

MEDOMAK VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY

I. Attendance Policy Rationale

Compulsory education is essential to the preservation of the rights and liberties of the people and the continued prosperity of our nation. Maintaining regular student attendance is necessary to achieve the goal of an educated citizenry. Public schools should ensure the rights of access for all school-age persons to an appropriate educational opportunity and, when necessary, should develop alternatives to regular school curricula for those children and youth at risk of becoming dropouts and those who may have left school.

The faculty and administration of MVHS, together with the RSU 40/MSAD 40 School Board, believe that regular classroom attendance is an essential and necessary component of a successful learning experience. Students need to be in the classroom to benefit from instruction, demonstrations, hands on activities and from the interaction and exchange of ideas with teachers and fellow students. Students who are absent from class are never able to duplicate these valuable classroom learning experiences. Students who regularly attend school achieve higher grades, enjoy school more, and increase their chances of becoming contributing responsible adults.

State law mandates that schools be in session for at least 175 days per school year and that responsibility for student attendance rests with the student and the family. .

II. General Policy

A student absent without an approved pass for more than 15 minutes of a class will be considered absent from that class. Students with planned absences of more than three days must meet with an administrator in advance of the proposed dates to determine the impact on their academics and potential loss of credit. Students with excused absences must obtain and complete work in a timely fashion as described under excused absences.

III. Administrative Discretion

The administration of MVHS has the authority to interpret situations which might not allow advance notification of a student's absence.

IV. Excused/Unexcused Absences

Absences are categorized as either "excused" or "unexcused." **All absences, with the exception of absences for school-sponsored activities, count towards the total absences.**

Excused

A student's absence from school is excused when the absence is for one of the following reasons:

1. A personal illness where attendance by the student would endanger their health or the health of others

2. Appointments with medical or dental professionals that cannot be scheduled outside of school hours
3. Appointments for driving license exams
4. Observance of a recognized religious holiday when the observance is required during a regular school day
5. College visits and appointments scheduled for college or future educational plans
6. Students in whose immediate family there is a “family emergency”
7. A planned absence that has been approved by administration
8. Students that are suspended “Out of school” by school officials
9. Students whose attendance is required in a court of law

If a student is absent for any of the above reasons, the school administration must receive a phone call and/or the appropriate documentation within 3 days of the absence. The appropriate documentation must be signed by a parent or guardian.

It is the **students’ responsibility** on or before their return to school to contact their teacher(s) regarding all work, tests, and class time missed and to arrange for all make-up work. Students will be afforded the equivalent number of days for make-up work as they were absent from school, unless they were absent because of suspension. Students who are absent from school due to a five day or less suspension will be given a maximum of three days to make up their work. Students suspended for between five and ten days will be given a maximum of five days to make up their work.

Parents/students requesting homework for assignments missed due to an excused absence should allow 24 hours for collection of same.

Unexcused

A student’s absence from school is unexcused if the student is absent from school or from a class without the permission of a parent/guardian, teacher or administrator.

Examples of unexcused absences include but are not limited to the following:

1. Students suspended from riding the school bus and not reporting to school
2. Students absent from class as a result of extra curricular activities not approved by school administration
3. Student’s absent from school or class without the prior knowledge of an administrator
4. Truancy
5. Missed bus
6. Oversleeping
7. Shopping
8. Employment

A student may be denied the opportunity to make up for full credit work missed during an unexcused absence, unexcused tardy or unexcused dismissal.

If the administrative office is contacted **immediately upon the student's return**, either by phone or by a written note from the parent/guardian, the administration may choose to excuse the absence. **The student will not have the opportunity to gain permission from a parent/guardian at a later time.**

V. Dismissals

Students may be dismissed from school for the same reasons as for excused absences. Dismissals must be arranged in advance by a parent/guardian either by a note or with a phone call and **students must check out at the administrative office prior to leaving campus or they will be considered truant.** Students may not dismiss themselves from school under any circumstances unless they are fully emancipated.

VI. Procedures for Absences/Dismissals

Parents/guardians who are unable to contact the administrative office in advance about an absence must give their child a note to be given to the attendance secretary no later than 7:40 am the day the student returns to school or the absence will be reported as **unexcused. Detention(s) may be assigned for each unexcused absence.**

Students who are ill for more than three consecutive days must provide a doctor's note to get an excused attendance slip the morning they return to school, **or** have their parents call the school nurse before the morning of return to school to provide medical verification of illness. Students leaving due to dismissal must check out at the attendance office prior to leaving campus, and must check in with the office upon returning to school.

VII. Participation in School Sponsored Activities

A student absent for more than two of the four classes each day may not participate in any extracurricular events on the day of the absence. Students absent from any class periods due to school-sponsored activities are expected to obtain advanced approval from classroom teachers in order to remain current with their coursework.

VIII. Excused/Unexcused Tardiness

Students must check in at the main office and obtain a pass if they are late in arriving to school.

Unexcused Tardy (no note or call in advance from a parent)

1st tardy per quarter: warning

2nd tardy per quarter: warning and parent contact from administrator

3rd tardy per quarter: one detention

Each additional tardy per quarter: one detention

(Students who arrive more than fifteen (15) minutes into a period with no note or prior parent contact will be issued consequences for cutting classes.)

Excused Tardy (parent calls or sends student with a note)

1st tardy per quarter: excused

2nd tardy per quarter: excused, with reminder that we will only accept 3 “parent tardies”

3rd tardy per quarter: excused, with a final warning that the 3 late rule has been met

4th tardy per quarter: one detention

Hardship or special circumstances will be taken into consideration on a case-by-case basis. Tardies due to medical appointments do not count if students bring a note from the doctor that verifies the appointment. Students will also be expected to bring in a doctor’s note if they have ongoing regularly scheduled medical appointments.