



## MADISON COUNTY SCHOOLS

P.O. Box 37  
Danielsville, Georgia 30633

Michael H. Williams – Superintendent

706.795.2191  
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August 1, 2022

Dear Parents/Guardians:

Welcome to Madison County Charter School System! The quality of the education that your child receives is so important. As educators, we want to do everything we can to help the children of Madison County be successful in their adult lives. The rigor and expectations for students have increased over the last two decades. Times are challenging, but we are working to get back to a normal pre-pandemic school year. However, this year will continue to be a challenge, and we are uncertain what the future holds. Regular attendance and participation must be a priority. Students who have attendance issues often have academic difficulties in school. Excessive absences or non-participation can lead to academic deficiencies in core subjects, below grade-level performances, failing grades, and students dropping out of school. The school system and parents must work together to ensure students consistently attend. *We understand if your child is sick, please keep them at home and send in a parent/doctor's excuse when it is safe for them to return to school.*

The Madison County Truancy Panel was formed to deal with poor school attendance, which has been a chronic problem and a major barrier in the area of student achievement. Madison County School Administrators, the Department of Family and Children Services, Magistrate Court, Juvenile Court Services, and Family Connection worked together to discuss methods used by neighboring counties to improve attendance. Through the hard work of these agencies and individuals and your cooperation, attendance and learning have both been improved. The Madison County Charter School System will again refer students and parents to the Madison County Truancy Panel. This truancy panel will serve as a problem-solving forum for the family, school, and community. The goal is to keep us from having to report violators to the state. The panel will meet at the Madison County Board of Education Office and students referred to the truancy panel meetings must attend. The Madison County Charter School System, Department of Family and Children's Services, Juvenile Court Services, and Family Connection will have representation on this panel.

**The following steps will be used:**

1. The individual school will phone the parent/guardian after the student misses **three** consecutive days without a doctor's note or other medical excuse.
2. The individual school will send a written letter to the parent/guardian after the student misses **five** unexcused days. **Parent-written notes about student illnesses keep absences from being classified as unexcused. Parents must submit these notes when students do not see a doctor within five days of the absence to be classified as excused.**
3. The individual school will refer the student to the Madison County School System Social Worker after the student misses **eight** days without a doctor's note or other medical excuse.



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4. The Social Worker will refer the student and parent/guardian to the Madison County Truancy Panel after the student misses **fifteen** days without a doctor's or other medical excuse.

NOTE: The Social Worker will provide intervention strategies between the 8<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> absences. Absences due to suspension or expulsion will not be counted in the above steps.

In addition to the local protocol above, the state law requires that we notify parents upon their student's 5<sup>th</sup> unexcused absence; and that the parent sign receipt of said notice of possible consequences and penalties covered under the law. If the student in question is 10 years of age or older, that student must also sign this documentation. Upon the 8<sup>th</sup> unexcused absence for the semester (or two consecutive quarters) parents of students 14 years or older must receive notification that only three unexcused absences remain before violating the attendance requirements. On the 10<sup>th</sup> unexcused absence, we are required to report the attendance violation through system reports to the State Department of Education.

The school system is required by law to have written verification (parent notes) in order to excuse each absence. **If your student is out ill but does not necessarily need medical treatment, please ensure a parent excuse is delivered promptly to your student's school on his or her return to school. This will help keep unexcused absences to a minimum.**

Please note the attendance law and all that it entails is predicated on unexcused absences which recognize parent authorization. Our protocol was established to bring attention to students missing school for reasons other than those covered by doctor's authorization. Because we feel strongly about the importance of students being in school, we will continue to notify you using both criteria—our local protocol and the state law—so we can best serve you and your children with a proper education. The local Attendance Protocol Committee has also established guidelines pertaining to tardies and "leave earlies" which the same law requires us to address. Feel free to view the entire protocol by visiting our website at [www.madison.k12.ga.us](http://www.madison.k12.ga.us). Once there, choose the "Social Services" link. Or, feel free to call your specific school and administrator to answer any questions. We hope you will appreciate our efforts to abide by the state's compulsory attendance law for school-age children. We also hope you can appreciate the common sense approach of "we can't teach them if they're not here." Please give us the benefit of the doubt when it comes to students' statements such as, "We're not doing anything today," or "He said we didn't have to come". If you have questions and/or doubts, please contact your child's teacher for specific answers to your questions, but please see to it that your child is at school if they are healthy enough to learn without putting others at risk. We will all benefit from your child being our student every day of the school year.

Sincerely,  
*Michael H. Williams*

Madison County Charter School System  
Superintendent