Attendance Policy and Procedures

Wai‘anae Complex

Wai‘anae High School
Wai‘anae Intermediate School
Kamaile Elementary School
Leihoku Elementary School
Ma‘ili Elementary School
Mākaha Elementary School
Wai‘anae Elementary School
Acknowledgements

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Addendum – July 1998

In the following document, Hawai‘i Revised Statute (HRS) regarding compulsory attendance and enforcement is referred to as Sections 298-9 and 298-13. Effective immediately, all references to HRS Section 298-9 and 298-13 regarding compulsory attendance and enforcement should be changed to HRS 302A-1131 and HRS 302A-1136 respectively.
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The State Law
The Hawaii Revised Statutes, Sec. 298-9, states that “unless excluded from school or excepted from attendance, all children who will have arrived at the age of at least six years, and who will not have arrived at the age of eighteen years, on or before December 31 of any school year, shall attend either a public or private school for and during such school year, and any parent, guardian, and other person having the responsibility for or care of a child whose attendance at school is obligatory shall send the child to some such school.” Section 298-13, Enforcement, HRS, places the responsibility for enforcing compulsory attendance with the Department of Education (DOE). Toward this end, agreements have been developed with all police departments within the state regarding truant students. Students who are chronic absentees may be referred to Family Court.

Exemption from the compulsory attendance law is permitted only under specified conditions pursuant to Section 298-9, Attendance compulsory, Exceptions, HRS, and DOE regulations relating to compulsory attendance exceptions.

The Hawai‘i State Department of Education’s Philosophical Base
In consonance with the statutory requirements relating to education, the DOE is committed to providing each individual with an educational program which will help the student to develop to the fullest extent of the student’s capabilities and to become a useful and personally successful member of society. Teachers, administrators, and other staff shall make every effort to work with the students and their parents and/or guardians to optimize available learning activities as well as educational services and opportunities. According to the Board of Education’s Student Code of Conduct, policy regarding attendance and punctuality, students are expected to attend school daily, attend all classes, and be on time every day.

Wai‘anae Complex Philosophy
We, the schools of the Wai‘anae Complex, believe that school attendance is “everyone’s business.” The schools, community, parents, and students need to join efforts and work to uphold a high and consistent standard for attendance. We believe that consistent school attendance is conducive to academic and personal success. Students and their parent(s) or guardian(s) will be responsible and held accountable for school attendance.

We further believe that through this policy, and proper guidance and instruction, students will become more dependable and responsible adult citizens.
Attendance Policy

Elementary Guidelines
In accordance with the Complex Philosophy are the following guidelines:

• Each school will notify all parent(s) and guardian(s) of:
  » Wai‘anae Complex’s Philosophy on Attendance; and
  » the school’s attendance policy (see Parent Notification, Sample A).

• Each school will process and maintain attendance daily in order to ensure students’ accountability for their attendance and to ensure consistent data collection.

• Each school will use the Daily Attendance Record (also known as the Daily Attendance Card) and the school’s Attendance Folder as the official documents that will record student attendance.

• Each school will strongly encourage teachers to contact parent(s) and guardian(s) after every absence.

• Each school will only excuse absences when written documentation is submitted within 3 school days upon student’s return to school; and absences are for one of the following reasons:
  » illness, injury, quarantine (for chicken pox, measles, etc.);
  » death in the family;
  » court attendance or approval;
  » special cases as approved by the principal;
  » school authorized activities which may include but are not limited to:
    On-campus activities, such as: appointments with a counselor or administrator; treatment in the health room; assigned detention or in school suspension.
    Off-campus activities, such as: student council related activities; field trips; and suspensions.
    Other activities approved by the principal or designee.

• Each school will emphasize the importance of attending school daily to parent(s) or guardian(s) of Kindergarten and pre-Kindergarten students although state law does not mandate their attendance (see Kindergarten Letters, Samples B.1, B.2, and B.3).

* Note: Questionable excuses may be interpreted as unexcused.
**Attendance Policy**

### Tasks and Procedures

#### I. Process Attendance Folders Daily

A. **Teacher** will mark all absences on *Daily Attendance Record* (attendance card).

B. **Teacher/Attendance Monitor** will contact parent(s) or guardian(s) after each absence.
   1. Discuss missed assignments;
   2. Arrange make-up work; and
   3. Express care/concern.

