

R. MAX ABBOTT MIDDLE SCHOOL

COMPULSORY ATTENDANCE

This brochure includes what every parent should know about school attendance and the law.

North Carolina law requires all children who are enrolled in Kindergarten through 12th grade to attend school on a regular basis.

When a child misses a day of school the parent/guardian must notify the homeroom teacher in writing within three days of the absence.

TYPES OF ABSENCES

There are two types of absences: **excused (lawful)** and **unexcused (unlawful)**.

An absence must fall into one of the following eight categories to be excused:

1. **Illness or Injury:** The student is physically unable to attend school due to an illness or injury.
2. **Quarantine:** The isolation of the student ordered by the health department/board of health or medical physician.

3. **Death in the Family:** The death of an immediate family member such as parents, siblings or grandparents.
4. **Medical/Dental Appointment:** Not for routine hour-long appointments, but for extensive appointments involving medical procedures.
5. **Court:** The *child* must be present for court proceedings or an administrative hearing.
6. **Religious Observation:** The tenets of a religion to which a student and his/her parents adhere, require or suggest observance of a religious event.
7. **Educational Opportunity:** The purpose of the absence is to take advantage of a valid educational opportunity such as travel by the student. *An educational opportunity form is required for prior approval by the principal. A student report must be turned in within five days of the last absence.*
8. **Military Deployment or Reunification:** The child's parent/guardian is deploying, redeploying or home on leave. Not to exceed five (5) days of absences.

FROM THE SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKER

The school social worker will contact you by letter, phone or home visit when your child has reached at least three (3) unexcused absences or ten (10) excused absences.

REQUIRED BY LAW

The social worker will send out three contact letters for unexcused absences.

1. The first letter is for **three unexcused absences**. These absences received a code of unexcused because a note was not received from the parent stating one of the eight valid absence reasons.
2. The second letter is sent home for **six unexcused absences**. These absences have accumulated from the beginning of the student's school year. This letter is signed by the principal.
3. The third letter is for **10 unexcused absences**. This letter notifies the parent of a conference with school personnel. This meeting is an effort to resolve the attendance concerns before punitive action.

AFTER THE TEN DAY LETTER

If attendance concerns continue after the 10 day meeting, then the social worker may proceed to the following actions:

1. Truancy Mediation Council. The social worker will request for a formal mediation at the Cumberland County court house. The parent/guardian will meet with school personnel, social services, court representatives, juvenile services, mental health counselors and any agencies involved with the student. This will give all parties a chance to discuss the situation and come to a mutually satisfactory solution.

2. District Court. The social worker may elect to proceed with court action. This action brings all parties in front of a judge to discuss the noncompliance with the compulsory attendance law. This could result in jail time as well as fines.

EXCESSIVE EXCUSED ABSENCES

Students accumulating 10 excused absences are sent a letter of Excessive Excused Absences. A physician's note will be required for all future absences. Failure to provide a physician's note will result in the absence being coded unexcused. Parents/guardians may submit a letter from a physician stating that the student has a chronic illness that will cause the student to be absent more than 10 days in a school year.

MAKE-UP ASSIGNMENTS

It is the student's responsibility to make up missed classroom assignments within five days of returning to school. Please contact your teachers immediately.

ATHLETIC ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for PFMS sports, you must be in attendance for 85% of the previous semester. Student-athletes may not attend practice or games on days they are absent.

CONTACT YOUR SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKER

Your school social worker will assist your family in overcoming any barriers that may be keeping your child from coming to school. Address issues early, so the school year will be successful for your child and family!

MORNING TARDY POLICY

Please refer to page 2 of the student planner for full details of the morning tardy policy. Students are tardy starting at 8:30 a.m. and must sign in at the front office with a parent before reporting to class.

PARENT PORTAL

Keep track of your child's attendance by accessing the parent portal at <http://homebaseportal.ccs.k12.nc.us/>. You will receive sign-in information from your child's homeroom teacher.



Attendance Policy

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