



# Neshaminy School District

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Administrative Offices • 2250 Langhorne-Yardley Road • Langhorne, PA 19047

August, 2018

Dear Parent or Guardian,

**Please read this communication carefully as the district's attendance policy has changed to reflect changes in the law.**

As we begin the 2018-2019 school year, we want to inform you of our policy change in regards to school attendance. Newly adopted Board Policy No. 204 [Adopted 5-22-2018] of the Neshaminy School District regulates student attendance within our school buildings. Board Policy 204 replaces Board Policy 552. The new policy can be located on the district website under Policy and Procedures--in the School Board section.

Regular school attendance is necessary for a successful school experience. Instructional continuity is the valuable interaction which occurs between teachers, students and peers. When a student is absent from school, tardy or dismissed early he or she is missing valuable academic experiences along with social and emotional learning. Realizing that regular attendance in school is necessary for students to gain maximum benefits from public education, the Board urges all parents/guardians to stress punctuality and regular attendance habits with their children.

In addition, school laws within Pennsylvania, specifically Act 138 of 2016, requires that every parent, guardian, or other person having control or charge of a child or children between the ages of eight and seventeen must send their child to school. The laws further require that, "Once a parent elects to send his child to school, the child must attend continuously until seventeen years of age, or once the student has graduated from a senior high school or has secured legal employment at age sixteen."

## **Excused Absence:**

Any child who is absent from school must present a written excuse signed by the parent or guardian. The excuse must clearly indicate the reason for the absence and must be presented to school staff within three school days from the child's return to school. Please note that a phone call does not excuse your child's attendance.

The school will classify an absence as "excused" for one of the following reasons only:

- Illness/Injury
- Death in the immediate family
- Quarantine
- Exceptionally urgent reasons (will be used only in such unavoidable absences as affect the welfare of the child directly and not for the convenience of the parent)
- Religious observances WITH prior approval
- Family Emergency

- Educational tours or trips WITH prior approval (not to exceed three days per year)
- Non-school sponsored educational tours or trips (not to exceed five days per year)
- Health care

Any absence that can be anticipated beforehand should be brought to the attention of the building administration in advance of the absence.

A maximum of fifteen (15) days of cumulative lawful absences verified by parental notification shall be permitted during a school year. All absences beyond fifteen (15) cumulative days shall require an excuse from a licensed medical practitioner.

**Religious Observation:** For full or part-time absences of a student to observe a religious holiday, it is necessary that a written request for the absence be presented to the school prior to the religious holiday(s). Under these circumstances, the student will not be deprived of eligibility to compete for any award.

**Truancy:** A student is considered truant when a student has been absent for three (3) days during the current school year without a lawful excuse. Any child accumulating six (6) or more days of unlawful absences will be considered habitually truant. Notices will be provided by the district to the person in parental relation who resides in the same household as the student after the third unexcused absence.

This notification is to inform our school community that our attendance policy has changed and you are encouraged to review School Board Policy 204 with your son/daughter to help promote academic success that can be achieved through regular school attendance.

Enjoy the remaining few days of the summer. We look forward to the return of our students for a start of another successful school year.

Sincerely,

Paul F. Meehan  
Assistant to the Superintendent/  
Director of Administration