C. **Teacher/Attendance Monitor** will document type and content of communication on back of *Daily Attendance Record* [e.g. note, teacher contact (phone/note sent home)].

D. **Teacher** will file note with appropriate attendance records.

E. Direct questions and concerns regarding attendance procedure to designated school administrator.

#### II. Intervene with Students with 3-5 Unexcused Absences or up to 10 Absences

A. **Teacher** will identify students by examining *Daily Attendance Record*.

B. Notify parent(s) or guardian(s).
   1. **Teacher** will contact by phone:
      a. Explain attendance policies:
         1. express need to attend school daily;
         2. express need to send written note explaining absence; and
         3. explain that this contact serves as Attendance Notice #1.
      b. Document result of contact [or attempt to contact] on *Daily Attendance Record*.
      c. Make 2 copies of *Daily Attendance Record*:
         1. submit one copy to counselor; and
         2. file one copy in cumulative file.
   2. If contact by phone is unsuccessful,
      **Teacher** will complete *Attendance Notice #1*;
      a. Make 2 copies of the completed letter:
         1. submit one copy of letter to counselor; and
         2. file copy of letter in cumulative file.
      b. Mail original letter with copy of attendance record to parent(s) or guardian(s).

**References**

Refer to *Sample C*, Page 14
(Daily Attendance Record)

Refer to *Sample D*, Page 16
(Attendance Notice #1)
Tasks and Procedures

III. Intervene with Students with 6-10 Unexcused Absences or up to 15 Absences

A. Teacher will identify student by examining Daily Attendance Record.

B. Teacher will complete Student Incident Referral Form.
   1. Mark attendance problem.
   2. Submit form to counselor.

C. Counselor will counsel student.

D. Teacher/Attendance Monitor will contact parent(s) or guardian(s) to schedule a Parent/Teacher/Counselor Conference.
   1. If able to contact:
      a. Schedule appointment;
      b. Record contact on Daily Attendance Record; and
      d. Notify all parties involved in conference.
   2. Complete Attendance Notice #2 [include scheduled date of conference].
      a. Make 2 copies of Daily Attendance Record:
         1. submit one copy to counselor; and
         2. file one copy in cumulative file.
      b. Make 2 copies of completed letter;
         1. submit one copy of letter to counselor; and
         2. file one copy of letter in cumulative file.
      c. Mail original letter with copy of attendance record to parent(s) or guardian(s).

E. Teacher/Counselor will conduct Parent/Teacher/Counselor Conf.
   1. If parent(s) or guardian(s) attend:
      a. Explain compulsory attendance laws;
      b. Provide written copy of HRS Sec. 298-9;
      c. Refer to appropriate counseling or parenting classes;
      d. Make appropriate Spec.Ed. or 504 referrals.
   2. If parent(s) or guardian(s) does not attend:
      a. Hold conference between teacher and counselor;
      b. Develop strategy to service student;
      c. Inform parent(s) or guardian(s) of strategy as appropriate.

References

Refer to Sample E, Page 17 (Student Incident Referral Form)

Refer to Sample F, Page 18 (Counseling Absenteeism)

Refer to Sample G, Page 19 (Attendance Notice #2)

Refer to Sample H, Page 20 (HRS Sec. 298-9)

Refer to Sample I, Page 21 (Missed Conference Letter)
Tasks and Procedures

IV. Intervene with Students with 10 Unexcused Absences up to 20 Absences

A. Teacher will identify student by examining Daily Attendance Record.

B. Teacher will complete Student Incident Referral Form
   [at school discretion]
   1. Mark attendance problem.
   2. Submit form to counselor.

C. Teacher/Attendance Monitor will contact parent(s) or guardian(s)
   to schedule a Parent/Counselor/Administrator Conference.
   1. If able to contact:
      a. Schedule appointment;
      b. Record contact on Daily Attendance Record; and
      c. Notify all parties involved in conference.
   2. Complete Attendance Notice #3
      [include scheduled date of conference].
      a. Make 2 copies of Daily Attendance Record:
         1. submit one copy to counselor; and
         2. file one copy in cumulative file.
      b. Make 2 copies of completed letter:
         1. submit one copy of letter to counselor; and
         2. file one copy of letter in cumulative file.
      c. Mail original letter with copy of attendance record to
         parent(s) or guardian(s) and include insert explaining
         compulsory attendance laws (HRS Sec. 298-9).

