



VERITAS COLLEGIATE

A C A D E M Y

Absence Policy for Veritas Collegiate Academy DC

1. Purpose

The purpose of this Absence Policy is to promote regular attendance, which is essential for academic success, personal development, and preparation for future responsibilities. Veritas Collegiate Academy DC (VCA DC) believes that consistent attendance fosters a positive learning environment and ensures that students receive the full benefit of their education. This policy outlines the expectations for student attendance, defines excused and unexcused absences, and details the procedures and consequences for excessive absences. It applies to all students enrolled at VCA DC.

2. Definitions

Absence: Any day a student is not present in school for the full scheduled day, regardless of the reason.

Excused Absence: An absence approved by the school administration for valid reasons, including but not limited to:

- Illness or medical appointment (with documentation from a healthcare provider if requested).
- Death or serious illness in the immediate family.
- Court appearances or legal obligations.
- School-approved activities (e.g., field trips, athletic events).
- Extreme weather or emergencies beyond the student's control.

Documentation may be required for excused absences, and the school reserves the right to verify the validity of any excuse.

Unexcused Absence: Any absence that does not meet the criteria for an excused absence, including but not limited to:

- Truancy (skipping school without permission).
- Oversleeping or missing transportation.
- Family vacations or non-emergency personal matters without prior approval.
- Absences without parental/guardian notification or valid documentation.

Tardy: Arrival to school or class after the scheduled start time. Excessive tardiness may be treated as partial absences and could accumulate toward unexcused absences.

Semester: For the purposes of this policy, a semester refers to one half of the academic year, typically aligning with grading periods.

3. Attendance Requirements

- Students are expected to attend school every day it is in session, unless excused.
- Parents/guardians must notify the school attendance office by phone, email, or written note within 24 hours of an absence to request it be excused. Failure to do so may result in the absence being classified as unexcused.
- Students with chronic health conditions or special circumstances may request accommodations through the school's administration, such as an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 Plan.
- Attendance records will be maintained by the school and made available to parents/guardians upon request.

4. Procedures for Reporting Absences

1. Daily Notification: Parents/guardians should contact the attendance office (phone: 866-564-4233; email: leagy@veritasca.com) by 9:00 AM on the day of the absence.
2. Documentation: For excused absences requiring verification (e.g., medical notes), submit documentation within 5 school days of the student's return.
3. Make-Up Work: Students are responsible for completing missed assignments. Teachers will provide reasonable time (typically one day per day absent) for make-up work for excused absences. For unexcused absences, make-up work may be allowed at the teacher's discretion but is not guaranteed full credit.
4. Monitoring: The attendance office will track absences and notify parents/guardians periodically if patterns emerge.

5. Consequences for Unexcused Absences

VCA DC implements a progressive intervention system to address unexcused absences and encourage improved attendance. Consequences are cumulative per semester and reset at the start of each new semester.

At 3 Unexcused Absences:

- A warning letter will be sent home from the Dean of Students.
- The student will be required to attend a mandatory meeting with the Dean to discuss the absences, identify any underlying issues, and develop an attendance improvement plan.

At 6 Unexcused Absences:

- A formal notification letter will be sent home from the Head of School.
- The student and parent/guardian will be required to attend a mandatory meeting with the Head of School to review the attendance record, discuss potential barriers, and revise the improvement plan if necessary. Additional interventions, such as counseling referrals or community resources, may be recommended.

At 9 Unexcused Absences:

- The student will lose academic credit for all courses in that semester.
- This loss of credit may impact the student's overall academic progress, grade promotion, and eligibility for graduation. Students who fail to earn sufficient credits due to attendance

issues may not receive a high school diploma and could be required to repeat courses or the semester.

- A final notification letter will be sent home, and the family may be referred to external agencies (e.g., truancy court) if required by District of Columbia law.

Additional Notes on Consequences:

- Absences beyond 9 unexcused per semester may result in further actions, including but not limited to retention in grade, mandatory summer school, or expulsion in extreme cases.
- Tardiness: Three unexcused tardies will count as one unexcused absence.
- The school may involve child protective services or legal authorities if absences suggest neglect or other concerns.

6. Appeals Process

- Parents/guardians or students may appeal the classification of an absence or any consequence by submitting a written request to the Dean of Students within 10 school days of notification.
- Appeals will be reviewed by a committee consisting of the Dean, Head of School, and a teacher representative. The decision of the committee is final.
- Grounds for appeal include new evidence, procedural errors, or extenuating circumstances.

7. Support and Resources

VCA DC is committed to supporting students and families in maintaining good attendance.

Resources include:

- Counseling services for personal or family issues.
- Tutoring for academic catch-up.

Parents/guardians are encouraged to contact the school early if attendance challenges arise.

8. Policy Review and Amendments

This policy will be reviewed annually by the school administration and may be amended as needed to comply with Virginia regulations or to improve effectiveness. Updates will be communicated to families via email, the school website, and parent meetings.

9. Acknowledgment

All students and parents/guardians must acknowledge receipt and understanding of this policy at the start of each school year through a signed form. Failure to sign does not exempt compliance.

Effective Date: Feb 2026

Approved by: Head of School, Veritas Collegiate Academy DC