



Patchogue-Medford High School

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Dear Parents and Students:

The Board of Education has an attendance policy. It is important for parents and students to be aware of all aspects of this policy and how it can impact a student's eligibility to receive credit for individual courses. Please read this overview, sign the bottom of page 2, as indicated, and have your child return it to the attendance teacher. If you have any questions concerning this policy, please do not hesitate to call your child's guidance counselor.

Overview of Patchogue-Medford High School's Attendance Policy

The purpose of Patchogue-Medford School District's Attendance Policy is to ensure the maintenance of an adequate record of verifying the attendance of all children during days of instruction and to establish a mechanism by which the patterns of pupil absence can be examined to develop effective intervention strategies.

The Record of Attendance – General Procedure

Each absence, lateness, and early dismissal will be recorded as excused or unexcused along with a code noting the specific reason for absence. **Excused absences are defined as: an absence due to personal illness, illness or death in the family, religious observance, quarantine, required court appearances, pre-approved college visits, pre-approved cooperative work programs, or pre-approved military obligations. All other absences, lateness, or early dismissals will be considered unexcused.**

On the secondary level, attendance will be taken during each class period and compiled in a central location within the school. Any absence, lateness, or early dismissal must be accounted for according to policy. **It is the parent's responsibility to notify the school within 24 hours of the absence AND to provide a written excuse upon the student's return to school.** The written note should include the student's name, date of absence, reason for the absence, and parent's signature.

Minimum Attendance Requirements for 9th – 12th Grade Students

The high school attendance requirement states, in part, that to be granted academic credit for any course, a student must earn a passing grade in the course and attend each class a minimum of 85% of the time.

Students will not receive course credit if absent more than (this includes excused and unexcused absences):

28 days	Full year course
14 days	Full year alternating day course
14 days	Half year course

In each course, when a student exceeds the maximum number of absences, the student will be assigned to "AUDIT" status and may not receive course credit. While in "AUDIT" status, students are still obligated to attend school, complete all work and assignments for the course, as their work will continue to be evaluated by the teacher. A notation of "audit" for all subsequent reporting periods and exams will be entered on the report card. **The student will forfeit his/her right to attend summer school at Patchogue-Medford for each course he/she audits if he/she is absent more than an additional five days during the remainder of the school year.** Summer school requires previous and continuous seat time in the particular course. **If a student is eligible to take a Regents examination, pursuant to Commissioner's Regulations, the score will be noted on the student's permanent record.**

Applicability

- a. This policy shall apply to students in grade 9-12 and for accelerated 8th grade students enrolled in courses where they earn high school credit.
- b. This policy shall apply to each course independently.
- c. This policy shall apply to classified students unless otherwise noted in their Individualized Educational Program of 504 Accommodation Plan.
- d. Students attending classes at other facilities, such as Academy of Applied Technology (AAT) center, shall be subject to the attendance policies at those other facilities.
- e. If the student attends Patchogue-Medford High School on a part-time basis, this policy shall apply to the portion of the student's program that requires his or her attendance at PMHS.
- f. New students to the high school, who enroll after the first semester, shall be entitled to half the number of allowable absences for each scheduled course.
- g. Students who transfer from one class to another during the school year will have their class attendance transferred to the new class.

Absences

- a. **All absences from class will be covered by this policy.** No distinction will be made between the classifications of excused or unexcused when determining the total number of days absent from each course.
- b. Students **shall not** be considered absent when they are authorized by school officials to be somewhere other than in their regularly scheduled class time for such activities as meetings, conferences with school personnel, testing, physical exams, music lessons, or field trips the student shall not be considered absent. It is the responsibility of the student and/or the designated staff member to provide the teacher with written documentation to attend these sessions before permitted to leave class.
- c. Absences resulting from the student being assigned to **in-school suspension will not count as a class absence.**
- d. Students who, for any reason, are removed from the Regular Attendance Register and placed on Homebound Instruction shall not be considered absent from their regular classes during this time.
- e. All students assigned to the PASS Program (Positive Alternative to Student Suspension) must attend on a regular basis and will be considered an unexcused absence if they do not attend.

Notification Sequence

The following refers to the notification process pertaining to the number of absences in a single course. A student may be notified several different times if excessive absences exist in more than one class.

As soon as possible after the fourteenth, twenty-first, twenty-fifth, and twenty-eighth absence from a **full course**, the high school administration shall send written notification to the student's parent(s) and guidance counselor.

Similarly, as soon as possible after the seventh, eleventh, and fourteenth absence from a **half year of a full year alternating day course**, the high school administration shall send written to the student's parent(s) and guidance counselor.

Appeal Process

For catastrophic or extenuating circumstances only, a parent has the right to file a written appeal for review by the appeals committee. The appeals committee will consist of one administrator, one guidance counselor, and the attendance teacher. The written appeal, including supporting documentation, must be received by the attendance teacher within **seven (7) days** of the date of the loss of credit letter. The committee will then rule on whether the student will continue as a regular student in the class or be placed on audit. The final decision will rest with the principal. Any further absence during the appeals process may result in dismissal of appeal and loss of credit.

Sincerely,



Randy E. Rusielewicz, Ed.D.
Principal

Please note that a complete copy of the Comprehensive Attendance Policy is enclosed.

Student's Name (Print) _____ Student's Signature _____

Date _____

As the parent or guardian of the above-named student, I have read and understand Patchogue-Medford High School's Comprehensive Attendance Policy.

Parent or Guardian's Signature _____ Date _____