D. Counselor will conduct Parent/Counselor/Administrator Conference.
   1. If parent(s) or guardian(s) attend:
      a. Explain compulsory attendance laws;
      b. Provide written copy of HRS Sec. 298-9;
      c. Inform parent(s) or guardian(s) of consequences
         (Family Court).
   2. If parent(s) or guardian(s) does not attend:
      a. Hold conference between counselor & administrator;
      b. Develop strategy to service student; and
      c. Inform parent(s) or guardian(s) of strategy.

References

Refer to Sample J, Page 22
(Attendance Notice #3)

Refer to Sample I, Page 21
(Missed Conference Letter)
V. Intervene with Students with 16 or More Unexcused Absences

A. **Teacher** will identify student by examining Daily Attendance Record.

B. **Teacher/Attendance Monitor** will notify parent(s) or guardian(s).
   1. Complete *Attendance Notice #4*;
      a. Make 2 copies of Daily Attendance Record:
         1. submit one copy to counselor; and
         2. file one copy in cumulative file.
      b. Make 2 copies of completed letter:
         1. submit one copy of letter to counselor; and
         2. file one copy of letter in cumulative file.
   2. Mail original letter with copy of attendance record to parent(s) or guardian(s).
      [Send via Certified Mail/Return Receipt]

C. **Attendance Monitor** will file *Family Court Petition for educational neglect.*

- **Tardies**

  If students are chronically tardy (10+ days), the **teacher** then **counselor** should make attempts to contact parents regarding the problem. If the problem persists, then the teacher should refer the matter to the counselor by completing a Student Incident Referral Form and submitting it to the grade level counselor. The above process may be followed for excessive tardies with the understanding that a court petition can not be filed for excessive tardiness.
Sample Letter A

Date ____________________

To the parents/guardians of _____________________________, grade_____, room_____

This letter is to inform you of Wai’anae Complex’s new attendance policy, effective April 7, 1997. Our philosophy is that school attendance is “everyone’s business.” The schools, community, parents, and students need to join efforts and work to uphold a high and consistent standard for attendance. We believe that consistent school attendance is conducive to academic and personal success. Students and their parent(s) or guardian(s) will be responsible and held accountable for school attendance. We further believe that through this policy, and proper guidance and instruction, students will become more dependable and responsible adult citizens.

As a matter of policy, only the following will be accepted as an excused absence:
  » illness, injury, quarantine (for chicken pox, measles, etc.);
  » death in the family;
  » court attendance or approval;
  » special cases as approved by the principal; or
  » school authorized activities which may include but are not limited to:
    On-campus activities, such as: appointments with a counselor or administrator; treatment in the health room; assigned detention or in-school suspension.
    Off-campus activities, such as: student council related activities; field trips; and suspensions.
    Other activities approved by the principal or designee.

If your child is absent, you need to submit written documentation as to why your child was absent within 3 days after your child returns to school. Failure to do so will result in the absence being marked as “unexcused.” Accumulation of too many unexcused absences will result in a Family Court Referral.

If you have any questions regarding attendance policy, please call the school. We look forward to a productive year and to seeing your child in school, on time, and ready to learn.

Sincerely,

_________________________  _________________________
Principal  Teacher
Notice #1

Date ____________________

To the parents/guardians of _____________________________, grade_____ , room_____

I am writing this letter to let you know that your child has now missed ______________ school days.

When any child is chronically absent from school, they feel left out, make fewer friends, have trouble learning social skills and basic concepts, thereby effecting their self-esteem.

Positive social skills and good self-esteem are essential for future success. It has been determined that children who benefit from these early skill building years are more likely to be successful. Kindergarten is recognized as possibly the most important year at elementary school because it is there that we learn “the basics”. Robert Fulghum, a well known author, wrote a book titled, All I Really Need to Know I learned in Kindergarten, for this reason.

Please help you child. Your help is getting your child to school on time, every day, will help them to learn, feel good about themselves and about school. Good attendance trains children for good habits for success.

Mahalo,

_________________________
Teacher

cc: File
   Teacher
   Counselor
Notice #2

Date ____________________

To the parents/guardians of _____________________________, grade_____, room_____  

I am writing this letter to let you know that your child has now missed _____________ school days.

