

The logo for Kalamazoo Public Schools features the school's name in white serif font on a dark blue rectangular background with a white border. Behind the text, the letters 'KPS' are written in a large, red, stylized font.

Kalamazoo Public Schools

Every child. Every opportunity. Every time.

Attendance Procedures

2024-25

Kalamazoo Public Schools Attendance Procedures

Overview

The attendance procedures are designed for all students. Good attendance will help students do well in school, college, and at work. It does not matter if absences are excused or unexcused, they all represent lost time in the classroom and lost opportunity to learn. Too many absent students can impact the whole classroom. The federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requires that states report chronic absence data. Chronic absence is missing 10 percent or more school days due to absence for any reason – excused, unexcused absences, and suspensions. Chronic absence not only impacts the absentee students; it disrupts learning for an entire classroom when teachers have to repeat lessons for students returning to class. Families should avoid extended vacations that require your children to miss school. Try to line up vacations with the school's schedule. The same goes for doctor's appointments. Above all, set an example for your child. Show your child that attendance matters to you and that you will not allow an absence unless someone is truly sick.

School is students' first and most important job. They are learning about more than math and reading. They are learning how to show up for school on time every day, so that when they graduate and get a job, they will know how to show up for work on time every day. Students who attend school regularly are more likely to graduate and find good jobs. In fact, a high school graduate makes, on average, a million dollars more than a dropout over a lifetime.

All students aged six to sixteen are required to be in school according to state law. Parents/guardians are required by law to make sure their children attend school on a daily basis. Kalamazoo Public Schools (KPS) expects all students to attend school. A collaborative approach is used in educating young students, which includes the utilization of family support specialists, staff members and administrators to ensure that students attend school on a daily basis.

All students attending preschool programs will be encouraged to have good attendance. Preschool is a great time to start building a habit of good attendance. Studies show that poor attendance in preschool can predict absenteeism in later grades. The Early Childhood Programs support families in educating their children.

Programs such as the Kalamazoo Area Math and Science Center (KAMSC), Kalamazoo Innovative Learning Program (KILP), and the KPS virtual program will adhere to the KPS attendance procedures. The administrators will determine what changes to the procedures are needed. Any changes to the attendance procedures at the alternative programs need the superintendent's approval.

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According to the State of Michigan Compulsory Attendance law, a parent, legal guardian, or other person having control or charge of a child age six to sixteen is required to send the child to school during the entire school year, except under the limited circumstances specified in subsection (3) of section 380.1561. The exceptions include, but are not limited to, sending the child to a state approved, a nonpublic school, or educating the child at home in an organized educational program.

Although the compulsory school attendance law does not apply to children under the age of six, a child who is at least five years of age by September 1 of the school year and is a resident of a school district which provides kindergarten classes is entitled to enroll in kindergarten [MCL 380.1147].

The goal of the district is to have all students in school every day. Building administrators, in collaboration with staff members, will develop a process for acknowledging students with excellent and improved attendance in each school.

For students to get the most out of school, punctual and regular attendance is vital. Parents/guardians should call the school office as early as possible on the day of an absence. It is most helpful to have the phone call within the first hour of school. In addition, parents/guardians should provide a written excuse and request homework for any absences thus making the absence excused; without communication the absence is considered unexcused. When a student is absent, they are responsible for makeup work. Any day a child is absent and an appropriate contact with the school office is not made by the parent/guardian, attempts will be made to contact the parent/guardian.

Administrators will allow the following excuses for an absence (EA):

- Student illness and/or appointment verified by the parent/guardian or medical professional.
- Medically verified extended illness or hospitalization.
- Attending a funeral.
- Religious holiday.
- Absence due to a subpoenaed court appearance.
- Any time missed due to KPS school transportation issues.

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Schools will record an “SF” for school activity when the following:








- Participation in a school-sponsored field trip, early dismissal for curricular, co-curricular or extra-curricular activity, choir, band, debate, forensics, and other school functions.
- Time spent in an administrative level office, if called to the office by an administrator.
- A guidance office appointment if the appointment was pre-arranged or if the counselor calls the student to the guidance office.

