

Dear Parents,

During COVID, our school protocols requested parents to be extremely cautious and keep children home when there was any doubt of impending illness. As a result, those protocols led to a rise in excessive absenteeism. As The Oakland County Health Department has reduced COVID restrictions, for the best interest of student learning, we need to return to and uphold our pre-COVID Attendance Policy as listed below:

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Absences, although at times extremely necessary, do cause an interruption in the teacher/student instructional process. Excessive absences cause even larger spans of disruption and difficulties regarding comprehension, and students can become overwhelmed trying to "catch up". In addition, the development of good habits, such as attending school daily and being on time for class, is important for a student's future success in high school, college, the workplace, and beyond. For these reasons, the administration and teaching staff become very concerned when a student misses an excessive number of school days, especially when they occur in succession. As a result, the following steps will be implemented regarding excessive absences:

1. 5 or more absences by the end of the first quarter – a letter will be sent to the parents addressing this concern.
2. 10 or more absences by the end of the second quarter – the principal will make a personal phone call to the parents regarding this matter.
3. 15 or more absences by the end of the third quarter – the principal will arrange a meeting with the parents to discuss possible solutions regarding this concern.
4. Please note that the State of Michigan deems excessive absences to exceed 18+ days, and once that amount has occurred, the St. Matthew School Board Chairperson, along with State agencies, will be notified if necessary.
5. An absence from school for more than half a day (after 11:30 am) means a student cannot participate in any after-school activities.
6. Exceptions to this policy will occur in the event of a positive COVID diagnosis or health/family crisis.