



STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
**KA'A'AWA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**  
51-296 KAMEHAMEHA HIGHWAY  
Ka'a'awa, HAWAII 96730  
PHONE: 305-6650

## Ka'a'awa Elementary School Attendance Policy

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Our school has adopted an attendance plan to assist in student achievement. An attendance rate of 95% is the minimum required by the state. The Strive Hi Readiness indicators measure whether a school is doing its part in ensuring students are ready to move through the K-12 pipeline prepared to graduate ready for college and careers. At the elementary school level, Chronic Absenteeism is used as a measure in determining whether students are on track to graduate ready for college and careers.

Our attendance policy helps us keep close track of attendance, ensure greater safety for our students, provide services for families needing assistance, and plan for school-wide incentives for good attendance. As a school, we want to know where our children are everyday; we want to be helpful to families who need assistance; and we want to congratulate and celebrate children and families who are helping to make good attendance a reality in our school.

For our school's purposes, the term 'attendance' refers to being at school **on time, all day, every day.** Therefore, we expect that students will be **lined up with their class at 7:50** when the bell rings (no exceptions.) Otherwise, they will be considered tardy in the morning. Students are expected to remain in school until being dismissed at the end of the school day at 2:05 (except for Wednesdays at 12:40). According to the Department of Education State of Hawaii School Attendance Procedures, students who are not present in school for at least three hours will be considered absent.

Children who arrive late will be given a tardy slip from the front office before joining their class. Breakfast ends at 7:40 and the cafeteria will be vacated by 7:45 to help ensure that children are with their classes when the bell rings at 7:50.

Families can help by calling the school if their child is sick. We will have an answering machine that can take your call from 3:30 p.m. until 7:00 a.m. After 7:00 a.m., school personnel will be available to take your call. If your child is not in school and we do not hear from you by 8:30, our Health Aide will give you a call. This is what we call a **Safe-to-School Call**. This not only helps us keep track of attendance, but it also guarantees the safety of your child. If your child should fail to appear at school in the morning, you would know quickly. Other ways families can help our efforts to monitor attendance are:

- Informing the school immediately when experiencing a rare situation like death or serious illness.
- Planning trips during scheduled school vacations.
- Planning doctor and dentist visits outside of school hours as much as possible.

The school will only excuse absences when written documentation (note) is submitted within three (3) days upon the student's return to school, and absences are for one of the following reasons:

- Medical or dental reasons, injury, or quarantine (i.e. chicken pox, measles, etc.). A verifiable note must be provided by a doctor or dentist for five (5) or more consecutive absences.
- Death in the family
- Ka'a'awa School authorized activities (i.e. History Day, Physical Fitness Meet, etc.)

Aside from monitoring attendance, we also have **preventative** measures to help improve our attendance:

- Lunch Bunch: On an as needed basis, children will be invited to spend lunch with our counselor, Mrs. Li'i Bee, to discuss strategies to improve attendance.
- Attendance awards: Families and children will be celebrated and recognized for their efforts to improve attendance with attendance awards. These will be given for either perfect attendance or improved attendance, as determined by the Attendance Committee.

Lastly, our school has interventions for families & children who need more assistance, such as:

- Calls home
- Letters home
- Home Visits
- Attendance Plans

Please refer to the attached document in this letter, which outlines our Attendance Interventions. The interventions can also be found on our school's website at <http://kaaawa.k12.hi.us>.

We are confident that we can work together to improve attendance, which will benefit our student's learning and development. Please sign and return the yellow form to your child's teacher to acknowledge you have received Ka'a'awa Elementary School's new attendance policy. Your feedback is valuable and needed. Please write any questions or comments below and return the yellow form.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Luke-Payne, Principal

Tamar Li'i Bee, Counselor

Miriam Ortiz-Gouveia, District Social Worker

Dee Domingues, Office Clerk

**One to Four Absences/Tardies: Clerk-Monitoring Call/Start the Attendance Card**

Monitoring phone calls from the office are placed to the homes of absent students. The attendance clerk attempts to acknowledge the absence with the parent, and maintains a record of all successful and unsuccessful attempts to make contact.

**Five to Nine Absences/Tardies: Counselor Sends 1<sup>st</sup> letter & Intervention Phone Call**

The first letter is sent home. The parent receives an intervention phone call from the counselor. A discussion about the attendance concern takes place. The counselor attempts to assist in getting the child to school on time by brainstorming with the parent. The counselor notates the conversation including the parents’ responsiveness and concerns for future support.

**Ten Absences/Tardies: Counselor Sends 2<sup>nd</sup> letter & Referral to Intervention Team:**

The second letter is sent home. A referral is made to the Intervention team. The parent is invited to attend a meeting to discuss ways to help the child improve attendance and catch up on missed school and homework assignments. A solution/plan is set for the family and child to resolve the problem.

**Eleven to Fourteen Absences/Tardies: Counselor Sends 3<sup>rd</sup> Letter and Home Visit**

The third letter is sent home. The Intervention Team (Counselor, Principal, Clerk, SSC, Social Worker (or any combination of these)) conducts a home visit. Once again, attendance expectations are expressed. The team and parent brainstorm ways to resolve the problem.

**Fifteen Plus Absences Principal/Counselor: District or Court Intervention**

After relentless supportive efforts to increase the child’s attendance with only minimal improvement, it is appropriate to take a more punitive stance. This may take the form of a referral to court authorities.

----- **Cut and Return** -----

**Ka’a’awa Elementary School Attendance Policy**

Sign and return this slip to your child’s teacher to acknowledge your receipt of Ka’a’awa Elementary School’s Attendance Policy at the start of the school year.

Child’s Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_