



Upper Township School District

525 Perry Road • Petersburg, NJ 08270
Phone (609) 628-3500 • Fax (609) 628-2002
www.upperschools.org

September 2021

To assist you in better understanding our attendance policies and procedures, please review the following:

Student Absences

The State of New Jersey requires schools to notify parents or guardians when their child has been absent a total of four (4) school days (regardless of reason) and inform them that a mandatory action plan must be created once a student has been absent for five (5) school days (regardless of reason).

EVERY student absence (except for religious observance or participation in a NJDOE approved Holiday) is defined as an Unexcused Absence and is charged against the individual student and the District by the NJDOE.

Student Truancy

Students between the ages of 6 and 16 are considered truant when he/she has accumulated ten (10) or more unexcused absences. At such time, the District must then consider whether or not the need for a court referral is warranted.

While local districts have no authority regarding the coding of student attendance, we have been given the ability to create a category entitled, "Justified Absences That Do Not Count Towards Truancy." These absences still count as official absences, however, they will not be locally considered when determining which students need to appear in court.

Justified Absences That Do Not Count Towards Truancy:

1. Student/Family illness; supported by written documentation from a medical professional.
2. Student's required attendance in court; supported by written documentation.
3. Where appropriate and consistent with IEPs and 504s.
4. Visit to secondary educational institutions; supported by written documentation (up to 3 visits per academic year).
5. Necessary, unavoidable medical or dental appointment that cannot be scheduled at a time other than the school day; supported by written documentation.

Example 1:

Student misses 10 days for reasons other than religion or NJDOE DAYS:

- a. Student is marked absent for 10 days (and receives the 4/5/10 day letters).
- b. Student is considered Truant by both the NJDOE and UTSD.
- c. Student marked for having 10 days counting towards truancy (may go to court).



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Example 2:

Student misses 10 days (7 for surgery, 2 HS visits, 1 dentist appt., **all with notes**):

- a. Student is marked absent for 10 days (and receives the 4/5/10 day letters).
- b. Student is considered Truant by the NJDOE, but NOT by the UTSD.
- c. Student is internally marked for having 0 days that count toward truancy.

COVID-19:

During the pandemic, ANY student who is required to self-quarantine OR has been infected by the COVID-19 virus will NOT have those days count against them. In addition, such students will be permitted to continue their studies remotely and will not be penalized in any way.

Yours in good attendance,

Vincent J. Palmieri, Jr.

Vincent J. Palmieri, Jr.
Superintendent of Schools