

## Attendance Expectations

School attendance is compulsory in Massachusetts for all persons between the ages of six (6) and sixteen (16) and research shows that students who regularly attend school are more likely to have success in school and careers (DESE, 2022). Consequently, we ask that you please make every effort to encourage your child to attend school, on time, everyday, and refrain from scheduling family vacations during school time.

### **Reporting an Absence**

If your student must miss school for any reason, please reach out to us! It is the shared responsibility of the student, their family, and the school to maintain a good attendance record. Please call the school at 508-261-7540 (ext: 33500) before 8am to leave a detailed message regarding your child's absence or email the attendance line at [mhsattendance@mansfieldschools.com](mailto:mhsattendance@mansfieldschools.com).

### **Excusable Absences/Tardy:**

Please note that student absences from class or school are considered **unexcused** unless proper written documentation is provided to the school as either a hard copy letter delivered to the Welcome Window or a scanned PDF letter is emailed to the [mhsattendance@mansfieldschools.com](mailto:mhsattendance@mansfieldschools.com) address as noted below:

- Documented college visit (Letter provided by college/university; no more than five in an academic school year for second half of junior year and entire senior year)
- Documented court appearance (Letter from Court)
- Religious observances (parent letter or email)
- Bereavements (parent letter or email)
- Family emergency (parent letter or email submitted to building administration for approval)
- Documented hospitalization (Doctor/Treatment Provider Letter)
- Medical Absences (Letter from a health care provider)
- Authorized school field trip (No documentation required beyond the Teacher's permission slip)

This year, dismissal from school by the school nurse *may* be considered an excused absence for the day of dismissal if exclusion guidelines are met. Nurse dismissals will be automatically updated. However, the following day will not be excused unless accompanied by a doctor's note.

### **Important Notices Regarding Attendance**

Further, students with excessive unexcused absences are subject to credit loss which impacts a student's overall progress. Credit loss is calculated based on cumulative unexcused daily absences at the end of the academic school year. Credit loss is determined as demonstrated in the chart below:

Number of Unexcused Absences	Credit Reduction
9-16	5
17+	10

Please note that 4 unexcused tardies is equivalent to one unexcused absence. Additionally, a student

that is absent from a class period for more than 10 minutes will result in an unexcused absence being recorded for the entire class. If a student is marked absent-unexcused in 3 or more classes over the course of the day, they will be recorded as absent for the day and subject to the credit loss policy. In the event the student is absent due to a school counselor's appointment, a school-mandated meeting, or is seeking medical attention in the school nurse's office, school personnel will update the absence as excused.

We have updated our attendance procedures to ensure that the students' primary contact receives notification about their student attendance. This school year, the primary contact should expect to receive notification via both automated call and email in the morning if their student has missed the first period of the day and at the end of the day if the student has missed other periods over the course of the day. It is the parents' responsibility to check-in with your child and monitor their attendance via the Aspen/X2 portal. A student who misses 8 or more days in a term is considered habitually truant and their failure to attend school without a valid excuse may warrant school personnel seeking help for the student and their family through supportive counseling, meetings and, if necessary, court action. Students are considered chronically absent when they have missed ten percent of their scheduled school days. Parents will be notified via postal mail if their student has 5 or more unexcused absences in the school year.

The full attendance policy is included for review in the MHS Student Handbook which you can find online on the MHS homepage.