Our first letter was a reminder. “When any child is chronically absent from school, they feel left out, make fewer friends, have trouble learning social skills and basic concepts, thereby effecting their self-esteem.

Because of our concern, your child’s attendance problem has been referred to the counselor. The counselor will be available to assist you in getting your child to school every day. It will be their every intention to help you remove the obstacles that get in the way of your child’s good attendance so that he/she may have the opportunity for success.

Please call ________________________________, your child’s counselor, at ___________ at your earliest convenience. If the counselor does not hear from you, someone will be contacting you.

Mahalo,

_________________________
Teacher

Additional comments:

cc: File  
    Teacher  
    Counselor  
    Principal

---

Person Contacted: ____________________________
Date and Time: ____________________________
Phone: ____________________________

Total absences: __________
Unexcused absences: __________
Excused absences: __________
Notice #3

Date ____________________

To the parents/guardians of _____________________________, grade_____, room_____

We are writing this letter to let you know that your child has now missed ______________ school days.

We are increasingly concerned about your child’s attendance. Two previous letters, date ______________ and dated ______________, were sent to you, and we have arranged for our school counselor to assist you and discuss steps to improve your child’s attendance. However, your child’s attendance has not improved.

We would like to meet with you within this week to discuss possible consequences, which may include retention or dismissal. At that time, we will also discuss your child’s attendance, academic standing, and social development. We have scheduled this conference on ___________________________, at ______________. If this time is inconvenient, please call ____________________, at ______________ to reschedule your appointment.

It is everyone’s best interest to work for the benefit of your child. Your cooperation is essential.

Mahalo,

__________________________________________  ____________________________________________
Counselor                                                                                      Principal

Additional comments:

cc: File
    Teacher
    Counselor
    Principal

____Total absences                                                                                   Person Contacted:  __________________________
____Unexcused absences                                                                     Date and Time:  __________________________
____Excused absences                                                                Phone:  __________________________
**Daily Attendance Record** (reduced scale)

![Daily Attendance Record](image)

**Back (actual size)**
ATTENDANCE NOTICE #1

Date ____________________

To the parents/guardians of _____________________________, grade_____, room_____

This letter is to inform you that according to our school attendance records, your child has _____absences for this school year.

As a complex attendance policy, we need to remind you that students should be in school every day except for illness and emergencies. It is very important that your child attend school daily in order to do well in class. However, if your child must be absent from school, please remember to send a note as documentation of your child’s absence to the school within three days of your child’s return. Without a valid note, absences will be considered unexcused. In addition, your child is responsible for making up any missed class work.

Absences affect children’s self-esteem and how they feel about school. When children are repeatedly out of school, they often feel insecure because they fall behind academically. They also become unsure of themselves socially because they don’t know if they fit in with their classmates.

We at ____________________school want to see your child succeed. To do this, we need your help in getting your child to school every day.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this matter, please call __________ and leave a message specifying a phone number and appropriate time to contact you.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

_________________________
Teacher

cc:  File
Counselor

_____ Total absences          Person Contacted: ________________________
_____ Unexcused absences      Date and Time: ________________________
_____ Excused absences        Phone: _______________________________
Student Incident Referral Form

WAIAHAE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
STUDENT REFERRAL FORM

TO:  _____Counselor   _____Administration   Date:_________________
     _____Administration

FR: ___________________________  Time:_________________
     ___________________________

STUDENT(s)  GR./RM.  RULE BROKEN  TEACHER

_________________________  __________  ___________________________

RULES:
1.  Follow directions.
2.  Keep hands, feet and objects to yourself.
3.  No swearing, rude gestures, or cruel teasing.
4.  Use a class pass when leaving the room during class time.
5.  Do not litter.
6.  Leave contraband items at home.
7.  Severe cause or other ___________________________

DESCRIBE INCIDENT/BEHAVIOR:

_________________________  ___________________________

ALL ACTIONS TAKEN BY THE TEACHER TO DATE:  (for documentation)
_____ Student has been previously counseled on same/similar behavior(s)
_____ I discussed the problem with other teachers:
_____ I discussed the problem with parents ___ by phone ___ by letter
     on (date)_________________________
_____ Other interventions (social skills, behavior modifications,  
     parent support, etc):

