

Student Absences and Excuses

Mapleton Public Schools (the “District”) is dedicated to ensuring that its students attend school every day, when in session. Colorado law requires students to attend school until the age of 17. According to State law, it is the obligation of every parent/guardian to ensure that every child under their care and supervision receives adequate education and training and, if of compulsory attendance age, attends school. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all students are in school in accordance with the law.

One of the most important factors to a student's success in school is regular and punctual attendance. Frequent absences may lead to poor academic work, lack of social development, and possible academic failure. Regular attendance is of utmost importance for school interest, social adjustment, and scholastic achievement. No single factor may interfere with a student's progress more quickly than frequent tardiness or absence.

Continuity in the learning process can be seriously disrupted by excessive absences. In most situations, the work missed cannot be made up adequately.

Students with good attendance generally achieve higher grades, enjoy school more, and are more employable after leaving school. For at least these reasons, the Board believes that a student must satisfy two basic requirements in order to earn full credit for a class: (1) satisfy all academic requirements, and (2) exhibit good attendance habits in accordance with this policy.

Excused Absences

Parents/Guardians have the responsibility to contact the school to excuse an absence, preferably the day of the student's absence, but no later than 48 hours from the time of the absence. The school may require documentation to support an excused absence, including written statements from medical providers.

The following will be considered excused absences:

1. A student who is temporarily ill or injured.
2. A student whose absence is approved by a school administrator on a prearranged basis. Prearranged absences will be approved for appointments or circumstances of a *serious nature only* which cannot be taken care of outside of school hours.
3. A student who is absent for an extended period due to a physical disability or a mental or behavioral health disorder.
4. A student who is pursuing a work-study program under the supervision of the school.
5. A student who is attending any school-sponsored activity or activities of an educational nature with advance approval by the administration.
6. A student who is suspended or expelled.

If a student is in out-of-home placement (as that term is defined by C.R.S. § 22-32-138(1)(e)), absences due to court appearances and participation in court-ordered activities will be excused. The student's assigned social worker must verify the student's absence was for a court appearance or court-ordered activity.

Unexcused Absences

An unexcused absence is defined as an absence that is not covered by one of the foregoing exceptions. Each unexcused absence will be recorded on the student's record. The parent(s)/guardian(s) of the student receiving an unexcused absence will be notified orally or in writing by the District of the unexcused absence.

In accordance with law, the District may impose appropriate consequences that relate directly to classes missed while unexcused. Consequences may include a warning, extending the school day, or student working during lunch recess/time. Academic penalties, out-of-school suspensions, or expulsion will not be imposed for any unexcused absence. The administration will develop procedures to implement appropriate penalties.

Students and parents/guardians may petition the Board of Education for Mapleton Public Schools (the "Board") for exceptions to this policy. No exception will be sustained if the student fails to abide by all requirements imposed by the Board as conditions for granting any such exception.

Chronic Absenteeism

When a student has an excessive number of absences, these absences negatively impact the student's academic success. For this reason, a student who has been absent for 10 days or 10% of the time, whether the absences are excused or unexcused, may be identified as "chronically absent" by the District. Absences due to suspension or expulsion will not be counted in the total number of absences considered for purposes of identifying a student as "chronically absent."

If a student is identified as "chronically absent," the school director (or designee) will develop a plan to improve the student's attendance. The plan will include best practices and research-based strategies to address the reasons for the student's chronic absenteeism, including but not limited to individual support from student support services, alignment of necessary transportation support, and academic assistance as needed. When practicable, the student's parent/guardian will participate in the development of the plan

As a last resort for addressing the problem of truancy, the District shall initiate court proceedings to compel compliance with the compulsory attendance law. The maximum number of unexcused absences a student may incur before judicial proceedings are initiated to enforce compulsory attendance is 10% of the total number of days at any point during any calendar year or school year. Before initiating court proceedings, the District shall provide written notice to the student and his or her parent(s)/guardian(s) that the District will initiate court proceedings if the student does not comply with the compulsory attendance law.

Nothing herein requires the District to identify a student as “chronically absent” prior to pursuing court proceedings against the student and their parent(s)/guardian(s) to compel the student’s attendance in accordance with State law.

Make-up Work

Make-up work will be provided for any class in which a student has an excused absence. It is the responsibility of the student to pick up any make-up assignments permitted on the day returning to class. The student will be afforded 3 days to complete make-up work for each day of absence.

Make-up work will be allowed following an absence or following a student’s suspension from school with the goal of providing the student an opportunity to keep up with the class and an incentive to attend school. This work shall receive full credit to the extent possible, as determined by the school director.

Unless otherwise permitted by a building administrator, make-up work will not be provided during a student’s expulsion. Rather, the District will offer alternative education services to the expelled student in accordance with State law. The District will determine the amount of credit the expelled student will receive for work completed during any alternative education program.

Tardiness

Tardiness is defined as the appearance of a student without proper excuse after the scheduled time that a class begins. Because of the disruptive nature of tardiness and the detrimental effect upon the rights of the non-tardy student to uninterrupted learning, appropriate consequences may be imposed for excessive tardiness. Parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified of all consequences regarding tardiness.

In an unavoidable situation, a student detained by another teacher or administrator will not be considered tardy provided that the teacher or administrator gives the student a pass to enter the next class. Teachers will honor passes presented in accordance with this policy. The provisions of this policy are applicable to all students in the District, including those above and below the age for compulsory attendance as required by law.

Adopted June 11, 2013, by the Board of Education for Mapleton Public Schools.

Updated October 22, 2019.

Revised August 25, 2020.

LEGAL REFERENCES:

C.R.S. §§ 22-14-101 *et seq.* (*dropout prevention and student re-engagement*)

C.R.S. § 22-32-109(1)(n) (*length of school year, instruction, and contact time*)

C.R.S. § 22-32-109.1(2)(a) (*conduct and discipline code*)

C.R.S. § 22-32-138(6) (*excused absence requirements for students in out-of-home placements*)

C.R.S. §§ 22-33-101 *et seq.* (*School Attendance Law of 1963*)

C.R.S. § 22-33-105(3)(d)(III) (*opportunity to make up work during suspension*)

C.R.S. § 22-33-108 (*judicial proceedings to enforce school attendance laws*)

C.R.S. § 22-33-203 (*educational alternatives for expelled students and determination of credit*)

1 CCR 301-78 Rules 1.00 *et seq.* (*standardized calculation for counting student attendance and truancy*)

CROSS REFERENCES:

EBCE: Closing and Cancellations

IC/ICA: School Year/School Calendar/Instruction Time

JEA: Compulsory Attendance Ages

JFABE: Students in Foster Care

JFC: Student Withdrawal from School/Dropouts

JHB: Truancy

JK: Student Discipline

JKD/JKE: Suspension/Expulsion of Students (and Other Disciplinary Interventions)

JLIB: Student Dismissal Precautions