**THE NORTH CAROLINA COMPULSORY ATTENDANCE LAW***All children enrolled in kindergarten through 12th grade are required to attend school on a regular basis. The parent, guardian, or custodian of a child shall notify the school of each known absence. The state identifies two types of absences: excused (lawful) and unexcused (unlawful).* [*Link:*](https://www.ncleg.net/EnactedLegislation/Statutes/PDF/ByArticle/Chapter_115c/Article_26.pdf)

**SENDING IN EXCUSES FOR ABSENCES**

* Should your student need to be absent from school, please provide a written note or doctor's note explaining the reason for the absence(s) upon returning to school. See a list of excused absences below that would require a written note or doctor's note.
* You may use Parent Square or report an absence through our JH Gunn Elementary website (click the Absent icon).

**EXCUSED ABSENCES**

An absence must fall into one of the following eight categories to be excused:

**1. Illness or Injury:** The student is physically unable to attend school due to an illness or injury.  
**2. Quarantine:** The isolation of the student ordered by the health department/board of health or medical physician.  
**3. Death in the Family:** The death of an immediate family member such as parents, siblings, or grandparents.  
**4. Medical/Dental Appointment:** This can be any routine appointment or if your child has any medical procedures that need to take place.  
**5. Court:** The child must be present for court proceedings or an administrative hearing.  
**6. Religious Observation:** The tenets of a religion to which a student and his/her parents adhere, require or suggest observance of a religious event.  
**7. Educational Opportunity:** The purpose of the absence is to take advantage of a valid educational opportunity. Must be approved by the principal prior to the travel date.   
**8. Military Deployment or Reunification:** The child's parent/guardian is deploying, redeploying, or home on leave. Not to exceed five (5) days of absences.

**LETTERS REGARDING ABSENCES**The school registrar will send out three contact letters for unexcused absences.

**1. The first letter is for 3 unexcused absences.** These absences received a code of

unexcused because a note was not received from the parent stating one of the eight valid absence reasons.  
**2. The second letter is sent home for 6 unexcused absences.** These absences have accumulated from the beginning of the student's school year.  
**3. The third letter is for 10 unexcused absences.** This letter notifies the parent of a conference with school personnel. This meeting is an effort to resolve the attendance concerns before punitive action.

**AFTER THE TEN-DAY LETTER**If attendance concerns continue after the 10-day meeting, then the school administration may proceed with the following actions:

**1. Attendance Review Conference:** The school social worker will request for a

conference between parents/guardians, teachers, and administration. This will give all

parties a chance to discuss the situation and come to a mutually satisfactory solution.

**2. Home visit:** School personnel will attempt a home visit to address continued attendance concerns.  
**3. Department of Social Services Child Protection:** The school social worker will file a claim of educational neglect.  
**4. District Court:** The Attendance Review Conference Committee may elect to proceed with court action. This action brings all parties in front of a judge to discuss the noncompliance with the compulsory attendance law.

**TARDY PROCEDURES**Students who are excessively tardy to school may be subject to disciplinary actions for such offenses. Your child is considered tardy if he/she arrives at or after 7:45 a.m. If a child is tardy, a parent or legal guardian must come into the office and sign your child in. PLEASE DO NOT DROP YOUR CHILD OFF IN FRONT OF THE SCHOOL AND LEAVE.  
  
All tardies are recorded as excused or unexcused. If a student is late due to a medical or mental health appointment, please obtain a note from the physician or therapist and present the note when checking the student in at the main office. Excessive unexcused tardies will result in a conference with school personnel. Please try to schedule all appointments outside of school hours as much as possible.

If you have any questions or concerns throughout the school year, please contact our student school Social Worker [Vanessa Sealey](mailto:vanessa.sealey@cms.k12.nc.us), vanessa.sealey@cms.k12.nc.us

Why does this matter? If a child misses 10 days of school, they miss over 60 hours of learning.

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