

William H. Farquhar Processes for Attendance

Daily attendance is an important factor to student achievement and increases opportunities to demonstrate mastery of material. Students are required to attend school, arrive on time and be ready for instruction at the start of each class period. Except when excused, students must go to classes and other required activities during the school day. Attendance will be reported to parents/guardians on the student's report card. A student is counted present for a full day if a student is in attendance four hours or more of the school day. A student is counted present for a half day if in attendance for at least two hours of the school day, but less than four hours. According to Farquhar's procedures, if a student is absent from school, the school will follow up on the absence. Please report all absences to the Attendance Secretary, Nancy Slocum in the main office (240)740-1200 or email nancy_slocum@mcpsmd.org.

Excused Absences

Students may miss school for the following reasons only:

- Death in the immediate family
- Illness (The principal may require a physician's certificate from the parent/guardian in cases of chronic or extended absences for illness.)
- Court summons
- Religious holiday
- State emergency
- Suspension
- Hazardous weather conditions (weather that would endanger a student on the way to or from school)
- Lack of authorized transportation (for example, if the bus does not show up)
- Permission from the principal
- Athletic Events

If a student misses school for one of these reasons, the student must bring a note from his/her parent/guardian within three (3) school days after returning to school. For example, if a student misses school Wednesday, and Thursday, and then returns Friday, a student must hand in a note explaining the absence by the following Tuesday. Otherwise, the absence will be considered unexcused. Family vacations are not usually excused. If unusual circumstances arise, however, the principal may excuse the absence.

William H. Farquhar MS Policy on Excused Absences:

Students who are absent one (1) to three (3) days, will be given make up work upon their return to school. If your child is absent for more than three (3) days, please call the main office to request that work be gathered and sent home. We do not expect students to do work when they have not received teacher instruction. When we are notified that a student is going to be absent, the staff works with that student before and after the absence to maintain the continuity of instruction as much as possible. All requests for an absence of five (5) or more days should be sent to Mr. Beidleman, principal, at least two weeks in advance.

Unexcused Absences

An absence that is not excused according to the above conditions is an unexcused absence. If a student misses a day of school and is not excused, the student will have an unexcused absence in each class missed. **Middle school students taking high school credit classes with five unlawful absences in a class will automatically be required to submit an appeal of the recording of their absences, if they or their parents/guardians believe any absence was recorded incorrectly, and/or develop an attendance intervention plan with their counselor/administrators.** Initiation of an appeal and/or attendance intervention plan may be initiated by the student, parent/guardian, or counselor/administrative team. If the student does not complete either an appeal of attendance recording or an attendance intervention plan and/or continues to be further unlawfully absent, the student will be considered to be in danger of receiving a failing grade in that course.

It is important for students to make up missed work regardless of the legal status of their absence. Teachers may assign an equivalent, but different task or assessment to students when they return from any absence. For unlawful absences, teachers may deny credit for missed assignments or assessments, in accordance with the process approved by the principal and the leadership team.

The principal may refuse a student the opportunity to participate in extracurricular activities on a day that he/she has an unexcused absence. Each school establishes a process to encourage regular daily attendance, monitor attendance, and provide interventions.

William H. Farquhar MS Policy on Unexcused Absences:

Due to the nature of traveling outside of the United States, all travel out of the country is considered unexcused. While we value the rich, cultural experience traveling gives our students, unfortunately travel outside of the country, for five (5) or more days, during the school year, regardless of the reason, is unexcused. As a result, we do not provide school work. Teachers will work with students before they leave and when they return. The exception would include illness or death in the family, and any other reason listed on the Excused Absences list.

Please note that students who miss five (5) or more days may have to drop classes where they receive high school credit such as algebra, geometry, Spanish, or French. Any student who is absent from school for fifteen (15) or more consecutive days will be withdrawn from William H. Farquhar MS. If the student returns, he or she will have to re-enroll. We cannot guarantee that the student will have the same classes. All requests for an absence of five (5) or more days should be sent to Mr. Beidleman, principal, at least two weeks in advance.

Work Missed During an Absence

Students have a responsibility and are expected to make up missed work, regardless of the legal status of their absence. If the absence is excused or is a result of a suspension, the teacher will help a student make up work. If the absence is unexcused, the teacher does not have to help a student make up the work missed, give a retest, or give an extension on work that was due.

Change of School Assignment:

Students who have been given permission to attend schools other than assigned may, with proper cause, such as poor attendance or behavior, have that permission rescinded. In addition, students whose change of school assignment was approved because they were attending a special/exempt program must return to their home school if they leave that program.