

James Madison High School
Attendance Procedures and Policies
2009-2010

Virginia State Law requires students to attend school until age 18. James Madison High School students are expected to be in attendance every school day unless special circumstances warrant their absence from school. Period-by-period attendance will be reported to the attendance office. As a courtesy, Madison High School utilizes an automated e-mailing system in an attempt to notify parents that their student has been marked absent in one or more classes on a daily basis.

If your student is going to be absent or late:

- Call the attendance office to report the absence/tardy before 9:00 a.m. (703-319-2319).
- If you do not contact the Attendance Office on the day of the absence/tardy, you must send a note or call **within 24 hours** after the student's return or the absence will be unexcused.
- Unexcused absences will result in disciplinary action:
 - First Unexcused absence in a class—verbal warning or teacher detention
 - Second Unexcused absence in a class—after-school administrative detention.
 - Third Unexcused absence—AIA (Alternative Instructional Arrangement)
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- Students who arrive late, but who **can be seated in their first block class by 7:35 a.m. are to report directly to class.** The classroom teacher will record the unexcused tardy. Students arriving after 7:35 a.m. are to report directly to the Attendance Office. Any student arriving after 7:20 a.m. with a note to excuse a tardy should report to the Attendance Office. Notes to excuse tardies must state an approved reason or the tardy will be unexcused. For all other classes, students arriving to class after the bell are considered tardy. **Students arriving in class fifteen (15) minutes after the class begins are marked unexcused absent (not unexcused tardy). Three unexcused tardies equal one unexcused absence.**
- Each day of an excused absence affords the student one class period to make-up the work. It shall be the student's responsibility to schedule all necessary make-up work with each of his/her individual teachers.
- **It is the responsibility of the parent/ guardian to call the Attendance Office to excuse an absence or tardy. It is not the responsibility of the Attendance Office to call the parent.**

If your student is going to be absent or late - Excused vs. Unexcused:

- Reasons for excused absences/tardies include: illness of the student, medical or dental appointments, religious observances, death in the family, court, suspension and approved prearranged absences.
- Reasons for unexcused absences/tardies include: overslept, alarm did not go off, missed the bus, ride was late, car trouble/accident, traffic, weather conditions, babysitting siblings, working on a project, hair appointment, typing a paper, studying for a test, parent's fault, etc.
- Since school bus transportation is available, **tardiness resulting from private transportation will not be excused.**
- **If a student is unexcused absent and misses a major assignment (quiz, test, presentation), The student will be required to make up the assignment. The student can receive a grade no higher than a 70%. If the student completes the assignment and produces a grade lower than 70% that is the grade he/she will receive for that particular assignment.**

If your student is going to check out before the end of the day:

- **A written note** is required.**

Simply write a note, including **time** and **reason** for check-out, and have your student bring it to the Attendance Office before 7:20 a.m. If you are not sure of the check-out time before your student leaves for school, write a note without indicating the time and call the Attendance Office with that information when it is obtained. The student will not be allowed to check-out until the Attendance Office is informed of the proper time. If no note is sent, the parent /guardian must sign out the student through the Attendance Office. **Students will not be released by phone calls, emails, or faxed notes.**

- **Unexpected check-outs are more difficult to handle.**

There may be times when something unexpected happens and it is necessary to pick up your student. Please try to call ahead, as it may be difficult to quickly locate a student who may be at lunch, in a P.E. class, etc. **You must come into the Attendance Office to sign out your student.**

- If a student becomes ill during the school day he/she must go to the school clinic. The clinic aide will contact a parent and the student will be checked out from the clinic should it be necessary to go home.
- **A student who does not check out properly will be marked unexcused absent for the time they miss.**
- If your student returns to school the same day, he/she must check back in through the Attendance Office.

If your student is going to have a prearranged absence:

- Absences for specified reasons, i.e., business and family trips, college visits, medical treatments, funerals, or religious holidays should be prearranged. To prearrange absences, a written note should be sent to the Attendance Office. Five days notice is necessary to allow teachers to advise students regarding assignments. The Attendance Office will issue a prearranged absence form, which the student will share with his/her teachers to obtain assignments for the absence period.
- We expect all students to take final exams when they are scheduled. **Prearranged absences to excuse a student from a final exam must have a valid reason for extenuating circumstances and must be approved by the Administration by June 1, 2009. All students will be required to complete the final exams after they return from the prearranged absence.**
- The last day of school is June 22, 2010, and students are expected to be in attendance through this date. **Requests for an Early Release from school must be submitted, in writing to the Administration no later than June 1, 2010.**

****All attendance notes should state the first and last name of the student, reason and date of tardy/absence/check-out (include time), your name and relationship to student, your daytime phone number, and your signature.**

If a student accrues 20 absences in any one class (excused and/or unexcused) throughout the entire school year, the administration will require medical verification for any future absences to be excused. Without such medical verification the absence will be considered unexcused.