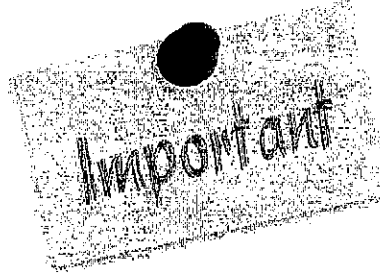


Eli Whitney Elementary School
1130 Huntington Road
Stratford, CT 06614
(203) 385-4198

Victoria Florek, Principal

Lisa Carlson, Assistant Principal

October 17, 2016



Dear Eli Whitney Families,

Supporting consistent attendance is important to us at Eli Whitney. Attending school, arriving at school on time, and remaining in school until dismissal on a daily basis is vital to making academic and behavioral growth for all children. As a first step in our efforts to support all children at Eli Whitney, I would like to take this opportunity to review the state law and attendance guidelines.

Per state law, for every school year, absences numbers one through nine are excused when the school is notified of the child's absence. Starting with absence number ten, state regulations require parents and guardians to provide the required documentation to excuse any further absences, as any number above nine is deemed excessive. Absences can be excused when followed by the proper documentation for illnesses by a medical professional, observance of religious holidays, death in the family or family emergency, mandated court appearances, or lack of transportation. Documentation needs to be submitted to the main office within ten days of the absence in order to excuse the absence.

Truancy is defined by a child who has four unexcused absences in a month, or ten unexcused absences in a school year. The law further states that students who fall into this category will be referred to a community agency capable of supporting students. Keep in mind that Eli Whitney follows the same guidelines as mentioned above in regard to tardiness to school. The doors open at 8:30 a.m. and the late bell rings at 8:45 a.m. At that time, students are expected to be in their classrooms, following their morning routines, and completing their morning work. We take advantage of every minute we can during the day, so instruction begins and ends with our bells. The protocol that our school follows is outlined below:

1. First absence/tardy notification letter is sent when a student is absent/tardy 9 times. This letter includes a copy of the state attendance law.
2. Second absence/tardy notification letter is sent when a student is absent/tardy any additional days after step one. This letter requests a parent meeting with administration and the school's social worker. The purpose of the meeting is to provide the family with support.

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3. Third absence/tardy notification letter is sent when a student is absent/tardy any additional days after step two. This letter offers a home visit by administration and the social worker. Again, the purpose of the visit is to provide the family with support.
4. Fourth absence/tardy notification letter is sent when a student is absent/tardy any additional days after step three. This letter informs that family that the student will be referred to a community agency for additional support. This letter is sent certified mail.

If your child is in grades four through six you can access their attendance record through the parent portal. If your child is in kindergarten through grade three and you are interested in obtaining a copy of their attendance record you can contact the main office.

I am looking forward to working together to make sure that all students attend school on a regular basis. Feel free to contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

Regards,



Victoria Florek
Principal



Lisa Carlson
Assistant Principal