendance issues with you before it becomes a problem. The following elements of our attendance policy are designed to support your student's learning and maximize his/her school experience.

All student absences, late arrivals and early sign-outs will be tracked for every student. If a student is absent from school a total of 30 hours (5 days) in any one marking period or 60 hours (10 days) within 90 days, he/she will have a ***pattern of non-attendance***. Cannon River STEM School staff will be checking in with parents/guardians regarding your child's attendance if it appears to be of concern. If a student develops a pattern of non-attendance, school staff may contact the parents in order to understand the cause of an attendance problem and resolve it. Cannon River STEM School prefers to work with parents to remedy an attendance problem and assist the student in attending school regularly. **However, by law, if a student has 3 or more unexcused absences in a school year, he/she is considered "continuing truant." If a student reaches 7 or more unexcused absences, he/she is considered "habitually truant" and the school must file a truancy report with the county.**

Student absences are considered **excused** under the following circumstances:

Doctor/Dentist Appointments Whenever possible, please schedule doctor and dentist appointments before and after school. If you must schedule an appointment during the school day, the appointment will be excused upon receiving a **written note** from the doctor or dentist. Simply ask your health care provider for a note before you leave the clinic.

Illness Students are allowed up to 8 total absences a year, or 3 days in a row, due to illness without a doctor's note. A **doctor's note must be provided** if your child is gone from school for illness more than 8 total days over the school year, or more than 3 days in a row. Your child's health is important to us. We

are pleased to discuss your child's health issues with you and assist you in any way we can. **If you have difficulty accessing health care for your child for any reason, please contact us for assistance.**

Religious Holidays/Cultural Observances If your child will miss school due to a religious holiday or cultural observance, please **notify the school** in advance in writing.

Funeral or other Family Emergency Students may miss school for up to 3 days a year because of a funeral or other family emergency.

Family Activity A student may miss school for up to 5 days for a pre-approved family activity. **Pre-approval** requires the following:

- ☑ At least 5 days before leaving, notify the school of the time your child will miss school for a family activity and secure approval from the Executive Director.
- ☑ The understanding is that your child will be responsible for completing all assigned work before returning to school. (Please see Homework Section) Please make arrangements with your child's teacher to obtain whatever work they can suggest. Keep in mind that much of what happens in the classroom cannot be condensed into homework, and while teachers will try as best possible to provide ways for your child to keep on track, this may not be possible.
- ☑ Plan to avoid having your child miss school during important testing times such as the MCA tests or the NWEA tests. These test dates are available from the school and testing windows are identified on the official school calendar.

A student is considered **absent-unexcused** if the absence does not fit any of the categories described in the section on excused absences.

Parents are asked to call the school by 9:00 a.m. on each day a student is absent from school.

If parents have not called by 9:00 a.m., school personnel will call to check on the child. **Be sure to contact the Cannon River STEM School Office (331-7836) or email attendance@cannonriverstemschool.org whenever you know your child will be absent.**

ABSENCE REPORTING

Please report student absences on EVERY day of absence, unless otherwise directed by staff. Please call (331-7836) or e-mail your student's classroom teacher and copy

attendance@cannonriverstemschool.org. Our voice mail is available from 4:00 p.m. – 7:30 a.m.

If children are ill, parents are requested to keep them at home. Please let us know the nature of the illness so we can monitor communicable diseases. Please note when a child has a fever of 100° F or above, or has any incident of vomiting or diarrhea. The child should not be at school until they have had 24 hours fever-free without fever reducing medicine (in case of fever) or it has been 24 hours since the last bout of vomiting or diarrhea. If your child has been sent home from school for fever, vomiting, or diarrhea, you will have a slip that notifies you the soonest your child may return to school.

TARDY POLICY

Students arriving after 8:05 a.m. must be accompanied by a parent/guardian to sign them in at the office. If a parent/guardian does not sign the sign-in sheet when bringing in a tardy student, we may not know the student has arrived and therefore cannot be sure that the student arrived successfully into the classroom. **For the safety of our students, always come into the office with your student when arriving after 8:05 a.m.** Students not in their classrooms ready to begin instruction at 8:05 a.m. will also be marked tardy by the classroom teacher. After three tardies, parents will be notified. Additional tardy issues may require parent meetings or other corrective measures.

VACATION

Please thoughtfully plan family vacations to align with Cannon River STEM School scheduled breaks, and to the best of your ability, schedule student appointments after school hours. Remember that it doesn't

matter if absences are excused or unexcused; they all represent lost time in the classroom and a lost opportunity to learn. If your child must be absent for a family vacation, please ensure that your child's classroom teacher and the office is notified at least five school days prior.