

Attendance, Absences

Students **must** bring in a note signed by a parent/guardian upon returning to school. The Absent Note Form is located on the Wootton website. Students have three (3) days from the day they return to bring signed notes from parents/guardians. All absent notes should be turned into the attendance office before school, during lunch, or after school. No notes will be accepted during class periods. After this three-day limit, an absence will be classified as unexcused unless the administrator has granted an extension to a student's request during these days. **In order to participate in any athletic event, extracurricular activity, scheduled school activity or practice, students must be on time and attend all scheduled classes the day of the event. With prior approval of an administrator, a student may be excused for prescheduled appointments.**

A doctor's note is required when a student is absent for four (4) consecutive days or more.

For any student who has reached the 20% absence list, a parent/guardian will be notified in writing. MCPS defines an absence in accordance with the definition of "Days Absent" in the Maryland Student Records Systems Manual, and is based on the cumulative school year. **All subsequent absences will be unexcused unless a doctor's note and a parental note are provided for all late arrivals and absences.** In order for a student's name to be removed from this 20% list, attendance must be improved and drop below 20% as reported monthly in accordance with the Maryland Student Records System, based on a cumulative school year.

Connect-Ed

The system, Connect-Ed, allows Wootton HS to contact homes when students have been marked absent by teachers in one or more classes. Parents/guardians should check the ParentVue if they have questions regarding a student's absence from class(s) before contacting the main office at 240-740-1500.

Attendance

Each student's attendance record at school is very important. Academic achievement is difficult to attain with poor attendance habits.

All students are expected to be in **every scheduled class** on time every day unless legitimately excused. According to state regulations, absence, tardy or early departure from school for the following reasons are lawful and shall be excused:

- ☐ Death in immediate family
- ☐ Court summons (documentation must be provided)
- ☐ Illness of student
- ☐ Observance of religious holiday
- ☐ Medical appointment **with** doctor's note
- ☐ Work or activity accepted by school authorities
(must have prior administrative approval)
- ☐ Violent Storms
- ☐ State Emergency
- ☐ Quarantine
- ☐ Suspension
- ☐ Lack of authorized (MCPS) transportation

The written reason is very important so the Attendance secretary can appropriately code the absence.

Please note: Family reason or family emergency will always need to be approved by the student's grade level administrator.

Family vacations are not excused. If unusual circumstances arise, however, an administrator may excuse the absence **in advance**.

Absentee Notes

All parental, medical, or "age of majority" notes must include the following: name of student, ID number, grade, date, and reason for absence or lateness, phone number where a parent/guardian may be reached during the day, and the parent/guardian signature. All notes should be no smaller than 4x6 (form can be found on the Wootton website). A student is considered unexcused until he/she brings a note to the attendance office within 3 days of the absence.

If a student's parents/guardians are planning on being out of town, it is imperative that the administrator receive the following information in advance of the departure:

- ☐ Dates that the parents/guardians will be gone
- ☐ Address and phone number of where the student will be staying
- ☐ Who is responsible for the student while the parents/guardians are away

Make-Up Work Policies

Each student has a responsibility to inquire and make up work regardless of the reason for the absence. When the absence is excused, the teacher has an obligation to assist the student in making up the class work that is missed. When the absence is unexcused, the teacher has no obligation to assist the student in making up work for credit; however, the student is still responsible for making up the work so that continuing effective course participation is possible.

When a student is absent, it is the student's responsibility to see the teacher in order to schedule any make-up work. Students who are absent one day should be prepared to take any scheduled tests or to turn in any assignments on the day that they return to school. Students who are absent for two or more days should be prepared to make up missed tests or assignments within the same number of school days that they are absent.

For extended illnesses (three days or more) students are encouraged to have their parents/guardians contact the counseling services office for class assignments. A twenty-four hour notice is required to prepare a list of missed assignments.

Unexcused Absence From Class

Due to the recent Board of Education decision regarding Loss of Credit for classes based on attendance, unlawful absences will be considered disciplinary infractions. Furthermore, students will be expected to make up missed work regardless of the legal status of their absence, in accordance with regulation IKARA, Grading and Reporting.

