

MIDDLETOWN TOWNSHIP PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Office of the Assistant Superintendent for Student Activities/Services

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William O. George III, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

Mary E. Walker
Assistant Superintendent

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Dear Parents,

Last school year, our administrators and counseling staff worked to reduce student absenteeism by expanding interventions to support student attendance. This year, we are continuing to focus on improved student attendance by more closely aligning our district's attendance procedures with New Jersey Department of Education guidelines. The changes, which target chronic absenteeism, are outlined below. Chronically absent students miss 10% or more of the school year, or 18 days for most students. Research shows that students with excess absences achieve at lower levels and are at greater risk for dropping out of school. These effects of chronic absenteeism begin as early as kindergarten and are compounded each year. In addition, learning can be disrupted for the entire class when classmates are excessively absent.

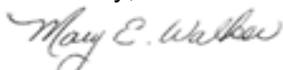
The new attendance requirements, which will be implemented at the start of the school year, include the following changes to [Regulation 5200](#) - Student Attendance.

- High school students may lose course credit on the 9th unexcused absence in a class. (A total of 16 days absent is possible before loss of credit due to the A/B day schedule.)
- Elementary and middle school students may be retained at grade level, in accordance with Policy 5410, on the 17th unexcused absence.
- In alignment with NJDOE regulations, the following absence reasons are excused absences and do not count toward loss of credit or retention.
 - Observance of religious holidays
 - Visits to post-secondary educational institutions (maximum of 3 per year for 11th & 12th grade students)
 - Take Your Child to Work Day
- Absences for a reason not listed above, but deemed excused by the principal, may require an Attendance Review Committee or an Intervention and Referral Services meeting.

All other absence reasons, including medical absences, are unexcused. Most students in our schools have fewer than 16 absences each year. However, if your child has excessive absences, building administration will work with you to identify barriers that are preventing your child from attending school, and develop plans that support regular attendance. If a student has a chronic medical condition, please provide your child's school with this information as soon as possible, so that they may work with you to provide supports and resources for your child.

More attendance information is available on the [Student Attendance Matters](#) presentation linked here. If you have any further questions regarding attendance procedures, please call your child's building administrator for further clarification.

Sincerely,



Mary E. Walker