Students will be given an opportunity to complete missed assignments, tests, and classwork. The school will also assist students with planned absences. Parents/guardians must submit a written request to the principal at least one week in advance. Arrangements will be made for the student to complete classroom assignments during their planned absence. Absences will be considered unexcused unless they fall under the criteria listed above.

When the absence from school is expected to be for an extended period due to physical disability or illness, parents should make homebound arrangements by working with their doctor and contacting Student Services at (269) 337-0161.

Please keep your student home from school if they have any of the symptoms in the chart. Returning to school after three or more days of illness requires a doctor’s note or proof of a positive COVID test.

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I NEED TO STAY HOME IF ...						
I HAVE A FEVER	I AM VOMITING AND/OR HAVE DIARRHEA	I HAVE COVID-19	I HAVE A RASH	I HAVE AN UNTREATED EYE INFECTION	I HAVE BEEN IN THE HOSPITAL	I HAVE THE FLU
						
temperature of 100.0 or higher	within the past 24 hours	I have a positive COVID test, or I have been exposed and have symptoms	body rash with itching or fever	redness, itching and/or pus draining from eye	hospital stay and/or emergency room visit	achy body, pain, tiredness, headache, dry cough, sore throat, runny nose (may have vomiting, diarrhea, or fever)
I am ready to go back to school when I am ...						
Fever free without the assistance of medication for 24 hours (i.e. Tylenol, Motrin, Advil, etc.)	Free from vomiting or diarrhea for 24 hours	Five days after a positive COVID test my symptoms are improving. You must mask on days 6-10	Free from rash, itching, or fever. I have been evaluated by my doctor if needed	Free from drainage and/or have been evaluated by my doctor if needed	Released by my medical provider to return to school	Released by a medical provider, symptoms are gone
<p>If your child has strep throat or another bacterial infection, he/she should stay home until the antibiotic has been given for at least 24 hours and your health care provider has given your child permission to return to school. We encourage you to seek medical attention when your child is sick and to follow your health care provider's recommendations about returning to school and other activities.</p> <p>Please note: Guidance from Health and Community Services will be followed for outbreaks or unusual clusters of disease. Please review the guidance from Kalamazoo county on communicable diseases.</p>						

Parent notification will be provided in the form of a robo call or written letter after the

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first 3 absences. (Documentation will be kept by school staff if absence is excused or unexcused). In person or virtual conferences notification will be required after 5 absences and must be documented. A recommendation must be made to the school's attendance team after the 10th absence. The attendance team will be responsible for creating a plan of support (district document). On the 15th total absence from school the student will receive a letter and must be referred to the central office attendance team, and considered for the Truancy Officer's caseload. The central office attendance team will make recommendations based on each student's unique situation.

Building teams will use a variety of resources to assist students with their attendance. Attendance committees must meet at least once a month. The resources may include: home support specialist, behavioral specialist, secretary, attendance support staff, principals, mentors, psychologist, Community Mental Health workers, academic specialist, paraprofessional, school nurse, district Truancy Officer, Pathways to Potential or Gryphon Place. Staff will document the contact made to the home in PowerSchool. The school, parent and student must take ownership of the importance of attending school each day.

It will be at the building administrator's discretion to determine which student absences constitute a referral to the court system. Students with excessive unexcused absences will receive written notification every 6 weeks. Students with poor attendance records may face mandatory summer school or grade level retention.

Parent(s)/Guardian(s)' Responsibility Regarding Attendance:

1. It is the responsibility of the parent(s) and/or guardian(s) to notify the student's school as early as possible on the day of an absence and explain the reasons for the absence. It is most helpful to have the phone call or email within the first hour of school.
2. Written or email verification of a student's absence by a parent/guardian is required (unless otherwise indicated by the appropriate administrator) and should be provided to the school the day after an absence.

