

Science Department

Dissection Opt Out Law

P.L. 2005, Chapter 266 (C.18A: 35 - 4.24 & C.18A: 35 - 4.25)

January 5, 2006 (effective)

Experimentation Involving Animals

<http://www.state.nj.us/njded/aps/cccs/science/dissection/faq.htm>

“Public school pupils from K – 12 may refuse to dissect, vivisect, incubate, capture or otherwise harm or destroy animals or any parts thereof as part of a course of instruction and requires the schools to provide alternative education projects for those students who choose to “opt out” of these activities”

Procedure

- ❖ Mount Olive Public Schools are required to notify pupils and their parents or guardians at the beginning of the school year of the students’ right to refuse to dissect, vivisect, incubate, capture, harm, or destroy organisms. Parents or guardians are then required to inform the school, within two weeks of the receipt of the notification, of their desire to exempt their child from participation in the stated activities.
- ❖ Mount Olive Public Schools will provide information about the pupil’s right not to participate and the parent’s responsibilities on the District Website, Parent and Student Handbook/Agendas, School Newsletters and in Course Descriptions or the Course Syllabus.
- ❖ The process is to “opt out” not “opt in”; therefore, the parent/guardian must notify the school in writing within two weeks of notification. **(POLICY AND OPT-OUT FORMS WILL BE DISTRIBUTED IN CLASS.)**

Acceptable Alternatives

Videos, models, computer programs, books, and other manipulatives will be used to teach the knowledge and skills required by the course of study. The teacher and student will document clear learning objectives and expectations for the alternative project before the student begins.

Student’s Grade

Students’ grades may not be affected by their decision not to participate in the lab experience. Their grades may be impacted only if they do not master the agreed-upon learning objectives and expectations.

ELIGIBILITY OF RESIDENT/NONRESIDENT PUPILS

Resident pupils shall be provided a free education between the ages of five and twenty except that the district shall provide for children identified as requiring special education from birth to twenty-one years of age. Persons who claim residence within this school district for the purpose of enrolling pupils may be required to support that claim with appropriate informal documentation, such as driver’s license, library card, utility bills, lease, or the like and/or formal documentation, including sworn affidavits.

REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 USC 706, covers preschool, elementary, and secondary education. Section 504 provides that no qualified handicapped person may be discriminated against in hiring, promotion, benefits or job assignment based upon the handicap. The Board of Education must make responsible recommendations for the physical or mental limitation of the handicapped applicants. Moreover, no qualified handicapped person may be denied participation in a program because facilities are not accessible. In addition, the Board of Education is required to provide free and appropriate public education for each qualified handicapped person. Any individual with questions pertaining to Section 504 should contact Ms. Lisa Schleer, Director of Special Services at (973) 691 – 4000 x 8401.

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION STATEMENT

Students, staff and members of the community may contact the District's Affirmative Action Officer at (973) 691 – 4000, Route 46, Budd Lake, New Jersey 07828 for information regarding the affirmative action policy, affirmative action plans, grievance procedures and sexual harassment policy.

Any student who believes he/she has been discriminated against may file a grievance with the District's Affirmative Action Officer (Brad Halien). If the grievance is not resolved within five days, the student has ten (10) days to appeal to the Superintendent. If, within five (5) days, the grievance is still not resolved to the student's satisfaction, he/she has ten (10) days to make an appeal to the Board of Education which will hear the complaint at the next regular meeting or within thirty (30) calendar days. In addition, any individual may petition the Commissioner of Education to resolve a dispute under NJSA regulations.

ANTI-BIAS POLICY

It is Mount Olive School District's explicit policy to develop students according to their performance and potential, without discrimination based on race, color, religion, national origin, sex, disability or sexual orientation.

All students must conduct themselves in a manner that shows respect for one another and the value placed on civility in the environment. Every student must be free from discrimination or harassment from any other student. Specifically, inappropriate actions that demean another individual on the basis of his or her personal attributes will not be tolerated. Inappropriate actions or behavior includes but is not limited to jokes, slurs, disparaging or derogatory remarks that are racist, ethnic, sexist or related to sexual orientation or disabilities.

