

Attendance Policy

The Hershey Christian Academy staff and administration believe that instruction within the classroom is vital to the learning process of all students attending our school. A day lost from class can never be replaced. It is more difficult for students to achieve their personal best and feel successful in their academic and social development without regular attendance in school. Parents/Guardians are required to assure and be responsible for the student's attendance through the laws of the Commonwealth and Hershey Christian Academy.

MORNING ARRIVAL PROCEDURES

All students may enter the building at 8:00am. Any students arriving prior to 8:00am must be enrolled in the Before School Program and will be under the coordinator's supervision.

Elementary Students K4-3rd Grades

The school day for students in **grades PreK-3rd begins promptly at 8:15am and ends at 3:00pm. Half-day PreK and Kindergarten will be dismissed from school at noon.**

Any PreK-3rd grade student arriving between 8:00 and 8:15am will be under supervision in the gym. From 8:15 until 8:30am, students **will be required** to participate in Jump Start as part of their physical education classes. Any elementary student arriving after 8:15am must report to the office to sign in and will be regarded as tardy.

Elementary Students 4th-6th and Secondary Students 7th-12th

The school day for students in **grades 4th-12th begins promptly at 8:15am and ends at 3:00pm.**

Any student arriving between 8:00am and 8:15am will be allowed into the building and proceed directly to their classroom. Any student arriving after 8:15am must report to the office to sign in and will be considered tardy.

AFTERNOON DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

1. Students will be dismissed under staff direction.
2. Students are to leave the building in an orderly manner.
3. If for any reason a parent should desire to pick up his/her student from school instead of allowing him/her to use the bus service, a written note must be submitted to the school office. In the event a note is not turned in to the office, a phone call from the parent will suffice.
4. In order for any student to be dismissed in any manner that differs from his/her regular dismissal procedure, parental permission is required.
5. Failure to notify the office through written or phone communication before 1:00 pm may result in missed communication.

ABSENCE POLICY

Full-day students in grades PreK-12th who arrive after 11:45am or leave school for the remainder of the day before 11:45am, will be marked with a half day absent. If a student is sent home due to illness

or other valid reasons before 11:45am, the student will be marked “excused absent” for half the day. If a student leaves school for a valid reason and returns to school later in the day, the student must be present for a total of 3 ½ hours to receive credit for the day.

ABSENCES

1. Each student is required by state law to attend school each scheduled day unless prevented from doing so for mental, physical, or other urgent reasons. According to state regulations 22 Pa. Code, Chapter 11.25a, “urgent reasons” is to be strictly construed and does not permit irregular attendance.
2. State law determines legal and illegal absences. **Illness or death in the family, medical appointments or court appearances are the only excusable absences.** Absences for educational experiences may be excusable if the procedures and guidelines as stated in the HCA policy for Educational Trips section are followed (see Educational Trip Form on our website and Parent Portal).
3. Any student who is absent must submit an excuse, written by the parent/guardian, **on the first day back from the absence**. A doctor’s written excuse is required after **absences of three consecutive days or more due to an illness**. This excuse should be specific as to the illness, which will help your student’s teachers know what to expect of the student as far as make-up work is concerned. Excessive absences, excused or unexcused, may require that further absences must have an excuse from a physician. Parents are encouraged to call the school on the day of the absence. However, that phone call does not take the place of the **written excuse note via email or paper that must be submitted to the school office**. Excuses should be submitted at the time of absence, or upon return to school.
4. Students who are absent because of communicable diseases must conform to the quarantine laws for such diseases.
5. Students **must** be in attendance for a full day of academic instruction in order to be eligible to participate in any extracurricular activity on the same day, unless there is a partial absence due to a routine medical appointment.
6. Three illegal (unexcused) absences will require a conference of the parents and administrator to resolve the situation in an agreeable manner, with the hope of avoiding undue public attention.
7. Illegal (Unexcused) absences beyond three days will be dealt with according to the procedure of the state school laws. Such a situation could be referred to the public-school truant officer in the student’s school district. At this point, Hershey Christian Academy will not be responsible for actions taken by the local school district. Truant officers may be assigned by the local school district to contact the family and fines may be levied.
8. A student who is absent more than thirty (30) days in one year may be retained in his/her present grade.

EARLY DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

● **Grades PreK-6 Dismissal Procedure**

Parents are urged to leave their children in school all day. Doctor or other appointments should be scheduled outside school hours or on school holidays whenever possible. If a child needs to be