



## STAFFORD COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS Office of Attendance Services

125 University Boulevard  
Fredericksburg, Virginia 22406  
Phone: 540-286-8985

Dear Parent/Guardian,

This year, SCPS is making a special effort to ensure that all students fully benefit from their education by attending school regularly. Attending school regularly helps students feel better about school—and themselves. The earlier your student can start building this habit the better. They learn right away that going to school on time, every day is important. Consistent attendance will help students do well in high school, college, and at work.

### WHAT WE NEED FROM YOU

We miss your student when they are gone and we value their contributions to our school. We would like you to help ensure that your student attends regularly and is successful in school. If your student is going to be absent, it is your responsibility as a parent to notify the school of your student's absence. SCPS provides various options for parents to report an absence. **The easiest options are; the online absence reporting portal on your student's school webpage emailing Kathy Butler at [butlerkm@staffordschools](mailto:butlerkm@staffordschools), calling the attendance line, or sending in a note.**

### SCHOOL POLICIES AND STATE LAWS

It is important that you understand our school policies and procedures, as well as Virginia State Law, to ensure your student is successful in school. State law for compulsory attendance (**VA Code 22.1-254**) requires students from age 5 to 18 to attend a public school, private school, or a district-approved home school program. SCPS is also required to adhere to reporting standards as defined in **VA Code 22.1-258 & VA Code 22.1-262**. SCPS Code of Conduct does specify that student's should turn an excuse note in upon their return to school.

### DID YOU KNOW?

- Starting in kindergarten, too many absences (**excused and unexcused**) can cause students to fall behind in school.
- Missing 10 percent (**or about 18 days**) increases the chance that your student will not read or master math at the same level as their peers.
- Being late to school may lead to poor attendance.
- Absences can affect the whole classroom if the teacher has to slow down learning to help a student catch up.
- By 6th grade, absenteeism is one of three signs that a student may drop out of high school.
- By being present at school, your student learns valuable social skills and has the opportunity to develop meaningful relationships with other students and school staff.
- Absences can be a sign that a student is losing interest in school, struggling with school work, dealing with a bully or facing some other potentially serious problem.
- By 9th grade, regular attendance is a better predictor of graduation rates than 8th grade test scores.

### OUR PROMISE TO YOU

We know that there are a wide variety of reasons that students are absent from school, from health concerns to transportation challenges. There are many people in our building prepared to help you if you or your student face challenges in getting to school regularly or on time. We promise to track attendance daily, to notice when your student is missing from class, communicate with you to understand why they were absent, and to identify barriers and supports available to overcome challenges you may face in helping your student attend school.

Rita Cavataio, Administrator of Alternative Programs and Student Services