An excuse note must indicate:

- a. Name of the student
- b. Building
- c. Class name(s) or periods (secondary)
- d. Dates of absence
- e. Reason for the absence - ***After 3 consecutive absences, a medical note from a physician may be required.***

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- f. Name and relationship of person making contact.

Student absences are considered unexcused if documentation supporting an excused absence is not provided.

3. It is the responsibility of the parent(s) and/or guardian(s) to inform the teacher(s) in advance of planned absences for religious holidays or medical reasons.
4. It is the responsibility of the parent(s) and/or guardian(s) to make arrangements with the teacher to obtain missed assignments due to absences.
5. It is important that students arrive to class on time. Parents/guardians should talk to their children regarding not being tardy.

Student's Responsibility Regarding Attendance:

1. It is the student's responsibility to inform the teacher(s) in advance of a planned absence for a religious holiday, medical reason, field trip, sport or other school activity.
2. It is the responsibility of the student to make arrangements with the teacher to obtain and complete missed assignments due to absences.
3. After an absence from any class, the student is to follow building procedures for signing in prior to entering class.

Attendance contracts will be created for students with excessive absences.

Teacher's Responsibility:

1. The teacher will be responsible for taking attendance and maintaining accurate, daily attendance and tardy records. All elementary classroom teachers must enter their daily AM and PM attendance and all secondary teachers must enter their class attendance in PowerSchool. Elementary AM and all periods of secondary attendance should be taken within the first 10 minutes of class. Elementary PM attendance should be taken within 10 minutes of the completion of lunch and recess. For audit purposes, the teacher will sign and date the Teacher Electronic Attendance Certification Form in the office or electronically at the end of each week upon review of their weekly attendance for accuracy. During the six-week count periods, the weekly attendance report has to be signed instead of the Teacher Electronic Attendance Certification Form. Teachers are expected to collaborate with the office staff and administration to communicate with families when students are absent from school.

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Administrator's Responsibilities:

- Monitor the entire attendance procedure and work closely with the parent(s)/guardian(s) and teachers to ensure the student's success in school. Under the direction of the building administrator(s), office staff will maintain a record of documented parent/guardian calls to the school regarding attendance and excused absences. The office staff will correct student absences after the teacher has recorded the attendance. Administrators will check attendance weekly to verify teachers are recording attendance properly.
- Monitor students' tardiness and assign consequences in case of chronic tardiness.
- Facilitate automated notifications to parent(s) or guardian(s) of students who were marked absent for each class period if the appropriate administrative level office was not informed as to the reason for the student's absence within the first hour of school.
- Assure the notification of parents/guardians when a student receives 3, 5 consecutive and 10 and 15 total absences.
- Provide the district Truancy Officer a caseload of most challenging cases of chronic absenteeism for home visits, with monthly updates to be shared at attendance meetings.
- Enlist the resources of the Kalamazoo County Family Court, Juvenile Division, in the event a student is chronically absent.

Elementary School Attendance Procedures

Students need to be on time for instruction. Morning and afternoon attendance is taken. Tardiness limits a student's learning time and is disruptive to others in the class. At the elementary level, a tardy is coming to school within the first 90 minutes of the school day. Arriving after the first 90 minutes is considered absent for the morning. Likewise, a student leaving within 90 minutes of the end of the school day will be marked, "Signed out early at end of day". If the student is signed out with more than 90 minutes left of the school day, they will be marked absent for the afternoon. Leaving early is equivalent to being tardy. Excessive tardiness or leaving early hinders the student's ability to make progress in school. On the fifth tardy, school personnel will make contact with the parent/guardian to problem solve in an effort to eliminate this loss.

Middle School Attendance Procedures

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Students need to be on time for instruction. Attendance is taken at the beginning of each class period. At the middle school level, a student is tardy when he/she is not in the classroom or assigned workstation when the bell rings for the beginning of class period. A student must receive an admit pass to enter class. Excessive tardiness hinders the student's ability to make progress in school and is disruptive to others in the class. On the fifth tardy, school personnel will make contact with the parent/guardian to problem solve in an effort to eliminate tardiness.

