

# REGULATION

## MEDFORD TOWNSHIP PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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Attendance

### R 5200 ATTENDANCE

#### A. GENERAL INFORMATION

In the event a pupil is to be absent from school, a parent(s)/guardian(s) is required to call and notify the office regarding the absence. Calls should be made at least thirty (30) minutes prior to the opening of school. Calls will be received by an answering device twenty-four (24) hours a day. The parent(s)/guardian(s) should indicate the pupil's name, homeroom teacher, and reason for the absence.

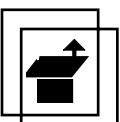
A pupil returning from an absence of any length must submit to the homeroom teacher a note stating the reason for the absence, dated and signed by the parent(s)/guardian(s). A physician's note explaining the pupil's absence for five (5) or more days is required. It is recommended that a physician's note be obtained for all visits. Children participating in "Take Our Children to Work Day" (fourth Tuesday in April) will be considered absent (excused absence if school is notified).

#### B. CO-CURRICULUM ACTIVITY PARTICIPATION

In order to participate in a co-curricular activity, students must be in school for no less than 3.5 hours of any given full session school day. Any pupil who goes home due to medical reasons may not participate in any activity held later the same day.

#### C. DEFINITIONS

1. "Attendance" is a pupil's presence in school and in the classroom to which he/she is assigned at the times scheduled for instruction or other school activities.
  - a. A pupil will be considered to have attended school if he/she has been present at least four hours during the school day.
  - b. A Kindergarten pupil will be considered to have attended school if he/she has been present at least two hours during the Kindergarten session to which the pupil is assigned.



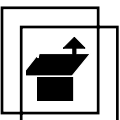
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- c. A pupil not present in school because of his/her participation in an approved school activity, such as a field trip, meeting, cooperative education assignment, or athletic competition will be considered to be in attendance.
2. "Excused absence" is a pupil's absence from school for a full day or a portion of a day for one or more of the following reasons:
    - a. The pupil's illness,
    - b. The pupil has uncoverable and/or uncovered weeping skin lesion(s), whether or not the pupil has been screened for HIV. No pupil may attend or visit school if he/she has an uncoverable and/or uncovered weeping skin lesion,
    - c. Family illness or death
    - d. Educational opportunities
    - e. Excused religious observances, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:36-14 through 16
    - f. Where appropriate, when consistent with Individualized Education Programs, the Individuals with Disabilities Act, accommodation plans under 29 U.S.C. §§ 794 and 705(20), and individualized health care plans pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:16-2.3,
    - g. The pupil's suspension from school,
    - h. The pupil's required attendance in court,
    - i. Necessary and unavoidable medical or dental appointments that cannot be scheduled at a time other than the school day,
    - j. An absence for a reason not listed above, but deemed excused by the Superintendent, upon a written request by the pupil's parent or legal guardian to the Building Principal or designee stating the reason for the absence and requesting permission for the absence to be an excused absence,



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k. An extreme family emergency.

3. "Truancy" is a pupil's absence from all or a part of the school day without the knowledge of the pupil's parent(s) or legal guardian(s). A pupil will also be considered truant if he/she:

a. Leaves school without permission when school is still in session,

b. Leaves class because of illness and does not report to the school nurse as directed, or

c. Is present in school but is absent from class without approval. Such truancy from class is a "class cut."

4. "Unexcused absence" is a pupil's absence for all or part of a school day for any reason other than those listed in A2 above.

### D. NOTICE TO SCHOOL OF A PUPIL'S ABSENCE

1. The parent(s) or legal guardian(s) or adult pupil is requested to call the school office before 7:00 a.m. of the morning of the pupil's absence.

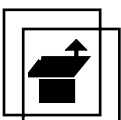
2. The parent(s) or legal guardian(s) of a pupil who attended morning session but will not attend afternoon session should call the school office before 10:00 a.m. to give notice of the pupil's absence.

