



Navigating the 2026-27 Attendance Policy

A Guide for Families of
Washington Township Public Schools

Defining absences, thresholds, and protocols to protect your student's academic standing.



The Baseline for a Present Day

4 Hours.

A student must be physically present in school for a minimum of 4 total hours to receive attendance credit for the day.

180 Days.

A student who misses 10% of a 180-day school year or 18 days is considered chronically absent.



The 10% Habitual Absence Rule

Even if a student meets the daily 4-hour standard, missing a specific class more than 10% of the year (due to habitual late arrivals or early senior privilege departures) can independently trigger disciplinary action and loss of course credit.

	State-Excused	Locally Excused	Unexcused
What it means:	State Recognized Absence	District Recognized Absence	Discretionary or unapproved absence
Does it count toward Chronic Absenteeism (18 days)?	No	Yes, if over 17 days	Yes
Does it count toward total Credit Loss (25 cumulative days)?	No	Possibly-Subject to Administrative Review	Yes

Although an absence is explained by a parent, it does not necessarily mean it is excused by the district.

The Blue Zone: State-Excused Absences



**Religious
Observance &
Take Your Child
to Work Day**



**Veterans' Day
Observance &
Board of
Education
Activities**



**Transportation
Failure:** Closure
of a busing
district preventing
travel.



College Visits:
Up to 3 days per
school year
(restricted to
grades 11 and 12).



Civic Events:
Available for grades 6-12.
Must be sponsored by a
government, community,
or non-profit
organization and
include an element of
service learning.

Impact on Chronic Absenteeism: ZERO. These days are not reported to the state for absenteeism tracking.

The Grey Zone: Locally Excused Absences



Illness (Must be coupled with a doctor's note)



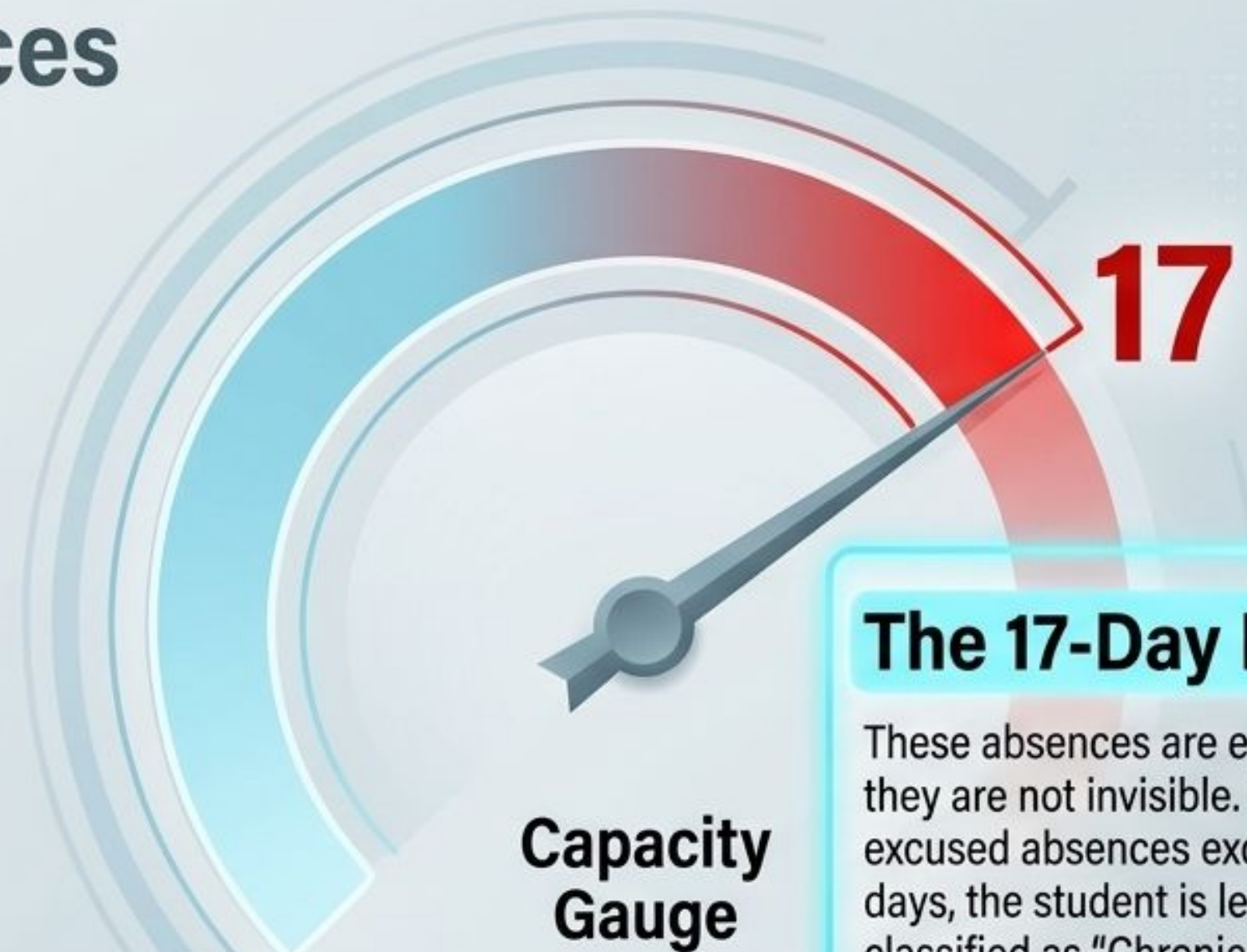
Doctor's Appointments & Long-term medical absences (unless on home instruction)



Death in the family / Funeral



School Suspensions (that do not qualify for Home Instruction)



The 17-Day Limit.

