Dear Parents/Guardians and Students,

As the Director of the Student Services Department, I want to welcome you to the schools of the Pajaro Valley Unified School District (PVUSD) for the 2018-2019 school year. One of our priorities in the Student Services Department is that all the children in our community be in school every day that school is in session. Daily school attendance is also required by California Education Code 48200 with compulsory attendance for students 6 to 18 years of age. Educators know that daily school attendance improves student achievement, to which we are all dedicated. Assist us by talking to your child and making daily, “on time” school attendance an important family value for your child. Education Code does allow excusable absences for the following reasons:

1) Illness (If more than 2 consecutive days of absence, may require a Doctor’s written explanation)
2) Medical, dental or optical service
3) Funeral services for immediate family (1 day if service is held in California, 3 days if service is held outside of California)
4) Quarantine
5) Other justifiable personal reasons (see Annual Parent Notification Booklet for details)

You, as the parent/guardian of the student, must send a note and/or phone the school within 3 school days to clear any of these excusable absences. Failure to excuse the absence results in a recorded truancy on the student’s record. It is also important that you know that the State only awards funding to school districts for actual attendance – the student must actually be in school. This means the State does not fund districts for the excusable absences listed above.

Another way to ensure your child’s daily attendance is by reviewing the school district’s 2018-2019 calendar and planning family holidays and vacations to occur on school holidays. Even parent notification to the school of a student’s absence for a family vacation results in lost instructional time for the student and is not an excusable reason for absence. Some other examples of reasons that are NOT excusable for students’ absences are:

*Going shopping  *Visiting relatives  *Oversleeping
*Minor illness  *No school uniform  *Car trouble
*Student’s birthday  *Childcare by the student at home

School staff may request your attendance at a conference when your child is absent for these or other non-excusable reasons.

High school students who maintain good daily attendance can enjoy certain privileges:

1. The opportunity to receive a work permit for employment (obtained from the school)
2. The opportunity to receive a driver’s license

Students who fail to attend school risk the loss of these privileges according to Education Code and Vehicle Code 13202.7. A student’s driver’s license or the opportunity to obtain a license can be suspended to age 18.

Any school may send a formal letter to the parents/guardians of students who accumulate 3 days of unexcused absences. This letter will inform the family of a potential declaration of truant on your child’s school record according to Education Code 48260. Be aware that students will be dropped from enrollment if 10 consecutive days of absence occur and the parents have failed to contact the school staff. The PVUSD’s goal for 2018-2019 is to continue to improve our district’s actual attendance to 97% or better. We appreciate your assistance in achieving this goal since every day of good school attendance can count towards your student’s continued academic success.

Thank you for your support.

Suzanne Smith, Director of Student Services