

September 201`2

Dear Elementary Parent/Guardian (Grades 3-5),

Welcome to the 2012-13 school year. I want to inform you about some changes that are taking place in how we record student attendance which are being driven by a new teacher evaluation law. New York State now requires each school district to track attendance separately for all subjects that link to a New York State Assessment, even in elementary school. This applies to Grades 3, 4, and 5 English/Language Arts (ELA), Grades 3, 4, and 5 Mathematics, and Grade 4 Science. Beginning with the first day of school, you will see the result of these changes online in the Campus Parent Portal.

In the past, when you viewed attendance online, you saw a single Homeroom (HR) class. Beginning this year, the schedule you see in the Campus Parent Portal will be segmented into five periods: HR, ELA1, ELA2, Math, and Spec (Specials = Art, Music, PE, and Science). As was the case in the past, classroom teachers will take attendance in the morning for the HR period. Beginning this year, teachers in Grades 3, 4, and 5 as well as Grade 4 Science will also take attendance at the end of the school day for each of their subject area classes to indicate which students, if any, missed the instruction.

There are a number of reasons why a student might miss an instructional period which fall into one of two main categories. A student who misses class due to Academic Services such as Enrichment or Special Programs such as assemblies will be marked Exempt (Ex) from the instruction. Students who miss class due to Health or other Non-Academic reasons will be marked as Absent (Ab) from that instruction. These designations will appear in the Portal the day after attendance is taken throughout the school year.

Additional notes explaining this change will be posted on the GNPS Web site and in the Campus Parent Portal. The purpose of this e-mail was to let you know in advance so you would not be surprised when you see a slightly different looking schedule for your child in the Campus Parent Portal. If no one in your household ever established a Campus Parent Portal account, you should have already received a letter with directions and an activation code so you can create one now. Your child's teacher can also help you with this at Open School night if needed.

Thank you for your ongoing support of our Instructional Technology program and best wishes for a successful school year.

Marc Epstein, GNPS District Technology Director