

**Notice Regarding New SC School Attendance Policy**

Lexington Four Families,

We want to make you aware of a new attendance policy that all South Carolina schools will be implementing in 2017-2018.

Under the guidance of the federal Office of Civil Rights, the South Carolina Department of Education is now requiring all districts to report students who are “chronically absent”. Chronically absent students are defined as having missed 10% of the total days within a school year. Research shows that students with a history of chronic absenteeism face a serious risk of falling behind in school, thus making it more difficult for them to succeed in the classroom.

As part of these new requirements, South Carolina students will now be considered “absent” if they miss 50% of their instructional day for ANY reason, regardless of the classification of the absence as excused or unexcused.

**This means Lexington Four students must be present for at least half of the instructional day to be considered “present” for that school day.**

For our schools, these new attendance requirements will look like this:

School	School Start Time	School End Time	Time Required in School to be Counted Present
ECC	7:50 a.m.	2:15 p.m.	3 hours, 13 minutes
SPS	7:50 a.m.	2:25 p.m.	3 hours, 18 minutes
SES	7:50 a.m.	2:25 p.m.	3 hours, 18 minutes
FMIS	8:35 a.m.	3:35 p.m.	3 hours, 30 minutes
SMS	8:00 a.m.	2:48 p.m.	3 hours, 24 minutes
SHFA	8:20 a.m.	3:20 p.m.	3 hours, 30 minutes
SHS	8:36 a.m.	3:15 p.m.	3 hours, 19 minutes

High School Credit Classes: Seat-time requirements will not change for course credit.

Attendance must be taken during each class period at the middle and high school level. If a student reaches a set number of unexcused absences in any Carnegie unit class, they will not meet the state-mandated attendance requirement for that class and will not receive credit until those absences are made up.

The attendance requirements are:

School	Maximum Unexcused Absences Allowed
SMS	10 absences (per year-long class)
SHFA & SHS	5 absences (per semester class) 10 absences (per year-long class)

We appreciate your understanding as we implement these new school attendance requirements.