



**EAST HAMPTON**  
**PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

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Dear Parents and Guardians,

Regular attendance at school is one of our top priorities in the East Hampton Public Schools. We want to make sure that every healthy child is in school every day. For the last several years, we have recognized September as “Attendance Awareness” month during which we encourage all students and families to start the school year knowing how important good attendance is for our students. The reason we focus on September is that *“students who miss 2-4 days in September go on to miss nearly a month of school”* according to Attendance Works. I urge parents to visit the Attendance Works website at [www.attendanceworks.org](http://www.attendanceworks.org). There are helpful hints for parents and attendance facts for consideration.

The State of Connecticut is requiring that all schools track **Chronically Absent Students** - students who miss 10% or more of the school year (18 days) and **Truant Students** - students who have four unexcused absences in any one month, or ten unexcused absence for the year. As this information serves as part of the district’s accountability report, we must carefully monitor the way we track absences.

The school’s revised policy is included for your perusal, but in essence, please note that while a call to the main office of the school is helpful on mornings of absences, in order for an absence to be **excused** there must be **written documentation** for the absence submitted to the office within 10 school days of the student’s return to school. Parents may only excuse the first 9 absences during the school year with written documentation. For the 10<sup>th</sup> absence and beyond, there are certain criteria that are highlighted in the policy (including illness verified by a medical professional, religious holiday, etc.) that must be included in the written documentation in order for the absence to be excused.

In addition, for students who spend less than 200 minutes in school on a regular day, those days will be considered absences whether the student arrives late or is dismissed. Those tardies and dismissals should be accompanied by a note within 10 days in order to be excused, as well.

Thank you for your cooperation as we work to meet the guidelines required by the State and work to improve attendance for every student.

Sincerely,

*Paul K. Smith*

Paul K. Smith  
Superintendent of Schools