

Pre-Arranged Absence Policy

Though family vacations present valuable experiences for kids, students missing school for prolonged periods of time associated with family vacations pose significant challenges for students and for planning class instruction. It is likely that parents are not aware of the impact such absences have on their child's education and on the ability of the school to function in a manner that serves the children best, particularly with the cumulative impact of several children missing school during the same time period, for example pre-Thanksgiving holiday. To address this challenge, Mercer Island Elementary Schools are instituting a policy for non-illness or non-emergency absences lasting three consecutive days or more.

- Families should notify the school office and teacher at least two weeks before the pre-planned absence occurs.
- Teachers will not prepare special homework packets in advance for families to take with them on vacation.
- Parents may wish to access information about class activities and assignments while away through teachers' regular all-class communications and/or websites, and by asking classmates or the parents of students in your child's class.
- When appropriate teachers will save work that was handed out during the child's absence. This work should be completed at home when the child returns to school.
- Upon a student's return from an absence, parents are responsible for reviewing work that was missed with their child/children. Students will have 2 days for each day they were absent to complete missed work.
- Parents should not request that teachers' make-up work with students.
- Children will miss some work that cannot be made up.

It is highly desirable for vacation activities to be blended into a child's education. Examples include keeping a journal or scrapbook for travel; digital records of trips, reading related books, maps or other educational material. It is recognized that there is educational value to travel.