



*Serving With Pride The
Township of Manalapan
and the
Borough of Englishtown*

Nicole Santora, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools
nicolesantora@mersnj.us

Peter M. Friedman Building
54 Main Street
Englishtown, N.J. 07726-1599
(732) 786-2500
(732) 786-2541 FAX

September 1, 2022

Dear Parent/Guardian,

The past three school years have been impacted tremendously by protocols and procedures as set forth by the State regarding Covid-19. Please be aware that COVID is now treated as any other communicable disease, consistent with [Board Policy 8451](#). In compliance with state law, our district implements the following attendance policy and procedures. Please be sure to utilize the Genesis Parent Portal to record student absences and communicate with the Health Office so we can accurately reflect absence reasons.

Absence Categories

Student absences are recorded in one of the following categories based on the information provided (or not provided) by parents/guardians.

1. **Excused** - The only absences that will be entered in this category are those deemed officially “excused” by the state. This category ONLY includes religious holidays and Take Your Child to Work day.
2. **Unexcused: Not Truant** - A student’s first five (5) absences accompanied by a doctor’s note, a parent note, OR a parent phone call will fall under this category.
3. **Unexcused: Truant** - After five (5) absences, any absence NOT accompanied by a doctor’s note falls in this category. **ALL vacations** also fall in this category.

Administrative Actions

Administrators in every school in our district will take the actions listed at each attendance threshold noted below:

1. **Five (5) Unexcused Absences of ANY KIND**: A letter will be mailed home alerting the parent/guardian that the student has reached this threshold. The letter will also be placed in the child’s cumulative folder.
2. **Five (5) Unexcused: Truant Absences**: A letter will be mailed home and placed in the student’s cumulative file. Administration may request a parent meeting/phone conference to develop a collaborative attendance improvement plan. This letter will also serve as a warning for the action to take place if the student reaches 10 Unexcused: Truant absences.
3. **Ten (10) Unexcused Absences of ANY KIND**: A letter will be mailed home alerting the parent/guardian that the student has reached this threshold. The letter will also be placed in the child’s cumulative folder.
4. **Ten (10) Unexcused: Truant Absences**: A truancy referral will be made to the district attendance officer at whose discretion a court referral will be made. A letter indicating this will be mailed

home and placed in the student's cumulative file. The district attendance officer may also contact the parents/guardians for a meeting.

5. **Fifteen (15) Unexcused Absences of ANY KIND**: A letter will be mailed home and placed in the student's cumulative file. This letter will serve as initial notification that an attendance review committee will convene at the end of the year to determine whether or not the student will be retained or promoted.
6. **Eighteen (18) Absences of ANY KIND**: Your child will be identified by the State of New Jersey as a "chronically absent" student. The attendance review committee will automatically recommend the following: Students will be required to attend the district summer program with 90% attendance in order to be considered for promotion to the next grade level.

Our ultimate goal as a district is to prevent chronic absenteeism to promote student achievement in all areas. A student who is chronically absent is at a greater risk of academic, social and emotional disadvantage when compared to his/her peers. Traditionally speaking, chronically absent students lag behind their peers when it comes to academic achievement and academic growth.

Let's prevent the effects of chronic absenteeism by working together to make sure your child attends school on a regular basis!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nicole Santora". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Nicole Santora, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools