



MILLTOWN SCHOOL DISTRICT

Milltown, New Jersey 08850-1643

www.milltownps.org



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Dear Parent or Guardian,

Please see information below for regulations regarding the monitoring of daily attendance at Parkview and Joyce Kilmer School for the 2019-20 school year.

State Policy to Determine Chronic Absenteeism

On September 1, 2017, New Jersey adopted a state policy to determine chronic absenteeism. Milltown Schools recognizes excused and unexcused absences to determine course completion, grade level promotion and truancy; however the state of New Jersey does not recognize absences in the same manner. Chronic absenteeism is defined as any child that is not present in school for 10% or more of the time they were required to be in school for any reason other than the 5 exceptions listed below. For a child to be counted as present for a full day in school, he/she must be in school for at least one hour in the morning and one hour in the afternoon.

Please be advised that the state under the newly authorized Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) has placed a greater emphasis and reporting requirement on chronic absenteeism. Accordingly to state regulations, any day a child misses from the approved district calendar of 180 school days, is considered absent. There are only 5 exceptions to this rule, which reduce the 180 day requirement that include:

1. Religious Observation
2. College Visits
3. Take Our Children to Work Day
4. Veterans Day
5. Specific busing issues in relation to school closings

Attendance Letters Based on NJ State Policy

- Absences (excused **and** unexcused) are added cumulatively from September to June.
- Notifications are sent home as follows:
 - 5-9 **total** absences = Letter e-mailed to the Parent Portal
 - 10 **total** absences = Letter mailed home with copy of attendance report
 - 14 **total** absences = Letter mailed home with copy of attendance report
*Parents who receive this letter will be required to attend a meeting with the principal.
 - 18 **total** absences = Letter mailed home with copy of attendance report to serve as notification that child will be reported as chronically absent for the school year to the state of New Jersey.

Local Board (MBOE) Approved Absence/Tardy Procedures

A student with more than (10) local MBOE **unexcused** absences, during a full academic year, shall not be considered to have successfully completed the instructional program requirements of the grade/course to which he/she is assigned. The student may be in jeopardy of potential retention. Once a student reaches more than (10) local MBOE **unexcused** absences, a review committee will be appointed by the Superintendent to determine the student's status.

Below is a brief overview of guidelines to follow which have been approved by the Milltown Board of Education. For further information please refer to the Milltown Public Schools Handbook starting under "Rules, Regulations, Procedures and Parent Involvement".

1. Notify your child's school by 9:00AM the morning of **every** absence/tardy.

Failure to leave a message by 9:00AM will result in a truancy alert to Guardian 1 and Guardian 2 via phone, text, and e-mail.

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|-----------------|--------------|-----------------------------------|
| Attendance Line | Parkview | 732-214-2360 – Option 1, Option 1 |
| Attendance Line | Joyce Kilmer | 732-214-2370 – Option 2, Option 1 |

Leave a message which includes:

- a. Name of Caller
 - b. Name of Student
 - c. Date of absence or tardy
 - d. Reason for the absence or tardy
- The attendance lines are a messaging system available to you 24/7. Please call as soon as you determine your child will be absent or tardy.
 - If a student is sick for several days, a call must be placed **each** day until the student returns.
 - In the event that you are aware of an upcoming absence or tardy in advance, you may leave a message detailing the information above at any time prior to the absence or tardy.
 - A follow up note **must** be provided in order for an absence to be marked as excused.
2. Submit a follow-up absence or tardy note to the office upon student's return. All absences are considered **unexcused** until a note with a parent/guardian or doctor signature is submitted for **review** within 7 days of the absence. *(A note does not guarantee an excused absence.)*

The note must include:

- a. Name of Student
 - b. Date(s) of absence or tardy
 - c. Reason for absence
 - d. Parent/Guardian **or** Doctor Signature
- Notes for unexcused absences will only be accepted within 7 days of returning to school.
 - A student with an illness may be excused up to 9 times with a parent note. Starting on the 10th day, a doctor's note will be required in order for it to be marked as excused.
 - After review of the absent or tardy reason, a decision will be made in accordance with school policy to determine if the absence/tardy is excused. (Please see box below.)
 - In the event that you are aware of an upcoming absence or tardy in advance, you may submit a note to the office detailing the information above at any time prior to the absence or tardy.
 - Family vacations are not considered excused absences.

The following reasons are considered **MBOE Excused Absences** after a note is provided:
All other absences will be considered unexcused

- a. Student illness
- b. Necessary and unavoidable medical/dental appointments
- c. Requirements of a student's individual health care plan
- d. Quarantine
- e. Alternate short or long term accommodations including mental health care and home instruction
- f. Requirements of a student's individualized education program (IEP)
- g. A death or critical illness in the student's immediate family or of others with permission of principal
- h. The student's required attendance in court
- i. The student's suspension from school
- j. Observance of the student's religion on a day approved for that purpose by the State Board of Education*
- k. Interviews with an admissions officer of an educational institution*
- l. Veterans Day*
- m. Take Your Child to Work Day*

* = State of New Jersey also recognizes as an excused absence.

Homework Request

- If absent for **one day**, please get assignments from a classmate.
- If absent for **more than one day**, assignments may be requested on the attendance line.
- Work may be picked up at the Parkview Office after 2:30PM
- Work may be picked up at the Joyce Kilmer Main Entrance after 3:30PM

Reminders

- Please **DO NOT** send sick students to school! A student who presents with a fever, chills, sore throat, vomiting etc. should stay home. Such symptoms may indicate the beginning of a contagious disease or serious illness, and it would be neither fair to the student who is ill, nor the other persons with whom he/she comes in contact with.
- A student may not participate in extracurricular activities unless he/she arrives by the start of third period (10:15AM) or has been absent or tardy for an excused reason other than sickness.
- If a child leaves school early due to illness he/she will not be permitted to participate in any after school activities on that day.

Procedures for Monitoring MBOE Unexcused Absences/Tardies

Attendance records are available for review on the Parent Portal all year.

a. Attendance Letters

- Unexcused absences are added cumulatively from September to June.
- Notifications are sent home as follows:
 - 5 **unexcused** absences = Letter mailed home with copy of attendance report
 - * Parents who receive this letter will be required to attend a meeting with the principal.
 - 10 **unexcused** absences = Letter mailed home with copy of attendance report
 - * Parents who receive this letter will be required to attend a meeting with the principal.
 - * Attendance Committee Review regarding retention
 - * Truancy may be reported to the Milltown Police Department.

b. Quarterly Unexcused Tardy Letters

Parkview School

- Students arriving at or after **8:30 a.m.** are considered **late** and must be signed in at the Main Office by a parent/guardian.
- **Unexcused** tardies are added quarterly (Every marking period starts with a "clean slate").
- Parents will be notified in writing if a student exceeds **3** unexcused tardies in a single marking period. If subsequent infractions occur, parents will be requested to come to school for a conference with the principal.

Joyce Kilmer School

- Students arriving at or after **8:45 a.m.** are considered **late**.
- **Unexcused** tardies are added quarterly (Every marking period starts with a "clean slate").
- Any student who exceeds **3** unexcused tardies in a single marking period will make up the number of minutes they've missed after school.
- Letters will be mailed home with the date(s), time(s), and location(s).

Sincerely,

Jennifer Smith-Samples
Attendance Officer and School Secretary
732-214-2370 Option 2, Option 2 - Jsmith@milltownps.org