

## Hillcrest Middle School Attendance Policy

School attendance is not only a good habit, state law requires it. Arizona State Law (15-802.E, 15-803) requires that "Every person who has custody of a child between the ages of six and sixteen years shall make sure the child attends school for the full time school is in session unless able to attend due to illness or another legitimate reason." (Please note, this is regardless of their letter grades)

To encourage and improve school attendance, Hillcrest Middle School has implemented a truancy program in partnership with Maricopa County Juvenile Court. This truancy program is called C.U.T.S. (Court Unified Truancy Suppression). We will be tracking attendance very closely. Absences are reported to the state in half-day increments. A student is "habitually truant" if he/she has five or more unexcused absences from school. A student that is absent more than ten percent (18 days) of the required school days per year is considered to have "excessive absences" whether the absence is excused or unexcused.

Our C.U.T.S. procedure is as follows: on or about the 10<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> absence, we are required to send you a letter (via email) advising you of your student's status. After the 19<sup>th</sup> absence, you will receive a phone call or email to discuss your student's attendance. If we do not hear from you, we will schedule a C.U.T.S. L.I.T.E (Limited Intervention to Educate) meeting for you, your student, our administration and a Maricopa County Juvenile Probation Officer.

Medical documentation (e.g. a doctor's note) is of vital importance to support your student's absence. If you have a doctor's note listing specific dates of absence, please turn them in to the front office. Doing this will eliminate that particular absence from counting against your student. It is imperative that you call our attendance line to report every absence. Our attendance line number is 623.376.3390

It is our goal to prepare your student for high school, where excessive absences can lead to a loss of credit and the ability to graduate on time. Communication is the key to helping us achieve this goal. Please contact us if you have any questions.

