



## *Maryland's Compulsory Attendance Law*

### **Who Must Attend:**

Every child who between the ages of 5 and 16 years old shall attend a public school regularly during the entire school year unless the child is otherwise enrolled in a private school, approved home instruction, or approved for home/hospital teaching through the school system.

### **Duty of Parent/Guardian:**

Any person who has legal custody or care and control of a child between 5 and 16 years of age shall see that the child attends school or receives instruction as required above.

### **Penalties:**

A parent or guardian can be guilty of a misdemeanor and subject to a fine not to exceed \$ 50 per day of unlawful absences, or imprisonment not to exceed 10 days, or both.

## *The Importance of Good Attendance*

Children are in school to learn and to grow into responsible and productive young adults who are prepared to enter the world on their own. Regular school attendance is the key to high school graduation and college and career opportunities.

Poor attendance in elementary school often leads to excessive absences in middle school and high school. Students with poor attendance often become disinterested and unmotivated in school and often drop out.

Unlawful absences and truancy have been identified as one of the warning signs of a student headed for potential delinquent activities, social problems, or failure in school. According to research, truancy frequently leads to dropping out of school, entering the juvenile court system and unemployment.

Truancy is a sign that a young person is losing his or her way and needs help. The Baker School Counselors and staff are available to help.



### **Parent Responsibilities:**

- Take an active interest in your child's education. Be positive and insist on daily school attendance.
- Read the Student and Parent Handbook to know the school's attendance policy.
- Check regularly with the school personnel to be aware of your child's attendance.
- Share responsibility and work with the school to ensure daily school attendance.
- Send a written excuse within three days after students return to school explaining an absence.
- Send a doctor's note after 5 consecutive days of absence.
- Ask for help as soon as attendance becomes a problem for your child.

### **Student Responsibilities:**

- Attend regularly. Arrive to school on time, go to every class and stay in school all day.
- Make up missed work in a timely manner.
- Be prepared for class, complete assignments, participate in discussions, and be involved.
- Take responsibility for your actions.

## Helpful Hints from the School Health Room:



The goal of the school health services team is to return students to class as quickly as possible so that they may continue with their education.

In the health room, students are assisted by the school nurse or the health room technician for injury or illness. Most health room visits are handled with basic first aid and comfort measures.

If injuries are severe, or if health room staff feels that the student is too ill to stay in school or should be seen by a doctor, the parent or guardian will be contacted to pick up the student.

Students should not be sent to school if they have a fever over 101 degrees, are vomiting, have diarrhea, undiagnosed rash or trouble breathing in the last 12 hours.

Frequent complaints of stomach aches and headaches may be a way to avoid school. The school nurse as part of the school team can assist you in determining how best to handle this behavior.

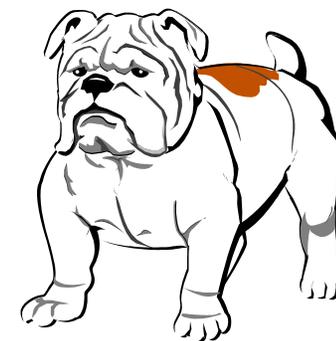
## HOW DO PARENTS GET HELP?

If your child starts to demonstrate school avoidance behavior such as refusing to get up, complains of vague illnesses, problems with peer or staff, or skips school, get help right away!

**Please contact your child's counselor at 240-207-2410.**



## School Attendance



## Baker Middle School

25400 Oak Drive

Damascus, MD 20872

Phone: 240-207-2440

Fax: 301.253.7020

<http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/schools/bakerms/>