

PRE-APPROVED TRIP REQUEST FORM

HARFORD CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

1736 WHITEFORD ROAD

DARLINGTON, MD 21034

410-457-5103

FAX: 410-836-9749

Harford Christian School stresses the importance of attendance to school, and discourage families from removing their children from regular attendance. Missing school is more than making up homework. A great amount is lost in missing classroom instruction time. We do, however, recognize that family opportunities for travel and educational experiences may arise during the school year. We ask that families limit those school absences to five or less school days during the year.

Please follow these steps in planning for a pre-approved family trip:

#1 The Pre-Approved Trip Request Form should be filled out and submitted to the high school office **at least 10 days prior to the trip.**

*The same form may be used for more than one child.

#2 Request should demonstrate that the trip will provide an opportunity for the student's educational enrichment under the direction and supervision of responsible adults.

#3 A request for an excused absence for a trip should not exceed 5 days.

#4 Students are responsible to secure and complete all classroom responsibilities that will be missed during the period of absence.

#5 Unless administration initiates communication, consider request approved.

Student Full Name: _____ **Grade:** _____

Student Full Name: _____ **Grade:** _____

Student Full Name: _____ **Grade:** _____

Proposed Dates of Absence: (From) _____ **(To)** _____

Person (s) Directing and/or Supervising Student During Absence: _____

Itinerary of Trip: Include the name and location of educational experience and briefly explain the educational value.

Parent Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

The Effects of Absenteeism

Missing a day of school at Harford Christian presents some real challenges of catching up upon return. From a parent perspective it may seem as though it should not be so difficult to get back on track after missing one or more days of school. The fact is, a lot is happening each day in the classrooms of Harford Christian School. Instruction does not slow, homework is not postponed, and tests/quizzes are not cancelled because students are absent. To continue our aggressive academic program, the wheels must stay in motion.

The issue of absenteeism elicits strong opinions from both teachers and parents. We do not accuse any school families of careless disregard of school attendance. For example, sick and contagious students should stay home. Perhaps a “once-in-a-lifetime” trip opportunity may warrant legitimate student absence. While avoiding a challenge to your family authority, please consider the following effects of school absenteeism. When a student is absent he/she:

- 1) Misses valuable instruction. This is why we have teachers in the classroom. It is not enough to give a student a textbook and ask him to learn. The teacher guides, facilitates and motivates student comprehension and learning. When students are absent, they miss much more than the homework assignment
- 2) Is faced with make-up work. Whether it’s homework or a quiz, the load accumulates quickly. Students can find themselves digging out from a deep hole if they are not diligent.
- 3) Loses the academic flow. Announcements, current school events and classroom instruction are all linked to momentum, a critical aspect of education.
- 4) Places an extra burden on teachers who must then deal with extra record-keeping, paperwork, and one-on-one follow up. This last consequence looms far larger than non-teachers realize.

Following are some proactive strategies that will help in the event of a pre-planned unavoidable trip:

- 1) Have your student aggressively interact with his teachers ahead of time. Not all teachers will be able to project exactly what will be covered during a missed class, but they can come pretty close.
- 2) If the absence was more of a late-minute surprise, contact the office so that we can collect missed work and homework assignments and get it to you. Call early, because the office cannot always accommodate last minute requests.
- 3) Monitor makeup work closely to insure getting back into stride quickly.

Absences sometimes just happen, but minimizing them makes for better teaching and better grades. So be proactive with your preparation and be sure to follow up. HCS teachers and administrators bend to accommodate the truly special circumstances that sometimes just happen. Please help us to minimize the risk and maximize your son or daughter’s learning experience at Harford Christian School.