

Students

Student Attendance

I. Purpose

This policy defines school attendance expectations. This policy recognizes that class attendance is a joint responsibility to be shared by the student, parent or guardian, teacher and administrators.

II. General Statement of Policy

It is the policy of the district to fully comply with Minn. Stat. §120A.22, which requires the students of the district to attend all assigned classes 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because the student has already completed state and district standards required to graduate from high school; has withdrawn; or has a valid excuse for absence.

A. Responsibilities

1. Student's Responsibility

It is the student's right to be in school. It is also the student's responsibility to attend, on time, all assigned classes every day that school is in session, and to be aware of and follow the correct procedures when absent from an assigned class. Students are responsible for securing missed work, scheduling make-up examinations, and are accountable to make up missed course content.

2. Parent or Guardian's Responsibility

It is the responsibility of the student's parent or guardian to ensure the student is attending school, to inform the school in the event of a student absence, and to work cooperatively with the school and the student to solve any attendance problems. The parent or guardian is also responsible for supporting the student with their assigned responsibilities.

3. Teacher's Responsibility

It is the teacher's responsibility to take daily attendance and to maintain accurate attendance records in each assigned class. It is also the teacher's responsibility to be familiar with all procedures governing attendance and to apply these procedures uniformly. It is also the teacher's responsibility to provide any student who has been absent with any missed assignments upon request.

4. Administrator's Responsibility

It is the administrator's responsibility to require students to attend all assigned classes. It is also the administrator's responsibility to be familiar with all procedures governing attendance and to apply these procedures uniformly to all students, to maintain accurate records on student attendance and to prepare a list of the previous day's absences stating the status of each. Finally, it is the administrator's responsibility to inform the student's parent or guardian of the student's attendance and to work cooperatively with them and the student to solve attendance problems.

III. Attendance Procedures

- A. Attendance procedures will be presented by the principals to the superintendent for review and approval. When approved by the superintendent, the attendance procedures will be included in the appendices of this policy and the *Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook*.

IV. Required Reporting

A. Continuing Truant

1. State law (Minn. Stat. §260A.02) provides that a continuing truant is a student who is subject to the Compulsory Instruction Law and is absent from instruction in a school without a valid excuse within a single school year for:
 - a. Three days if the child is in elementary school; or
 - b. Three or more class periods on three days if the child is in middle school or high school.
2. When a student is initially classified as a continuing truant, Minn. Stat. §260A.03 provides that the building administrator or designee will notify the student's parent or legal guardian, by first class mail or other reasonable means, of the following:
 - a. That the child is truant;
 - b. That the parent or guardian should notify the school if there is a valid excuse for the child's absences;
 - c. That the parent or guardian is obligated to compel the attendance of the child at school pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 120A.22 and parents or guardians who fail to meet this obligation may be subject to prosecution under Minn. Stat. §120A.34;
 - d. That this notification serves as the notification required by Minn. Stat. §120A.34;

- e. That alternative educational programs and services may be available in the district;
- f. That the parent or guardian has the right to meet with appropriate school personnel to discuss solutions to the child's truancy;
- g. That if the child continues to be truant, the parent and child may be subject to juvenile court proceedings under Minn. Stat. §Ch. 260; and
- h. That if the child is subject to juvenile court proceedings, the child may be subject to suspension, restriction, or delay of the child's driving privilege pursuant to Minn. Stat. §260C.201.

B. Habitual Truant

1. A habitual truant is a child under the age of 17 years who is absent from attendance at school without lawful excuse for either (1) seven school days if the child is in elementary school or (2) one or more class periods on seven school days if the child is in middle school or high school. Also, a habitual truant is 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. The building administrator or designee will refer a habitual truant child and the child's parent or legal guardian to appropriate services and procedures, under Minn. Stat. §Ch. 260A.
3. The district reserves the right to report students truant if they accumulate more than 10 excused absences during the year.

V. Student Status

A pupil, regardless of age, who has been absent from school for 15 consecutive school days during the regular school year or for five consecutive school days during summer school or intersession classes of flexible school year programs, without receiving instruction in the home or hospital, will be dropped from the roll and classified as withdrawn.

