

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.

Absences and tardies are cumulative and can result in a reduction of course credit and administrative consequences if the number of *unexcused absences/tardies* exceeds the attendance policy limit.

For the 2022-23 school year the number of absences allowed per course is *5 unexcused absences for a 1 semester course and 10 unexcused absences for a 2 semester course* before a student's credits are impacted. Please note that 4 unexcused tardies to a class 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, unless 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. 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 address as noted below:

Excusable Absences/Tardy:

- 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)

Reporting an Absence

It is the shared responsibility of the student, their family, and the school to maintain a good attendance record. If your child must miss school, please call the school at 508-261-7540 (ext: 33500) and leave a detailed message or email the attendance line at mhsattendance@mansfieldschools.com.

If your child misses one or more periods in a day, the primary contact will receive notification via both automated call and email in the evening. 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 the 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 available online.