

## 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. The board delegates responsibility to the superintendent or superintendent's designee(s) to implement this policy.

#### II. General Statement of Policy

It is the policy of the school district to fully comply with state law, 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because the student has already completed state and district standards required to graduate from high school, has withdrawn, or has a valid excuse for absence.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 attached as Appendix I of this policy and included in the *Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook*.
- B. Each school site will develop procedures that promote regular student attendance and prevent absenteeism and truancy. When possible, the school district will work with other organizations and agencies to support regular student attendance.

### IV. Classification of Absences

#### A. Excused Absence

##### 1. Non-Exempt

An excused absence indicates an acceptable absence from school or class with parent/guardian and school permission. Full credit is given for all make-up work, and it is the teachers' and parents'/guardians' obligation to reasonably 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. Unless specifically identified as an exempt absence, excused absences will be counted toward cumulative absences (see Appendix I, Section II.D.) The following are excused absences:

##### a. Medical-Related Absences

- 1) Chronic illness with documentation from the student's licensed health care provider.

- 2) Illness (non-chronic) (a doctor's note may be required after a student has 3 cumulative absences during a school year).
  - 3) 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 district may require documentation in order for it to be considered an excused absence.
  - 4) Surgery or inpatient hospitalization with medical documentation.
  - 5) Medical recovery.
- b. Death or terminal illness in the student's immediate family or of a close friend or relative.
  - c. Court appearance occasioned by family or personal action.
  - d. Regularly scheduled religious instruction, not to exceed three hours in any week.
  - e. Emergency conditions such as fire or flood.
  - f. Active duty in any military branch of the United States (High School only).
  - g. Spectator at a district-sponsored activity. This activity needs approval from school district or school leadership and is up to the discretion of building administration.
  - h. Driver's examination. The district requires documentation in order for this to be considered an excused absence.
  - i. Pre-arranged personal or family vacations. A student must have completed and turned in the form for Pre-Arranged Personal Absences, Family Vacations, and Significant Educational Opportunities not less than five school days in advance of the first day of absence for a vacation to be considered an excused absence.
  - j. College visit. The district requires documentation in order for this to be considered an excused absence.
  - k. Transportation miscues, including traffic congestion, and vehicle malfunction.

## 2. Exempt

Exempt absences. The following excused absences are exempt and will not count against a student's cumulative absences:

- a. Participation in district-sponsored activities.
- b. Official school field trip or other district-sponsored outing.
- c. Religious holiday or observance, up to three consecutive days per holiday or observance.
- d. 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.

## 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 district as listed in Section IV.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 Appendix I, Section II.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 district.
2. Any absence in which the student failed to comply with any reporting requirements of the 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 district-sponsored work release program.
5. Personal or family vacation that is not pre-arranged as described in Section VI.
6. Oversleeping, missing alarms, missed buses, studying, or volunteer work.

## 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 absent.
- B. Each secondary site must develop and maintain a site-specific tardy plan with clear procedures for implementation and monitoring.

## VI. Pre-Arranged Absences

For an absence to be excused, a student, parent, or guardian must complete the pre-arranged absence form, attached as Appendix II, for any absences related to personal reasons, family vacations, or significant educational opportunities. The form must be submitted 5 days prior to the absence for it to be considered excused.

## VIII. Required Reporting

### A. Continuing Truant

1. State law 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 cumulative days if the child is in elementary school; or
  - b. Three or more class periods on three cumulative days if the child is in middle school or high school.
2. When a student is initially classified as a continuing truant, state law 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, under state law, the parent or guardian is obligated to compel the attendance of the child at school and parents or guardians who fail to meet this obligation may be subject to prosecution;
  - d. That this notification serves as the notification required by state law;
  - e. That alternative educational programs and services may be available in the school 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 state law; 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 state law.

### 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 cumulative school days if the child is in elementary school or (2) one or more class periods on seven cumulative 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 state law.
3. The school district reserves the right to report students truant if they accumulate more than 12 excused absences during the year.

#### IX. Student Status

A student, regardless of age, who has been absent, whether excused (unless an exempt absence) or unexcused, 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.

