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Attendance Requirements Agreement

Student Name Grade Age Birth Date

Dear Parent/Guardian,
Arlington Public Schools has exciting plans and high expectations for your child's learning. To ensure those hopes and dreams are realized, we ask for your commitment to ensure your child attends school every day possible this year. Attending school regularly helps children feel better about school - and themselves. Your child can start building this habit in preschool and learn right away that going to school on time every day is important. Consistent attendance will help children do well in high school, college and at work.

DID YOU KNOW?

Starting in kindergarten, too many absences (excused and unexcused) can cause children to fall behind in school.

- ◆ Missing 10% (or about 18 days) increases the chance that your child will not read or master math at the same level as their peers.
- ◆ Students can still fall behind if they miss just a day or two days every few weeks.
- ◆ Being late to school may lead to poor attendance.
- ◆ Absences can affect the whole classroom if the teacher has to slow down learning to help children catch up.
- ◆ By 6th grade, absenteeism is one of three signs that a student may drop out of high school.
- ◆ By being present at school, your child learns valuable social skills and has the opportunity to develop meaningful relationships with other students and school staff.
- ◆ Absences can be a sign that a student is losing interest in school, struggling with school work, dealing with a bully or facing some other potentially serious difficulty.
- ◆ By 9th grade, regular and high attendance is a better predictor of graduation rates than 8th grade test scores.

SCHOOL POLICIES AND STATE LAWS

It is important that you understand our school policies and procedures, as well as Washington State Law, to ensure your child is successful in school. State law for mandatory attendance, called the Becca Bill, requires children from age 8 to 17 to attend a public school, private school, or a district-approved home school program. Children that are 6 or 7 years old are not required to be enrolled in school. However, if parents enroll their 6 or 7 year old, the child must attend full-time. Youth who are 16 or older may be excused from attending public school if they meet certain requirements.

Please refer to Arlington Public Schools Board Policy 3122 at www.asd.wednet.edu.

Arlington schools are required to take daily attendance and notify you when your child has an unexcused absence. If your child has three unexcused absences, state law requires we schedule a conference with you and your child to identify the barriers and supports available to ensure regular attendance. The district is obligated to develop a plan that may require an assessment to determine how to best meet the needs of your child and reduce absenteeism.

In elementary school, after five (5) excused absences, or ten (10) or more excused absences in the school year, the school district is required to contact you to schedule a conference at a mutually agreeable, reasonable time with at least one district employee, to identify the barriers and supports available to you and your child. A conference is not required if your child has provided a doctor's note, or pre-arranged the absence in writing, and the parent, student and school have made a plan so your child does not fall behind academically. If your child has an IEP or 504 Plan, the team that created the plan needs to reconvene.

If your child has seven (7) unexcused absences in any month or ten (10) unexcused absences within the school year, we are required to file a petition with the Juvenile court, alleging a violation of RCW 28A.225.010, the mandatory attendance laws.

WHAT PARENT/GUARDIANS CAN DO TO HELP

Establish and stick to the basic routines (going to bed early, waking up on time, etc.) that will help your child develop the habit of on-time attendance.

- ◆ Talk to your child about why going to school every day is critical and important unless they are sick. If your child seems reluctant to go to school, find out why and work with the teacher, administrator or after school provider to get them excited about going to school.
- ◆ Come up with back up plans for who to turn to (another family member, a neighbor or fellow parents) to help you get your child to school if something comes up (e.g. another child gets sick, your car breaks down, etc.)
- ◆ Reach out for help if you are experiencing tough times (e.g. transportation, unstable housing, loss of a job, health problems) that make it difficult to get your child to school. Other parents, your child's teacher, principal, social worker, school nurse, after school providers or community agencies can help you problem solve or connect you to a needed resource.
- ◆ If your child is absent, work with the teacher to make sure they have an opportunity to learn and make up for the academics missed.

We would like you help ensure that your student attends regularly and is successful in school. If your child is going to be absent, please contact your school attendance office or submit the absence through Family Access.

With my/our signature(s) below as parent/guardian(s), I/we agree to sending our child to school every day, on time, without any unexcused absences, skips or tardies.

_____ Parent/Guardian Signature	<input type="checkbox"/> I agree <input type="checkbox"/> I disagree	Date <input type="text"/>
_____ Parent/Guardian Signature	<input type="checkbox"/> I agree <input type="checkbox"/> I disagree	Date <input type="text"/>