VI. Request for Modified Learning Experience

District families may request a modification on their child's learning experience beyond the child's scheduled school day. The request could be a defined number of full days or a defined amount of time during the school day for a defined number of days.

The request shall be made to the building principal and consideration for approval will be limited to the following reasons:

- Students desire for a performance acceleration

- Extended family travel schedule
- Students unique learning challenges

Families seeking approval of a modified learning experience must do so six weeks prior to the experiences beginning date. The district review and decision of the proposal will be completed within four weeks of received proposal. The modified proposal can be found in Appendix III.

VII. Support for Student Attendance

Each school site will develop procedures that promote regular student attendance and prevent absenteeism and truancy. When possible, the district will work with other organizations and agencies to support regular student attendance.

VIII. Dissemination of Policy

This policy will be made available to all students and parents at the commencement of each school year in the *Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook*. This policy will also be available upon request in each principal's office.

Legal References:

Minn. Stat. § 120A.22 (Compulsory Instruction)
 Minn. Stat. § 120A.24 (Reporting)
 Minn. Stat. § 120A.26 (Enforcement and Prosecution)
 Minn. Stat. § 120A.34 (Violations; Penalties)
 Minn. Stat. § 126C.05 (Definition of Pupil Units)
 Minn. Stat. §§ 121A.40-121A.56 (Pupil Fair Dismissal Act)
 Minn. Stat. § 260A.02 (Definitions)
 Minn. Stat. § 260A.03 (Notice to Parent or Guardian When Child is Continuing Truant)
 Minn. Stat. § 260C.007, Subd. 19 (Habitual Truant Defined)
Goss v. Lopez, 419 U.S. 565 (1975)
Slocum v. Holton Board of Education, 429 N.W.2d 607 (Mich. App. Ct. 1988)
Campbell v. Board of Education of New Milford, 475 A.2d 289 (Conn. 1984)
Hamer v. Board of Education of Township High School District No. 113, 66 Ill. App.3d 7 (1978)
Gutierrez v. School District R-1, 585 P.2d 935 (Co. Ct. App. 1978)
Knight v. Board of Education, 38 Ill. App. 3d 603, 348 N.E.2d 299 (1976)
Dorsey v. Bale, 521 S.W.2d 76 (Ky. 1975)

Cross Reference:

Policy 506 (Student Discipline)

Policy
 adopted: 6/16/08
 amended: 5/21/12
 revised: 3/14/16
 revised: 4/17/17
 revised: 6/12/17
 revised: 12/17/18

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT 273
 Edina, Minnesota

ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

The school district believes regular attendance to be an essential element in the student's educational process. Regular, punctual attendance fosters a climate conducive to learning, perpetuates effective teaching, protects the integrity of the school day and ensures quality education. Regular, punctual attendance, a responsibility that should be shared by students, parents, and school, is one means by which a student learns responsibility and self-discipline. To encourage attendance, the school district herein adopts the following attendance requirements for Edina Public Schools:

I. Attendance Procedures

- A. If a student is absent or will be absent from class or arrive late to school, the student's parent or guardian must call the school office before noon the day of the absence. Phone calls are preferred to report absences. If a phone call cannot be made, a note with a phone number where a parent or guardian can be reached will be acceptable on the day the student returns; otherwise, the absence will be considered unexcused. The parent or guardian must contact the school within 48 hours to change an absence from unexcused to excused. If for some reason a parent is unable to follow the above procedure, the building administrator or designee must be contacted.
- B. Students must be in school for a minimum of three hours (unless absent due to a school-sponsored activity or documented medical/dental appointment) in order to be eligible to practice or participate in any activity after school.
- C. Physical education attendance and excuses. When a temporary condition or disability resulting from illness or injury makes it necessary for a student not to participate in physical education or swimming, the parent is asked to write a note making this request. If the student is to be excused for longer than a week, a statement from the attending physician requesting this is required. These requests should be brought to the school office before classes start in the morning.

