



Monday, December 8, 2014

Dear Parents/Guardians:

Re: SchoolConnects Safe Arrival Program

One measure of keeping students safe is ensuring students have safely arrived at school. It is important that if your child is going to be absent or late for any reason, you contact the office immediately and report the reason for the absence.

If there is no report about the absence, we will make attempts to contact you to determine the reason for the absence through our Safe Arrival Program. We have now moved to an automated call-out system for our Safe Arrival Program. This system will mean that you will be contacted more quickly than is currently possible with a manual system.

Beginning next week, parents/guardians of students who have an unexplained absence (one where the school has not been previously notified) will be contacted to verify the reason for the absence.

The system call-out will work as follows:

- Parents/guardians identified in TDSB's Student Information Systems who has access to student records, and emergency contact with priority 1 or 2 will receive a call.
- When you receive the call, you are **required to listen to the entire message and follow the prompts accordingly**.
- You will be asked if you are aware or unaware of your child's absence.
- If unaware, you will be asked to call the school immediately.
- If you are aware of the absence, you will be asked to enter the reason for your child's absence. The following options will be provided for you:
 1. Illness
 2. Doctor Appointment
 3. Dentist Appointment
 4. Family Matter
 5. Weather
 6. Other

- At the end of the message, you will have to press 2 to confirm you received the message.
- If you do not confirm receipt, you will receive a call on your mobile phone.
- If there is no response from a Priority 1 contact, this same process will be followed for Priority 2 contacts.
- If there is no contact with either Priority 1 or Priority 2, this entire process will be repeated 3 times in 10 minute intervals.

This same process will be followed for the afternoon attendance.

In the evening, all parents/guardians of students who were late that day will receive a call informing them of their child's tardiness.

With this in mind, it is important that your contact information on file at the office is up-to-date. Please let the office know immediately if your contact information changes at any time throughout the school year.

We recognize that regular attendance is essential to the safety, academic success, and well-being of all students. Thank you for your continued cooperation with keeping your child safe and accounted for.

Please review the following Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) for additional information about our new automated system.

Sincerely,

C. Birnbaum

Armour Heights Public School

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Why do schools have Safe Arrival Programs?

Student Safety is of utmost importance and parents need to be notified as soon as possible if their child has not arrived at school. The Safe Arrival Program complies with the *Education Act* and related Ministry of Education policies in respect of student attendance in order to maximize students' academic success and well-being.

2. Why are you moving to an automated call-out system?

Automation will allow our families to be contacted in a timely manner allowing us to confirm absences much sooner than using a manual system. This system reports allows us to better track student absences/lates and also help to send messages to the parents/guardians regarding their child's attendance in a timely manner.

3. Can I opt out of the Safe Arrival Program?

NO, the TDSB recognizes that regular attendance is essential to the safety, academic success, and well-being of all students.

4. Is there something I can do to prevent receiving calls from the automated system?

YES

- i. Ensure your child attends school every day on time.
- ii. Notify the school in advance when your child will be absent.

5. My child has two people listed as Priority 1. Will both people be contacted?

Yes, **IF** they are both listed as Guardian and have access to Student Records.

6. If both people are contacted, will they both have to confirm receipt of the message?

Yes, if one does not confirm receipt, the system will continue to call the other person.

7. What phone numbers will be called and in what order?

The order of contact will be:

- i. Priority 1 – Home
- ii. Priority 1 – Cell
- iii. Priority 2 – Home (unless it is the same home phone number)
- iv. Priority 2 – Cell
- v. The system does not call business phone numbers.

8. Can I change the priority contacts?

Yes, please call the office at 416-397-2950 and they will adjust the priority contacts in the Student Information System.

9. Can I have my child's babysitter contacted instead of me?

No. Only parents/guardians listed in the Student Information System will be contacted.

10. If I don't answer the phone, will a message be left on my voicemail?

Yes, however the calling process will continue until a live person confirms receipt of the call.

11. What time will the callouts happen?

- a. The morning call out will occur at approximately 9:00 a.m.
- b. The afternoon call out will occur at approximately 1:00 p.m.
- c. The evening call out (for late students) will begin at 6:00 p.m.

12. What if I arrive at school after 9:15 a.m.?

You will receive a safe arrival phone call. You will also receive a phone call informing you of your child's tardiness that evening.

13. What if my child is late for school because of the weather?

Unfortunately, the callout time is not adjustable. Regardless of weather conditions, the calls will still begin at 9:00 a.m. If there is a long line and you get your admit slip after 9:00 a.m., you will receive both a safe arrival call and an evening call.

14. What if my child's bus is late dropping them off, will I still receive a call?

No, you will not receive a call.

15. What if I have a question that is not answered in the FAQ?

You can phone the school at 416-397-2950 and ask for help.