

**HOPKINTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE POLICY****STUDENT ATTENDANCE**

The Committee recognizes that regular and punctual school attendance is essential for success in school, and that the district shares responsibility with parents in ensuring that students attend school regularly in accordance with Massachusetts General Law. Parents are responsible for ensuring that their children attend school regularly and punctually, and the school is responsible for notifying parents consistent with Ch. 76 §1A if their child is absent from school.

Excused Absences or Tardiness

Students may be excused from attending school or being tardy for the following reasons:

- Illness or quarantine,
- Bereavement or serious illness in the family,
- Weather so inclement as to endanger the child's health and safety,
- Observance of religious holidays in accordance with the family's religious beliefs,
- Other exceptional reasons with previous approval of the school's Principal.

As written in each school's handbook, parents shall provide an explanation for a child's absence or tardiness, either in writing or via telephone to the school nurse

Denial of School Attendance

The following will be grounds for denying a student's attendance in the Hopkinton Public Schools:

- Previous graduation from high school or equivalent secondary school curriculum,
- Failure to meet age requirements for kindergarten entry,
- Expulsion from another Massachusetts public school in the same school year,
- Residency outside of Hopkinton unless allowed under School Choice or, in the case of international students, a proper visa,
- Failure to comply with Massachusetts' requirements for immunizations at ages set by the Department of Public Health.
- Failure to meet residency requirements of the Hopkinton Public Schools School Admissions and Residency policy (JF).

Attendance Officer

The school district employs an Attendance Officer consistent with the requirements of Ch. 76 §19. The Attendance Officer is required to investigate all cases brought to his/her attention by a Principal when a student fails to attend school regularly or is habitually tardy, or if a student's attendance could be denied based on the conditions listed above.

It is a crime for a responsible parent or guardian not to cause a child to attend school. If a child fails to attend school for seven full-day sessions or fourteen half-day sessions within any six-month period, the supervisor of attendance may file a complaint in court against the parent and/or guardian who is responsible for the child.

The Attendance Officer will also determine if anyone has unlawfully induced a minor to be absent or truant from school, and if so, bring this to the attention of the Superintendent who may bring charges under Ch. 76 §4.

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Policy Amended	
Legal References	M.G.L. 76:1; 76:4; 76:12; 76:12A; 76:12B; 76:16; 76:19; 76:20; 71:37H; 603 CMR 26:00
Policy Cross Reference	JF School Admissions and Residency Requirements JEB Requirements for School Entrance
Procedure Reference	