

MT. LEBANON SCHOOL DISTRICT

ATTENDANCE POLICY

School Board Policy JED requires that any student returning from an absence must submit a written or electronic excuse within three (3) calendar days. If the excuse is not given or emailed to the homeroom teacher by the third (3rd) day after return, the absence will be considered illegal. An absence must include the following information:

Full Name
Date of absence
Reason for absence
Signature of parent/guardian (or sent from a district verified email address)

The Attendance Office will provide written notice to parents when a student accumulates five (5) full-day absences in a semester period.

Excused Absence or Tardy

The following constitute excused absences or tardiness:

Personal illness
Death in the immediate family
Traditionally-recognized religious holidays
Religious instruction
Court appearances
Quarantine
Pre-approved educational travel
District-approved tutorial programs not offered by the District

Unexcused Absence

Any unexcused absence is also unlawful. The following are penalties for unlawful absences or tardiness:

First Offense

When a child has accumulated three days (or their equivalent) of unlawful or unexcused absences as verified by the Principal or his/her designee, the parent is notified by mail by the Superintendent (or a Principal as the Superintendent's designee) with the First Offense Notice, advising the parent of the dates of unlawful or unexcused absences and including a description of the consequences that will follow if the child becomes habitually truant. The First Offense Notice shall be in the mode and language of communication preferred by the person in parental relation, may include an offer of a school attendance improvement conference and, when transmitted to a person who is not the biological or adoptive parent, shall be provided to the child's biological or

adoptive parent if the parent's mailing address is on file with the school and the parent is not precluded from receiving the information by court order.

Subsequent Offenses

If the child continues to incur unlawful or unexcused absences after the District has issued the First Offense Notice, the District shall then offer by advance written notice a school attendance improvement conference to the child and the person in parental relation, unless a conference was held previously following the First Offense Notice. The following shall apply:

- i. No legal requirement is placed upon the child or person in parental relation to attend the conference. The conference shall occur even if the person in parental relation declines to participate or fails to attend the scheduled conference after advance written notice and attempts to communicate via telephone.
- ii. The outcome of the conference shall be documented in a written school attendance improvement plan on a form substantially similar to one developed by the Department of Education.
- iii. Further legal action may not be taken by the school to address unexcused absences by the child until after the date for the scheduled school attendance improvement conference has passed.
- iv. The district shall not expel or impose out-of-school suspension, disciplinary reassignment or transfer for truant behavior.

Habitually Truant Consequences

- i. When a student under fifteen (15) years of age is habitually truant, the District:
 - a. Shall refer the student to a school-based or community-based attendance improvement program or the local children and youth agency.
 - b. May file a citation against the person in parental relation who resides in the same household as the student.
- ii. When a student fifteen (15) years of age or older is habitually truant, the District:
 - a. Shall refer the student to a school-based or community-based attendance improvement program.
 - b. May file a citation against the student or the person in parental relation who resides in the same household as the student.
 - c. May refer the student to the local children and youth agency, if the student continues to incur additional unexcused absences after being referred to a school-based or community-based attendance improvement program, or if the student refuses to participate in such program.
- iii. The procedures for filing a citation are set forth in Section 1333.2 of the School Code, as amended.
- iv. Additional penalties for violating compulsory school attendance requirements are set forth in Section 1333.2 of the School Code, as amended, and include, without limitation: fines, assignments of community service, completion of programs designed to improve attendance, referral for services or possible disposition as a dependent child under 42 Pa.C.S. Ch. 63, suspension of drivers licenses or ineligibility to apply for driver licenses.

Any additional unlawful student absence occurring more than three (3) days after the date of the first notice becomes a Subsequent Offense. The District will file the case with the district justice without further notice.

Unexcused Tardy

Students who are not in their assigned homerooms when the late bell rings are considered tardy. Tardiness is considered excused or unexcused for the same reasons as excused or unexcused absences.

Students are permitted three (3) unexcused tardies per semester. On the fourth (4th) unexcused tardy, the student will be assigned one (1) detention, and the parent/guardian will receive a written notice. Additionally, the student will be assigned one (1) detention for each unexcused tardy during that semester.