

ATTENDANCE POLICY*

Parents and students are responsible for attendance which shall be required of all students during the days and hours that school is in session. Students are expected to:

- be present at school each and every day;
- attend class as scheduled;
- arrive at school and each class on time; and
- demonstrate appropriate behavior and a readiness to learn.

A. Attendance Defined

1. School Attendance - Students are to be counted in attendance only if they are actually present for at least two (2) hours of the day or engaged in a school-approved educational activity which constitutes a part of the instructional program for the student.
2. Class Attendance - Students are to be counted in attendance if they are physically present in class for at least half of the class period, have been excused by the teacher on a class-related assignment, or have been requested by a member of the school support staff for an approved school activity.
3. Tardiness – A student is considered tardy if he/she is not present at the moment the school bell rings for the class assigned. Note: If a student is not present when attendance is taken but is present later in the school day, that student must be considered in attendance, but tardy, and the absence should be changed. A student who is tardy should never remain on record as being absent.
4. Early Sign-outs - No student shall be released within the final thirty (30) minutes of the school day unless authorized by the school principal or principal's designee, e.g., emergency, sickness.

B. Reasonable Excuses for Time Missed at School

1. Personal illness of the student (medical evidence may be required by the principal for absences exceeding five (5) consecutive days). The written statement must include all the days the student has been absent from school. If a student is continually ill and repeatedly absent from school due to a specific medical condition, he/she must be under the supervision of a health care provider in order to receive excused absences from school.
2. Court appearance of the student, subpoena by law enforcement agency, or mandatory court appearance.
3. Absence due to a medical appointment requires a written statement from a health care provider indicating the date and time of the appointment and submitted to the principal.
4. An approved school activity (absences recorded, but not reported).
5. Other absences with prior approval of the principal.
6. Attendance at a center under the Department of Children and Families supervision.
7. Significant community events with prior permission of the principal. When more than one (1) school is involved, the Region Superintendent will determine the status of the absence.

8. Observance of a religious holiday or service when it is mandated for all members of a faith that such a holiday or service be observed.
9. Military Connected Students – M-DCPS is committed to assist students from military families and will continue to facilitate the development and implementation of policies that directly impact children of military personnel. In an effort to ease the burden of our students who have parents that may be deployed or on “Block Leave,” schools will allow up to a total of 5 days of excused absences each academic year to allow families time together.
10. Death in the immediate family.
11. School sponsored event or educational enrichment activity that is not a school-sponsored event, as determined and approved by the principal. The student must obtain advance written permission from the principal. Examples of special events include: public functions, conferences, and regional, state, and national competitions.
12. Outdoor suspension.
13. Other individual student absences beyond the control of the parent or student, as determined and approved by the principal. The principal shall require documentation related to the situation.

C. Unexcused School Absence Due to:

1. vacations, personal services, local non-school event, program, or sporting activity;
2. older students providing day care services for siblings;
3. illness of others; and
4. non-compliance of immunization requirements unless lawfully exempted.

Absences not included in the excused absences listed above shall be considered unexcused. Any student who has been absent from school will be marked unexcused absent until he/she submits the required documentation. Failure to provide the required documentation within three (3) school days upon the return to school will result in an unexcused absence. Unexcused absences do not require that the teacher provide make-up work for the student.

A student accumulating ten (10) or more class unexcused absences in an annual course or five (5) or more class unexcused absences in a designated semester course may have quarterly, semester, and final grade(s) withheld pending an administrative screening and completion of assigned interventions by the Attendance Review Committee.

Unexcused absences shall not be grounds for suspension from school but may result in detention or placement in existing alternative programs.

Any student who fails to attend a regularly scheduled class and has a “no excuse” for the absence should be referred to the appropriate administrator. Disciplinary action should include notification to parents. Chronic truancy or deliberate nonattendance in excess of fifteen (15) days school days within a ninety day (90) calendar period will be sufficient grounds for withdrawal of students sixteen (16) years of age or older, who are subject to compulsory school attendance under [Florida Statutes § 1003.21](#).

The teacher will:

1. encourage school and class attendance with challenging and rigorous instruction and curriculum and by demonstrating an interest in the welfare of students;
2. take attendance during homeroom and whenever students change instructors in elementary schools and take attendance each period of the school day in secondary schools, and report absences as required by the school;
3. at the request of the student or parent, provide make-up assignments for excused absences/tardinesses.

The student will:

1. attend school/classes 180 days each school year;
2. be reported as present for the school day in order to participate in athletic and extracurricular activities;
3. request the make-up assignments for all excused absences/tardies from his/her teachers upon his/her return to school or class within three (3) days. It should be noted that all classwork, due to the nature of the instruction, is not readily subject to make-up work; and
4. complete the make-up assignments for classes missed within the equivalent number of days absent. Failure to make up all assignments will result in the lower assessment of the student's academic and/or effort grade.

The parent will:

1. be responsible for his/her child's school attendance as required by law and stress the importance of regular and punctual school attendance with his/her child;
2. report and explain an absence or tardiness to the school;
3. ensure that his/her child has requested and completes make-up assignments for all excused absences/tardies from the child's teachers upon his/her return to school or class; and
4. appear before the Attendance Review Committee at the scheduled time to provide information relating to his/her child's absences, and support the prescribed activities designated.

**This information can be found in [School Board Policy 5200 - Attendance](#)*