

May 3, 2016

Dear HSPVA Parent,

By Texas law, students may not have more than 10% unexcused absences based on total attendance in any course to earn high school credit. Once students reach this 10% absence limit, credit is denied and a restoration process occurs. At HSPVA, during spring semester, denial of credit happens at eight unexcused absences in first period and four unexcused absences in any other period. For students to recover credit, they must perform community service during the summer to have credit restored. If the community service is not performed, then the course must be retaken for credit. If students reach 25% or more absences a formal appeals process must be initiated. The Attendance Committee meets and the student and/or parent has the opportunity to explain any unusual circumstances that would warrant credit being restored with community service hours. More information regarding community service requirements can be found the student handbook and also online at www.hspva.org.

Because of some changes that come with HB5, HISD is now requiring schools to track and report any student who loses credit due to absences. A Personal Graduation Plan will have to be completed and filed for students finding themselves in this situation. Due to these changes, HSPVA is adopting a new policy for attendance. The SDMC approved a policy that states that any student who is denied credit because of excessive unexcused absences, will be put on attendance probation, regardless of whether or not the community service is completed.

I would like to remind you that parents must make contact with the attendance office, Ms. Norman at jnorman6@houstonisd.org, regarding absences and reasons for the absence(s) within three days of the student returning to school. Ms. Norman can also accept handwritten notes delivered by students, but email is the preference. In addition, by HISD policy, students arriving at HSPVA after 8:05 a.m. are counted absent to first period. An excuse would be needed if a student is counted absent for arriving after 8:05 am.

There are systems available to you as a parent to monitor student attendance. All absences are listed in the Parent/Student Connect feature used by Houston ISD. Within this portal, you may set a trigger to notify you every time a student is marked absent for a class. In addition, HSPVA administration monitors student absences and visit with students when a number of unexcused absences occur.

Daily attendance plays a large role in funding for our campus. Thank you for your help in being sure our students are at school every day possible. High attendance rates help with our budget and also impacts student success in the class room. We appreciate your support with this issue. If you have any questions, feel free to contact us.

Partners in education,

Mercy Alonso-Rodriguez
HSPVA Assistant Principal

Oscar Perez
HSPVA Assistant Principal