

Mustang Families,

We are writing to inform you of an important update to our attendance policy. Last night, the MPS Board of Education approved a change to Board Policy 5020 covering student attendance.

Starting in the 2024-2025 school year, the policy will reduce the number of allowable absences per semester for students from ten (10) to eight (8).

Each day a student is absent is a missed opportunity for learning and personal growth. The issue of Chronic Absenteeism has received significant attention recently, and this policy adjustment aligns our practices with State and Federal guidelines.

Following the lead of the Oklahoma State Department of Education (OSDE), which revamped its report card system in 2016 to include measures like Chronic Absenteeism, MPS first adjusted this policy in 2019, reducing allowable absences from twelve to ten. This change of further reduction for next year supports our commitment to meeting State Report Card standards and underscores the critical nature of consistent school attendance.

Research from Attendance Works highlights the profound impact of missing just two days a month on a student's academic journey. Students who miss this amount are at a higher risk of not reading at grade level by third grade, failing courses by middle school, and potentially dropping out by ninth grade.

Absenteeism isn't a new issue, nor is it unique to Mustang. Chronic absenteeism occurs when a student misses at least 10% of days in a school year. A new report from the United States Department of Education states that in 2021-22, two-thirds (66%) of enrolled students in the U.S. attended a school with high or extreme levels of chronic absence; this means at least one in five students in their school was missing almost four weeks throughout the school year.

Introducing the "Every Moment Matters" Campaign:

To promote regular attendance, we're launching the "Every Moment Matters" campaign. This initiative will highlight the significant learning moments that students miss when they are absent. Utilizing the hashtag #EveryMomentMatters, we will feature classroom achievements and stories on social media that illustrate the vibrant daily activities at MPS.



Even so, this is not an invitation for contagiously ill students to attend school; there must be a balance between attendance and health. Our website provides clear guidelines on when to stay home through easily accessible [infographics](#).

We will, of course, remind families of this policy change as we gear up for the new school year later this Summer, but we wanted to make everyone aware now as well to help make sure there were no surprises. Every day our students are present is a day filled with endless possibilities. Let's make every day count. As always, we want to conclude by thanking each of you for your continued support of Mustang Public Schools; it is truly our privilege to partner with you in educating your children.

Sincerely,
Charles Bradley, Superintendent
Mustang Public Schools

For more information on Chronic Absenteeism, please visit the OSDE website at <https://sde.ok.gov/chronic-absenteeism>.