3. The parent(s) or legal guardian(s) or adult pupil who anticipates a future absence or anticipates that an absence will be prolonged should notify the Building Principal, who will assist in the arrangement of make-up work.

### E. READMISSION TO SCHOOL AFTER AN ABSENCE

1. A pupil returning from an absence of any length must present to the Principal a written statement, dated and signed by the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) or adult pupil, of the reasons for the absence.

2. A note explaining a pupil's absence for noncommunicable illness for a period of more than five school days must be accompanied by a physician's statement of the pupil's illness.



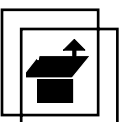
3. A pupil who has been absent by reason of having or being suspected of having a communicable disease must present to the Principal written evidence of being free of communicable disease, in accordance with Policy No. 8451.

F. INSTRUCTION

1. A pupil who anticipates an excused absence due to a temporary or chronic health condition may be eligible for home instruction in accordance with Policy No. 2412. The parent(s) or legal guardian(s) or adult pupil must request home instruction.
2. Pupils absent for any reason are expected to make up the work missed. In grade one and above, the pupil is responsible for requesting missed assignments and any assistance required. Teachers will provide make-up assignments as necessary.
3. In general, pupils will be allowed two day(s) to make up missed work for each one day of absence. Teachers shall make reasonable accommodations to extend time for pupils.
4. A pupil who missed a test because of an excused absence shall be offered an opportunity to take the test or an alternate test. ; in no case will a pupil who missed a test because of his/her observance of a religious holiday be denied an opportunity to make up the test.

G. DENIAL OF COURSE CREDIT

1. The teacher will determine the credit to be awarded a pupil for make-up work, subject to the rules set forth in this section. Where class participation is a factor in the learning process, the teacher may consider a pupil's absences in determining a final grade, except that absences for the observance of a pupil's religious holiday or for a suspension from school cannot adversely affect the pupil's grade. The teacher may record an incomplete grade, in accordance with Regulation No. 2624, for a pupil who has not had full opportunity to make up missed work.



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### H. ABSENCES

#### ATTENDANCE BENCHMARK

#### ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION

5 Days Absent

- Confirmation letter to parent(s)/guardian(s) (Middle School Only)

10-14 Days Absent

- First written notification to parent(s)/guardian(s) by principal
- Conference may be required at principal's discretion

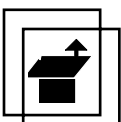
15-20 Days Absent

- Second written notice
- Conference required with principal and/or support team
- Action plan developed to improve attendance and address academic achievement
- Possible referral to Medford Township Municipal Court
- Consideration for retention

23-25 Days Absent

- Third written notice
- Conference required with principal
- Complaint filed in Medford Township Municipal Court
- Pupil Assistance Committee required to address possible retention and/or to develop/revise action plan

1. For pupils with disabilities, the attendance plan and punitive and remedial procedures of N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.8 and Policy and Regulation 5200 shall be applied, where applicable, in accordance with the pupil's Individualized Education Programs, pursuant to 20 U.S.C. §1400 et seq.; the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act; the procedural protections set forth in N.J.A.C. 6A:14; accommodation plans under 29 U.S.C. §§794 and 705(20); and individualized health care plans, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:16-2.3.



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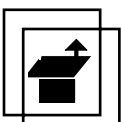
2. All receiving schools pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:14-7.1(a) shall act in accordance with F. above for each pupil with up to four cumulative unexcused absences.
  - a. For each pupil attending a receiving school with five or more cumulative unexcused absences, the absences shall be reported to the sending district by the receiving school.
    - (1) The sending school district shall proceed in accordance with the district Board of Education policies and procedures pursuant to F. above and the provisions of F.2. through F.4. above, as appropriate.

