

## **STUDENT ABSENCES AND EXCUSES**

There is a legal responsibility that the school system will require students, with specific exception, to be present in school each day to receive the full benefit of a quality education. It is also the right of every student to receive a thorough and effective public school education.

The School Committee recognizes that regular school attendance is vital to meeting the educational needs of all students. The Committee further recognizes that the responsibility for regular, daily punctual attendance is shared by the community, the home, students and school personnel.

### **Expectation:**

As required by state law, regular and punctual patterns of attendance are expected of each student enrolled in the school system.

All discretionary absences are discouraged.

### **Parent and Student Responsibility:**

Parents and students have a primary role in student attendance at school. For the parents to fulfill their responsibility, the school will keep them informed of student absences and participate in determining the appropriateness of planned/optional absences.

### **Absences:**

It is recognized that absence from school will occur under certain conditions, such as illness or quarantine, family emergencies, authorized school activities, religious holidays and subpoenaed court appearances.

Every effort shall be made by students, parents, teachers and administrators to keep absences and tardiness to a minimum.

### **Chronic or Irregular Absence:**

In instances of chronic or irregular absence reportedly due to illness, the school administration may request a physician's statement certifying such absences to be justifiable.

### **Truancy, Suspension & Non-School Vacations:**

It is also recognized that absence from school will occur under conditions such as truancy, suspension and non-school vacations.

Truancy:

- A student who is absent from school without the knowledge and permission of his/her parents or guardians or school authorities is truant.
- A student who skips or leaves a class without permission after reporting to school is truant.
- Absences which are excessive and/or which interfere with the student's educational program may be interpreted as truancy.
- Truancy may result in legal action by the school system against the truant or his/her parent(s) or guardian(s).

Non-School Vacations:

- Taking vacation time, other than during school vacations, is strongly discouraged. In deciding on an absence from school for a vacation, other than a regular school vacation, parents and school personnel shall consider the potential positive and negative educational effects on the student, and the impact on their peers and staff.

**Establishment of Procedures:**

- Attendance Record Keeping:  
The administration will develop procedures to support student attendance and appropriately monitor and limit absenteeism, including a comprehensive system of attendance record keeping.
- Compensating For Absences:  
Each school will develop an appropriate procedure to support students in preparation for and upon returning from an absence which is considerate of the needs of the students, their peers and the staff. It is recognized that needs and accommodations may be unique to a specific, grade level, program and/ or the student.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 72:8, 76:1, 1A, 2, 2A,3,4 ,5; 76:16-76:20

