

Dear MBIT Families,

Regular school attendance is crucial for student success. When students miss school, they fall behind in their studies and miss out on valuable social interactions. To ensure your child's academic and social development, please help them establish a strong attendance record. Attendance in school is a direct indicator to employers as to what they may expect from a student in the workplace. Employers are just as interested in attendance and employability skills as they are in a student's grades.

Pennsylvania's school laws, like Act 138 of 2016 and the updated Act 16, outline what is required for mandatory school attendance and procedures to follow when students are absent or late. These laws and procedures are included in MBIT Executive Council [Policy 204](#) and require that every parent and guardian must have their child enter school "no later than 6 years of age until the child reaches 18 years of age," which is referred to as compulsory age.

As we start the second marking period of the school year, we wish to remind you of some important information regarding attendance.

**Notifying About Absences:** If your child is absent, you'll get a text and email to let you know. This is to make sure you are aware that your child isn't at school that day.

**Excused Absences:** Parents and guardians must notify the office by 9 am through the Safe Arrival System. Emails will not be accepted. Absences reported through the Safe Arrival System will count as the excuse note. If you don't have internet access, you can excuse your child by phone and then send a written note within three days after their return to school. Following state attendance law, an absence is "excused" for one of the following reasons only:

- Illness
- Family emergency
- Death of a family member
- Medical or Dental appointments
- Authorized school activities
- Exceptionally urgent reasons
- Religious observances (with prior approval)
- Tutorial work
- Educational trips (with prior approval, not to exceed five days in a school year)
- Health care

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**Planned Absences:** Please let the school know well in advance if you know your child will be absent.

**Religious Observations:** For full or part-time absence of a student to observe a religious holiday, it is necessary that the request be put in through the Safe Arrival System prior to the religious holiday(s).

**Educational Trips:** If you wish for your child to miss school for an educational trip, this request must be made to the school at least 10 days prior to the anticipated absence. The total number of approved days of absence cannot exceed five days per school year. Extra days will be considered unlawful and/or unexcused. The student is responsible for making up any missed assignments.

**Unexcused Absences:** Absences for reasons not listed above will be unexcused. For students under 18, unexcused absences are also unlawful. After three unlawful absences in a school year, an official “first notice” will be sent home and a “School Attendance Improvement Plan” will be developed in collaboration with the sending schools. ***After six unlawful absences, the law permits for your child to be referred to an attendance improvement program, Children and Youth Services, or file a truancy citation with the District Magistrate.*** Importantly, for students aged 18 and older, absenteeism may result in credit denial as outlined in sections above

**Cumulative Absences:** If a student has 10 or more absences in a school year, the parent or guardian will receive a letter stating that any future absences must be medically excused by a doctor. Failure to do so will result in unexcused absences and potential truancy proceedings absences. .

**Tardiness and Early Dismissal:** If your child is late or leaves early, it must be recorded in the Safe Arrival System. These are marked as excused or unexcused based on the same criteria as full-session absences. Students who are late to class and/or school without an excused reason will receive an unexcused Tardy. Students who are Tardy with no accepted excuse on more than 10% of scheduled days are considered excessively late and will receive progressive consequences, including a suspension or permanent loss of driving privileges.

We appreciate your partnership in ensuring students regularly attend school to get the most out of their educational experience.

Sincerely,

MBIT Administration