STUDENT AND STAFF PHOTO ID CARDS

Students and staff will be given photo ID cards at the beginning of the school year. All students and staff must clearly display the identification

card on their person above the waist at all times. These will be useful in making student identification easy for security purposes, as well as extracurricular activities, including dances, athletic events, and throughout the community. The student ID card will be required for admission to the Library, Attendance Office, Nurses' Office and the Writing Center. **Cost for replacement is \$10.**

SECTION II: ATTENDANCE RULES & REGULATIONS

***Please be aware that these attendance policies are subject to change as they are under review by the local Board of Education**

New Jersey State Law and the Mt. Olive Board of Education requires regular attendance of all students enrolled in the public schools and has instituted the following regulations:

- In order to determine the nature of a student's absence from school, the Attendance Office will attempt to contact the student's parent/guardian by electronic phone call. A student's parent/guardian is required to call in student absences to the Attendance Office prior to 9:00 a.m. The attendance line operates 24 hours/day. Only a parent/guardian may phone-in to report a student's absence from school. Students impersonating a parent/guardian will be subject to disciplinary action.
- Regarding chronic illnesses, parents should submit a doctor's note to the attendance office indicating the nature of the chronic illness and how it may affect a student's school attendance. The doctor's note should be filed with the school at the beginning of the school year or at such time when the chronic illness is identified. No student may receive a blanket excuse from an attendance policy without specific documentation for each incident.

In keeping with the prevailing laws of the state: "Any child between the ages of six and sixteen years who shall repeatedly be absent from school, and any child of such age found away from school during school hours whose parent, guardian or other person having charge and control of the child is unable to cause him to attend school and any pupil who is incorrigible, actually vagrant, vicious, or immoral in conduct, shall be deemed to be a juvenile delinquent and shall be proceeded against any such." (18A:38-27)

- The number of absences allowed for a new student entrant is figured at 1.4 absences per month for the remainder of the school year. Example: A student enters the high school in February; thus, he/she has 1.4 days for the months of February, March, April, May, and June, allowing him/her a total of 7 absences for the school year.
- Participation in School Events - Students must be in attendance no later than the end of second block on the day of the event, or if a weekend event, the last day of school before the event. No student

may participate in a program or event related to student activities or athletics who is absent on the above-mentioned days. More specific information will be outlined in the contract for the event or in the athletic policy. (See page 88)

Unexplained absences N.J.A.C. 6A:6-7.8

In accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:6-7.8, in addition to the attendance policy for course credit as outlined in this student handbook, there are additional attendance requirements as follows:

- For up to four cumulative unexplained absences, the school shall a) make a reasonable attempt to notify the student's parents prior to the start of the following day; b) investigate the cause of the unexplained absence; c) develop an action plan designed to address patterns of unexplained absences and to return the child to regular attendance at school; d) contact DYFS if abuse or neglect is suspected; e) cooperate with law enforcement and other agencies, as appropriate.
- For between five and nine cumulative unexplained absences, the school shall a) make a reasonable attempt to notify the student's parents prior to the start of the following day; b) investigate the cause of the unexplained absence; c) evaluate the appropriateness of the action plan; d) revise the plan if needed and establish outcomes based upon student needs and necessary interventions.
- For cumulative unexplained absences of ten (10) or more, the school shall a) make a mandatory referral to the court; b) make a reasonable attempt to notify the parents of the mandatory referral; c) continue to consult with a parent and any involved agency to support the student's return to regular attendance; d) cooperate with law enforcement and other agencies as appropriate; e) compel attendance at school in accordance with the statutory and administrative means available, including proceeding to court.

CUMULATIVE (Unexcused) ABSENCES

Cumulative absences are recorded for full day absences, absences from individual classes, class cutting, class lates, and truancy. Students are responsible for making up all work missed.

- A student will not be granted credit in a scheduled course after his/her cumulative absences exceed fourteen (14) absences (7 in a semester course). Students will remain in the scheduled course even after exceeding the limit noted above. Report cards will indicate grades earned in courses each marking period; however, report cards and the permanent records will also indicate "no credit-excessive absenteeism" for final grade.
- Illnesses are cumulative. Doctors' notes can be used in the appeals process.

- **Family vacations are not excused absences and teachers are not required to provide work for such circumstances.**
- Visiting sick relatives is considered a cumulative absence but may be used in the appeal process.
- Parents/guardians must make themselves aware of cumulative absences by checking Power School.

