

# Chapter XI

## Academic Day

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### 1. Arrival and the Normal School Day

The doors will be opened and the Pharr Oratory Of St. Philip Neri School System will offer supervised care as early as 7:00 a.m. Refer to your child's specific grade level assignment information for the exact schedule of his school day. Refer to campus maps and procedures.

**1.1 Attendance:** Attendance is taken at the beginning of every period.

**1.1.1** Students will be considered **tardy** if they arrive in the first 10 minutes of the period. After, an absence will be given.

10 absences/semester=no credit/no pass

5 tardies = 1 absence

**To make up an absence or tardy, a student may go to Attendance School.**

**1.1.2** It is the student's responsibility to make up all work missed during any absence. The student, not the teacher, must take the initiative to find out from the teacher and fellow students what the student must do (e.g., past assignments, examinations, etc.) Make-up work must be turned in **no later than one week after returning.**

**1.2 Extended Day:** The extended day begins at 7:00 a.m. and ends at 5:30 p.m. A late fetching fee of \$1.00 per minute per child will be imposed. Continued late fetching may result in cancellation of extended day service.

**1.3. Parental Excuses:** A written parental excuse is required for absences, or early dismissals. These written excuses will become part of your son/daughter documentation, and this must include the following:

- Printed full name and homeroom of student
- Date(s) of absence(s) or early dismissal
- Time to be dismissed (early dismissal)
- Reason for the absence or early dismissal
- Signature of the custodial parent/guardian
- Guardian/parent phone number

### 2. Absences, Early Dismissal

#### State Required Attendance

Students must have 90% (162 days) attendance to pass to the next grade level and/or obtain credit. Any absence including early fetching, excused or unexcused, will be counted in these 18 days.

**2.1 School Absences:** Failure to attend classes deprives students of the opportunity to learn. If a student must be absent, one of his or her parents should call and advise the school before 8:00 a.m. on the day of the absence. The parent who calls should

give the name of the student, the name of his or her homeroom teacher and the reason for the absence. When the student returns to school, he or she must bring to the office a note signed by one of the parents with the same information given earlier by phone.

1. In order to ensure a justified absence for your child after an illness, a parent and/or doctor's excuse is required the day your child returns to school. After that day, excuses will not be accepted and your child's absence will be considered unexcused.
2. Make-up work will be posted on Power School. Click on any subject's letter grade to view all assignments for that subject, completed and incomplete.
3. Absences due to vacation plans will not be accepted. Such absences will be unexcused, and teachers will not provide lesson plans and homework in advance nor will the student be allowed to make up missed homework assignments, quizzes or tests.
- 4. Fraudulent excuses obtained by parents may lead to termination of services.**

**2.1.1. Missed exams:** For obvious reasons, parents and legal guardians must not take their children on vacation when classes are in session or when examinations are being given. If a student misses an exam for reasons, which the school considers justifiable, the student must take the initiative to make arrangements with the administration and with the teacher involved for an extraordinary exam make-up session.

**2.2 Early Dismissal:** Early dismissals are considered absences.

**2.2.1 Early release of a student:** Only under circumstances of extreme necessity should students be released early from their classes. Early release of a student can be justified only for the same reasons of an excused absence. Parents should schedule their children's medical and dental appointments outside of regular class hours, unless there is an emergency. Try to make such appointments very early in the morning or late in the afternoon in order to minimize the loss of class time.

**2.3 Tardiness and academic progress:** Experience has demonstrated that habitual or frequent tardiness correlates negatively with academic success. Habitual tardiness may result in: (a) poor or failing grades in the class subjects affected; (b) disciplinary action or (c) suspension from school.

**2.4 Failure to obey school policy will result in the loss of privileges:**

Failure to follow the Policy of Absences will result in the loss of the privilege of making up missed assignments and examinations.

### **3. Arrivals and Departure**

The Pharr Oratory of St. Philip Neri School System will not be responsible for students that arrive before or after regular school hours.

**3.1 Late fetching:** To discourage parents from arriving late to fetch their child—which causes a great hardship on the families of the Pharr Oratory Of St. Philip Neri School System personnel—they will be billed \$1.00 per child for every minute of tardiness. Habitually late fetching will result in the discontinuance of services of the Pharr Oratory of St. Philip Neri School System.

**3.2 Fetching during inclement weather:** Parents are responsible for properly clothing their child for inclement weather. Students will be taken to outside fetching points in most cases. Refer to Parker Uniform information for required poncho.

**3.3 Vehicle speed:** A slow safe speed, not exceeding ten (10) miles per hour, is to be observed in the let off, fetching, and parking areas.

**3.4 Unattended vehicles:** Parents must never leave their vehicles unattended with children inside. Vehicles must not be left with the engine running or with keys in the ignition. Unattended and unoccupied vehicles must be left in designated parking areas.

**3.5 Reporting Infractions:** For the protection of the children, parents are encouraged to report any of these vehicular infractions to the Pharr Oratory of St. Philip Neri School System office.

**3.6 Arrival and Departure Locations:** For maximum safety and time efficiency in letting off and fetching their children, parents will receive at the beginning of the school year a plan designed by the Administration.