Students who have numerous unexcused absences in a class may receive an automatically generated letter from the county in regards to the possibility of failure. If you receive a letter and have a concern, please contact the student's counselor and administrator. The counselor will consult with the student and the parents/guardians, verify reasons for the absences, and determine the appropriate interventions.

Other Absences

Under unusual circumstances written requests submitted at least 10 days in advance will be reviewed by the student's grade level administrator.

Examples of these unusual absences include, but are not limited to: non-school sponsored sports, Internships, religious camps or retreats.

Student's must present to the attendance office, a signed note from the parent/guardian along with the invitational letter from the event.

Parents/guardians must realize that extended absences may jeopardize a student's successful completion of course objectives and may adversely affect a successful learning experience.

Absences such as vacations, ski trips, and family visitations are discouraged and unexcused.

College Visits

Seniors will be allowed a maximum of 5 days per school year. Juniors will be allowed a maximum of 3 days during their second semester. Students **MUST** bring in the invitation letter/email from the campus/university to the attendance office before or after their college visit in order for the absence to be excused.

Late Arrival

All students arriving to school after 7:45 a.m. must sign in at the attendance office immediately if they have excused notes signed by parents/guardians. Students arriving before 7:55 a.m. who do not have written excuses, should report directly to period 1 and will be considered unexcused tardy. They will have only one day to bring in parent/guardian notes to have the absences changed to excused.

Unexcused Tardiness

Tardiness is defined as not being in the classroom at the beginning of the period. After twenty (20) minutes, unexcused tardiness is to be treated as an unexcused absence. Three unexcused tardies equate to one unexcused absence. Students are expected to be in class at all times. Students found outside of class without passes will be given detentions. **Possible action:** Student warned by teacher, teacher may assign detention for any unexcused tardiness beyond the third unexcused tardy but must assign detention for every third unexcused tardiness and must contact parents.

Early Dismissal

Students leaving for an early departure must turn in a signed parent note to the attendance office before 7:40am. This note must contain the reason for the absence, the student's ID, grade, students full name, time leaving and parent's signature. A parent/guardian must be reached in order for **all** early dismissals to be validated and the student excused, including students leaving from the health room. Students who leave school grounds and do not sign out in the attendance office will not be allowed to bring in an excused note the next day. **Students must sign out in the attendance office before leaving the school building or they will be unexcused.**

If you did not send a note or your child forgot the note, you must call the main office at 240-740-1500 in advance so we can send a student aide (if we have one) to deliver the dismissal pass. You may also come in the building and request your child, but remember this may take some time.

If a student does not have a note to leave

early, a parent should call the main office number (240-740-1500), so they can have a pass sent to the student to be released. The student must sign out with the main office pass before exiting the building, otherwise they will be unexcused.

Early Dismissal Returns (same day)

Students returning the same day must sign in and have the time noted and initialed on their pass page. Students are considered unexcused from classes missed until they show the teacher their pass page to verify the excused absence. Students returning to school from early departures must submit doctors' or dentists' notes in order for the absences to be excused.

Early Departure, Health Room

Students who become ill during the school day will get a pass from their teacher and the report to the health room. Following this procedure ensures accurate attendance reporting and the safety of the student. The health room will call the parent/guardian(s) listed on the emergency contact list. The student must sign out at the attendance office before leaving the building. Please discourage your child from using their cell phone to contact parent to leave school early.

Leaving School Grounds Without Permission

Any student leaving school grounds at any time during the school day must sign out in the attendance office. Students who violate these procedures will be considered unexcused and ineligible to participate in any school sponsored extra-curricular activities that day. No student may leave the school grounds without the permission of a parent, guardian, or prior written notice from a student who exercises the age of majority and the approval of the principal or assistant principal. **Possible action:** Referral to administrator, parent contact, detention, in-school

Suspension

Age of Majority

A student reaching the age of eighteen who wishes to exercise their age of majority should submit a letter requesting it to their counselor. The counselor will forward the recommendation to an administrator for final approval. A parent/guardian may still be notified of student attendance and discipline problems. Privilege may be revoked if abused.