### I. ABSENCES DUE TO VACATION AND/OR ILLNESS

Absences due to vacations will be counted in the total number of days absent from school. The following guidelines must be followed relative to absences that will result due to a vacation:

- When vacations during the school year are planned by parents, a written notice is to be sent to the school at least one week in advance of the intended vacation. Students will obtain their assignments upon returning to school.
- Students absent for five days or more miss a substantial amount of classwork. It is the responsibility of the parent to ensure that missed assignments are completed.
- Upon return from vacation, the student will be provided time to make-up missed assignments as follows:
- School Days Absent =====>Calendar Day to Make-Up Work
  - 1 day=====> 1 day
  - 2-6 days=====>3 days
  - 7 or more days=====>5 days

Upon returning to school after an illness, students should meet with each individual teacher to arrange a work make-up schedule within a reasonable period of time. If a student is absent three consecutive days, a parent(s) or guardian(s) may contact the guidance office for missed assignments. The work will be available the following day at



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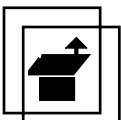
3:00 P.M. for pick up. Elementary students who are absent should check with friends; Middle School students should check with friends and/or call the Homework Hotline.

### J. UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

In N.J.S.A. 18A:38-25-31, N.J.A.C. 6:3-9, and N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.8, the New Jersey Department of Education defines an unexcused absence as an absence for which no communication has occurred between the school and the parent. In other words, the parent did not report the absence to the school and the school was unable to contact the parent regarding the absence. The following administrative actions will be taken after the specified number of absences in accordance with the above regulations in addition to the actions specified in the school's disciplinary code:

One to Four Unexcused Absences - Truancy Officer to investigate absence. Principal forwards written notification to parent(s)/guardian(s) and conducts a conference. An action plan is developed to remedy the situation. School staff will make a reasonable attempt to notify the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) of each unexcused absence prior to the start of the following school day. The district will proceed in accordance with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 9:6-1 et seq. and N.J.A.C. 6A: 16-11, if a potential missing or abused child situation is suspected. The district will work with law enforcement and other authorities and agencies as appropriate.

Five to Nine Unexcused Absences - School staff will make a reasonable attempt to notify the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) of each unexcused absence prior to the start of the following school day. Truancy Officer provides documentation for principal. The Truancy Officer or other school staff will conduct a follow-up investigation, including contact with the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) to determine the cause of each unexcused absence. Principal forwards written notification to parent(s)/guardian(s) and conducts a conference. The action plan will be revised and the matter will be referred to the building Pupil Assistance Committee. The revised action plan will identify patterns of unexcused absences and establish actions based on the student's needs and specify the interventions for achieving the outcomes, supporting the student's return to school and regular attendance. Other revisions to the action plan may include testing, assessment or evaluation of the student's academic behavioral or health needs; consideration of an alternative placement, or referral to a community based social or



health provider agency or other community resource. The matter will be reported to DYFS and the parent(s)/guardian(s) will be advised that the issue will be referred to Medford Township Municipal Court if unexcused absences exceed nine days. The district will proceed in accordance with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 9: 6-1 seq. and N.J.A.C. 6A: 16-11 if a potential or abused child situation is detected. The district will cooperate with law enforcement or other authorities and agencies as appropriate.

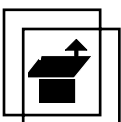
Ten or More Unexcused Absences - For a student between the ages of six and sixteen, Principal forwards written notification to parent(s)/guardian(s) and conducts a conference. Principal makes a mandatory referral to Medford Township Municipal Court utilizing Truancy Officer's documentation. The district will make a reasonable attempt to notify the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) of the mandatory referral. The district will continue to consult with the parent and the involved agencies to support the student's return to school and regular attendance. The district will cooperate with law enforcement and other authorities and agencies as appropriate. Also, the district will proceed in accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A: 38-28 through 31, Article 3B, Compelling Attendance at School and other applicable State and Federal statistics as required.

