Revised July 2026

SCINTILLA CHARTER ACADEMY
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Attendance and Tardy Policy

General Information

Instructional Day School Hours: 7:45 AM - 3:00 PM
Arrival: Gates will open at 7:15 AM and close at 7:45 AM
Dismissal: Gates will close at 3:35 PM
Office Hours: 7:15 AM - 3:45 PM

Tardiness:
Scholars arriving after 7:45 must be escorted into the front office and signed in by an adult at the main desk.

Late Pick-Up:
We encourage parents to enroll their child(ren) in the after-school program if they cannot make the 3:35 PM deadline. If a child is not picked up by 3:45 PM, parents/guardians will be charged $20 to allow his/her child to participate in the after-school program until arrival for pick-up. Parents or guardians must come into the front office to sign out their scholar for all late pick-ups. Upon the fifth late pick-up, the school will make a referral to the Georgia Division of Family & Children Services (DFCS). This policy does not apply to children participating in scheduled after-school activities (e.g., sports, extracurriculars) under the supervision of an adult.

Absences from Class/School

Your child(ren) must be in school every day as mandated by state law. **Parents/Guardians have three days to provide a written or emailed excuse for an absence.** For emailed excuses, parents/guardians may email to: attendance@scintillacharteracademy.com. For an absence to be excused, a dated and signed note from the physician or parent/guardian or an e-mail from a verified parent/guardian account must be sent to the student's homeroom teacher explaining the reason for the absence within three (3) school days of returning to school.

Failure to provide a written/emailed excuse will result in the absence being *unexcused*.

As permitted under Georgia state law and Georgia State Board of Education policies, a scholar's absence, tardiness, or early checkout may be excused for the following reasons:

- Personal illness or when attendance in school would endanger a student's health or the health of others
- Scheduled medical or dental appointments with documentation
- Serious illness or death of an immediate family member
- Mandated absence by order of governmental agencies, including pre-induction physical examinations for service in the armed forces

- Observing religious holidays, necessitating absence from school
- Conditions that render attendance impossible or hazardous to one's health or safety
- Registering to vote or voting, for a period not to exceed one day
- Required court appearance or subpoena by a law enforcement agency
- Reuniting of families between military deployments, not to exceed five days (utilizing the Georgia Military Family Act).

NOTE: For school attendance purposes, scholars shall be counted present when they are in attendance at least one-half of the instructional day or serving as pages of the Georgia General Assembly.

Unexcused Scholar Absences Protocol

In the event that a child experiences multiple unexcused absences, the following protocol will guide next steps:

- After 5 unexcused absences: The scholar's parent or guardian will be notified regarding the scholar's unexcused absences. The scholar will be identified as at-risk for excessive absences and placed on a watch list monitored by the school counselor. According to S.B.O.E. 160-5-1-.10, a child is truant and subject to compulsory attendance who, during the school calendar year, has more than five days of unexcused absences.
- After 7 unexcused absences: The scholar's parent or guardian will be notified regarding the scholar's unexcused absences. The scholar's parent will be contacted by a representative of the Attendance Intervention Committee regarding excessive absences, tardies, or early dismissals and schedule a conference. During this meeting, there will be a review of the Excessive Absence Notification Form, which the parent/guardian will be required to sign. Parents/Guardians will be expected to receive a referral to the Truancy Intervention Program.
- After 10 unexcused absences: The scholar's parent or guardian will be notified regarding the scholar's unexcused absences. The parent/guardian will be required to sign the Excessive Absence Notification Form and attend a Retention Alert Meeting. After 10 unexcused absences, a referral will be made to the Department of Family and Children Services (DFCS) for truancy and/or educational neglect. Scholars and/or parents/guardians will be subject to a referral(s) to juvenile court and/or magistrate court.
- After 15 or more unexcused absences: A Tier IV violation of the Student Code of Conduct occurs when a scholar accumulates more than 15 unexcused absences. A home visit will be made by SCA's SRO. Retention will be strongly considered. A referral will be made to the Department of Family and Children Services (DFCS) for truancy and/or educational neglect. Scholars and/or parents/guardians will be subject to a referral(s) to juvenile court and/or magistrate court.