High School Attendance Procedures

Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each class. It is expected that students will be present for the entire class period. Kalamazoo Central, Loy Norrix, and Phoenix High Schools will follow this procedure. All other programs will adopt similar procedures; any differences will be approved through the Superintendent and Board of Education.

A student is tardy when he/she is not in the classroom or assigned workstation when the bell rings for the beginning of class. If the student is missing at the beginning of class and comes to the class at any point during the period, then the student is considered tardy and not absent. A student must follow building procedures for signing in prior to entering class. On the fifth tardy, school personnel will make contact with the parent/guardian to problem solve in an effort to eliminate tardiness. Students may have consequences for class tardies.

Program and School Specific Attendance Procedures

KPS Virtual Attendance Procedures

Student Expectations:

Students should expect to spend at least 1-1.5 hours per day in each course to be successful with virtual instruction. Weeks are counted from Wednesday through the following Tuesday.

Secondary - The student will be responsible for participating in at least one synchronous session or meet with the teacher during his/her drop-in office hours for each class, each week. Students are also expected to communicate with their mentor on a weekly basis.

Teacher Expectations:

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The teacher will be responsible for taking attendance and maintaining accurate two-way communication documentation in PowerSchool. For audit purposes, the teacher will sign and date the Teacher Electronic Attendance Certification Form in the office or electronically at the end of each week upon review of their weekly attendance for accuracy. During the six-week count periods, the weekly attendance report has to be signed instead of the Teacher Electronic Attendance Certification Form.

The attendance is based on two-way communication between the teacher and student/parent during the week. The two-way communication must be relevant to the student's course(s) or academic progression. The teachers will mark students with TWI (two-way interaction) for the week when a two-way interaction occurred during the week. If no two-way communication occurred during the week, the teacher will mark the student VA (virtually absent) for the week. All two way communications must be thoroughly documented in the PowerSchool TWI log page including the date(s), method of two-way communication, and a summary of the communication.

Completion of assignments and virtual attendance in synchronous instruction will not be an acceptable form of two-way interaction in 2024-25.

Kalamazoo Innovative Learning Program (KILP) Attendance Procedures

Student Expectations:

Students will be assigned to in-person sessions that meet their needs. They will attend three in-person sessions per week unless other arrangements have been made with the teacher and approved by the administrator. Students will be required to communicate with their mentor each week. Virtual weeks are counted from Wednesday through the following Tuesday.

In order to be successful, it is highly recommended that students follow the recommended guidance from their teachers and attend the synchronous sessions offered.

Students should expect to spend at least 1-1.5 hours per day in each course to be successful with virtual instruction.

Teacher Expectations:

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The teacher will be responsible for taking attendance and maintaining accurate two-way communication documentation in PowerSchool. For audit purposes, the teacher will sign and date the Teacher Electronic Attendance Certification Form in the office or electronically at the end of each week upon review of their weekly attendance for accuracy. During the six-week count periods, the weekly attendance report has to be signed instead of the Teacher Electronic Attendance Certification Form.

Teachers will record daily attendance in the homeroom class. Students who attend an in-person session will be recorded as PRE in the PM attendance.

On the Wednesday dates, teachers will also record two way interactions in the AM homeroom for the week Wednesday through the following Tuesday. The attendance is based on two-way communication between the teacher and student during the week. The two-way communication must be relevant to the student's course(s) or academic progression. The teachers will mark students with TWI (two-way interaction) when a two-way interaction occurred during the week. If no two-way communication occurred during the week, the teacher will mark the student VA (virtually absent). All two-way communications must be thoroughly documented in PowerSchool TWI log page; including the date(s), method of two-way communication, and a summary of the communication.

Completion of assignments and virtual attendance in synchronous instruction will not be an acceptable form of two-way interaction in 2024-25.