

PRESS RELEASE



Manhattan Beach Unified School District
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MBUSD School Attendance and State Funding

Manhattan Beach, CA, October 30, 2018

Over the past few days, we have had several inquiries about Manhattan Beach Unified School District's option for parents to make a \$47 donation when reporting an absence. Here are some answers to some of the questions we have been receiving.

How does state funding for student attendance work? Has it changed?

The state of California has always funded California public schools based on student attendance. In the past, school districts received funding for all days when a student was present and for days when there was an *excused absence*. Excused absences include absences due to illness, medical appointments, or bereavement. Schools did not receive funding for *unexcused absences*, such as truancies, or students being taken out of school by their parents for any reason not listed above. However, this changed about 10 years ago, and, currently, schools only receive funding when a student actually attends school - schools receive no funding for days when students are absent for any reason. In MBUSD, about 70% of all absences are for reasons that fall into the "excused" (but still unfunded) absence category; like other districts throughout the state, when California made this change, MBUSD took a significant hit in terms of state revenue.

Why \$47 a day?

The state provides MBUSD with approximately \$8,450 per student per year. This, by the way, is the second-lowest funding level in the state for unified school districts, based on the state's funding model. There are 180 school days, so that comes out to approximately \$47 a day for attendance.

Is this option for a donation something new?

MBUSD has had this option for years. Our parents understand California's funding model. We have discussed this matter with our parent leaders over the years. A few parents have chosen this option every year, particularly when they are taking their child out of school for reasons other than illness or medical appointments. This is not a push we make for students who are ill or seeing a doctor. But when parents take their students out of school for a family reunion, or a travel opportunity, or a college visit, or

something else, we do want our parents to know this is an option for them. If every family were to exercise this option, we would receive donations for approximately 30% of all absences throughout the year.

How many parents have chosen to donate this year?

As of mid-October, parents have chosen to donate for approximately 1% of all absences for the year so far. Interestingly, we have heard that since this has made the local papers in the last few days, our donations have actually increased a little bit.

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ABOUT THE MANHATTAN BEACH UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

MBUSD serves approximately 6,800 students from preschool to twelfth grade at eight school campuses—one preschool, five elementary schools, one middle school, and one high school. Robinson Elementary School and Grand View Elementary School were recently recognized as a National Blue Ribbon School in 2013. Six MBUSD schools have been honored as California Gold Ribbon Schools since 2015. In 2012, Grand View Elementary was named a National Green Ribbon School, joining just 77 other schools in the United States so honored that year. In 2016, MBUSD was named as a National Green Ribbon District. MBUSD’s Michael Hayden and Maggie Mabery were the *California* Teachers of the Year in 2015 and 2016. In addition to outstanding students and excellent teachers, MBUSD is extremely fortunate to have a high level of parental involvement in the schools and very strong partnerships with community partners such as the Manhattan Beach Education Foundation, PTAs/PTSAs, MBX—Beyond the Classroom, the City of Manhattan Beach, Chevron, Continental Development, the Manhattan Beach Chamber of Commerce, and other local organizations and businesses. More information about MBUSD is available at www.mbusd.org.