

## **Attendance Summary for Students and Parents/Guardians**

Student attendance in all classes is critically important to maximize student learning, attain good grades, and earn credits in high school. Below is important information for students and parents/guardians:

### **Determining Whether an Absence Is Lawful (Excused) or Unlawful (Unexcused)**

- **A written explanation of each absence is required from the parent/guardian within three days of the student's return to school (email is acceptable).**
- **Requests for late arrivals or early dismissals must be authorized by the parent/guardian.**
- **Students are considered lawfully (excused) absent from school for the following reasons:**
  - 1) **Work approved or sponsored** by the school, Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS), or the Maryland State Department of Education
  - 2) **Death in the immediate family**
  - 3) **Illness of the student** (The principal may require a physician's certificate.)
  - 4) **Court summons**
  - 5) **Hazardous weather conditions** which would endanger the health or safety of the student when in transit to and from school
  - 6) **Observance of religious holiday**
  - 7) **State emergency**
  - 8) **Suspension**
  - 9) **Failure to provide MCPS authorized transportation to eligible students**
  - 10) **Other emergency or set of circumstances** determined by the principal
- **Any absence for reasons other than those specified above may be considered either lawful or unlawful by the principal/designee.** Normally, requests for family travel are not lawful absences.
- **A student's absence may be deemed lawful at the discretion of the principal/designee with prior request based on the following:**
  - 1) Recommendations from the student's teacher(s) concerning the possible effect of the anticipated absence on the student's academic progress and the options available for make-up work before making a decision to approve the absence.
  - 2) Number of lawful and unlawful absences student has accumulated to date.
  - 3) Purpose or special significance of the absences.
  - 4) Duration of the absence.
- **In unique and specific circumstances, absences can be considered authorized and should not be reported as either lawful or unlawful and students are considered to be present.** Examples include, but are not limited to:
  - 1) **Sports participation**
  - 2) **Student government**
  - 3) **Field trips**
  - 4) **Health room visit**
  - 5) **Home and hospital teaching**
  - 6) **In-school suspension/In-school intervention**

*See Montgomery County Public Schools Regulation, JEA-RA, Student Attendance, for more information; [www.montgomeryschoolsms.org/departments/policy/pdf/jeara.pdf](http://www.montgomeryschoolsms.org/departments/policy/pdf/jeara.pdf)*