



## What should parents know?

- Regular school attendance is a major predictor of academic success
- Parents/guardians should set routines to establish good attendance patterns
- Parents/guardians should notify the school when their child is going to be absent on any given day
- A parent/guardian needs to provide a written note or physician's certificate for absences or tardiness within 3 days of the students return to school
- Parents/guardians can be required to submit a doctor's note for excessive absences
- Parents/guardians can be held criminally responsible for failure to send their child to school regularly

## Benjamin Banneker Middle School

Mrs. Michelle Fortune,  
Principal

[Michelle\\_L\\_Fortune@mcpsmd.org](mailto:Michelle_L_Fortune@mcpsmd.org)

Duane Smith,  
Pupil Personnel Worker  
[Duane\\_A\\_Smith@mcpsmd.org](mailto:Duane_A_Smith@mcpsmd.org)

## Contact Us

Phone: 301.989.5747

Fax: 301.879.1032



## ATTENDANCE POLICY



### ATTENDANCE POLICY

14800 Perrywood Drive  
Burtonsville, MD 20866



## What is the policy?

Children between the ages of 5 and 17 must attend school per Maryland state law. Maryland recognizes home instruction as an alternative to public school enrollment as a means of meeting the compulsory attendance law. A child must be formally enrolled in home instruction.

For Kindergarten students, state law allows for 3 exceptions to the attendance requirement: for immaturity; for attendance in a licensed child-care center; or for attendance in a registered family day-care home.

## What is the definition of Truancy?

Truancy is defined as a student who has more than 20% unlawful or unexcused absences. Parents/guardians are responsible for their child's attendance.

## What is a Lawful vs. Unlawful Absence?

Each school's responsibility is to record attendance for each student. A lawful or excused absence is considered under the following circumstances:

- Illness of student or student's child
- Death in immediate family
- Observance of a religious holiday
- State emergency or hazardous weather conditions
- Court summons
- Suspension
- Work approved or sponsored by the school
- Failure of MCPS authorized transportation to eligible students

Any absences for reasons other than those specified above are considered unexcused or unlawful unless permitted at the discretion of the principal/designee. Normally, absences for travel are not lawful or excused.

## Importance of Good Attendance

Regular school attendance is the key to high school graduation and future achievement. Poor attendance in elementary school has been identified as an early warning sign to delinquency, social problems, and school failure or dropping out.



## What if my child has excessive absences?

Pupil Personnel Workers in collaboration with the school monitor student attendance. If a student's attendance becomes a concern, they may be referred for interventions to increase regular school attendance. The following are possible interventions:

- Required doctor's note for excessive or chronic absences
- Letters of notification informing parents of concern
- Home visits
- Parent phone calls/meetings
- School counselor support
- Attendance intervention plans/contracts
- Referrals to outside agencies
- Referrals to Attendance Matters
- Referrals to Truancy Review Board
- Referrals to court

