

**RICHFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
ATTENDANCE**

I. PURPOSE

The school board believes that regular attendance in school and punctuality are important factors in a student's success in academic work, including success in meeting state and local requirements for graduation. Students who attend school consistently and are on time develop better socially, establish better communication with their teachers, and acquire important lifetime habits such as dependability, self-sufficiency, and responsibility. Therefore, the purpose of this policy is to positively encourage regular school attendance and punctuality.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

- A. The Minnesota Compulsory Attendance Law requires that every child between 7 and 16 years of age attend school.
- B. Student academic achievement is the primary goal of Richfield Public Schools. Although learning occurs in a variety of settings, time in class is essential to learning so that students can receive instruction and contribute as members of the community of learners.
- C. School staff, students, families and the community share responsibility for student attendance. Families have the responsibility for making decisions about their children's schooling. School staff have responsibility for communicating with families about student attendance.
- D. All students should receive equitable opportunity and treatment. Students have individual needs that must be considered. The District respects religious and cultural considerations that may affect student attendance.

III. SHARED RESPONSIBILITY

The school board recognizes that class attendance is a responsibility shared by the student, parent or guardian, and the school. The District intends to involve all parties in promoting regular attendance.

- A. The superintendent is authorized to set regulations, procedures and rules to implement this policy. Communication of regulations and procedures shall, at a minimum:
 - 1. establish clear and consistent practices across the district, including a standard set of excused absences;

2. use accurate and timely attendance data for planning, evaluation, and communication;
 3. clarify staff roles and responsibilities;
 4. clarify the role of parents in informing the school regarding their students' attendance or absences;
 5. require that attendance regulations and guidelines be communicated to students and families at registration, or at least annually.
 6. provide for the means of appeals by parents or guardians regarding attendance issues.
- B. Administration and school staff have the responsibility to:
1. engage students in the learning process with strong curriculum, instruction and relationships with staff;
 2. meet the needs of individual students by using a range of strategies and interventions;
 3. communicate attendance expectations to families, inform them of their students' attendance, and involve them in problem solving related to their students;
 4. involve the community through shared expectations and actions.
- C. Teachers have the responsibility to:
1. take daily attendance and to maintain accurate attendance records in each assigned class and study hall;
 2. provide students who have been absent with any missed assignments and adequate time to complete them;
 3. proactively share expectations with students for making up missed work in the event of absences from class;
 4. follow all attendance-related accommodations as specified in student individualized education plans and 504 documents.
- D. Students have the responsibility to:
1. attend all assigned classes and study halls every day that school is in session;
 2. be aware of and follow the correct procedures when absent from an assigned class or study hall; and
 3. request any missed assignments due to an absence, or have parent/guardian request missed assignments when appropriate
- E. Parents/guardians have the responsibility to:
1. ensure the student is attending school;

2. inform the school in the event of a student absence; and
3. work cooperatively with the school and the student to solve any attendance issues that may arise.

III. PREKINDERGARTEN AND KINDERGARTEN ATTENDANCE

- A. Once a child 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 that a child under the age of seven who was 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 prekindergarten 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 that applies to students in kindergarten through grade 12. Prekindergarten 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. Prekindergarten students may be excused from attendance on the same basis as is permitted for students enrolled in kindergarten through grade 12.

IV. WITHDRAWAL

- A. Students not required by Minnesota Law to attend school may withdraw as follows:
 1. Any student under age seven (7) may be withdrawn by the parent or guardian if:
 - a. the student is enrolled in another school; or
 - b. the student is registered or enrolled in a home school; or
 - c. the parent or guardian declares in writing that the withdrawal is due to the immaturity of the child.
 2. Any student between 16 and 18 years of age who seeks to withdraw from school, along with that student's parent/guardian, must:
 - a. Attend a meeting with school personnel to discuss the educational opportunities available to the student, including alternative educational opportunities and,
 - b. Sign a required written election to withdraw from school.

VI. NOTIFICATION OF POLICY AND BUILDING PROCEDURES

- A. This policy shall be available on the District website.
- B. A summary of this policy and building attendance procedures shall be provided annually to all students and their parents in a student handbook or other building publication.
- C. A copy of the policy shall 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.28 (School Boards and Teachers, Duties)
Minn. Stat. §120A.30 (Attendance Officers)
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).
Goss v. Lopez, 419 U.S. 565, 95 S.Ct. 729 (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 Educ. 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, 348 N.E.2d 299 (1976)
Dorsey v. Bale, 521 S.W.2d 76 (Ky. 1975)

Policy References:

Board Policy 541: Student Behavior and Administrative Guidelines 541.1

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