

- inform the school in the event of a student absence;
- work cooperatively with the school and the student to solve any attendance problems that may arise;
- request missed assignments due to absence for elementary students; and
- update changes to contact information and preferences at least annually to allow school staff to make contact about attendance.

3. Staff's Responsibility

It is the staff's responsibility to:

- be familiar with all policies and procedures governing attendance and to apply these procedures uniformly to assure consistency and equity;
- take daily attendance and to maintain accurate attendance records in each assigned class and other school activities;
- contact family to ensure the student is safe (e.g., robo calls sent on first day of absences, reach out to family personally following multiple days of unexcused absence);
- problem solve for any student learning needs and barriers to attendance (e.g., learning materials & transportation);
- positively welcome students back after absences;
- support students with any essential learning and or standards missed due to absences;
- log contacts in district information system
- support home visits when appropriate

4. Administrator's Responsibility

It is the administrator's responsibility to:

- communicate attendance expectations, policies and procedures to families and staff;
- collaborate with students, parents or guardian to address attendance needs and overcome barriers that may arise;
- require students to attend all assigned classes and other school activities;
- be familiar with all policies and procedures governing attendance and to apply these procedures uniformly to assure consistency and equity;
- ensure all teachers properly account for student attendance in a timely manner;
- ensure compliance with be@school and other state and county attendance reporting procedures;
- work collaboratively with the staff to develop and implement equitable attendance procedures; and
- support home visits when appropriate

III. PREKINDERGARTEN / KINDERGARTEN ATTENDANCE

- A. Once a student has been enrolled in kindergarten, regardless of the age of the student at that time, attendance is compulsory unless and until the child is properly withdrawn from enrollment. In the event a child under the age of seven enrolled prior to their seventh birthday is properly withdrawn from enrollment, attendance is no longer compulsory until the earlier of the following is reached: 1) re-enrollment of the child as a student, or 2) the child's seventh birthday.

- B. Students who are enrolled in the pre-kindergarten programs of the district are not subject to the compulsory attendance law, but their continued enrollment shall be subject to their meeting the district expectations for attendance in kindergarten through grade 12. Pre-kindergarten students who do not meet the attendance requirements will be dropped from enrollment, and their space offered to students who may be on a waiting list for the program. Pre-kindergarten students may be excused from attendance on the same basis as is permitted for a student enrolled in kindergarten through grade 12.

IV. ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

In general: The school will work to understand the underlying reasons behind student absences and help the family understand the educational implications of missing school. Schools will partner with students and families to remove barriers. Problem solving can include students logging on to access school assignments when physically unable to attend in person.

A. Expectations

1. Because daily attendance is critical to academic achievement, the District expects every student to attend school and be to class on time every day.
2. Ninety-five (95) percent attendance is the minimum expectation.

B. Students with Individualized Programs

Students who have an Individual Education Program (IEP) or Section 504 Plan may have modified attendance expectations, incentives, recognitions, and interventions. Such modification must be part of the written plan or program in order to supersede the general attendance guidelines for students of a similar age and grade.

C. Excused Absences

1. **Illness**, an absence due to illness may be excused by the following means: written verification from a healthcare professional; verification from the school nurse or a note or call from the student's parent/guardian, or the student (if eighteen or more years of age).
 - a. Illness includes both mental and physical health symptoms.
 - b. Six or more absences due to a chronic illness or a medical condition will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and the school may require a statement from a health care professional for absences to be considered excused.
2. **Family emergencies**, for up to six (6) days within a school year, however, with notice by a family in extraordinary circumstances a principal or site administrator, or designee, may grant a longer period.
3. **Funeral attendance**, for up to four (4) days within a school year; however, the principal or site administrator, or designee, may grant a longer period.

4. **Student appointments**, with health care providers immigration, incarcerated parents and meetings with other professionals, when unable to schedule outside school hours.
5. **Student appearances**, in a judicial or quasi-judicial meeting ordered by a court when unable to schedule outside school hours and when school is notified by the parent or guardian, the court or the adult student.
6. **Religious instruction**, when a school is notified and religious instruction does not exceed 3 hours in any week.
7. **Cultural or religious observance.**
8. **School authorized absences**, to include but not limited to, approved field trips, interscholastic athletic and fine arts competitions and events, student recognition/ award ceremonies, suspension from class or school, other activities as approved by the school.
9. **Non-District competitions or events**, up to two (2) days within the school year when a parent or guardian, or an adult student, request an excused absence for participation in a non-district sponsored event.
 - a. The request must be in advance of the first absence;
 - b. Documentation from the sponsor must be provided along with the request identifying the location, dates and time of the event;
 - c. Missed schoolwork must be assigned by the student's teacher or teachers, and the parent or guardian or adult student agrees that schoolwork will be completed.
10. **College & post-secondary program visits**, up to two (2) days within the school year when requested.
11. **Active duty**, in any military branch of the United States.
12. **Family activities**, for up to five (5) days within one school year,
 - Families will inform the principal or site administrator.
 - Missed schoolwork is assigned by the student's teacher or teachers, and the parent or guardian agrees that school work will be completed.
13. **Transportation barriers** communicated by the District Transportation Department, parent/ guardian or student to school staff or administrator.
14. **District transportation interruptions**, caused by:
 - Student change of address within the school attendance boundaries when:
 - The parent or guardian has completed a change of address form;

