



Center City Public Charter Schools

Character, Excellence, Service

Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment

Center City PCS is committed to providing an environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and dignity. Each student has the right to learn in an atmosphere that promotes equal opportunities and prohibits discriminatory practices, including harassment. Center City PCS does not discriminate on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, creed, religion, sex, national origin, age, personal appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, family status, family responsibilities, political affiliation, disability, genetic information, status as a victim of an inter-family offense, place of residence, or any other protected characteristics as established by law.

Admission Preference

Center City honors 4 enrollment preferences in the following order:

1. Sibling Attending - Sibling already attends
2. Sibling Offered - No sibling currently attends but has already been offered a seat
3. Transfer - Transfer from another Center City school
 - Transfer requests can be requested at any time by contacting My School DC
 - Once approved, the student will be added to the campus waitlist
 - If/when a seat becomes available the parent(s) will be notified
4. Staff - Child of a part-time or full-time employee at any Center City school

Preferences do not guarantee placement. In order to increase the likelihood of a desired outcome, please submit the preference request prior to the annual MSDC lottery deadline.

Annual Notification of FERPA Rights

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students 18 years of age or older ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. FERPA defines "directory information" as information contained in a student's education record that generally would not be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed. Directory information could include: name, address, telephone listing, electronic mail address, date and place of birth, dates of attendance, and grade level; participation in officially recognized activities and sports; weight and height of members of athletic teams; degrees, honors, and awards received; and the most recent school attended.

These rights are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the School receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to Center City PCS's FERPA Administrator (the contact information for the FERPA Administrator is listed below) a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The FERPA Administrator will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate. Parents or eligible students may ask the School to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate. They should write to the FERPA Administrator, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed and specify why it is inaccurate. If the FERPA Administrator decides not to amend the record as



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requested by the parent or eligible student, the FERPA Administrator will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by Center City PCS as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the School Board; a person or company with whom Center City PCS has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

If a parent wants to opt out of having any information, considered to be directory information released, the parent should make the request in writing to the Center City PCS FERPA Administrator.

3. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by Center City PCS to comply with the requirements of FERPA.

The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA is:
Family Policy Compliance Office U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202-5901

Any questions, concerns or requests to inspect or review records should be sent to:
Center City Public Charter Schools – Central Office
c/o FERPA Administrator
900 2nd Street, NE, Suite 221
Washington, DC 20002
info@centercitypcs.org

Parent Complaints and Grievances

Center City PCS is committed to providing the best possible conditions for its students. Part of this commitment is encouraging an open and frank atmosphere in which any problem, complaint, suggestion or question receives a timely response from school supervisors and administrators.

Center City PCS strives to ensure fair and honest treatment of all students. Everyone is expected to treat each other with mutual respect. If a student, parent, guardian or visitor disagrees with established rules of conduct, policies or practices, or their treatment, he or she may express his or her concerns through the following problem resolution procedure(s). No person will be retaliated against or penalized formally or informally, for voicing a complaint with Center City PCS in a reasonable, business-like manner or for participating in the investigation of a complaint pursuant



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to the grievance procedure. All documentation and communications related to the investigation will remain confidential.

Any student, parent, guardian or visitor may initiate the Grievance Procedure to resolve complaints of discrimination based upon race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability. This grievance procedure does not bar individuals from filing claims in other forums to the extent permitted by state or federal law. The Grievance Process outlined below sets forth how complaints will be processed and investigated. The Grievance Process is intended to provide a prompt and equitable resolution of your concerns.

Parent Complaint Process (General Concerns)

To support families with concerns they may have, Center City PCS has the following procedures in place to assist in resolving concerns or complaints.

Families and students are strongly encouraged to express their concerns first through informal conferences with the appropriate teacher or campus administrator. Concerns should be expressed as soon as possible to support immediate resolution. Concerns must always be addressed at the level in which the concern occurred.

If an informal conference regarding a complaint/concern fails to yield a just resolution, the parent may initiate the formal process by timely filing a written complaint form. Even after initiating the formal complaint process, parents are encouraged to seek informal resolution of their concerns with campus leaders. A parent whose concerns are resolved may withdraw a formal complaint at any time. If informal attempts at resolution fail, the formal complaint procedures begin with a complaint filed online at www.centercitypcs.org or via phone with Center City PCS Central Office.

Complaint Resolution Process (General Concerns)

Step 1, Campus Level: Always start with the person with whom you have a concern. If the issue is unresolved, it is essential that the school principal be included in the process. Please schedule an informal conference/discussion with appropriate teachers, staff or campus administrators to share your concerns. This can be done in person, by phone or email.

