

## *Student Absences and Excuses Policy*

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Regular and punctual school attendance is essential for success in school. The Committee does recognize that parents or guardians of children attending our schools have special rights as well as responsibilities, one of which is to ensure that their children attend school regularly, in accordance with state law.

Therefore, students may be excused temporarily from school attendance for the following reasons:

1. Illness or quarantine.
2. Bereavement or serious illness in family.
3. Weather so inclement as to endanger the health of the child.
4. For observance of major religious holidays.

A child may also be excused for other exceptional reasons with approval of the school principal.

A student's understanding of the importance of day to day school work is an important factor in the shaping of his/her character. Parents or guardians can help their children by refusing to allow them to miss school needlessly.

Accordingly, parents or guardians will provide an explanation in writing or by e-mail for the absence and tardiness of a child. This will be required in advance for types of absences where advance notice is possible. Schools in the district shall have a pupil absence notification program, designed to notify parents or guardians if the school has not received notification of an absence within three (3) days of the absence.

It shall be the policy of the Martha's Vineyard Public Schools to notify parents or guardians if a student has at least five (5) days in which he/she has missed two (2) or more periods unexcused in a school year or has missed five (5) or more school days unexcused in a school year.

Principals or designees shall make a reasonable effort to meet with parents or guardians of a student who has five (5) or more unexcused absences to develop an action plan to improve that student's attendance.

LEGAL REFS: *M.G.L. Chapter 76, School Attendance*  
*Chapter 22, Student Access to Education*

REVISED: March 2014