

# WESTPARK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

**Dr. Erica L. Hawkes, Principal**

25 San Carlo, Irvine, CA 92614

949 936-6400 Fax 949 936-6409

[www.iusd.org/wp](http://www.iusd.org/wp)



**A**CCOUNTABILITY

**I**NTEGRITY

**R**ESPECT

July 29, 2010

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Our goal at Westpark is to help students have a successful educational experience. In order to do this, regular daily attendance is necessary. It has been shown that frequent tardies and/or absences affect children's skill development and may lead to behavioral problems and poor grades.

The California State Department of Health recognizes that schools should be concerned with students' tardies or absences in excess of ten (10) school days, regardless of whether they are legally excused or unexcused. As part of our attendance procedures, we send an informational letter to the parents/guardians of a student whose attendance patterns lead us to believe they may be tardy or absent from school for five more days throughout the year. When students are frequently late or absent, whether excused or unexcused, they miss important classroom instruction. This informational letter is just to share our concern so that we can problem solve together attendance and tardy issues. According to California education code, students with 3 or more unexcused absences or students who are tardy 30 minutes or more on three occasions can be classified as truant. Parents and guardians of children found to be habitually truant are subject to prosecution and may be penalized by fine up to \$500 and/or incarceration in county jail for up to one year. (Education Code 48200 ET. Seq.) Student absences may be excused for the following reasons: illness, medical or dental appointments, funeral attendance of immediate family members, quarantine for health reasons, jury duty, or under certain conditions court appearances or religious holidays.

When absences become excessive, it is our obligation to determine the causes for the benefit of the entire student body, as well as for your child (Education Code 46011). An excessive number of tardies/absences may compel us to require a doctor's note or visit to the school nurse or health aide to verify the need to grant an excused absence (California Code of Regulations, Title 5, Sec. 421).

Regardless of whether an absence is excused or unexcused, continued attendance problems may result in consequences that range from referral to the district's School Attendance Review Board (SARB) up to and including prosecution in court. If your child has specific health issues that need to be addressed by the school or an alternative educational program, please contact us in order that we may work together to resolve your child's attendance problems.

Your cooperation in fulfilling your legal obligation to see that your child attends school regularly and on time is greatly appreciated. Your child's progress, academic and social is our utmost concern, and we really want to work together to see this happen, it is imperative that all children receive all their instruction! Please contact us if we can be of assistance to you or if you have any questions regarding this matter.

Dr. Erica L. Hawkes

Principal



California Distinguished School