



# Del Norte Elementary School

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Kristen K. Bischoff  
Principal

Margaret Daugherty  
Assistant Principal

## School Attendance Policy

Dear Del Norte Families,

As you know, our goal for student attendance is 97%. We have begun a "Less Than Five Campaign" which encourages all students to have less than five absences the entire year. This includes both excused and unexcused absences. Please do everything you can to schedule all appointments after 3:10 pm or after 12:30pm on Fridays. We will hold an exciting celebration at the end of the year and offer several rewards for students who complete the "Less Than Five" campaign successfully.

Per district policy, an excused absence is:

1. Illness
2. Family Emergency – court hearing, funeral of immediate family member
3. Cultural Ceremony

A letter or phone call from a parent or guardian is required the first day a child is absent from school in order for the absence (above) to be considered "excused."

Del Norte will require documentation on the second consecutive absence in order for it to be "excused." This documentation can include:

1. Doctor's Note
2. Hospital Note
3. Letter from a Medicine Man

A phone call/note from home will not be enough to excuse an absence after the first excused absence has occurred the previous day. In other words, we will only excuse the first day a child is absent as long as we receive correspondence from a parent or guardian. Days that immediately follow the first excused absence will require documentation for them to be excused.

We also understand that circumstances arise that are beyond our control. Under certain circumstances, it is necessary for us to handle absences on a case-by-case basis. Please contact either of the building Principals if you feel an absence should be excused without documentation.

Excessive tardies prevent our students from fully engaging in learning that takes place at the beginning of the day. Please ensure your child is at school no later than 8:00 am every day.

Please know that our priority is the education of your children. Let's work together to ensure they have a positive and productive school-year.

Sincerely,

Kristen K. Bischoff, Principal

Margaret Daugherty, Assistant Principal

"Gallup McKinley County Schools recognizes the diversity and worth of all individuals regardless of national origin, race, religion, sex or sexual orientation in any educational programs, activities or employment. Gallup McKinley County Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, disability or age in its programs and activities. Gallup McKinley County Schools provide equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups."

## **New Mexico Compulsory School Attendance Law**

School attendance is priority at Del Norte Elementary. Below are the procedures we follow regarding unexcused absences in accordance with the **New Mexico Compulsory School Attendance Law (22-12-1 NMSA, 1978)**.

### **Step #1**

When a child has **five unexcused absences**, a letter is sent home to the parent(s) or guardian(s) advising the child has five unexcused absences.

### **Step #2**

When a child has **seven unexcused absences**, another letter is sent home to the parent(s) or guardian(s) advising the child has seven unexcused absences. In addition, the student will be referred to the Student Assistance Team (SAT) for a meeting to discuss the attendance issue and how the child can be supported by the school. Parent(s) and guardian(s) will be invited to attend and participate in the meeting.

### **Step #3**

When a child reaches **10 unexcused absences**, parent(s) or guardian(s) will receive a "Habitual Truancy" letter and a referral to the Gallup McKinley County Schools Hearing Authority. In addition, the District Attorney's office will be notified according to the **New Mexico Compulsory School Attendance Law**.

Students who have good attendance are more successful academically, have better peer relationships, develop healthy habits, and feel they are an important part of the school community. We encourage you to have your child at school and on time, each and every day.

Thank you for your cooperation and support in providing an excellent education for your child.

**I have read and understand Del Norte's School Attendance Policy as well as the New Mexico Compulsory School Attendance Law. I will do my best to ensure my child has good attendance while at Del Norte Elementary School.**

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Parent/Guardian Signature

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Date

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Child's Name