ACTION TAKEN BY THE COUNSELOR OR ADMINISTRATION:
     C counseled:
     Social Skills:
     Apologized to:
     Warned that further disciplinary action will be taken if problem
     persists.
     DETENTION: ___ DAYS beginning: ____________
     SUSPENSION: ___ DAYS beginning: ____________
     PARENT CONFERENCE: ___ BY TELEPHONE (#____), IN PERSON

Remarks and teacher follow up:

TIME RETURNED TO CLASS:_______  signature (COUNSELOR/ADMINISTRATOR)
white-counselor/yellow-teacher/pink-VP/goldenrod-teacher#2

8/93
Counseling Absenteeism

The following is suggested in order to assist children with absenteeism problems:

A. Through meeting with the parents and children, the counselor will assess what the needs of the family are to assist them in getting the student to school regularly. These needs may be academic, adjustment, self-esteem, financial, family, or motivational in nature.

B. If possible, the counselor will attempt to address these problems with the family through available school resources, or will refer the family to an appropriate agency.

C. The counselor will explain the law regarding mandatory attendance and the consequences of noncompliance to parents.

D. The counselor will also provide students with an explanation of the laws dealing with mandatory attendance, truancy, and the consequences of chronic absenteeism.

E. The counselor will discuss how choices determine long term consequences of chronic absenteeism and/or truancy including criminal/gang activity, loss of earning potential, unemployment, incarceration, drugs, and dropping out.
ATTENDANCE NOTICE #2

Date ____________________

To the parents/guardians of _____________________________, grade_____, room_____

We are increasingly concerned about your child’s attendance. Since the letter dated __________ was sent to you, ____________________ has been absent several more days. According to our school records, your child now has a total of _____ absences.

Because of this, we feel it is necessary to meet with you within the week at the school office. At that time, we can further discuss your child’s attendance, academic standing, and the possibilities of you and your child receiving special supportive services. We have scheduled your Parent-Teacher-Counselor conference on (date)__________________ , (time)________ . If this is inconvenient, please call ___________ to reschedule your appointment.

The Hawaii State Law makes regular school attendance compulsory. Attendance of children at the elementary school level is generally considered the responsibility of the child’s parents and/or guardians. While we realize illness and emergencies can occasionally keep students out of school, your child cannot keep up with his or her classes without coming to school daily and on time.

We look forward to meeting with you at the scheduled appointment. By all of us working together, we know we can help your child succeed in school.

Sincerely,

_________________________  _________________________
Teacher  Counselor

cc:  File
     Counselor

_____Total absences
_____Unexcused absences  Person Contacted: __________________________
_____Excused absences  Date and Time: __________

Phone: ______________________

Comments


HRS 298-9
Attendance Compulsory

The Hawaii Revised Statutes, Sec. 298-9, states that “unless excluded from school or excepted from attendance, all children who will have arrived at the age of at least six years, and who will not have arrived at the age of eighteen years, on or before December 31 of any school year, shall attend either a public or private school for and during such school year, and any parent, guardian, and other person having the responsibility for or care of a child whose attendance at school is obligatory shall send the child to some such school.”
Sample Letter I

Date ____________________

To the parents/guardians of _____________________________, grade_____, room_____

Since you failed to show up at the scheduled conference, we would like to inform you as to what was discussed.

In order to help your child attend school regularly, we will be working on the following:

By all of us working together, we know we can help your child succeed in school.

Sincerely,

_________________________
Counselor

cc: File

Missed:  ____Parent/Teacher/Counselor Conference (date/time)
        ____Parent/Counselor/Administrator Conference (date/time)

Comments
ATTENDANCE NOTICE #3

Date ____________________

To the parents/guardians of _____________________________, grade_____, room_____

We are increasingly concerned about your child’s attendance. Two previous letters, dated _________ and dated __________, were sent to you and we have made a request to meet with you to discuss this issue. Since then, your child’s attendance has not improved. According to our school records, your child now has a total of _____ absences.

We would like to meet with you, along with your child’s teacher and counselor, within the week at the school office. At that time, we will discuss your child’s attendance, academic standing, and the possibilities of you and your child receiving special supportive services. We have scheduled your Parent-Counselor-Administrator conference on (date)__________________ , (time)________ . If this is inconvenient, please call ______________ to reschedule your appointment.

