



Matawan-Aberdeen Regional School District
OFFICE OF CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION



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September 6, 2018

Dear Parents/Guardians:

As per the *New Jersey Department of Education School Register*, **the NJDOE recognizes only the five allowable reasons listed below as a “state-excused absence.”** As a result, the district has updated attendance procedures in order to facilitate accurate and efficient state attendance reporting to the New Jersey Department of Education.

1. Religious observance (N.J.A.C. 6A:32-8.3(h))
2. A college visit (up to 3 days per school year, only for students in grades 11 and 12)
3. “Take Our Children to Work Day” (pursuant to the [Memo - Click Here](#) issued by the Commissioner to all districts on April 25, 2017) or other rule issued by the Commissioner
4. Participation in observance of Veterans Day (N.J.S.A. 18A: 36-13.2) or district board of election membership activities (N.J.S.A. 18A: 36-33)
5. The closure of a busing district that prevents a student from having transportation to the receiving school.

Beginning with the 2018-2019 school year, any student absence, other than the five allowable reasons noted above, will be reflected as “Absent” in the Realtime Parent Portal, along with a comment/note if documentation was provided (i.e.; a note from a parent or doctor).

In order for students to learn and achieve their fullest potential, it is critical that they are in school and engaged in the learning process. Research shows that student absences impact a child’s ability to succeed in school. In addition, research shows that chronic absenteeism from school is a primary cause of low academic achievement and a powerful predictor of a student’s risk of dropping out of school.

By state statute, a student is considered “*chronically absent*” when he/she is not present for 10 percent or more of the days that that they were “in membership” at a school. Truancy is defined as 10 or more cumulative unexcused absences as per N.J.A.C. 6A:16-1.3. A student is considered “*truant*” when the parent/guardian has not given permission for the student to be absent, or when the parent kept the student from attending school without obtaining approval from school officials. Your child’s principal will review and consider correspondence provided for determinations of truancy; however, any absence, other than the five allowable reasons noted above, ***will count*** toward chronic absenteeism. Exceptions to truancy occur when the student is coded as “state-excused absence” (the five reasons above), serving an out-of-school suspension, home instruction, or assigned an interim alternative placement.

Realtime generates attendance letters on the 4th, 8th, 12th, 16th, 20th, and 24th absence. In order to be proactive in this area, school counselors will contact parents after 4 absences that occur within a marking period. Parents are also reminded of the importance of their children attending school and that we are obligated to report truant students to the municipal court and Division of Child Protection and Permanency.

Should you have further questions, please contact your child’s counselor.

Thank you,

John Bombardier