These absences are excused, but they are not invisible. If locally excused absences exceed 17 days, the student is legally classified as "Chronically Absent." Excess absences here may lead to credit completion sessions or total loss of course credit.

The Red Zone: Unexcused Absences

Family Vacations
(Regardless of advance notice provided).

Mental Health Days & Student-orchestrated "skip" days.

Non-school-sponsored athletics/competitions.

Operational Directives

- Parents must notify the principal 2 weeks before removing a child for vacation.
- Absences during assessments/state exams are strongly discouraged.
- Make-up work and exams are mandatory for the missed time.

Impact Status: HIGH. Every single day lost to these events counts directly toward your yearly unexcused limit under Policy 5200.

The Escalation Pathway: Accumulating Days

Consequence Accumulation



Administrative Action:

18 Unexcused OR 25 Cumulative Days: Critical Action. Regardless of the reason for the 25 cumulative days, reaching this threshold means the student may be retained or completely lose credit for their course(s).

Administrative Action:

11-17 Unexcused Days: Credit Recovery Phase. Students are mandated to attend credit recovery sessions, determined by the school administrator.

Administrative Action:

10 Unexcused Days: Mandatory Admin Meeting. Student and family must meet with the building administrator to outline written/signed expectations moving forward.

Administrative Action:

1-9 Unexcused Days: Standard monitoring.

Total Impact: How Absences Combine



Chronic Absenteeism is defined as missing 10% of the 180-day year (18 days) for any non-state reason.

"The Ultimate Danger Zone: 25 Cumulative Days. A mix of legitimate doctor-noted illnesses and unexcused family vacations both fill the same 25-day bucket. Mismanaging unexcused days leaves your student with no safety net if a severe illness strikes later in the year.

Daily Protocols: Notification & Make-Up Work

The Notification Sequence

Step 1: Call the attendance office before the school day.

Step 2: Follow up with a signed note, email, or entry into the Student Information System (SIS).

Early Dismissal

PreK-10 must be signed out in person. Driving-age students can self-sign out after parent phone verification.

3 Consecutive Days with No Contact triggers the Principal/designee to potentially dispatch a Truant Officer for a wellness check.

Make-Up Work Matrix

Standard Absence:

Request work 24 hours in advance.

Extended Absence (3+ days):

Request work 3 days in advance. (Teachers will cooperate in preparation).

Expectation:

Students are responsible for requesting assignments and must complete make-up work upon return.

The Friction of Extended Absences (>10 Days)

Pre-Trip

Written notification
with dates provided
to the school.

Day 1 of Absence

Dis-enrollment.
Student is transferred to
Homeschool status.
District technology, books,
and supplies must be returned.

During Absence

Zero Academic Support.
Homework and make-up
assignments will NOT be
provided by the district.

The Return

Mandatory Re-registration.
Family must re-enroll
through the registration
office. Requires proof of
residence and birth
certificate/passport.

The district will attempt to place the student back in their original schedule, but it is not guaranteed.

Navigating Medical Absences

Medical Absence

Standard Recovery (3+ Days)

- Requires a dated/signed written statement from parent/adult student listing the reason.
- Communicable Disease: Requires written evidence of medical clearance from the school nurse upon return.

Long-Term Illness (10+ Consecutive Days)

- Eligible for Homebound Instruction or a Medically Fragile Child Plan (Regulation 2412).
- The Protection: Time spent on home instruction or long-term hospitalization does NOT count toward excessive unexcused absenteeism.
- The Requirement: Parent must request homebound instruction within 5 days of illness inception, accompanied by a medical examiner's statement detailing prognosis and nature of illness.

AGE-SPECIFIC RISK PROFILES & PENALTIES

STUDENTS 16 AND OLDER



TRIGGER: Exceeding 24 cumulative absences.



ACTION: Parents/guardians are formally advised of excessive absences.



CONSEQUENCE: The school may request the parent/guardian to voluntarily withdraw the student (requires written/signed consent).



ADULT STUDENTS (19 YEARS OLD)



TRIGGER: 17 Unexcused Absences OR 24 Cumulative Absences.



ACTION: Immediate Administrative Action.



CONSEQUENCE: The adult student will be involuntarily dropped from the district rolls and will receive zero credit for the school year.

The Safety Net: Recovery & Recourse

Credit Recovery Ecosystem



- Relief options include Working Lunches, After School Recovery, and Saturday Suspensions (applied based on age-appropriateness per Regulation 5200).
- Summer Completion Program: Available for non-credit status students (>18 unexcused or >25 cumulative days), but operates entirely at the family's expense.

The Appeals Protocol

1.

Step 1 (The Window): Parent files a written appeal to the Principal within 5 days of receiving retention/no-credit notice.

2.

Step 2 (The Case): Appeal must state reasons for absences, include supporting documentation, and argue why course credit is deserved.

3.

Step 3 (The Review): Appeal goes to attendance review; Principal has 7 days to respond.

Further Recourse: Parents retain the right to elevate the appeal if they disagree with the Principal's decision.