II. Classification of Absences

A. Excused Absence

An excused absence indicates an acceptable absence from school or class with parental/guardian and school permission. Full credit is given for all make-up work, and it is the teachers' and parents'/guardians' obligation to assist the student with all make-up work. Each teacher will notify the students of the classroom's make-up work policy. A student should complete all missing work within a period equating to two days per day of excused absence from school. Students should proactively request work or assignments in cases of prearranged absences.

The following absences are considered excused, and will not be counted toward cumulative absences:

1. Chronic illness
2. Death or terminal illness in the student's immediate family or of a close friend or relative
3. Court appearance occasioned by family or personal action
4. Regularly-scheduled religious instruction, not to exceed three hours in any week

5. Religious holiday or observance
6. Emergency conditions such as fire or flood
7. Official school field trip or other school-sponsored outing
8. Active duty in any military branch of the United States (High School only)
9. Participation in school-sponsored activities
10. Removal of a student pursuant to a suspension. Suspensions will be handled as excused absences and a student will be permitted to complete make-up work.
11. Spectator at a school-sponsored activity. This activity needs approval from district or school leadership, and is up to the discretion of building administration.

The following are excused absences, but will be counted toward the cumulative absences (see Section III.D.):

1. Illness (non-chronic) (a doctor's note may be required after a student has 3 cumulative absences during a school year)
2. Medical, dental or orthodontic treatment or counseling appointment that cannot be completed outside of the school day. The appointment should last no more than one half day, and the school may require documentation in order for it to be considered an excused absence.
3. Driver's examination. The school requires documentation in order for this to be considered an excused absence.
4. Prearranged personal or family vacations. A student must have completed and turned in the prearrangement form not less than five school days in advance of the first day of absence for a vacation to be considered an excused absence.
5. College visit. The school requires documentation in order for this to be considered an excused absence.
6. Transportation miscue, including missed bus, traffic congestion and vehicle malfunction

B. Unexcused Absence

An unexcused absence indicates that the student is absent from school or class with or without the consent of the parent/guardian, for a reason which is not acceptable to the school as listed in Section II.A. Make-up work may be required and credit will be given at the discretion of the teacher, based upon the individual classroom's make-up work policy. Unexcused absences are counted toward cumulative absences (see Section III.D.). The following are examples of absences that will not be excused:

1. An absence by a student that was not approved by the parent/guardian and/or the school district
2. Any absence in which the student failed to comply with any reporting requirements of the school district's attendance procedures within 48 hours of the absence
3. Working on school assignments or preparing for exams at home
4. Work at a business, except under a school-sponsored work release program
5. Personal or family vacation that is not prearranged as described in Section II.A.15.
6. Oversleeping, missing alarms, studying, or volunteer work

III. Monitoring Absenteeism

- A. A staff attendance review team may meet on a regular basis to monitor both excused and unexcused student absenteeism. The school will utilize the table below to provide communication to parents.

- B. The school notification system will provide communication electronically to parents with each absence from the school day or a class.
- C. School administration will monitor excused absences and work with families to improve attendance.
- D. School administration will follow the steps below based on the number of unexcused absences a student has incurred.

Elementary and Middle School	
3 Unexcused Absences	School administration may communicate with parents about attendance concerns via letter, email, or phone call. Parents may be required to meet with the school social worker, counselor or administrator.
6 Cumulative Absences	School administration will communicate with parents and may begin an intervention process to improve attendance. Parents may be required to attend a Parent Group Meeting through the "Be@School" program in Hennepin County if all 6 absences are unexcused.
9 Unexcused Absences	The student will be required to participate in a conference with the building administrator or designee. The school may file an Educational Neglect and Truancy Report. The administration will communicate to the parents that the continued absences will result in eventual referral to the state attorney.
9-18 Cumulative Absences	School administration will continue to work with family to communicate absences. A student that reaches 18 cumulative (excused and unexcused absences) may be recommended for retention.