Step 2, District Level: If informal attempts do not bring resolution, a complaint form may be filed online at www.centercitypcs.org (Parent's Corner) or by contacting the Director of Family & Student Engagement at the Central Office. You will be contacted within 5 days after receipt of the online complaint form.

Step 3, Executive Level: If after step 2 a resolution is still not reached, you may contact the Board Chair via email at boardchair@centercitypcs.org. You will be contacted within 5 days after receipt of the email.

Section 504

Section 504 is federal civil rights law under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 that provides protection against discrimination for individuals with disabilities. Students in school settings fall under the civil rights protection of Section 504. A student is entitled to a Section 504 Accommodation Plan if they have been identified and the evaluation shows that they have a mental or physical impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. A team of knowledgeable individuals, including the parents, who are familiar with the student and his/her disability, makes this determination.



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If any person believes that the school or any of its staff or schools have inadequately applied the regulations of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, he/she may initiate a grievance with the Central Office Section 504 Coordinator. At the district level, that individual is the Associate Director of Special Education. The grievance procedures are outlined below and are meant to provide for a prompt and equitable resolution of a complaint.

Level One Section 504 Grievance

Individuals may file a grievance by submitting a completed Level One Grievance to the Director of Special Education. If a complaint of discrimination is being made against the Central Office Section 504 Coordinator, the written request can be submitted to the Managing Director of Schools, who will designate an appropriate individual to investigate the complaint.

Level One Grievance form must contain the following information:

- The nature of the grievance;
- The date of informal mediation, if any, and discussion of what remains unresolved (No grievance will be heard unless it has been filed in writing within thirty (30) calendar days after the act or condition giving rise to the grievance and such filing must state with particularity the basis for the grievance, the policy regulation and/or procedure, rule or law believed to have been violated, and the remedy sought);
- The remedy requested; and
- Be signed and dated by the grievant.

The Central Office Coordinator will investigate the grievance and respond in writing within ten (10) business days summarizing the outcome of the investigation and any corrective or remedial action necessary. A copy of the determination will be sent to the student's parent and to the student's campus Section 504 Coordinator for placement in the student's file. If the Level One determination is not favorable to the grievant, the grievant may submit a written appeal.

Level Two Section 504 Grievance

The grievant party may appeal any decision by submitting a signed statement of appeal to the President & CEO within ten (10) business days of the issuance of the Central Office's 504 Coordinator's Level One response. The written appeal can be mailed or delivered to 900 2nd Street, NE Suite 221, Washington, DC 20002. The President & CEO and his designee shall review the complaint, Central Office Section 504 Coordinator's response, all information presented as part of the investigation, and will meet with all parties involved, if necessary. The President & CEO will formulate a conclusion and respond to the grievance in writing within ten (10) business days summarizing the outcome of the appeal and any corrective or remedial action necessary.

Level Three Section 504 Grievance

The grievant party may appeal the decision of the President & CEO or his designee by filing a signed written statement of appeal to the Board of Directors within ten (10) business days of the issuance of the determination. The written appeal can be mailed or delivered to 900 2nd Street, NE Washington DC, Suite 221, 20002. The Board of Directors shall review the complaint, Central Office Section 504 Coordinator's response, President & CEO or designees determination, and all information presented as part of the investigation and, if necessary, meet with the concerned parties and their representatives within thirty (30) days of the receipt of such an appeal. A copy of the Board's disposition of the appeal summarizing the outcome of the appeal and any corrective or remedial action necessary will be mailed to each party within ten (10) business days of this meeting. A copy of the determination will



be included in the student's file.

The Grievant also has the right to file a complaint with the Office for Civil Rights by: (1) mailing the complaint to: Director, District of Columbia Office, Office for Civil Rights (OCR), U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20202-1475; (2) faxing it to (202) 453-6021; or (3) filing it electronically at: www.ed.gov/ocr/complaintprocess.html . For more information, you can contact OCR at (202) 453-6020 (voice), (877) 521-2172 (TDD), or ocr.dc@ed.gov

Student Code of Conduct (Discipline Policy)

Center City PCS student Code of Conduct is aimed at helping students entrusted to our care to make responsible choices about their behavior and to ensure a safe and orderly school environment. Our practices seek to establish an environment that 1) creates and supports positive choices, 2) ensures logical consequences to actions, and 3) engages the entire community. As partners in the learning process, parent expectations of their child's conduct must align with our code. When a child violates the expressed code, parents support administered consequences and assist the school in changing the behavior.

