

MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICY

Massachusetts law requires compulsory attendance for all students. Chapter 76, section 1 of the Massachusetts General Laws requires all children between the ages of six and sixteen to attend school. The school must uphold state laws relative to student attendance.

We strongly discourage family vacations when school is in session. In addition to compromising the attendance law, family vacations interrupt the educational process of each course in ways that make-up work cannot reverse. Teachers are not required to provide work in advance. It is the students' responsibility to ask each teacher for make-up assignments.

Student Absence Notification Program

At the commencement of each school year, parents/guardians will be sent a notice instructing them to call a designated telephone number at a designated time to inform the school of the student's absence and the reason for such absence. The notice will also require such parent or guardian to furnish the school with a home, work or other emergency telephone number where they can be contacted during the school day. If the school does not receive a message from the parent/guardian by the designated time, then the school shall call the telephone number or numbers furnished to inquire about the student's absence. Parents will be contacted within three (3) days of the student's absence if the Parent(s) or Guardian has not contacted the school regarding the absence.

Students arriving late to school must report to the main office with their parent or with a signed parent note.

Parents/guardians are encouraged to contact school staff and work collaboratively with them to correct the reasons that the student is missing school.

Middle School Attendance Policy for Absent and Tardy Students

A meeting will be scheduled with the building Principal (or his/her designee), the Parent(s)/Guardian and the student to develop an action plan to improve the student's attendance if a student has accrued any of the following:

- Five (5) or more unexcused absences in the school year
- Five (5) or more days tardy (unexcused)
- Two (2) or more classes/periods (unexcused)

Please note that when a student has been absent for five (5) or more consecutive days, parents must obtain a doctor's note and submit it to school.

If a student is absent for eight or more days in a quarter, school officials may file a CRA (Child Requiring Assistance) petition with the Juvenile Court which could result in a hearing before a Juvenile Court Judge. Prior to the filing of a CRA, Families and Students will be required to work with school administrators to improve the student's attendance.

Chronic absenteeism may also lead to academic failure for the year and retention of the student.

An **Excused Absence/Tardy** includes:

- Documented illness or injury
- Bereavement/family funeral
- Major religious observations
- Extraordinary family circumstances (excused at the discretion of the principal)

An **Unexcused Absence/Tardy** is any absence or tardy that is not covered by the aforementioned definition of “Excused Absence/Tardy”. Examples of an unexcused absence may include, but may not be limited to:

- Repetitive or chronic absence or tardiness due to illness or injury not documented by a doctor or other medical professional.
- Cutting class (suspendable offense)
- Truancy
- Family vacations
- Undocumented absences
- Non-emergency family situations

Before School Protocol

- The school building opens to students at 7:50. Students may enter the building at 7:30 to attend breakfast and must remain in the cafeteria until 7:50. Faculty members who wish to meet with students in the morning must provide them with a pass to either enter the building early or leave the cafeteria prior to 7:50.
- On days when weather conditions are poor, students may enter the building earlier and will be supervised by in designated areas until 7:50, when they will be allowed to proceed to their homerooms.
- Students who arrive to homeroom after 8:00 will be marked tardy by their homeroom teacher.

During School Protocol

- Students who need to be dismissed from school during the day must present a note from a parent in the main office between 7:50 and 8:00 a.m. In emergency or unforeseen circumstances, the Principal or his/her designee may dismiss a student upon parent request.
- If a student whose name does not appear on the daily attendance has been absent from class, teachers must report the absence to the main office. Teachers must notify the attendance secretary if a student who is present is marked absent on the daily attendance.
- When in the hallways during class, all students need to have a pass. If another student is using the classroom pass, students need to wait until it is available unless special circumstances allow the student to leave the classroom, e.g. IEP or 504 accommodations.
- No student may leave school grounds without permission. Leaving without permission will automatically result in disciplinary action.

After School Protocol

- Students are expected to leave the building by 2:50 p.m. unless supervised by an adult. Students who stay and are unsupervised will be asked to leave. Unsupervised students will be reported to an administrator and their parents will be called.
- Students who are absent from school may not attend or participate in any extracurricular functions such as intramurals, dances, concerts, or the play, the same day.