



DODEA Launches new "Be Here!" Attendance Policy

Student success—both inside and outside the classroom—depends on thorough preparation. To ensure all students are prepared for maximizing learning opportunities, DoDEA has implemented a new system-wide attendance policy known as "Be Here!"

To ensure a fair and consistent approach, DoDEA reviewed and analyzed the attendance policies adopted by most U.S. school districts—particularly those serving military children—with the unique needs of military families in mind. The new DoDEA attendance policy offers a balanced approach by clearly defining expectations and the specific interventions if a student misses school.

Although DoDEA educators have long worked with families to grant legitimate, excused absences or resolve attendance concerns, the process for addressing those concerns varied by school. In other words, the new policy is not really new, but students and their families need to be aware of these important highlights:

- All students must attend school at least 180 days per school year
- Academic penalties will NOT be imposed for excused absences such as:
 - Medical, dental or mental health appointment
 - Personal illness
 - Death of a family member
 - Please review the full policy for more examples
- Students who accumulate 5 absences in a semester:
 - May be referred to the Student Support Team
 - May be assigned an intervention plan consistent with regularly planned school work during absences
- Students who accumulate 7 absences in a semester:
 - May be referred to the local Commander for appropriate intervention and support
 - High school students may lose course credit

Communication, before excessive absences occur, is the key. We encourage families to review the full attendance policy together and discuss any concerns with the school principal:

http://www.dodea.edu/back_to_school/2011_12.cfm?cId=attendance

Bottom line: students deserve every opportunity to succeed and being in school is a proven way to forge their ambition, talent and intellectual curiosity into sustained achievement. To "Get There:" Highest Student Achievement, students need to: "Be Here!"