Parents also have responsibilities to uphold the values and culture of Center City. By enrolling and joining the Center City community, parents officially state their commitment to work alongside Center City staff to achieve the highest social and academic goals for their child.

The Student Code of Conduct is based on the principles of logical consequences, clear communication of rules and expectations; and family communication to promote positive behavior choices and a safe and orderly school environment.

The Student Code of Conduct is enforceable when a student is (in-person/virtual) traveling to/from school and school events, during the school day, and during all school related/school sponsored extracurricular activities. In addition, behavior that occurs outside of school may be subject to the Student Code of Conduct when such conduct is disruptive to the school environment.

Disruptions Requiring Tier 1 Support

These disruptions interfere with and/or compromise a student's ability to learn and develop. Disruptions requiring tier 1 support carry consequences that are teacher directed and designed to ensure that the student understands why the behavior is inappropriate. If students commit multiple of these disruptions, they may be subject to tier 2 support, issued by an administrator.

Disruptions Requiring Tier 2 Support

These behaviors disrupt the school environment and interfere with another students' opportunity to learn. Disruptions requiring tier 2 support are frequent minor or more severe disruptions to the school's community. Students making disruptions that require tier 2 support, may receive a maximum consequence of **in-school suspension** in the most severe circumstances, but are likely to receive a restorative conversation, detention, reduction of in-school privileges, or other restorative consequences determined by an administrator.



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Disruptions Requiring Tier 3 Support

These behaviors are instances of serious misconduct that disrupt classroom instruction, threaten the safety of the school environment, impact school operations, or threaten/cause harm to members of the school community. The student, his or her parent or guardian, the student's classroom teacher, and school leader should **meet in order to address the student's behavior and develop a plan for improvement and potential restoration of the harm done.**

Severe Misconduct

If a student displays one of the behaviors outlined below, they are subject to suspension or expulsion. Severe misconduct consequences will be determined *in conjunction with district level staff.*

Behavior Disruption Guidelines <i>(including and not limited to – Note, this is just a sample and does not apply to all situations)</i>			
Tier 1 Support Disruption Examples	Tier 2 Support Disruption Examples	Tier 3 Support Disruption Examples	Severe Misconduct Disruption Examples
Failure to complete assignments	Disrespectful behavior towards a fellow student, teacher, school personnel, parent, or visitor (i.e. eye rolling, teeth sucking, back talking)	Threats of violence	Using, possessing, or bringing to school a weapon—weapons include but are not limited to: loaded or unloaded firearms, pistols, blank pistols, starter pistols, revolvers, rifles, shotguns, toy guns, knives, razor blades, explosives, fireworks, mace, tear gas, and tasers
Running in the building	Bullying (<i>refer to anti bullying policy</i>)	Possession of sexually explicit material	Possession, use or distribution of alcohol
Excessive noise in the school building	Violation of a fellow student's privacy rights (i.e. unauthorized viewing of another student's records, files, or report card)	Possession and/or use of lighters/matches	Using, selling or distribution of marijuana, prescription drugs, controlled dangerous substances, imitation controlled substances, inhalants, other intoxicants, controlled or drug paraphernalia



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Dress code infractions	Use of inappropriate, harmful, or threatening language	Throwing objects that have the potential to cause serious injury and/or harm	Assault/attack on a member of the school community that results in bodily injury
Inappropriate use of/and or concealment of technology (including but not limited to, cell phones, e-readers, tablets, etc.)	Insubordination (repeated refusal to follow instructions/directions)	Severe, persistent, or pervasive insubordination and disrespect towards a fellow student, teacher, school personnel, parent, or visitor	Gang affiliations, activity, or recruitment
	Leaving class without permission	Severe, persistent, or pervasive bullying, verbal, written, or electronic, or other physical behavior that results in another student's physical or emotional distress	Any behavior or other conduct not specifically enumerated in any other level in this chapter that is illegal, causes significant disruption to the school's operation, or causes substantial harm to self or others
	Intentional or unintentional horseplay or roughhousing (resulting in emotional distress or physical harm)	Fighting (displaying or engaging in violence, combat, or physical aggression)	Sexual Harassment and Misconduct
	Theft/stealing		Intentional violations of safety protocols (specifically related to COVID)



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Suspension

In May 2018, the DC Council passed the Student Fair Access to School Act, which was reviewed by the Mayor and enacted on July 12, 2018. This Act places restrictions on the number of consecutive and cumulative days in any out-of-school suspension that students can receive. The exception to the requirements is if a student violates the Gun Free School Act. This federal law requires all schools to expel a student, who is determined to have brought a firearm to a school, or to have possessed a firearm at a school.