According to Hawaii State Law, Revised Statutes, Section 298-9, regular school attendance is compulsory. According to Hawaii State Law, Revised Statutes, Section 298-13, regular school attendance is the responsibility of the parents and/or guardians. Students who are chronic absentees may be referred to Family Court.

We look forward to meeting with you at the scheduled appointment. Through your cooperation, I know we will be able to help your child be successful.

Sincerely,

________________________  ________________________
Administrator  Counselor

cc: File
   Counselor

_____ Total absences          Person Contacted: ______________________ ______________
_____ Unexcused absences  Date and Time: ________________________
_____ Excused absences  Phone: ________________________
ATTENDANCE NOTICE #4 —FINAL NOTICE

Date ____________________

To the parents/guardians of _____________________________________, grade _____, room _____

According to our school records, your child now has a total of _____ absences.

We have tried to assist you with your child’s attendance problems. Letters of notification have been sent (dated) __________. (dated) __________, (dated) __________ and requests for parent conferences have been made. At this point, our attempts to help improve your child’s attendance have been unsuccessful. Your child continues to be absent from school.

Since our efforts at school have not been successful, we have no choice but to refer this matter to Family Court, according to Hawaii State Law, Revised Statutes 298-13. We feel we can best help you and your child by obtaining the court’s help.

Sincerely,

________________________
Principal

cc: File
    Teacher
    Counselor

_____ Total absences          Person Contacted: _____________________
_____ Unexcused absences      Date and Time: _____________________
_____ Excused absences        Phone: _____________________

Comments

23
Family Court Petition

INTerventions ATTEMPTED PRIOR TO REFERRAL TO FAMILY COURT FOR TRUAncY AND EDUCATIONAL NEGLECT PETITIONS

Student ___________________________ Grade ______
Last Name _______________ First _______ MI __________
School ____________________ Completed by ______________ Date ______

DATES INTERVENTION EFFORTS
1) Three (3) face-to-face contacts with family and or legal guardian.
2) Three (3) attempts to make home visitation.
3) Three (3) attempts to make telephone contact at parent’s place of employment.
4) Referral to outreach counselor or truant officer, if available.
5) Referral to appropriate counseling services and/or parenting classes, if available.
6) Implementation of “dog tag” or similar check system for at least four (4) weeks.
7) Assess appropriateness of amending class schedule.
8) Assess appropriateness of and referral to alternative education program, if available.
9) Assess need for special education referral and/or appropriate modification plan.
10) In-school consequences for truancy.
11) Arrange schedule for parent to escort child to class/school for at least two (2) weeks.
12) Discuss appropriateness of 4140 (other than home schooling) with student and parent or legal guardian.

USE OTHER SIDE FOR EXPLANATION AS TO WHY INTERVENTION EFFORTS WERE NOT MADE

PLAN TO ADDRESS TRUAncY/EDUCATIONAL NEGLECT
TARDY NOTICE #_____

Date ____________________

To the parents/guardians of ________________________________, grade _____, room _____

According to our school records, your child has been tardy for _____days this school year.

Please remember that school starts at ______ a.m. daily. While we realized that situations do arise that contribute to tardiness that at times are beyond your control, we would like to emphasize the importance of bringing your child to school on time everyday.

Much work is involved when your child comes to school late. Teachers have to repeat instruction, and lunch and attendance counts have to be adjusted by the classroom, office, and cafeteria. Most importantly, your child must quickly get settled and has often missed very important interactions with his or her teachers and peers.

Coming to school on time motivates a student toward becoming a more responsible person. A student who comes to school tardy often falls behind in his or her classwork. Poor performance in the classroom directly leads to poor academic and social achievement. We’d like to ask for your assistance and cooperation in making your child’s elementary school experience positive and productive.

Should you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to call me at __________. Thank you for your cooperation and support.

Sincerely,

_______________________
Teacher

cc: File

_____ Total tardies

Person Contacted: ____________________
Date and Time: ____________________
Phone: ____________________

Please sign and return this portion of this letter to your child’s teacher.

I have received a letter informing me of my child’s frequent tardiness.

Child’s Name_________________________________ Grade/Room________________

Parent’s Signature_____________________________ Date____________________