

Records

Heritage Academy shall maintain records to reflect the average daily attendance (“ADA”), as required by the Commissioner. The Superintendent or designee shall be responsible for maintaining a student attendance accounting system in accordance with statutory and TEA requirements. The Superintendent or designee shall report annually to the Board concerning the operation and effectiveness of Heritage Academy’s student attendance system, and may present recommendations for improvement.

The Superintendent, Principals, and teachers are responsible to the Board and the state to maintain accurate, current attendance records. The Superintendent is responsible for the safekeeping of attendance records and reports. The Superintendent may determine whether the properly certified attendance records or reports for the school year are to be filed in the central office or properly stored at each respective campus operated by Heritage Academy. Regardless of where such records are filed or stored, they must be readily available for audit by TEA.

Minimum Enrollment

A student must be enrolled for at least two hours of instruction to be considered in membership for one half day, and for at least four hours of instruction to be considered in membership for one full day.

Full-Day Students

Students enrolled on a full-day basis may earn one full day of attendance each school day.

Half-Day Students

Students enrolled on a half-day basis may earn only one half day attendance each school day. Attendance is determined for these pupils by recording absences in a period during the half day they are scheduled to be present.

Alternative Attendance Accounting Program

Students who are enrolled in and participating in an alternative attendance accounting program approved by the Commissioner shall earn attendance according to the statutory and rule provisions applicable to that program.

Attendance for State Funding Purposes

Attendance for all grades shall be determined by the absences recorded in the second period of the day, unless Heritage Academy has obtained permission from TEA for an alternate period to record absences, unless the Board adopts a policy for recording absences in an alternate period or hour, or unless the students for which attendance is being taken are enrolled in and participating in a Commissioner-approved alternative attendance accounting program.

The established period in which absences are recorded may not be changed during the school year.

Students absent during the daily period selected by Heritage Academy for taking attendance shall be counted absent for the entire day, unless the students are enrolled in and participating in a Commissioner-approved alternative attendance accounting program. Students present at the time attendance is taken shall be counted present for the entire day, unless the students are enrolled in and participating in a Commissioner-approved alternative attendance accounting program.

Exceptions

A student not actually on campus when attendance is taken may be considered in attendance for Foundation School Program purposes if:

1. **Board-Approved Activities** – The student is participating in a Board-approved activity under the direction of a member of Heritage Academy’s professional staff, or an adjunct staff member who has a bachelor’s degree and is eligible for participation in TRS.
2. **Mentorships** – The student is participating in a mentorship approved by Heritage Academy personnel to serve as one or more of the advanced measures needed to complete the Advanced/Distinguished Achievement Program.
3. **Medicaid Students** – The student is Medicaid-eligible and participating in the Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment Program. Such students may be excused for up to one day at any time without loss of ADA.
4. **Religious Holy Days** – The student is observing religious holy days, including days of travel to or from a site where the student will observe holy days. A student who is observing holy days is allowed up to one day of excused travel for traveling to the site where the student will observe the holy days and up to one day of excused travel for traveling from that site.
5. **Court Appearance** – The student is attending a required court appearance, including travel for that purpose. A student who is attending a required court appearance is allowed up to one day of excused travel for traveling to the site where the student will attend the required court appearance and up to one day of excused travel for traveling from that site.
6. **Citizenship Proceedings** – The student is:
 - a. Appearing at a governmental office to complete paperwork required in connection with the student’s application for United States citizenship.

A student who is appearing at a governmental office to complete such paperwork is allowed up to one day of excused travel for traveling to the site where the student will complete the paperwork and up to one day of excused travel for traveling from that site; or

- b. Taking part in a United States naturalization oath ceremony. A student who is taking part in such a ceremony is allowed up to one day of excused travel for traveling to the site where the student will take part in the ceremony and up to one day of excused travel for traveling from that site.
7. **Election Clerks** – The student is serving as an election clerk. A student who is serving as an election clerk is allowed up to one day of excused travel for traveling to the site where the student will serve as an election clerk and up to one day of excused travel for traveling from that site.
 8. **Health Care Appointments** – The student is temporarily absent as a result of a documented appointment with a health care professional during regular school hours, if that student commences classes or returns to school on the same day of the appointment. The appointment should be supported by a document such as a note from the health-care professional. “Temporary absence” includes the temporary absence of a student diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder on the day of the student’s appointment with a health-care practitioner to receive a generally recognized service for persons with autism spectrum disorder, including applied behavioral analysis, speech therapy, and occupational therapy.
 9. **Conservatorship of the State** – The student is in the conservatorship of the Department of Family and Protective Services and misses school:
 - a. To participate in an activity ordered by a court under the Texas Family Code, provided that scheduling the participation outside of school hours is not practicable; or
 - b. To attend a mental health or therapy appointment or family visitation as ordered by a court under the Texas Family Code.
 10. **Higher Education Campus Visits** – The student is visiting an institution of higher education accredited by a generally recognized accrediting organization during the student’s junior and senior years of high school for the purpose of determining the student’s interest in attending the institution of higher education, provided that:
 - a. Heritage Academy may not excuse for this purpose more than two days during the student’s junior year and two days during the student’s senior year; and

b. Heritage Academy adopts:

- (1) A policy to determine when an absence will be excused for this purpose; and
 - (2) A procedure to verify the student's visit at the institution of higher education.
11. **Dropout Recovery Education Program** – The student is in attendance at a dropout recovery education program.
 12. **Taps at Military Funeral** – The student is sounding “Taps” at a military honors funeral held in this state for a deceased veteran, provided that the student is enrolled in grade 6 or higher.
 13. **Off-Campus Instruction** – The student's absence is permitted by other conditions related to off-campus instruction described in the *Student Attendance Accounting Handbook*.
 14. **Military Dependents** – The student's parent, stepparent, or legal guardian is an active duty member of the uniformed services and has been called to duty for is on leave from, or immediately returned from continuous deployment of at least four months outside the locality where the parent, stepparent, or guardian regularly resides, to visit with the student's parent, stepparent, or guardian. Heritage Academy may not excuse a student under this provision more than five days in a school year. An excused absence under this provision must be taken not earlier than the 60th day before the date of deployment or not later than the 30th day after the date of return from deployment.

Parental Consent to Leave Campus

A student absent from school for any portion of a school day shall provide a note that describes the reason for the absence. The note shall be signed by the student's parent or, if the student is 18 or older or is an emancipated minor, by the student.