#### X. 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 - Continuing Truant)  
Minn. Stat. § 260A.03 (Notice to Parent or Guardian When Child is a Continuing Truant)  
Minn. Stat. § 260C.007, subd. 19 (Definitions - Habitual Truant)  
*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 Conduct and Discipline)

Policy  
adopted: 06/16/08  
amended: 05/21/12  
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revised: 04/08/24  
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INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 273  
Edina, Minnesota

## Appendix I to Policy 503

### **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/guardians, and school, is one means by which a student learns responsibility and self-discipline. To encourage attendance, the district herein adopts the following attendance requirements:

#### I. Attendance Procedures

- A. If a student is absent or will be absent from class or arrive late to school, the student's parent/guardian must report the absence to the school office before noon the day of the absence. Digital reporting of absences is preferred. Phone calls through the attendance line is a second reporting option. If a phone call cannot be made, a note with a phone number where a parent/guardian can be reached will be acceptable on the day the student returns; otherwise, the absence will be considered unexcused. The parent/guardian must contact the school within 48 hours to change an absence from unexcused to excused. If for some reason a parent/guardian is unable to follow the above procedure, the building administrator or designee must be contacted.
- B. 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/guardian is asked to notify the teacher through email or a written 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 to be brought to the school health office before classes start in the morning.

#### II. Monitoring Absenteeism

- A. A staff attendance review team may meet on a regular basis to monitor excused and unexcused student absenteeism. The school will utilize the table below to provide communication to parents/guardians.
- B. The school notification system will provide communication electronically to parents/guardians 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 and cumulative absences (including excused and unexcused, but excluding specifically identified exempt absences as described in district policy) a student has incurred. School administration may communicate with parents/guardians about attendance concerns via letter, email, or phone call.

<b>Elementary and Middle School</b>	
3 Unexcused Absences	Parents/guardians may be required to meet with the school social worker, counselor, or administrator. Schools mail 3-day attendance letter to parent(s)/guardian(s).
6 Cumulative Absences	School administration will communicate with parents/guardians and may begin an intervention process to improve attendance. Resources are provided to the family and ongoing communication with the family occurs. Parents/guardians 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 sends initial report to Be@School program at the seventh unexcused absence. The administration will communicate to the parents/guardians that the continued absences will result in eventual referral to the state attorney.
9-18 Cumulative Absences	At 12 unexcused absences, school sends report 2 to Be@School, which includes additional information about the student, known or suspected barriers, and attendance interventions. School administration will continue to work with the family to communicate absences. At 17 days, school sends report 3 to Be@School to update attendance, contact information, or any additional concerns. A student that reaches 18 cumulative (excused and unexcused absences) may be recommended for retention.

<b>High School</b>
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**UNEXCUSED ABSENCES**

Any Unexcused Absence	Family will be notified via automated phone call. Family has <u>48</u> hours to excuse the absence via the EHS online system. Students have the opportunity to make up missed work for up to 75% or equivalent.
3 Unexcused Absences	At three unexcused absences, schools send a Three-Day Continuing Truant notification letter home to parents/guardians.
7 Unexcused Absences	Truancy Report 1 will be filed through the Hennepin County “Be@School” program. Parents may be required to attend a Parent Group Meeting through the “Be@School” program. At seven unexcused absences, a student is considered a habitual truant. The school will communicate with parents about attendance concerns via phone call or parent meeting including EHS staff to create an intervention plan.
12 Unexcused Absences	Truancy Report 2 will be filed through the Hennepin County “Be@School” program. Pending student performance or extenuating circumstances, student may be dropped from class with a grade of NC.

**EXCUSED ABSENCES**

Any Excused Absence	Full credit is given for make-up work. A student should complete ALL missing work within a period equating to two school days per day of excused absence to receive full credit.
12 Excused Absences	The school will communicate with parents about attendance concerns via phone call or parent meeting. The student may be placed on an intervention plan which may require pre-approval from administration/health services or provide a note from a medical provider upon subsequent excused absences. At 17 days, school sends report 3 to Be@School to update attendance, contact information, or any additional concerns.

The district reserves the right to report students truant if they accumulate more than 12 excused absences during the year.

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/guardian 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.

- Appendix
- reviewed: 04/17/17
- revised: 06/12/17
- revised: 12/17/18
- updated: 11/18/19
- revised: 06/12/23
- revised: 04/08/24
- revised: 06/09/25

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(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian 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.**

**Written Explanation for Absences:**

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Parents//guardians/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)/guardian(s) should sign this form before giving it to the classroom teacher.

I have read and understand the conditions listed above:

**Student Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent/Guardian Signature(s):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

*Office Use Only:*

*Date received by Office Staff:* \_\_\_\_\_

(06/25)