

Marple Newtown High School Attendance Policy

STUDENT ATTENDANCE, CLASS CUTS, AND SECURLYPASS

Student Attendance

Daily attendance is essential to maintaining good scholastic standing. Students are required, by law, to be in attendance at school.

Absence

Parents or guardians must email the Attendance Office at hsattendance@mnsd.org or call at 610-359-4219 prior to 7:30am in the event that a student is absent.

Students, regardless of age, must turn in absence notes signed by a parent/guardian.

Excused Absences

An absent student must be called out for each day of absence from school. This helps to ensure the safety of your children. **All absences require that a written excuse be submitted to the school within three (3) days of an absence.** If a written excuse is not submitted to the office within that time period, the absence is recorded as unexcused and is deemed by the state to be an illegal absence. A written excuse documenting an absence is required under the state's compulsory attendance laws.

- A written excuse must contain the following information: (1) name of the student and student number; (2) student grade level; (3) the date(s) of the absence; (4) the reason for the absence; and (5) a parent or guardian's signature.
- *We are able to accept excuse notes sent via email to hsattendance@mnsd.org*
- In the case of an absence of three (3) or more consecutive days, a note from a health care provider must be submitted to school within **three (3) calendar days**.
- **Administration reserves the right to request an original doctor's note at any time the school deems it necessary.** Students who have been absent from school because of a communicable disease must present a doctor's certificate before they may be readmitted to school.
- Juniors and Seniors are permitted 3 college visits per academic year. An official school form is required and must include signature, email and phone number of a collegiate official.

Unexcused/Unlawful Absences

In cases where a student has **accumulated ten (10) or more days of absence**, parents/guardians may be notified that future absences will require an excuse signed by a health care professional treating the student. **Only 10 days will be excused with a parent note per year- after this a doctor, court, or educational visit (Juniors and Seniors only) note will be required.**

Official Notice –When a student accumulates a third unlawful absence, the state law requires that we send a document “Official Notice of Child’s Unlawful Absence”

explaining that future unlawful absences will result in a petition to the local District Justice. Included in the Official Notice will be an invitation to a School Attendance Improvement Conference. A School Attendance Improvement Plan will be created during this conference.

The school district does not recognize any day as a “cut day.” Absences on such days are considered unexcused/illegal.

*** Unexcused absences are classified as illegal if the student is under the age of

18. Students who arrive after 11:00 a.m. will be marked as a half-day absence.

Any student that accrues more than 4 unexcused/illegal absences per marking period may be excluded from all extracurricular activities for the remainder of the marking period. Any student that exceeds 10 unexcused/illegal absences during the school year may be excluded from all extracurricular activities for the remainder of the school year.

Class Cuts

Regular attendance and participation in classroom activities is an integral part of every subject in our curriculum. Absences from class can interfere with the continuity of the instructional process for the student and the class. Recognizing that regular attendance in class is essential for success in school, it is expected that students will assume the responsibility of attending every assigned class and study hall.

A class “cut” is defined as an absence from a scheduled class or class activity that is not excused by the classroom teacher or school administration. This also includes if a student is missing from class for more than 10 minutes. It is the responsibility of the student to provide the classroom teacher with written documentation explaining his/her absence by the next school day; failure to do so will result in the absence being listed as unexcused.

A student having an unexcused absence (“cut”) will not be permitted to make up the day’s work, including any tests or quizzes. The student will not be given credit for class participation, thereby affecting his/her overall grade. Additionally, the unexcused absence shall be referred to the school administration for disciplinary action.

NOTIFICATION OF ABSENCE, PARENTAL REQUEST FOR STUDENT EXCUSED ABSENCE

Notification of Absence

The automated phone system will be used to notify parents of all unexcused absences. In keeping parents and guardians informed of possible non-compliance with the attendance policy, notification letters will be sent by the school administration and/or home and school visitor.

Pre-planned Trip

The Marple Newtown School District strongly discourages student absence from school

except when illness or other urgent reasons prevent the child from attending. School district officials are aware that it is not always possible to schedule family trips and vacations while school is not in session. In keeping with our guiding philosophy, but also recognizing the importance of the family unit, the school district will approve pre-planned trips up to a **maximum of five school days per student per year**.