**3.7 Extracurricular Activities or After School Programs:** Designated sponsor will supervise extracurricular activities or after school programs.

#### **4. Authority to Fetch Students**

For grades **Pre-kindergarten through sixth** a person other than the parent is authorized to fetch a student if the proper documentation to do so is on file in the Pharr Oratory of St. Philip Neri School System office. Only authorized persons will be allowed to fetch a student from the school or from any school sponsored school activity off campus. Unauthorized persons may fetch a student only under the following conditions:

- a. they must present a hand-written letter dated that same day indicating that he/she has the authority to fetch the child in the parent's name;
- b. the above-mentioned letter must have the signature of a custodial parent or legal guardian;
- c. if they are unknown to the Pharr Oratory of St. Philip Neri School System attendant, they must present a means of identification with photograph, i.e., driver's license, official work identification card, etc. to assure attendant that the bearer of the letter is, in fact, the person fetching the child, and, finally
- d. if the bearer of the letter is unknown to the attendant, he or she will be asked to wait until the Pharr Oratory of St. Philip Neri School System employee verify the bearer in question and have finished his/her work of releasing the students. To verify the letter and its signature, the attendant will then go to the Pharr Oratory of St. Philip Neri School System office where copies will also be made of the documents of identification.

Students in **grades 7-12** are authorized to leave campus at the **end of the school day** without school supervision unless directly requested by the parents to release only to authorized persons.

*Fetching:* No student will be dismissed from the reception area after 2:30 p.m. After this time all students, without exception, will be fetched at their respective stations.

- If you must fetch your child early for a doctor's appointment or other emergency, you must come to the reception area before 2:30 p.m.
- If you must fetch you child early for a scheduled doctor's appointment or emergency, the class will not be interrupted to fetch your child. This is disruptive to the class and the other students' learning is stopped. A student being fetched early will be dismissed at the end of their current class. Please refer to your child's schedule and plan your appointments accordingly. No students will be pulled out of classes for early dismissal after 2:30 p.m.
- It has been observed that some parents pull all the children in their family or carpool when fetching one child for an early release doctor's appointment or emergency. All of these children lose class instruction and will be counted absent from all classes after they leave on that day.
- Beware that all schedules are not the same. Parents must arrange to have all the other children fetched by someone on their list at normal fetching time. This allows the parent to take care of the sick child and ensure the other children continue learning.

## **5. Classroom Celebrations**

**5.1 Holidays:** Classroom festivities are limited to All Saints Day, Christmas, Easter, and "school closing" celebrations.

### **5.2 Birthdays:**

**5.2.1 Pre-Kindergarten:** birthdays may be celebrated with a "party" during snack or lunch period not to exceed 30 minutes, provided the parents have obtained the prior approval of the teacher at least one day before the celebration. No "piñatas", clowns or other outside entertainment are allowed.

**5.2.2 Grades Kinder – Second:** Birthdays that fall during the week will be celebrated once a week, as a group by classroom not individually. These celebrations must be modest: i.e. cookies or healthy snack.

**5.2.3 Grades Three and beyond:** birthdays may not be celebrated during school hours.

**5.2.4 Private Birthday Party Invitations:** Private birthday party invitations will be distributed on campus only **if the entire class is invited.**

## **6. Video Recordings or CD Players**

The principal use of video recordings or CD players within the school setting is instructional. Entertainment videos are, however, permitted after the "academic day" or on bad weather days when the children are prevented from going outside for recess or physical education. With the permission and approval of the Director or his representative, children may watch only age appropriate video recordings.

## 7. Telephone

Only in emergencies, may students use the office telephone. Calls for bringing forgotten homework, books, physical education clothing, etc., or for getting permission to go to a friend's home are **not considered an emergency**.

## 8. Drills

*Fire Drill:* The fire alarm will consist of a loud continuous noise from alarm buzzers. Upon hearing the alarm buzzers, students should follow these procedures:

**8.1** Walk in silence and in orderly manner to the designated fire exit for your room. The teacher or assigned student will turn off all electrical units and close door upon exiting. The teacher will follow the last student from the room. If your exit area is blocked, proceed to the nearest exit and clear the building.

**8.2** If a room door is blocked by fire, the teacher will open a window for the safe exit of all students. This procedure will be followed only in an extreme emergency.

**8.3** Should a fire or a drill occur during the lunch period, students will exit the doors of the cafeteria and proceed to the field. Homeroom teacher should locate you and take attendance.

**8.4** If you are separated from your class, proceed to the nearest exit and report to your teacher.

## 9. Forgotten items

- It is our continued goal to decrease the amount of classroom interruptions. These interruptions break the flow of instruction and cause a distraction for our students. We cannot interrupt class each time a forgotten item is left behind at home. As a result, classroom interruptions will not be made for staff to deliver forgotten books, ties, belts, sports equipment, homework/projects, instruments, etc.
- You can assist us by reminding your child to pack his/her backpack the night before school. This will foster student responsibility and eliminate those "forgotten items." Developing this responsibility is an important component to school education. We appreciate your partnership in this critical area enabling us to maximize our students' time on tasks within the classroom.