- The parent or guardian is not able to transport the student prior to the institution of the new stop for the student;
- The existing bus stop is deemed unsafe (as defined by the Transportation Department) for students in Preschool through fifth grade.
- Student change of address outside of the school attendance boundaries when:
 - The student is properly identified as meeting the definition of homeless or highly mobile or foster care; and
 - The parent or guardian is not able to transport the student prior to the institution of the new stop for the student.

15. **Extreme weather conditions**, considered by the parent/guardian to be too dangerous for the student to attend school.

16. **Administrative decisions**, the site administrator or principal may excuse an absence due to a barrier, activity or event, which due to its confidential nature will not be otherwise identified, to protect the privacy interests of the student or family.

D. Partial Day Absence

Definition: Partial day absence describes students not physically in school for part of a school day or class period.

Procedures for Partial Day Absence

1. Students must report to the school office and follow school procedures.
2. Schools will establish procedures for partial day absence that emphasize positivity and support for the range of student and family needs.
3. Valid excuses for partial day absences are the same as those for full day absences.

E. Unexcused Absences

The following are examples of absences, which will not be excused:

1. Truancy, an absence by a student, of all or part of the school day, which was not approved by the parent and/or the school.
2. Failure to report, an absence prior to or following a full or partial day absence.
3. Work at a business, except under a school-sponsored work release program.
4. Family trips/vacations, for which no arrangement has been made with the school.

Consequences of Unexcused Absences

In cases of recurring unexcused full or partial day absences, the administration may refer family to Hennepin County be@school, make a report to CPS (for children under 12), and or request the county attorney to file a petition with the juvenile court, pursuant

to Minnesota statute.

F. Tardiness

Definition: Students are expected to be in their assigned area at the times designated. Secondary students present at school but not in their assigned location will be marked tardy.

1. Tardies are not absences nor do they accumulate to become absences.
2. Suspension or removal from instruction must not be used as a consequence for tardiness.
3. Tardiness will be addressed by school staff and administrators following school procedures with a focus on problem solving and re-engaging students in instruction.

G. Absences for co-curricular activities, extracurricular activities, and school-sponsored on-the-job-training programs:

Definition: Co-curricular activities are activities that take place outside the classroom but reinforce or supplement classroom curriculum in some way. They are ungraded and do not offer any form of academic credit, but they do provide complementary learning of some form.

Definition: Extracurricular activities are nonacademic activities beyond academic courses such as sports, creative arts, and performing arts.

For students involved in any district-approved activity scheduled either during or outside the school day and any school sponsored on-the-job training programs the following shall apply:

1. School-initiated absences will be excused and participation permitted.
2. A student may not participate in any activity or program if he or she has an unexcused absence from any class during the day.
3. If a student is suspended from any class, they may not participate in any school activity or program during the suspension.
4. If a student is absent from school due to medical reasons, they must present a statement from a health care professional or the student's parent or guardian clearing the student for participation that day. The note must be presented to the coach or advisor before the student participates in the activity or program.

H. Opportunity to make up missed work due to absence.

1. Teachers will provide an opportunity for students to make up work, provide an alternative assignment or excuse missed assignments due to absences;
2. When appropriate, assignments will be posted online;
3. Secondary students whose absences are excused assume the major responsibility for

obtaining assignments and completing make-up work within the time specified by the teachers;

4. Building administrator will share the process for making up assignments with families so they may assist their student; and
5. Failure to complete the assignments may affect a secondary student's grade and assessment of progress toward achievement of graduation standards.

V. NOTIFICATION OF POLICY AND PROCEDURES

- A. A summary of this policy shall be made available to all students and parents at the commencement of each school year.
- B. This policy shall also be available upon request in each principal's office.
- C. Schools shall communicate expectations to students and families regarding State Truancy Laws and District policies.
- D. Schools shall use a consistent method to inform families of student absences and missed student work due to absence.
- E. Schools shall have a system for making contact with the family of every student with an unaccounted-for absence, on the day of the absence.