NON-CUMULATIVE ABSENCES - (Absent excused)

Certain extreme and unavoidable circumstances may prevent a student from attending school. The reasons listed below shall count as non-cumulative absences; however, all work missed must still be made up at the student's initiative. Non-cumulative absences will be allowed for:

- Death in the immediate family (mother, father, brother, sister, grandparent). A note is required upon return to school.
- Religious holidays, as recognized by the State Board of Education. **Notes must be submitted within 24 hours in advance of absence.**
- Administrative reasons, field trips, extra-curricular activities, and special programs.
- 3 Days of College Visits per year, during Junior and Senior Years, with documentation on college letterhead
- College Placement Tests scheduled by the college are excused with proper documentation from the college.
- Out-of-School Suspensions and In-School Suspensions.
- Students are required to present documentation regarding non-cumulative absences to the Attendance Office for processing.

By state law all absences, both cumulative and non-cumulative, must be verified by either a doctor's note, a notice for a court appearance or by a parent note submitted to the Attendance Office upon the student's return to school. Although the parent notes do not excuse the absence, it is a means of verifying the parent's knowledge of the student's absence. Students who absent more than 30 days, no matter what the reason – excused or unexcused - may lose credit.

APPEALS

Appeals for loss of credit will be made to the Attendance Committee, which includes the vice principal, guidance counselor, school nurse, and two teachers. Appeals must be made in writing by the parent/guardian after loss of credit is apparent by checking Power School. Parents/guardians and students may present any extenuating circumstances relative to the absences to the Committee. The Attendance Committee may do one of the following but is not limited to:

- Restore credit based on the appeal circumstances.
- Deny appeal, in which case the student may make up the credit through successful completion of summer school or by successfully completing the course the following year.
- Put student on probation for the remainder of the school year to monitor attendance.

EARLY DISMISSAL FROM SCHOOL

All students (including those 18 and older) must have parent/guardian permission for early dismissal. If it becomes necessary for a student to leave school prior to regular dismissal time, a written request or fax (973 927 2215) from the parent/guardian must be presented in advance to the Attendance Office. This request should state the reason for early dismissal, the time at which the student is to sign out, method of transportation to be used and who is providing the transportation. The parent/guardian must call the Attendance Office as well to verify the written note. With this request, the student may sign out, obtain a pass from the Attendance Office and wait in the Attendance area until the parent/guardian comes into the school, shows I.D. and signs the student out.

Students who need to leave school early but have not brought in a written request must be signed out by a parent or guardian before leaving the school. Students will only be called at the beginning or end of a block. Parents should report to the Visitor's Center so that the student may be located. Parents must produce valid identification before signing a student out. The parent should then wait for the student at the Visitor's Center.

If a student is dismissed early from the Nurses' Office, parents must make provision for transportation home, as the student will not be dismissed otherwise. **No student may drive him/herself home if dismissing due to illness without parent and administrative permission.**

Students who leave school early on a regular basis (Vo-Tech, work study etc.) should complete the appropriate form, which can be obtained at the Guidance Office. **Seniors who are allowed to leave early to go to work will not be allowed back to school until the end of the school day.**

Students who have signed out and then return to school must sign in at the Attendance Office before returning to class. Older brothers/sisters may not sign students out unless a parent/guardian has spoken to a school official and provided a written request. Students must always pick up their sign out pass in the Attendance Office to be in compliance with security procedures. **Students who leave school without signing out through the Attendance Office will face disciplinary action.**

ATTENDANCE DISCIPLINARY PRACTICES

LATE TO SCHOOL

Once students arrive on school grounds, they are subject to all school rules and regulations. No student is allowed to leave school grounds without authorization.

Students arriving to school after 7:17 AM will report to the Attendance Office. A student who arrives after 7:17 AM and does not sign in at the Attendance Office will be "in school truant." Any student not in his/her assigned area when the bell rings will be subject to disciplinary action.

The following guidelines will be followed:

- 3 times late (per marking period) = Lunch Detention
- 4 times late (per marking period) = Administrative Detention
- 5 or more tardies = 2 hour Administrative Detention.

Any senior who has 6 or more lates will forfeit driving privileges for the year.

LATES TO CLASS

Students arriving late to class without an agenda pass from a staff member will have the lateness recorded as an unexcused late. Continual unexcused lates to class will result in administrative disciplinary action.

CUTTING CLASS

Students must follow their schedule until a counselor has made a schedule change. Students who do not go to their assigned classes, including Study Hall, will face disciplinary action for cutting, as well as receiving a zero for that class block and any work that was due during that time, including tests. Cutting a class results in an unexcused absence from that class. Students will be ineligible to make up any work missed as a result of the cut.

First cut: Administrative Detention

Second cut: In-School Suspension

Third cut: Loss of Credit – student remains in class and, if cooperative, will be allowed to attend summer school to reinstate credit if the course is offered.