

**RCPS Attendance Policy**  
**STUDENT ABSENCES**  
**Abbreviated version (Adopted 5.2015)**

Students are expected to be in school, in class and ready for instruction. School attendance is critical to academic achievement and preparing students for the world of work and personal success. A good attendance record is an indication that an individual is willing to accept responsibility, exert self-discipline, and develop good work habits necessary for success in school, at work, and in life. Regular attendance is the first step to academic success. Students who are frequently absent miss instruction in key concepts and skills. We ask that parents set the tone for their child by encouraging good attendance and by communicating that school is their child's job and therefore, his or her responsibility every day.

**Definitions**

**A. Excused Absences**

The student is absent with parent/guardian permission for one of the following reasons: illness, medical or dental appointments, a death in the family, legal appointments, religious holidays, and prearranged absences approved by the principal or designee or other emergencies discussed with and approved by the principal or designee. In this regard, the principal or designee will consider the nature of the specific request of the parent, number of prior excused and unexcused absences and tardies, past and current grades as well as the student's discipline record when making decisions about whether to excuse any pre-arranged absence.

**B. Unexcused Absences**

All other absences for reasons not included in the above definition of an excused absence are unexcused. Examples of unexcused absences include: personal business, not having a parent note as required in Section III below, suspension, oversleeping, haircuts, shopping, failure to catch the school bus, and failure of private transportation.

If a student must be absent from school, a parent or guardian needs to call their child's school prior to the day of the absence and state the reason for their child's absence. If word has not been received from the home concerning the absence, the school will make every attempt to contact the parent or guardian of each absent student by phone at their home and/or their place of employment. A documented attempt will be made to contact the parent if a student is absent without administrative approval or knowledge.

**Whether or not contact with a parent or guardian is able to be made by the school in order to verify the absence, the student must present a note to the school secretary upon his or her return to school.** Failure to provide a note, even for an excused absence communicated over the phone from the parent or guardian, within 3 days of an absence will result in the absence being coded as "unexcused."

**A. Excessive Excused and Unexcused Absences**

1. Definitions. All excused and unexcused absences will be included in computing excessive absences, except as follows:

- a. School-sponsored and school-related activities
- b. Recognized religious holidays

Students having either five (5) unexcused absences or a total of 15 absences of any type (excused, unexcused, or a combination of both) for either an entire day or in a specific block or class will be considered as having excessive absences.

### **MTC Attendance Policy**

Massanutten Technical Center is invested in preparing your students for a competitive workforce. The goal of technical education has always been to prepare students for the world of work. Students must realize that good attendance is essential to further success. Students who are frequently absent miss instruction in key concepts and skills. For all absences, MTC will contact the student's home each day the student is absent from school when there is no indication that the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) is aware of and supports the absence.

### **Consequences for students who are absent from MTC:**

- **3 unexcused absences:** Student is referred for discussion with administration. Instructor will contact the parent(s)/guardian(s).
- **4 unexcused absences:** A letter will be sent home. Administration will contact the parent(s)/guardian(s).
- **5 unexcused absences:** Referral to administration. The administrator will hold a meeting with the student, parent(s)/guardian(s) to jointly develop an academic improvement plan.
- **10 absences:** Referral to administration. Referral to the attendance officer. Administration will call parent(s)/guardian(s).

### **Attendance Incentive Plan**

Massanutten Technical Center faculty and staff feel that attendance is one of the key factors leading to success; therefore we have put in place a program called the Attendance Incentive Plan that rewards faithful attendance for all high school students enrolled in high school programs at MTC.

Purpose: To encourage high school students to attend MTC.

### **Perfect Attendance Guidelines**

1. Perfect attendance means no absences with the exception of pre-approved school related activities.
2. All students with perfect attendance for the entire school year will be entered into a drawing at the end of the year.
3. The winning student(s) must be present on the day of the drawing or be involved in a pre-approved school related activity in order to be awarded a prize.

### **MTC Tardy Policy**

Students must be in class on time. Class activities begin as soon as the first bell rings and it is essential for students to be present. A student who arrives late to class must report immediately to the attendance secretary in the attendance office. A student arriving after 8:35 a.m. for a morning class and after 12:30 p.m. for an afternoon class will be considered tardy. A tardy due to school sponsored activities such as field trips, club meetings, and pre-arranged school activities will be marked as participation in a school activity, not a tardy. Parents or guardians of students are encouraged to contact Massanutten Technical Center when their child is going to be tardy. Transportation reasons for lateness will be marked as tardy unexcused, as buses are available to all MTC students on a daily basis.

### **Consequences for students who are tardy to MTC:**

- **3rd unexcused tardy:** student is referred for discussion with administration. Instructor will contact the parent(s)/guardian(s).

- **5th unexcused tardy:** Referral to administration. The student will be assigned social probation/poor school standing for a minimum of two (2) weeks and the parent(s)/guardian(s) will be contacted by school administration.
- **8th unexcused tardy:** Referral to administration. The student will be assigned one (1) day of after school detention at MTC, the social probation/poor school standing will be extended by an additional week, and student drivers will lose driving privileges to MTC for one (1) week. Administration will contact the parent(s)/guardian(s).
- **10th unexcused tardy:** Referral to administration. The student will be assigned two (2) days of after school detention at MTC, the social probation/poor school standing will be extended by an additional week, and student drivers will lose driving privileges to MTC for one (1) week. Administration will contact the parent(s)/guardian(s).

**Further consequences will be considered should a student receive additional unexcused tardies.**

### **Student Early Dismissal**

Students are not permitted to leave school before their school day is completed unless they are approved in the office and properly signed out. Students who expect to leave early must bring in a note or signed statement from their parent(s) giving a reason for the early dismissal, the time for dismissal, and the telephone number where a parent can be contacted. If transportation is by someone other than the parent this should also be noted. The note or signed statement should be taken to the attendance office within the first twenty minutes of school. If the student does not take a note to the attendance office in the first twenty minutes of school, the student will need to report to the attendance office to sign out when it is time for the student to leave the school building. A parent will then need to be contacted before the student can be released. Students will not be released during the school day to any person not authorized by the student's parent to assume responsibility for the student. Students shall be released only on request and authorization of the parent. Students leaving campus without following proper dismissal procedures will be subject to disciplinary action. No student may walk to or from campus.