

# **Meigs Magnet**

## **2018-2019 Attendance Expectations**

Dear Parent or Guardian:

School attendance is a critical component in order to ensure that a child is successful at school. Our students are developing the habits that will shape their future. When students attend school daily, they will have a better opportunity of having higher student achievement and feel confident about their work at school. Tennessee law requires children ages six through 17 attend school.

### **DID YOU KNOW?**

- Missing 10 percent (or about 18 days) increases the chance that your student will not read or master math at the same level as their peers.
- Students can still fall behind if they miss just a day or two days every few weeks.
- Being late to school may lead to poor attendance.
- Absences can affect the whole classroom if the teacher has to slow down learning to help children catch up.
- By being present at school, your child learns valuable social skills and has the opportunity to develop meaningful relationships with other students and school staff.

### **WHAT WE NEED FROM YOU**

We miss your student when they are gone and we value their contributions to our school. We would like you to help ensure that your student attends regularly and is successful in school. If your student is going to be absent, it is not necessary to call but do please contact **Kathryn Forrest** via email at **[Kathryn.forrest@mnps.org](mailto:Kathryn.forrest@mnps.org)**. Parent or guardian absence notes will not be accepted after **10** absences, regardless of if the absences are consecutive or not. Physician notes will be required for students after reaching this number of absences.

### **OUR PROMISE TO YOU**

We know that there are a wide variety of reasons that students are absent from school, from health concerns to transportation challenges. There are many people in our building prepared to help you if you or your student face challenges in getting to school regularly or on time. We promise to track attendance daily, to notice when your student is missing from class, communicate with you to understand why they were absent, and to identify barriers and supports available to overcome challenges you may face in helping your student attend school.

### **SCHOOL POLICIES AND STATE LAWS**

It is important that you understand our district policies and procedures, as well as Tennessee State Law, to ensure your child is successful in school. State law for mandatory attendance requires children from age 6 to 17 to attend school. A student is considered to be truant after he or she has more than four unexcused absences in a school year. When a student has five unexcused absences, the principal may make a referral to juvenile court so the court can intervene with the student's truancy if school level interventions have failed. For more information on district attendance policies,

please review our district's Student-Parent Handbook available on the MNPS website at [www.mnps.org](http://www.mnps.org).

## WHAT ABSENCES ARE COUNTED AS EXCUSED ABSENCES?

- Student's personal illness
- Family member's illness that requires the student's temporary help
- Death in the family (up to three days)
- Deployment of a parent or guardian serving in the military (one day for deployment, one day for return and up to 10 days when the service member is on temporary leave at home)
- Head lice (up to three days per infestation)
- Recognized religious holidays regularly observed by persons of the child's faith
- Court appearance or legally mandated meetings
- Documented college visitations (up to three days per year for juniors and seniors)
- A principal may allow the following circumstances to be considered an excused absence if the parent or guardian submits a written request:
  - Unexpected emergencies such as car problems
  - Job interview or conference
  - Doctor or dental appointments
- Other circumstances requested in writing by the parent or guardian that the principal considers to require a child's absence
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## WHAT ARE THE CONSEQUENCES FOR LATE ARRIVALS AND EARLY DISMISSALS?

All instructional time is important. Arriving to school on time and staying in school all day allows students to receive all available instruction, engage in social and emotional experiences, hear important announcements, and develop positive lifelong habits. Alternately, students who arrive late or leave early miss valuable instruction time, disrupt the flow of class, distract students, and impede learning. Students arriving within 45 minutes of the school start time will report directly to class. Students arriving after this time frame will report to **Mrs. Forrest in the Main Office** to sign in and receive an admit slip. The information below outlines our consequences for excessive late arrivals and/or early dismissal. These consequences will not result in further loss of instructional such as in-school-suspension or out-of-school suspension and are designed to encourage on time arrival and dismissal.

<b>Late Arrival or Early Dismissal</b>	<b>Consequences</b>
5 Late Arrivals in a 9 wk period	<b>Office Referral</b>

## WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Set a regular bed time and morning routine.
- Prepare for school the night before, finishing homework and getting a good night's sleep.
- Find out what day school starts and make sure your child has the required immunizations.

- Don't let your student stay home unless they are truly sick. Keep in mind complaints of a stomach ache or headache can be a sign of anxiety and not a reason to stay home.
- Avoid appointments and extended trips when school is in session.
- Develop back-up plans for getting to school if something comes up. Call on a family member, a neighbor, or another parent.
- Keep track of your student's attendance through the ***Campus Parent Portal***.
- Talk to your student about the importance of attendance.
- Talk to your students' teachers if you notice sudden changes in behavior. These could be tied to something going on at school.