VI. REQUIRED REPORTING

A. Educational Neglect

Definition: Educational Neglect applies to children ages 11 & under. It is presumed that the cause for a child missing school at this age is the parent's, guardian's, or custodian's failure to comply with the compulsory instruction laws, and the school has made appropriate efforts to resolve the child's attendance problems.

B. Continuing Truant

Definition: Minnesota statute provides that a continuing truant is a secondary student 12 years or older who is subject to compulsory instruction requirements and is absent from instruction in a school, as defined in Minnesota statute, without valid excuse.

Students in elementary, middle school, or high school with;

1. Three (3) unexcused absences, which can include 3 full day absences or 9 partial day absences, will be sent a 3-day absence letter and contacted by the school to identify strategies to improve school attendance.
2. Seven (7) unexcused absences, which can include 7 full day absences or 21 partial day absences, will be sent a 7-day absence letter, contacted by the school, and may be reported to the Hennepin County be@school program after 7 unexcused days.
3. Fifteen (15) unexcused absences, which can include 15 full day absences or 45 partial day absences, will be sent a 15-day absence letter, contacted by the school, and reported to the Hennepin County be@school program.
4. Seventeen (17) unexcused absences, which can include 17 full day absences or 51

partial day absences, will be sent a 17-day absence letter, contacted by the school, and reported to the Hennepin County be@school program. Court proceedings could ensue.

C. Reporting Responsibility

When a student is initially classified as experiencing educational neglect or as a continuing truant, Minnesota statute provides that the building principal or designee shall notify the student's parent or legal guardian, by first class mail or other reasonable means, of the following:

1. That the student is being identified as truant or experiencing educational neglect;
2. That the student, parent or guardian should notify the school if there is a valid excuse for the child's absences;
3. That the student, parent or guardian if unsheltered, should notify the school HHM lead for McKinney Vento referral for support services.
4. That the parent or guardian is obligated to compel the attendance of the student at school pursuant to Minnesota statute and parents or guardians who fail to meet this obligation may be subject to prosecution.
5. That this notification serves as the notification required by Minnesota statute.
6. That alternative educational programs and services may be available in the district;
7. That the parent or guardian has the right to meet with appropriate school personnel to discuss solutions to the student's truancy;
8. That if the student continues to be truant, the parent and student may be subject to juvenile court proceedings under Minnesota statute.
9. That if the student is subject to juvenile court proceedings, the student may be subject to suspension, restriction, or delay of the student's driving privilege pursuant to Minnesota statute; and
10. It is recommended that the parent or guardian accompany the student to school and attend classes with the student for one day.

D. Habitual Truant

1. A habitual truant is a student under the age of 17 years who is absent from attendance at school without lawful excuse for seven school days if the child is in elementary school or for one or more class periods on seven school days if the student is in middle school, or high school, or a child who is 17 years of age who is absent from attendance at school without lawful excuse for one or more class periods on seven school days and who has not lawfully withdrawn from school.
2. A habitual truant student and the student's parent or legal guardian shall be referred to appropriate services and procedures, under Minnesota statute.

VII. WITHDRAWAL FROM SCHOOL

A parent or guardian may withdraw the student from enrollment in school for good cause by notifying the district. Good cause includes, but is not limited to, enrollment of the student in another school, or the immaturity of the student.

- A. Any student under age seven (7) may be withdrawn by the parent or guardian if:
 - 1. the student is enrolled in another school; or
 - 2. the student is registered or enrolled in a home school; or
 - 3. the parent or guardian declares that the withdrawal is due to the immaturity of the child.

- B. Any student between seventeen (17) and eighteen (18) years old, who seek to discontinue secondary education, and the student's parent or guardian, must:
 - 1. Meet with school personnel to discuss educational opportunities available to the student, including alternative educational opportunities; and
 - 2. Sign a written election to withdraw from school.

- C. In accordance with Minnesota Statute, the school district will classify a student as withdrawn for funding purposes after 15 consecutive missed school days during the school year or five consecutive school days during summer school or intersession.

VIII. ONLINE SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

The following statements apply for students enrolled in online school and/or an online course. Definitions:

Online Attendance - is defined as either 1) logging in to the online course delivery platform by the assigned times and following prescribed procedures or 2) participating in mandatory synchronous learning at the assigned times and following the prescribed procedures.

Online Absence - Failure to log in to the online course delivery platform by the assigned time, or failure to follow prescribed procedures for recording your attendance, or failing to participate in any mandatory synchronous learning sessions at the assigned times.

Online Partial Attendance- is defined as either 1) logging in to the online course delivery platform after the assigned time or 2) participating in only some of the mandatory synchronous learning activities.

Cross Reference: Policy 506 (Student Discipline)