Prior to commencing judicial proceedings to impose a penalty for violating compulsory school attendance law, the school system shall send a notice by certified mail, return receipt requested. By September 1st or within 30 school days of a student's enrollment, the parent, guardian, or other person having control or charge of the scholar must sign a statement indicating receipt of the written statement of possible consequences and penalties. After two reasonable attempts by the school to secure such signatures, the school shall be considered in compliance with this requirement. In addition, students age ten or older by September 1st must sign a statement indicating receipt of a written statement of possible consequences for non-compliance with the local system's policy. After a scholar has five or more unexcused absences, the school designee or SRO may refer a parent to the

Magistrate Court for a warrant and to the Solicitor General for prosecution under the Georgia Compulsory School Attendance statute if it is suspected that the parent or guardian is the cause of the student's absence. At the State Court's discretion, parents may receive a fine of not more than $100, up to 30 days confinement in jail, community service, or any combination for each offense. Additional actions may include, but are not limited to: Referral to the Truancy Intervention Program, Juvenile court CHINS complaint, or DFCS referral. If the parent or guardian has previously attended TIP, a second referral to the program may be forfeited and criminal prosecution may be initiated.

Absences Requiring Medical Documentation

In the event that a scholar has 5 or more absences without a physician's excuse, the school will require a physician's excuse in order to consider the absence as an excused absence.

School days missed as a result of out-of-school suspensions will not count as unexcused absences for the purpose of determining truancy. NOTE: SCA complies with the Lowndes County Juvenile Court Protocol Agreement for Truancy in Schools. A referral to the Truancy Intervention Program (TIP), juvenile court, state court, magistrate court, and/or the Department of Family and Children Services (DFCS) may be made in lieu of the outlined procedures. Protocol changes that occur during the school year will be posted on the website

In the event that a scholar's physical illness at school endangers a student's health or the health of others, the school may require the scholar to present appropriate medical documentation upon return to school for the purpose of validating that the absence is an excused absence and ensuring the safety of all scholars and school personnel.

Excused/Unexcused Combined Absences

Upon a student's 10th absence, whether excused or unexcused, a parent or guardian will be notified by the Attendance Intervention Committee. Medical documentation is required for any additional absences. Upon a student's 15th absence, whether excused or unexcused, a referral may be made to TIP or DFCS unless extenuating medical conditions exist.

Early Checkout

Checkouts prior to 11:30 AM will be counted as an all-day absence. Parents/guardians may not check scholars out after 2:30 PM. Instead, they will need to pick them up in the car line. Early checkout (anytime before 2:30 PM) is documented as a tardy on the scholar's record. Student drivers will require verified parent permission to check out early.

Tardy Policy

A scholar is considered tardy when he/she arrives after the car line is closed. Scholars arriving after the car line is closed must be escorted into the office and signed in by an adult at the main desk. Student drivers arriving after the car line is closed will be required to sign in as tardy at the Middle/Upper School front office. Excused tardies are given for doctor's appointments with notes from the doctor. A doctor's note must be presented upon arrival in order to receive an excused tardy. Upon the seventh unexcused tardy, parents or guardians will be required to complete an Excessive Tardy Form at the front office each time their scholar is dropped off late for the remainder

of the school year.

In the middle and upper school, teachers will take attendance at the start of each class period. Scholars arriving after the class start time, as indicated on the student's schedule, will be considered tardy.

Makeup Work

Scholars who have an excused absence shall have the opportunity to make up work. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian in lower school and the scholar in middle/upper school to contact the teacher(s) involved to determine make-up assignments and establish mutually agreeable terms for daily work and test makeup.

Scholars with an *excused* absence will have a maximum of two school days per excused absence to submit make-up work or schedule/complete a make-up test with a teacher.

Major projects or assessments missed during suspensions will be made up within the same number of days as the length of the suspension.