The following provisions must be met for approval of a pre-planned trip:

- A. A “Parental Request for Student Excused Absence” form has been designed for pre-planned trips. This form can be found on the district website or in the main office. A copy of this form can be found at the end of the district handbook.
- B. A “Parental Request for Student Excused Absence” form must be submitted to the child’s building principal or designee for consideration at least **one week prior** to the date of the intended trip. The request must include a statement detailing the educational value of the trip and the name of the person responsible for supervision. Any questionable requests will be submitted to the Superintendent for final determination.
- C. The building principal will evaluate the request in terms of its educational value, duration, and adequateness of the supervision. **Anything above 5 cumulative days in an academic year will be unexcused.** Prior to leaving on the trip, it is the responsibility of the student to seek assignments. It will be the responsibility of the student to make up all work missed during the absence within one week after the student returns to school.
- D. The absence of a student taking a trip which has not received prior approval from the building principal as being educational in nature will be considered unlawful (unexcused) and subject to the provisions of the Compulsory Attendance Laws (Section 1327 of the School Code).
- E. Any trip scheduled during state standardized testing may not be excused and may be marked as an unexcused absence.
- F. If more than one child in a family will be absent and the children attend different schools, a separate request for each child shall be made to each child's principal

PERFECT ATTENDANCE AND LATENESS TO SCHOOL

Perfect Attendance

Perfect attendance means that a student has missed no days, has not been tardy for any reason, and has not been dismissed early for reasons other than school related activities. Family trips, even if excused, still disqualify a student from achieving perfect attendance.

Lateness to School

All students must be in class at or before 7:40 am. School attendance will be taken during each period. Any student not present at the beginning of period 1 will be considered late to school. Students who arrive after 11:00 a.m. will be marked as a half-day absence.

2 categories:

- 1. Excused tardy** – arrive with the original doctor, court note, family funeral, or

official school form to designate a collegiate visit (for juniors and seniors only and must include signature, email and phone number of a collegiate official).

2. *Unexcused Tardy* – this covers all other tardies. Levels of discipline and consequences:

- ☐ 2 unexcused tardies per marking period = none
- ☐ 3rd tardy = 1 detention
- ☐ 5th tardy = 2 detentions
- ☐ 8th tardy (and every 3rd after) = Saturday school, and loss of campus privileges for 1 week. A parent conference may be set up to plan for improved attendance
- ☐ Loss of campus privileges means students must leave school grounds at the conclusion of the school day, unless attending a help class or detention.
- ☐ Parking permit may be revoked for this period of time.
- ☐ Students in this situation are not permitted to attend or participate in any extracurricular activities during this time.

LATENESS TO CLASS/EARLY DISMISSAL

Lateness to Class

As a general rule, students are required to be in the classroom by the end of the “bell tone” that signals the start of the class period. Students have four minutes to pass between classes. Lateness to class will be unexcused if a student fails to present a written pass from a teacher or administrator. Teachers are empowered to take measures deemed necessary to enforce the late to class standard.

Disciplinary actions include, but are not limited to:

- ☐ Student verbally warned by teacher
- ☐ Loss of privileges, parents contacted
- ☐ 3 unexcused lates to class..... Teacher Detention
- ☐ 6 unexcused lates to class..... 2 Teacher Detentions
- ☐ 9 unexcused lates to class..... 3 Administrative Detentions
- ☐ 12 unexcused lates to class..... Saturday School
- ☐ 13 or more lates to class will result in out-of-school suspension and/or additional assignment to Saturday School.

Early Dismissal

Attendance in all classes is considered an important part of the educational process. Therefore, it is recommended that students do not schedule appointments during the school day. Students may pick up their approved Early Dismissal from the Attendance Office. Upon returning to school, students are to sign in at the Attendance Office.

Students who leave school early must follow proper sign-out procedures (and sign-in procedures, if the student returns) to avoid disciplinary action.

There are two types of early dismissals:

2. *Early Dismissal*: Parent written notification needs to be submitted 24 hours prior to

dismissal. It is recommended to email: hsattendance@mnsd.org.

3. Excused Early Dismissal: upon return, student brings an original note from a doctor, court, family funeral, or official school form to designate a collegiate visit (for juniors and seniors only and must include signature, email and phone number of a collegiate official).

For all early dismissal notes, students must submit the original doctor or court note upon return to school. Without such note, student may not be eligible to participate in any extracurricular activities at the conclusion of the school day.

Early dismissals follow same procedure as tardies in terms of consequences. Students are allowed 2 early dismissal notes per marking period. On the 3rd early dismissal, students begin to receive consequences in the same manner as being late to school.

- ☐ 3rd ED = 1 detention
- ☐ 5th ED = 2 detentions Saturday school
- ☐ 8th ED (and every 3rd after) = Saturday school and loss of privileges for 1 week. A parent conference may be set up to plan for improved attendance
- ☐ Loss of privileges means students must leave school grounds at the conclusion of the school day, unless attending a help class.
- ☐ Students in this situation are not permitted to attend or participate in any extracurricular activities during this time.