

STUDENT ABSENCES AND EXCUSES

Attendance in a school approved by the Department of Education is compulsory for every child between his/her 7th and 17th birthdays. Frequent absences disrupt the continuity of a student's education program. Attendance is taken at least daily in all schools.

All pupils who are absent from school for any reason are required to provide the appropriate school with a note indicating the date of absence, the reason for the absence, and the signature of the parent or guardian. This should be taken in upon return to school.

Planned absences are intended for legitimate medical or educational purposes and should not be abused as a means of prolonged school vacations. Planned absences should be arranged with the school well in advance.

Students who fail to attend school without legitimate cause may be considered truant. Space does not permit a lengthy review of laws; however, the specific legally constituted legitimate reasons for being absent are listed below and absences not clearly falling under one of the following categories would constitute truancy and be in violation of the law. They are:

1. Personal illness (as attested to in writing by a parent and in some cases a physician). All contagious diseases should be reported to the school.
2. Appointments with health professionals that cannot be made outside the school day.
3. Observance of recognized religious holidays when the observance is required during a regular school day.
4. Emergency family situations.
5. Plans for personal or educational purposes which have been approved. Factors to be considered by the administrators in approving planned absences:
 1. Reason for planned absence
 2. Student's academic status
 3. Student's past record on absenteeism
 4. Educational value of planned absence.

M.S.A.D. #3 wishes to clearly state its intention to enforce the law consistently, rigorously, and fairly. Procedures that address unexcused absences, trancies, and dismissals will be determined by each school in M.S.A.D. #3 and notice of such will be included in school handbooks.

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