- Students in grades K-5 cannot receive an out-of-school suspension for a single discipline incident that exceeds 5 consecutive days.
- Students in grades 6-12 cannot receive an out-of-school suspension for a single incident that exceeds 10 consecutive days.

Students in grades K-12 cannot receive more than 20 cumulative days of out-of-school suspension. For students with disabilities (this includes students with IEPs or 504 Plans and students who are in the process of being evaluated for Special Education) who are suspended for more than 10 school days in a school year, a multi-disciplinary team will review all relevant educational records contained in the student's file or in possession of the school to determine whether the student's violation of school rules was a manifestation of the student's disability.

- If it is determined that the student's behavior was a manifestation of the student's disability, the student will be returned to his/her educational placement.
- If it is determined that the student's behavior was not a manifestation of his/her disability, the student's file will be reviewed to determine disciplinary action in accordance with the policies contained in this section.

The suspension process is as follows:

- If a student is under consideration for suspension, the principal will contact the parent/guardian to arrange a meeting to review the conduct that has led to consideration for suspension. Students and families must follow the rules in the behavior guidelines outlined above.
- The principal will convene the school's disciplinary committee to decide whether or not to move forward with the recommended suspension.

Suspension Appeals Process

Parents/guardians may appeal the decision to suspend a student through a formal appeals process. The appeal must be made in writing upon notification of suspension. This appeals process is distinct from that in the Center City PCS Anti-Bullying Policy regarding appeals for investigations related to reports of bullying or retaliation.

Send request to:

Your student's campus Principal

- and-



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info@centercitypcs.org, Please indicate "Appeal Request" in the subject field

Once the appeal request is received you will be contacted by a District-level staff member.

Expulsion

Expulsion is an action taken as a last resort. It is a consequence used for severe misconduct or violations of laws. The Expulsion Process is as follows:

If a student is under consideration for expulsion, the principal will contact the parent/guardian to arrange a meeting to review the conduct that has led to consideration for expulsion. The student will be considered suspended until the expulsion is final. Students and families must follow the rules in the behavior guidelines outlined above.

The student is not allowed to return to the school grounds or participate in any school-sponsored activities, field trips, or programs.

The principal will convene the school's disciplinary committee to decide whether or not to move forward with the recommended expulsion.

A decision will be made, and parent/guardian notified by school principal in writing.

Expulsion Appeals Process

Parents/guardians may appeal the decision to expel a student through a formal appeals process that includes a hearing before an appeals committee. The appeal must be made in writing within 48 hours of notification of expulsion and be delivered by email, regular mail, or by hand to the Director of Family & Student Engagement. This appeals process is distinct from that in the Center City PCS Anti-Bullying Policy regarding appeals for investigations related to reports of bullying or retaliation. Send request to:

Center City Public Charter Schools

Central Office, Attention: Appeal Request

900 2nd Street NE, Suite 221 Washington, DC 20002

- or -

info@centercitypcs.org

Please indicate "Appeal Request" in the subject field

Once the appeal request is received, a hearing is scheduled. To ensure that the student does not fall behind academically while the appeal is underway, the student will receive an academic packet until the appeal process is complete. At the appeals hearing, the principal may present written and oral statements as well as documentation supporting the decision to expel. The parent/guardian may present written and oral statements as well as



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documentation supporting the appeal. The student is encouraged to attend and present an oral or written statement.

The appeals committee will consider the testimony of all participants and render a written decision within 48 hours of the hearing. The committee's decision to affirm OR reverse a Principal's decision is final.

Attendance Policy

It is the expectation that all students attend school on all school calendar days, whether designated in-person or virtual. Regular attendance is vital to student development and academic success. Center City realizes some absences are unavoidable due to health problems or other circumstances. But, we also know that when students miss too much school— **excused or unexcused** —they can fall behind academically.

Center City is committed to ensuring students have equal access to learning in person and or virtually, by providing technology and internet access. Given this commitment, all students must be on time and present for all virtual classroom session durations. Based on the schedules each campus provides, students must be on time and present for any and all virtual learning experiences to be marked present for the school day. Arriving to or exiting from a virtual session 15 minutes or more will result in a student being marked absent. If attendance concerns arise, the school-based leadership team will convene an in person or virtual meeting to discuss any next steps. ****(Subject to change)***

School hours are from 8:30am to 4:00pm. Students must be present in school for 80% of the day to be counted as present; otherwise they are recorded absent per the rules defined below. Per DC Attendance Laws, students who miss more than 20% of the school day are marked "partial day absent". Partial day absences count the same as a full day absence for reporting purposes. ***During the national health emergency (COVID-19) school times and days may vary and are subject to change.***

Tardiness

Students are expected to arrive at school before the school day starts at 8:30am. School doors open at 8:15am. Any student arriving after 8:30am must report to the school office to receive a late slip before entering the morning meeting or going to class. Tardiness is noted on a student's progress report and report card. Multiple tardies may cause your child to be marked absent. 10 instances of tardiness may be counted as one absence. Excessive tardiness may result in disciplinary action and/or intervention from school leadership. Excessive tardiness will require intervention from school leadership and/or district agencies.

