



Administrative Guidelines

Department: Academics (OAAP)

Policy: JB

Topic: Attendance

Revised: April 2019

PROCEDURE

Marietta City Schools Attendance Protocol Chart for Elementary, Middle, High School

The purpose of this attendance protocol is to address unexcused absences for students ages six through fifteen. Any kindergarten student (age 5) who enters school and remains in school for 20 school days is also subject to the Compulsory School Attendance Law.

Timeline	Action	Documentation
By September 1 of each school year or within 30 days of a student's enrollment in the school system	A parent/guardian notification is issued explaining attendance expectations and possible consequences/ interventions of unexcused absences. The form requires the signature of parent/guardian and students (ages 10 and up).	After two reasonable attempts to secure the signature(s), the school will send a copy of the statement via certified mail, return receipt requested or first class mail. School will document date the letter was mailed.
10 or more unexcused the previous school year	Attendance meetings are scheduled for students who incurred 10 or more unexcused absences the previous year.	Documentation of the meetings for each student will be maintained in Aspen journal.
Three (3) unexcused absences	The teacher contacts the parent/guardian via a phone call regarding student attendance and the need for the student to be at school regularly. If a parent/guardian cannot be reached by phone, a letter or email is sent following the phone attempt(s).	Teacher documents date of phone call in Aspen journal. Teacher documents date of letter or email in Aspen journal.

<p>Five (5) unexcused absences</p>	<p>Students are considered truant after more than five (5) unexcused absences. The school is responsible for sending the letter automatically generated through Aspen to the parent/guardian. It is recommended that this letter be sent via first class mail.</p> <p>The school counselor contacts the parent/guardian via phone call. If a parent/guardian cannot be reached by phone, a letter or email is sent following the phone attempt(s).</p>	<p>The school documents date letter sent home to parent/guardian.</p> <p>The school counselor documents date of contact in Aspen journal.</p>
<p>Seven (7) unexcused absences.</p>	<p>A school-level attendance panel meeting is scheduled for all students.</p>	<p>The chairperson of the attendance panel will maintain documentation of the meeting for each student in Aspen journal.</p>
<p>Eight (8) unexcused absences</p>	<p>A school social work referral is generated by the school counselor listing specific school-based interventions (phone calls, letters, conferences, etc.) that have occurred prior to making the referral.</p>	<p>The school keeps a copy of the school social worker referral for each student.</p>
<p>Ten (10) or more unexcused absences</p>	<p>A truancy officer referral may be generated by the school social worker.</p> <p>Students and/or parents may be referred to the juvenile court, magistrate court and/or Department of Family and Children Services (DFCS) for truancy and/or educational neglect. Detailed information pertaining to interventions attempted to address absenteeism with the student and parent will be necessary when filing a referral to court or DFCS.</p>	<p>The school social worker keeps a copy of truancy officer referrals for each student.</p> <p>The truancy officer keeps a copy of the referral and any additional documentation included in the referral.</p>

It is critical that all teachers take regular and accurate attendance. It is the responsibility of school administrators to monitor and ensure accurate attendance record keeping.

Interventions and consequences only go so far in improving student attendance. Students attend school regularly when they find meaning in what they are learning, participate in engaging learning activities, have positive relationships with staff in the building, and feel safe and respected. Attendance issues are indicative of school climate concerns. These concerns need to be addressed in order to improve student attendance. Schools need to use school climate data and surveys to continuously monitor and address climate concerns.

As per Marietta City Schools Board Policy, at a minimum, the parent/guardian must submit a written excuse explaining the reason for the absence for it to be considered excused. The absence will only be considered an excused absence if it aligns with the reasons allowed by state law and the State Board of Education Rule as outlined in Marietta City Schools Policy JB. Failure to submit a written excuse within two school days of the student's return to school after an absence may result in the absence being marked as unexcused. The school principal may ask for additional medical or other documentation to verify that absences are excused, particularly when more than three (3) absences have been accumulated during the semester.

Attendance referrals to the school social worker, court, or DFCS for students over the age of 16 shall not be initiated. These students are not governed by the Compulsory Attendance Law. Local schools will develop programs, strategies, and/or interventions to address attendance with this population.