



# Attendance

## **Attendance & Absences**

Montessori education is a relationship-based pedagogy which requires presence in the classroom for experiencing the hands-on learning materials and social interactions so necessary for growth and learning. Regular attendance at school helps students succeed in all areas of development, academics, social-emotional confidence, independence, concentration, and leadership. Daily, on-time attendance is expected each and every school day except in the case of illness. With a year-round school-year and one early-release day per week, RMCS encourages families to schedule appointments and travel during non-school time, including the five breaks throughout the school year.

## **Excused Absences for Classroom Based Attendance**

Absence from school shall be excused only for health reasons, family emergencies, and justifiable personal reasons, as permitted by law or school policy.

A student's absence shall be excused for the following reasons:

1. Personal illness;
2. Quarantine under the direction of a county or city health officer;
3. Medical, dental, ophthalmologic, or chiropractic appointments;
4. Attendance at funeral services for a member of the immediate family:
  - a. Excused absence in this instance shall be limited to one day if the service is conducted in California or three days if the service is conducted out of state.
  - b. "Immediate family" shall be defined as mother, father, grandmother, grandfather, spouse, son/son-in-law, daughter/daughter-in-law, brother, sister or any relative living in the student's immediate household.
5. Jury duty in the manner provided by law;
6. Justifiable personal reasons, when accompanied by a written request by the parent or guardian and approved by the Executive Director or their designee, including, but not limited to:
  - a. Appearance in court
  - b. Attendance at a funeral service
  - c. Observance of a holiday or ceremony of their religion
  - d. Attendance at religious retreats
  - e. Attendance at an employment conference
  - f. Attendance at an educational conference on the legislative or judicial process offered by a nonprofit organization
7. Serving as a member of a precinct board for an election pursuant to Elections Code § 12302.
8. Spending time with a member of the pupil's immediate family, who is an active duty of the uniformed services and has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or has immediately returned from, deployment to a combat zone or combat support position. Absences granted pursuant to this section shall be granted for a period of time to be determined at the discretion of the Executive Director or designee.
9. For the purpose of attending the pupil's naturalization ceremony to become a United States citizen.
10. Authorized at the discretion of a school administrator.

Attendance at religious retreats shall not exceed four hours per semester.

## **Method of Verification**

Students who are absent must present a satisfactory explanation verifying the reason for the absence. RMCS uses an electronic Absence

Reporting tool which can be found on the website.

Physician's verification may be requested upon continued absences for illness. Insofar as class participation is an integral part of students' learning experiences, parents/guardians and students shall be encouraged to schedule medical appointments during non-school hours.

Students in grades K-6 should not be absent from school without their parents/guardians' knowledge or consent except in cases of medical emergency.

#### Unexcused Absences/Truancy for Classroom Based Attendance

The Director, or designee, shall implement positive steps to reduce truancy. When the student's attendance problems cannot be resolved or the student and parent/guardian have failed to respond to directives to correct the problem, a student who has been classified as truant may be referred to the district attorney or probation officer for truancy mediation. Further, the School attendance review board or probation officer may request a juvenile court petition on behalf of the student.

Students shall be classified as truant if absent from school without a valid excuse three full days in one school year, or tardy or absent for more than any 30-minute period during the school day without a valid excuse on three occasions in one school year, or any combination thereof. Such students shall be reported to the Executive Director or designee. A student's grades may be affected by excessive unexcused absences in accordance with Board policy.

#### Independent Study Contracts

Students who are absent for between 2-14 days may be eligible to study/work at home under adult supervision. A short-term Independent Study Agreement can be designed to allow a student to continue schoolwork while injured or during a family emergency. Independent Studies cannot exceed 14 days within one academic year.

Families must inform the teacher of anticipated absences at least one week in advance (5 school days) so that an Independent Study agreement can be approved and academic lessons assigned. RMCS receives funding for days absent if the agreement is satisfactorily completed by the due date.

Adopted: 8/22/21