Dismissal

Students must have signed authorized pick up and transportation forms on file stating how they are to be dismissed, and to whom. Written documentation must be provided by a parent/guardian if a student needs to leave in a different manner. If a student needs to leave early for the day, advanced notification is appreciated. If a parent comes to pick up a child within an hour of dismissal they may be asked to wait. Excessive early dismissals impact students required instructional time and will be addressed in the same manner as absences and tardiness.

If the parent/guardian or other approved dismissal party will be late because of an emergency, please contact the school office as soon as possible. Traffic is an ongoing challenge in our communities – please exercise caution, civility, and patience. If a student is not picked up by 4:15pm (unless enrolled in a CCPCS aftercare program), Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA) and the police may be contacted. Additionally, a late pickup fee may be assessed.



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During the national health emergency (COVID-19) individual campuses will determine arrival and dismissal protocols and expectations.

Absences

Center City PCS is committed to on-time attendance for all students (in person or virtually). By law, student attendance is mandatory.

Below are the categories for valid excused absences:

- Illness or other legitimate medical cause experienced by the student
- Exclusions, by direction of DC authorities, due to quarantine, contagious disease, infection, infestation, or other condition requiring separation from other students for medical reasons
- Death in a student's immediate family
- Necessity for a student to attend judiciary or administrative proceedings as a party to the action or under a subpoena
- Observance of a religious holiday
- Lawful suspension or exclusion from school by school authorities
- Temporary closing of school facilities or suspension of classes due to severe weather, official activities, holidays, malfunctioning equipment, unsafe or unsanitary conditions, or other conditions(s) or emergency requiring a school closing or suspension of classes
- Failure of DC to provide transportation in cases where there is a legal responsibility for transportation of the student
- Medical or dental appointments for the student
- Absences to allow students to visit their parent or a legal guardian, who is in the military; immediately before, during, or after deployment
- An emergency or other circumstance approved by Center City PCS administrators.

Unexcused Absence	Center City PCS Response <i>ANY absence that does not fall into one of the categories listed OR any absence where the parent/guardian does not provide a written valid excuse within 3 days of a student's return to school is considered unexcused. In order to ensure that Center City PCS is aware of the whereabouts of its students, the following steps will be taken in response to unexcused absences:</i>
1st	School will contact the parent/guardian to request written documentation-->via Robocall (Parents have 5 days to provide written documentation to provide reason for absence).



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5th	School will refer the student to the Student Teacher Assistance Team (STAT) within two days. STAT will: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• make reasonable and diligent efforts to communicate and collaborate with the student's parent or guardian;• review and address the student's attendance and determine the underlying cause for the unexcused absences;• communicate and collaborate with the student's IEP team (if applicable);• provide timely response to the student's truant behavior;• make recommendations for academic, diagnostic, or social services;• use school and community resources to improve the student's attendance including referral to a community-based organization when available, and;• develop and implement an action plan in consultation with the student and student's parent or guardian
7th	Parent/Guardian will be required to meet with the school principal/designee and the School Counselor to determine an action plan to remedy truancy.
10th	Child family services will be contacted for children ages 5-13. The parent will receive a copy of the Truancy Prevention Resource published by OSSE.
20th	Students age 14 and over will be referred to the Court Social Services Division of the D.C. Superior Court and Office of the Attorney General Juvenile Section.

Additional Attendance Interventions

- After **five consecutive** absences, a home visit may be warranted.
- After **fifteen or more** absences (**excused or unexcused**), a student may be required to repeat the current grade level regardless of grades earned. Excessive tardies and absences will be factored into retention decisions.
- After **twenty consecutive** absences, a student will be considered as having withdrawn from Center City PCS and will be automatically unenrolled on the 20th day. Proof of enrollment into another LEA will be requested. If documented proof is not provided, a referral to CFSA will be made.
- A student enrolled in PK3 or PK4 that has an attendance rating of **75% or less** during Q1 or Q2 may lose their enrollment spot.

Please note, leisure travel plans that require a student to miss school are discouraged. Any such



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absences will be *unexcused*.