## K. DISCIPLINE

1. Pupils may be denied participation in co-curricular activities if their attendance fails to meet the standards set forth in Policy No. 2430.
2. Pupils may be denied participation in athletic competition if their attendance fails to meet the standards set forth in Board Policy No. 2431.
3. No pupil who is absent from school for observance of a religious holiday may be deprived of any award or of eligibility for or opportunity to compete for any award because of the absence.
4. The absence of a pupil missing from school for unexplained reasons will be handled in accordance with Regulation No. 8464.

## L. RECORDING ATTENDANCE

1. Teachers must accurately record the pupils present, tardy, and absent each day in each session or each class. Attendance





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records must also record pupils' attendance at out-of-school curricular events such as field trips.

2. Teachers must classify and record each absence as excused, unexcused, or truancy.
3. A report card will record the number of times the pupil was absent and tardy in each marking period.
4. A pupil's absence for observance of a religious holiday will not be recorded as such on any transcript or application or employment form.

### M. APPEAL

1. A truant pupil may be suspended or expelled for trancies in accordance with Policy Nos. 5610 and 5620.
2. A pupil who has been retained at grade level for excessive absences may appeal that action in accordance with Policy No. 5410.

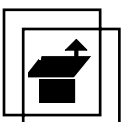
### N. LATE ARRIVAL AND EARLY DISMISSAL

Students who are not in their homeroom by the time listed below are considered to be late; Students who leave early are considered PM tardy.

|                           | <u>Arrival</u> | <u>Dismissal</u> |
|---------------------------|----------------|------------------|
| Haines Sixth Grade Center | 7:40 AM        | 2:10 PM          |
| Memorial Middle School    | 7:40 AM        | 2:10 PM          |
| Cranberry Pines School    | 8:15 AM        | 2:45 PM          |
| Taunton Forge School      | 8:15 AM        | 2:45 PM          |
| Allen School              | 8:50 AM        | 3:20 PM          |
| Chairville School         | 8:50 AM        | 3:20 PM          |
| Kirby's Mill School       | 8:50 AM        | 3:20 PM          |

If a pupil is late to school, he/she must be accompanied to the office and signed-in by the parent(s)/guardian(s). If the pupil enters alone, the parent(s)/guardian(s) will be contacted and reminded of the correct procedure.

No pupil shall be permitted to leave school before the close of the school day unless he/she is met in the school office by his/her



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parent(s)/guardian(s) or person authorized by the parent(s)/guardian(s) to act in his/her behalf. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) are asked to make every effort to schedule student appointments after the school day or at night in an effort to avoid students missing instruction.

### O. TARDINESS

#### TARDINESS BENCHMARK

#### ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION

2 Days Tardy

- Third and subsequent unexcused lateness during a report period

5 Days Tardy

- Confirmation letter to parent(s)/guardian(s)
- Student consequences may be assigned at the discretion of the principal

10-14 Days Tardy

- First written notification to parent(s)/guardian(s) by principal
- Conference may be required at principal's discretion
- Student consequences may be assigned at the discretion of the principal

15-20 Days Tardy

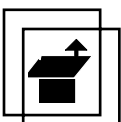
- Second written notice
- Conference required with principal and/or support team
- Action plan developed to improve tardiness and address academic achievement
- Possible referral to Municipal Court over 21 days

23-25 Days Tardy

- Third written notice
- Conference required with principal
- Complaint filed in Medford Township Municipal Court
- Pupil Assistance Committee required to develop/revise action plan

### P. ATTENDANCE IMPROVEMENT PLAN

1. The Superintendent will collect attendance data from each of the schools in the district and calculate the average daily attendance rate for the district and for each school. The attendance rate shall be calculated by dividing the total number



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of pupil days present for all pupils by the total possible number of pupil days present for all pupils and multiplying the result by one hundred.

2. When the average daily attendance rate for the district or for a school does not meet the New Jersey Department of Education requirements, performance objectives to improve pupil attendance pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:32-12.2(a)3 shall be developed.

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