

POLICY

Queen Anne's County Public Schools

POLICY TITLE: Middle School Attendance Policy	
ADOPTION/EFFECTIVE DATE: January 09, 2013	
POLICY/PROCEDURE MANUAL SUMMARY CATEGORY: Students	
Amendment:	

I. Purpose:

Outline the standards and procedures for attendance in the middle schools.

II. Policy Statement:

All students are expected to attend school regularly and to be on time for classes in order to benefit from the instructional program and to develop habits of punctuality, self-discipline and responsibility.

III. Rationale:

Attendance and school performance are linked.

IV. Definitions:

- A. Attendance Review Committee This committee will be established at each middle school and will meet as needed.
- B. Attendance Contract Transfer students, with a poor attendance history, may be required to complete a Contract.
- C. Makeup Work There shall be no makeup work for students who are unlawfully absent. After 15 days, any unlawful absence cannot be changed to a lawful absence.
- D. Habitual Truant are students who are absent without cause from school for a number of days or portion of days greater than 20% of the available time school is in session.

V. Policy Standards:

The standard for regular attendance is 100% unless lawfully absent. Attendance is an important factor in determining grades.

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VI. Implementation

The Superintendent shall develop Administrative Procedures to implement this policy.

VII. References

COMAR §13A.08.01.03 (lawful absences)

COMAR §13A.08.01.04 (unlawful absences)

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QUEEN ANNE'S COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS MIDDLE SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Standards for School Attendance

All students are expected to attend school regularly and to be on time for classes in order to benefit from the instructional program and to develop habits of punctuality, self-discipline and responsibility.

The standard for regular attendance is 100% unless lawfully absent. Attendance is an important factor in determining grades.

A. In middle school, parents may excuse absences by phone or by note NO MORE than 10 occasions in combination during the school year. 10 or more unlawful absences during the school year may result in course failure. This decision may be appealed to the Attendance Review Committee. This committee will be established at each middle school and will meet as needed.

B. Students receiving special education or have a 504 Plan will be referred to the SST or IEP team to determine possible course failure for excessive unlawful absences.

C. Transfer students, with a poor attendance history, may be required to complete an Attendance Contract.

D. There shall be no makeup work for students who are unlawfully absent. After 15 days, any unlawful absence cannot be changed to a lawful absence. (See course syllabus for make-up procedure)

"Habitual Truants" are student who are unlawfully absent from school for a number of days or portion of days in excess of 20% of the available time school is in session.

E. When a student is truant, the parent will be notified and disciplinary action will be taken via normal disciplinary procedures.

Student Trips - A written request must be provided to the principal at least two weeks in advance

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Consequences for middle school students not meeting the standard for school attendance in the Queen Anne's County Public Schools' Attendance Procedure are as follows:

1. Beginning with the sixth absence of the school year, an attendance letter from attendance staff to the parent is to be sent, signed by the school counselor.
2. Beginning at the tenth absence of the school year an attendance letter from attendance staff and signed by the principal will be sent. The letter would indicate the need for a conference with the school counselor to develop a plan to correct the attendance problem. A copy of the letter goes to the school counselor, PPW and cumulative file.
3. Parents of students receiving special education services or who have a 504 Plan will be sent a letter referring them to the SST or IEP team to schedule a meeting to address attendance.
4. A list of students having ten unlawful absences per semester will be reviewed by the Student Support Team (SST). Those found in violation of the policy will be sent a letter indicating course failure.
5. Students having ten unlawful absences during the school year and who receive special education services or have a 504 Plan will be sent a letter referring them to the SST or IEP team to make a determination about course failure.

Student Support Team (SST) will document parent contact of unlawful absences when they reach 10 unlawful absences. The SST will share the data and information with teachers. Teachers will comment on mid-terms/report cards: Absences impede progress.

A Master List of those students having 10 unlawful absences and failing grades will be kept by the attendance office as well as a list of those appealing and the results of those appeals.

6. Parents may appeal the failing grade and must do so in writing one week prior to the end of the school year. An appeal committee, made up of middle school staff, will review all written appeals to determine whether the student will earn a passing grade in the course.
7. Those students whose appeals are denied will be notified by letter.

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COMAR 13A.08.01.03

.03 Lawful Absence.

Students presently enrolled in public schools are considered lawfully absent from school, including absence for any portion of the day, only under the following conditions:

- A. Death in the immediate family. The local school system shall determine what relationships constitute the immediate family.
- B. Illness of the student. The principal or a pupil personnel worker shall require a physician's certificate from the parent or guardians of a student reported continuously absent for illness.
- C. Court summons.
- D. Hazardous weather conditions. Hazardous weather conditions shall be interpreted to mean weather conditions which would endanger the health or safety of the student when in transit to and from school.
- E. Work approved or sponsored by the school, the local school system, or the State Department of Education, accepted by the local superintendent of schools or the school principal, or their designees as reason for excusing the students.
- F. Observance of a religious holiday.
- G. State emergency.
- H. Suspension.
- I. Lack of authorized transportation. This does not include students denied authorized transportation for disciplinary reasons.
- J. Other emergency or set of circumstances which, in the judgment of the superintendent or designee, constitutes a good and sufficient cause for absence from school.