



- ensure the student is attending school;
- inform the school within 5 days 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 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., robocalls sent on the 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 the 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 caregiver to address attendance needs and overcome barriers that may arise;
- require students to attend all assigned classes and other school activities;
- maintain accurate records of student attendance, and prepare a list of the previous day's absences stating the status of each.
- To inform the student's parent or caregiver of the student's attendance and to work cooperatively with them and the student to solve attendance problems.
- be familiar with all policies and procedures governing attendance and 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.

In accordance with the Minnesota Compulsory Instruction Law, Minnesota Statutes, section 120A.22, the students of the district are required to attend all assigned classes, activities and/or study halls every day school is in session, unless the student has been excused by the school board from attendance because the student has already completed state and district standards required to graduate from high school, has withdrawn, or has a valid excuse of attendance.

- 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 regulations for students of a similar age and grade.

C. Excused Absences

1. A parent or caregiver of a child may apply to a school district to have the child excused from attendance for the whole or any part of the time school is in session during any school year. Application may be made to the administrator or designee. A note from a healthcare professional stating that the child cannot attend school is a valid excuse.
2. To be considered an excused absence, the student's parent or caregiver may be asked to verify, in writing, the reason for the student's absence from school.

D. Legitimate Exceptions

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/caregivers, or the student (if eighteen or more years of age).
  - Illness includes both mental and physical health symptoms.
  - 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 an administrator, site administrator, or designee, may grant a longer period.
3. **Funeral attendance**, for up to four (4) days within a school year; however, the administrator, or designee, may grant a longer period.
4. **Student appointments**, with health care providers including those conducted through telehealth, immigration, incarcerated parents, and sessions 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 caregiver, 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. This instruction must be conducted and maintained in a place other than a public school building, and it must not, in whole or in part, be conducted and maintained at public expense.
7. **Cultural or religious observance.**
8. **School-authorized absences**, including but not limited to, approved field trips, interscholastic athletic and fine arts competitions and events, student recognition/award ceremonies, suspension from class or school, and 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 caregiver, or an adult student, requests an excused absence for participation in a non-district sponsored event.
  - The request must be in advance of the first absence;
  - Documentation from the sponsor must be provided along with the request identifying the location, dates, and time of the event;
  - Missed schoolwork must be assigned by the student's teacher or teachers, and the parent or caregiver 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 administration
  - Missed schoolwork is assigned by the student's teacher or teachers, and the parent or caregiver agrees that school work will be completed.
13. **Transportation barriers** communicated by the District Transportation Department, parent/caregiver, 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 caregiver has completed a change of address form;

- The parent or caregiver 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 caregiver is not able to transport the student prior to the institution of the new stop for the student.
15. **Extreme weather conditions**, are considered by the parent/caregiver to be too dangerous for the student to attend school.
16. **Administrative decisions**, the site administrator 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.

E. Partial Day Absence

Definition: Partial day absence describes students not physically in school or able to be located on school grounds or assigned areas 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.

F. 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 within 5 days, an absence prior to or following a full or partial day absence.
3. Work at home.

4. Work at a business, except under a school-sponsored work release program.
5. Family trips/vacations, for which no arrangement has been made with the school.
6. Any other absence not included under the attendance procedures set out in this policy.

G. Consequences of Unexcused Absences

1. Absences resulting from official suspension will be handled in accordance with the Pupil Fair Dismissal Act, Minnesota Statutes section 121A.40-121A.56
2. Days during which a student is suspended from school shall not be counted in a student's total accumulated unexcused absences.
3. In cases of recurring unexcused full or partial-day absences, the administration may refer the 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.

H. 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.

I. 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 caregiver 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.

J. 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. The 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 administrator'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, caregiver'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. Habitual Truant

Definition: Minnesota statute provides that a "habitual truant" means a child under the age of 17 years who is absent from attendance at school without lawful excuse for seven school days per school year if the child is in elementary school or for one or more class periods on seven school days per school year if the child is in middle school, junior high 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 per school year and who has not lawfully withdrawn from school under section 120A.22, subdivision 8.

A habitual truant student and the student's parent or caregiver shall be referred to appropriate services and procedures, under Minnesota statute.

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 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.

5. If an administrator has concerns about excessive excused absences, they may consult with the Hennepin County be@school program.

C. Reporting Responsibility

When a student is initially classified as experiencing educational neglect or as a continuing truant, Minnesota statute provides that the building administrator or designee shall notify the student's parent or caregiver, 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 caregiver should notify the school if there is a valid excuse for the child's absences;
3. That the student, parent, or caregiver if unsheltered, should notify the school HHM lead for McKinney Vento referral for support services.
4. That the parent or caregiver is obligated to compel the attendance of the student at school pursuant to Minnesota statute and parents or caregivers 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 or outside of the District;
7. That the parent or caregiver has the right to meet with the 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 caregiver accompany the student to school and attend classes with the student for one day.
11. A district may terminate the enrollment of a nonresident student enrolled under this section or section 124D.08 at the end of a school year if the student meets the definition of a habitual truant under section 260C.007, subdivision 19, the student has been provided appropriate services under Chapter 260A, and the student's case has

been referred to juvenile court. A district may also terminate the enrollment of a nonresident student over the age of 17 enrolled under this section if the student is absent without lawful excuse for one or more periods on 15 school days and has not lawfully withdrawn from school under section 120A.22, subdivision 8.

## VII. WITHDRAWAL FROM SCHOOL

A parent or caregiver 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 caregiver 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 caregiver declares that the withdrawal is due to the immaturity of the child.
- B. Any student between seventeen (17) and eighteen (18) years old, who seeks to discontinue secondary education, and the student's parent or caregiver, 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 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 to students enrolled in online school and/or and 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 into 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)