**These are total absences throughout the school year.*

High School	
3 Unexcused Absences	School will communicate with parents about attendance concerns via letter or phone call. Student will be placed on an attendance contract stating the next unexcused absence in the particular class hour will result in loss of credit and study hall placement for the remainder of the term.
4 Unexcused Absences	Student will be dropped from course or set up for an attendance appeal. Parents may be required to attend a Parent Group Meeting through the "Be@School" program in Hennepin County.
7 Cumulative Absences	Letter sent to parents to notify them their student could be dropped from course if they reach 9 cumulative absences within a semester.
9 Cumulative Absences	School administration implements an attendance contract to ensure both parents and students are aware that credit may be lost if absences continue to occur.
10 Cumulative Absences	Student will be dropped from course or set up for an attendance appeal.

**All absences are reset at the start of a new semester.*

E. Attendance Appeal Process for Edina High School

A student scheduled to be removed from a class due to excessive (excused or unexcused) absences may appeal this decision. The student and/or parent is provided an opportunity to share the circumstances related to the violation of the attendance contract that warrant not being dropped from the course. The final decision is made by the administrator.

IV. Suspension from School

Make-up work is required and will receive one hundred percent (100%) credit. Days during which a student is suspended from school will not be counted in the student's total cumulative absences.

V. Tardiness

- A. At the Elementary level, tardiness is late arrival to school, not to exceed thirty minutes. Any student arriving later than thirty minutes will be marked as a half day absence.
- B. At the Middle School and High School levels, tardiness is late arrival to school or to a class, not to exceed 10 minutes.

Tardiness, other than the first period of the day, will be handled by the teacher. Each teacher will advise students of penalties and/or makeup for their class. Late arrivals to school in the morning will be dealt with through the office. The fourth unexcused tardy in any given quarter will result in an intervention (e.g., attendance plan, parent meeting, team meeting).

- C. Tardiness or half day absence is classified as excused or unexcused, depending on whether the reason is defined as excused or unexcused in Section II, A. and B.

Reviewed: 4/17/17
Revised: 6/12/17
Revised: 12/17/18
Updated: 11/18/19

Appendix II to Policy 503
**Form for Pre-Arranged Personal Absences, Family Vacations,
and Significant Educational Opportunities**

Entire form must be filled out **5 days prior to the absence for it to be considered excused!**

Student Name: _____ Grade: _____ ID#: _____

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Parent Phone Number(s): Cell (____)____-____; Home (____)____-____

Date(s) of Absence: * _____ through * _____

*Leaving midday at: _____AM/PM

*Returning midday at: _____AM/PM

Check one Box Below:

- Religious Observance**
- Personal Matter / Family Vacation - Please supplement this form with a short written explanation.**
- Significant Educational Opportunity - Please supplement this form with a short written explanation of the opportunity.**
- Athletic Event - Please supplement this form with a short written explanation.**

Parents/students are responsible for contacting the teacher(s) and arranging for makeup work before turning this form into the office. Please complete and turn this form in to the office **at least five school days** prior to departure. Forms not turned in 5 school days prior to being gone will result in the absence marked as unexcused. Parent(s) should sign this form before giving it to the classroom teacher.

I have read and understand the conditions listed above:

Parent Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Office Use Only:

Date received by Office Staff: _____

Revised: 12/17/18

Family Proposal for a Modified Learning Experience

Student's Name: _____ Grade: _____ School: _____

Date of Submission: _____

Experience Begin Date: _____ Experience End Date: _____

Experience School Day Adjustment: _____

Family Need/Rationale for Modified Learning Experience (describe reasons for proposal):

Customized Learning Experience:

Subject(s)	Modified Instructional Approach	Assessment Process

Requirements of Modified Learning Experience:

- Meets state and district attendance requirements
- Meets state and district academic advancement requirements, including grade level standards and high school course credits
- Does not require specialized services or instructional support of district staff

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Family Proposal for a Modified Learning Experience, page 2

District Administrative Approval:

Approved Denied

Approved with the following modifications:

District Administrative Decision-Makers:

Director of Teaching & Learning

Building Principal

Date

Date

Appeal Request Date: _____

Decision of District Task Force:

Approved Denied

Created: May 15, 2017
Updated: July 17, 2017