



# SUGAR VALLEY RURAL CHARTER SCHOOL

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February 5, 2020

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Our goal every school year is to ensure that every student attends school regularly.

Showing up for school has a huge impact on a student's academic success starting in kindergarten and continuing through high school. Even as children grow older and more independent, families play a key role in making sure students get to school safely every day and understand why attendance is so important for success in school and in life.

We realize some absences are unavoidable due to health problems or other circumstances. But, we also know that when students miss too much school— regardless of the reason – it can cause them to fall behind academically. Absences can add up quickly. A child is chronically absent if he or she misses just two days every month!! Your child is less likely to succeed if he or she is chronically absent—which means missing 18 or more days over the course of an entire school year. Research shows:

- Children chronically absent in kindergarten and 1st grade are much less likely to read at grade level by the end of 3rd grade.
- By 6th grade, chronic absence is a proven early warning sign for students at risk for dropping out of school.
- By 9th grade good attendance can predict graduation rates even better than 8th grade test scores.

Please note that if a student has a doctor's appointment during the school day, you should always be asking for a doctor's excuse to ensure that their absence is coded correctly. **What you also need to be aware of is that the medical excuses only cover the duration in which your student was at the appointment.** For example, if your student has a dentist appointment in the morning, they will need to return to school following the appointment. Likewise, if your student has a therapy appointment at the end of the day, the expectation is that the student will be in school prior to leaving for the appointment. **All excuses must be turned into the main office or emailed to [attendance@svracs.org](mailto:attendance@svracs.org) within 3 days of the absence.**

The research shows a direct correlation between student success and attendance. The staff at SVRCS would like to help you get your students into school. Please let us know if there is anything that we can do to help.

Sincerely,  
SVRCS Administration

## **Did You Know?**

- **Students should miss no more than 9 days of school each year to stay engaged, successful and on track to graduation.**
- **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 6th grade, absenteeism is one of three signs that a student may drop out of high school.**
- **By 9th grade, regular and high attendance is a better predictor of graduation rates than 8th grade test scores.**
- **Missing 10 percent, or about 18 days, of the school year can drastically affect a student's academic success.**
- **Students can be chronically absent even if they only miss a day or two every few weeks.**
- **Attendance is an important life skill that will help your child graduate from college and keep a job.**

Reminder: The Board considers only the following conditions to constitute reasonable cause for absence from school:

- Illness of the student.
- Quarantine.
- Emergency directly affecting the student.
- Recovery from an accident or surgery.
- Court requirements.
- Death in the immediate family (3 days).
- Family educational travel, with *prior* approval not to exceed 7 days.
- Religious Holidays
- Out of school suspensions
- Proof of attendance for PA Driver's Examination