



JAMES IRWIN CHARTER SCHOOLS

Committed to Character Development and Academic Excellence

Special Policy Addendum for School Emergencies

James Irwin Charter Schools, including James Irwin Charter High School, James Irwin Charter Middle School, James Irwin Charter Elementary School, James Irwin Charter Academy, and Power Technical Early Colleges has adopted the following temporary changes to school calendars, instructional time, and attendance in the event of a pandemic, such as COVID-19, or other natural disasters that requires students and staff to work remotely, and from here on in this policy known as “disasters”.

School Calendar Policy

The James Irwin Charter Schools (JICS) Board of Directors (BOD) will annually adopt a calendar that has been prepared for the upcoming school year by each of the school principals and chief executive officer. The school calendar will be no less than 160 days as specified by state law unless annually requested by the school(s) and approved by the state of Colorado. Although each of the school charters of JICS specify more than the state mandated minimum days and hours, the JICS BOD may amend these days and hours to state minimums in the event of disasters.

The school calendar shall include the dates for all professional development programs scheduled for the coming school year. A copy of the school calendar shall be available to all parents/guardians enrolled in a JICS school. Any change in the calendar, except for emergency closings or unforeseen circumstances, shall be preceded by adequate and timely notice. Each time a calendar is amended, and updated copy shall be submitted to the school’s authorizer.

For the 2020-2021 academic year, student contact days may include remote learning days as implemented as a result of public health and safety measures. If school is closed due to emergencies, which results in student-teacher contact time being reduced below the minimum hours/minutes allowed by state law and provided for in the calendar, the school leadership teams shall adjust the calendar to make up for the lost time. Notification by email shall be made to each school authorizer (Harrison D2, Charter School Institute, and El Paso D49) on the dates that the school closed and the planned make-up dates.

Instructional Time Policy

The JICS BOD defines “actively engaged in the educational process” as time when students are working toward achieving educational objectives under the supervision of a teacher, including:

- Classroom instruction time;



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- Individual student work time while at school, including study hall and library research;
- School-related field trips;
- Independent Study; and,
- School assemblies.

For in-person instruction, calculations for contact time may include passing periods between classes. Time calculated as “actively engaged in the educational process” shall not include:

- Lunch;
- Teacher preparation time; and,
- Passing between lunch and a class.

For the 2020-2021 school year, in response to COVID-19 and the flexibilities made available by the state, the JICS BOD expands its definition of “educational process” to include:

- Instruction delivered electronically
- Independent, remote work time for students that is directed and monitored by educators

For remote instruction, calculations for contact time may be based off of academic content covered, student demonstrations of learning, estimated times for students to complete independent work, and/or other methods identified by the school to compare in-person learning to remote learning. Additional information about how teacher-pupil instruction will occur during remote learning days as well as a bell schedule equivalency statements shall be further detailed by each school and made available at www.jamesirwin.org and will be sent electronically by email or Infinite Campus to parents and guardians.

Attendance Policy

During remote learning times, students will be marked “present” so long as they are engaged in the educational process. Attendance will be taken daily in the JICS student information system, Infinite Campus.

Remote learning offers some flexibility regarding when and where students complete coursework. Nevertheless, they are held fully accountable for meeting all state-mandated attendance requirements. Attendance is expected to be recorded by the parent daily and is verified by teachers to ensure the school is properly calculating and adequately monitoring the students’ time. Students must complete a minimum of 25.4 hours per week or 900 hours per year for full-time kindergarten students, 28 hours per week or 990 hours per year for students in grades 1-5 based on a 177 instructional day school calendar year, and 30 hours per week or



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1,080 hours per year for students in grades 6-12 based on an 180 instructional days in a school calendar year. JICS may reduce the number of student contact days to a minimum of 160 as a result of emergency closings or unforeseen circumstances. Instructional hours may be reduced to 1,056 for secondary schools, 968 hours for grades 1-5 and 870 hours for kindergarten if necessary, for the health, safety or welfare of students. These hours are accumulated through a variety of methods including:

- Completion of lessons assigned through the learning management system as documented with student login and lesson participation;
- Completion of assignments provided through external sites with access and login only available through direct links;
- Completion of offline work documented by parent;
- Attendance at a synchronous live session;
- In-person testing such as CMAS, PARCC, CoAlt, or other required state exams;
- Online assessments such as NWEA accessed through students accounts; and/or
- In-person attendance in which attendance is taken by the teacher on-site.

Secondary school attendance is monitored daily. Reports are used to show school login data, in addition to each unique course log-in and time spent in course. Synchronous class attendance is monitored by each teacher and also logged into reports.

The school calculates attendance in the following way:

- Attending 6+ hours daily in their remote learning course curriculum;
- Course progress in curricular assessments; and/or
- Attending live class sessions for each course as per the schedule.

Absences

Excused and unexcused absences will be calculated and tracked the same as each schools' current policies define "excused" and "unexcused". If a student is a remote learner and is unable to participate in class for a period of time, the parent/guardian is still expected to call or email the school receptionist in advance of the absence. For COVID-19 related absences, the school principal will have some latitude in excusing absences if a doctor's excuse is available.