

Attendance Really Does Matter!

*Encouraging regular school attendance is one of the **most powerful ways** we can prepare a student for success both in school and in life.*

Maryland's Compulsory Attendance Law

Who Must Attend?

Every child between the ages of 5 and 18 shall attend a public school regularly during the entire school year unless otherwise enrolled in private school or home instruction approved by Baltimore County Public Schools

Duty of parent or guardian: Each person who has under his/her custody a child between 5 and 18 years of age must see that the child attends school or receives instruction as required above.

Penalties: Under the Maryland Compulsory Attendance Law, charges may be filed in District Court. A parent or guardian may be found guilty of a misdemeanor and subject to a fine or incarceration for unlawful absences of a student.

What Types of Absences are Considered Excused?

Legal absences are defined by C.O.M.A.R. as the following:

- Death in family
- Illness of child
- Court Summons
- Religious Holiday
- Assigned Transportation does not pick up
- Suspension (no note needed)

In order for the absence to be considered excused, a note, signed by the parent/guardian, is to be submitted to the first period teacher upon the student's return to school. Students will receive a pink "excused absence" form to show all of their teachers in order to receive their missing work.

What if the reason for absence does not fall in one of these categories?

Absences for any other reason need to be reviewed by an administrator before being excused.

My child will miss an extended number of days from school for a pre-planned event. What do we do?

Communication is key. We ask that you notify your child's school counselor *at least a week prior* to the extended absence. This will allow the counselor to communicate with all teachers in regards to the absence and seek assistance in gathering missing work. Additional documentation may be required to support the absence in being considered excused.

Unfortunately, vacations are **not** considered excused absences. However, we will do our best to work with students in gathering the missing work.

College Visits: High School students are allowed up to three (3) days in both the junior and senior year to be coded as excused. The student should provide documentation from the school of the visit.

Extended Absences for Medical Reasons

Baltimore County Public Schools offers the opportunity for students to receive educational supports during periods of extended absences due to a medical or emotional condition through the Home and Hospital program.

Students may qualify for full-time services if the physical or emotional condition will result in 20+ consecutive days of absences. ***If approved, students' daily school attendance is coded as "present".***

Students may qualify for intermittent services if the student has a condition that may result in absences of 2 or more days at a time due to the verified condition. Once the approved student is absent from school for two consecutive days, the parent calls the Home and Hospital office and they will make arrangements for a tutor to come and work with the child on making up missing school work. It is the responsibility of the student to collect work that needs to be completed with the assistance of the tutor. ***When services are initiated, the school is directed to change the student's attendance to "present" for the days absent from school.***

Our school counselors are the point of contact for information related to Home and Hospital services. Please contact them at (443) 809-1219 with questions.

PHS Bell Schedule

Not only are we concerned about absences from school, but we are also concerned about school lateness.

Please take note of our bell schedule for the 2019-2020 school year.

Period 1: 7:40 - 9:00 AM

HR: 9:00 – 9:10 AM

Period 2: 9:15 - 10:40 AM

Period 3: 10:45 AM - 12:40 PM

Period 4: 12:45 - 2:10 PM

Throughout the year, participation in special school events will be tied to attendance to school in an effort to promote on-time, daily attendance.