



WEST MORRIS CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL

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Dear Parents,

Kindly take the time to review the West Morris Regional High School District's Attendance Policy. This policy can be view in its entirety by going to our school web site, click on about West Morris and scroll down to WMRHSD Board Policies. Please note that there are two separate attendance figures on the interim and marking period reports.

The attendance figure at the bottom of the report '**Attendance by Day**' is based on New Jersey Code. This figure is reflective of the clock time a student was in school. The attendance figure located next to the individual classes designated '**Attendance**' is based on the West Morris Regional High School District's Attendance Policy. This figure reflects the number of individual classes in which the student has been absent.

These separate attendance figures do not reflect the same measurement.

ABSENCES AND EXCUSES -- WMRHSD Bd. Of Ed. Policy 5113

In order for the board of education to fulfill its responsibility for providing a thorough and efficient education for each student, the complete cooperation of parents and students is required to maintain a high level of school attendance.

Regular attendance at school is an indicator of responsible student behavior. Prolonged or repeated absences from school or from class deprive the student of the classroom activities deemed essential to learning and may result in course failure and/or loss of course credit.

A. Daily Notification by Parents/Guardians

Parents are responsible for notifying the school early in the day when a student will be absent and for informing the school of the reason for the absence. Such notification is necessary to ensure the safety of students; it does not replace or limit the responsibility of parents to maintain records and documentation of absences in the event that such becomes necessary for an administrative or committee review. A phone call will account for an absence or tardy, but does not excuse it.

B. Notification by School Personnel

With the exception of long term illnesses requiring home instruction, all absences will accumulate, regardless of their nature

The administration may reduce a student's absences for the following reasons:

1. Subpoenaed or court ordered attendance
2. Death in the immediate family
3. Religious observance of a day recognized by the commissioner of education

Keep in mind that West Morris Central additionally may exempt absences due to a chronic illness. (A minimum of three **consecutive** days of absence accompanied by a doctor's note)

• **Excused and unexcused lates:**

Except for school authorized trips and activities, missing more than 15 minutes of a class period is recorded as an **absence** if verified and a **cut** if unverified. Tardiness will be dealt with on an individual basis by the classroom teacher. Verified lates must be approved by a building administrator. Students will receive detentions after 5 unexcused tardies.

C. Attendance Limits

• **Attendance Notifications**

The attendance committee will make every effort to notify parents at the following stages

1. Regular Year Long Classes
 - a. 7 absences-warning letter
 - b. 13 absences-final letter

2. Physical Education Class
 - a. 5 absences-warning letter
 - b. 9 absences-final letter
3. Semester Classes
 - a. 3 absences-warning letter
 - b. 6 absences-final letter
4. Marking period Classes
 - a. 2 absences-warning letter
 - b. 3 absences final letter

Parents are expected to keep records of all student absences

D. Review Committee

A review committee will be appointed by the principal and consist of representative staff, including pupil service personnel and classroom teachers. The purpose of the committee is to conduct hearings with students and their parents when absences accumulate to more than the class limit in any given year. After the committee considers the reasons for excessive absences, they will recommend to the principal whether or not to grant additional excusal to any given absence(s).

This committee shall recommend appropriate modification to the program of any student who does not qualify for excusals. In doing so, the committee shall consider the rights of students with educational disabilities and the responsibility of the school to provide an appropriate educational experience for students.

E. Modification to Program Due to Excessive Absenteeism

Students who regularly and intentionally absent themselves from class(s) for inappropriate reasons and fail to demonstrate academic achievement and/or effort in any given course may lose the privilege to complete a course. Removal for this reason shall result in a grade of withdrawn failing. The withdrawn/failure option will be applied only when failure for the course is imminent based on teacher report of student progress.

In situations where academic achievement are proven, but unexcused absences exceed policy limits, the review committee may require alternative efforts from students to correct excessive absenteeism. Possible responses may include alternative class sessions/ assignments, school or community service; in-school suspension; or attendance during off-school hours, including Saturdays, for counseling /tutoring.

Failure of the student to successfully complete the modification plan will result in removal from the class and/or a failing grade for the course(s) and loss of credit.

F. School Authorized Trips and Activities

Missed class (es) due to school sponsored trips and activities are not considered as absences for purposes of this policy. Students who miss class under these circumstances are responsible for making up work and for informing teachers of the reason for missing class.

G. Truancy/Cutting of Class

The same procedures will apply to students who accumulate three or more absences due to truancy and/or individual class cuts. All students who illegally absent themselves from three classes will be granted a hearing before the review committee which may recommend the sanction of withdrawn failing or other appropriate responses.

The board will report to appropriate authorities' infractions of the law regarding the attendance of students below the age of 16. Repeated infractions by enrolled students over the age of 16 may result in suspension or expulsion.

It is the policy of the board to consider the effectiveness and appropriateness of the educational program for those students who habitually and repeatedly absent themselves from their assigned classes and to refer such cases to the child study team for review.

Students who are truant or cut a class lose the privilege of making up tests or other class work given on the day of the illegal absence.

Sincerely,



Edward Braun
Assistant Principal