

503 STUDENT ATTENDANCE

I. PURPOSE

- A. The school board believes that regular school attendance is directly related to success in academic work, benefits students socially, provides opportunities for important communications between teachers and students and establishes regular habits of dependability important to the future of the student. The purpose of this policy is to encourage regular school attendance. It is intended to be positive and not punitive.
- B. This policy also recognizes that class attendance is a joint responsibility to be shared by the student, parent or guardian, teacher and administration. This policy will assist students in attending class.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

A. Responsibilities

1. Student's Responsibilities

It is the student's right to be in school. It is also the student's responsibility to attend all assigned classes and study halls every day that school is in session and to be aware of and follow the correct procedures when absent from an assigned class or study hall. Finally, it is the student's responsibility to request any missed assignments due to an absence.

2. Parent or Guardian 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 that may arise.

3. Teacher's Responsibility

It is the teacher's responsibility to take daily attendance and to maintain accurate attendance records in each assigned class and study hall. 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. Finally, it is the teacher's responsibility to work cooperatively with the student's parent or guardian and the student to

solve any attendance problems that may arise.

4. Administrator's Responsibility

- a. It is the administrator's responsibility to require students to attend all assigned classes and study halls. 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.
- b. In accordance with the Minnesota Compulsory Instruction Law, Minnesota Statutes section 120A.22, the students of the school district are REQUIRED to attend all assigned classes 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 school district standards required to graduate from high school, has withdrawn or has a valid excuse for absence.
- c. The district must count a student as in attendance on each day the student receives supervision, instruction or services from school staff during scheduled school hours. Minnesota Statutes, section 120A.22 does not remove the school district's responsibility to continue to comply with reporting requirements in Minnesota Statutes, section 126C.05 for the purposes of funding.
- d. The principal must issue and keep a record of attendance, under rules established by the school board.

B. Attendance Procedures

Attendance procedures shall be presented to the school board for review and approval. When approved by the school board, the attendance procedures will be included as an addendum to this policy.

1. Excused Absences

- a. A parent, guardian or other person having control 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 a truant officer or the school official designated by the principal. A note from a physician or a licensed mental health professional stating that the child cannot attend school is a valid excuse.

- b. To be considered an excused absence, the student's parent or legal guardian may be asked to verify, in writing, the reason for the student's absence from school.
- c. The school board of the district in which the child resides may approve the application under subparagraph (a) above upon the following being demonstrated to the satisfaction of that board:
- d. Legitimate Exceptions

The following reasons shall be sufficient to constitute excused absences:

- (1) that the child's physical or mental health is such as to prevent attendance at school or application to study for the period required, which includes;
 - (a) child illness, medical, dental, orthodontic or counseling appointments; including appointments conducted through telehealth;
 - (b) family emergencies;
 - (c) the death or serious illness or funeral of an immediate family member;
 - (d) active duty in any military branch of the United States;
 - (e) the child has a condition that requires ongoing treatment for a mental health diagnosis; or
 - (f) other exemptions included in this attendance policy.
- (2) that the child has already completed state and district standards required for graduation from high school; or
- (3) that it is the wish of the parent, guardian or other person having control of the child, that the child attend for a period or periods not exceeding in the aggregate three (3) hours in

any week, instruction conducted by a Tribal spiritual or cultural advisor or a school for religious instruction conducted and maintained by a church, or association of churches, or any Sunday school association incorporated under the laws of this state, or any auxiliary thereof. 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. A child may be absent from school on days that the child attends upon instruction according to this clause.

c. Consequences of Excused Absences

- (1) Students whose absences are excused are required to make up all assignments missed or to complete alternative assignments as deemed appropriate by the classroom teacher.
- (2) Work missed because of absence must be made up within the established number of days set by a school from the date of the student's return to school. Any work not completed within this period shall result in no credit for the missed assignment. However, the building principal or the classroom teacher may extend the time allowed for completion of make-up work in the case of an extended illness or other extenuating circumstances.

2. Unexcused Absences

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

- (1) Truancy. An absence by a student which was not approved by the parent 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.
- (3) Work at home.
- (4) Work at a business, except under a school-sponsored work release program.
- (5) Absences resulting from cumulated unexcused (3 tardies

equal one (1) unexcused absence).

- (6) Any other absence not included under the attendance procedures set out in this policy.

b. Consequences of Unexcused Absences

- (1) Absences resulting from official suspension will be handled in accordance with the Pupil Fair Dismissal Act, Minnesota Statutes sections 121A.40-121A.56.
- (2) Days during which a student is suspended from school shall not be counted in a student's total cumulated unexcused absences.
- (3) In cases of recurring unexcused absences, the administration may also request the county attorney to file a petition with the juvenile court, pursuant to Minnesota statutes.
- (4) Students with unexcused absences shall be subject to discipline as determined by each school site. If the result of a grade reduction or loss of credit has the effect of an expulsion, the school district will follow the procedures set forth in the Pupil Fair Dismissal Act, Minnesota Statutes sections 121A.40-121A.56.

C. Tardiness

1. Definition: Students are expected to be in their assigned area at designated times. Failure to do so constitutes tardiness.
2. Procedures for Reporting Tardiness
 - a. Students tardy at the start of school must report to the school office for an admission slip.
 - b. Tardiness between periods will be handled by the teacher.
3. Excused Tardiness

Valid excuses for tardiness are:

- a. illness
- b. serious illness in the student's immediate family

- c. a death or funeral in the student's immediate family or of a close friend or relative
- d. medical, dental, orthodontic or mental health treatment
- e. court appearances occasioned by family or personal action
- f. physical emergency conditions such as fire, flood, storm, etc.
- g. any tardiness for which the student has been excused in writing by an administrator or faculty member.

4. Unexcused Tardiness

- a. An unexcused tardiness is failing to be in an assigned area at the designated time class period commences without a valid excuse.
- b. Consequences of tardiness will be determined by each school site.

D. Participation in Extracurricular Activities and School-Sponsored On-the-Job Training Programs

- 1. This policy applies to all students involved in any extracurricular activity scheduled either during or outside the school day and any school-sponsored on-the-job training programs.
- 2. School-initiated absences will be accepted and participation permitted.
- 3. A student may not participate in any activity or program if he or she has an unexcused absence from any class during the day.
- 4. If a student is suspended from any class, he or she may not participate in any activity or program that day.
- 5. If a student is absent from school due to medical reasons, he or she must present a physician's statement or a statement from 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.

III. RELIGIOUS AND CULTURAL OBSERVANCE ACCOMMODATIONS

Reasonable efforts will be made by the school district to accommodate any student who

wishes to be excused from a curricular activity for a religious or American Indian cultural practice, observance or ceremony. Requests for accommodations should be directed to the building principal.

IV. DISSEMINATION OF POLICY

- A. Copies of this policy shall be made available to all students and parents at the commencement of each school year. This policy shall also be available upon request in each principal's office.
- B. The school district will provide annual notice to parents of the school district's policy relating to a student's absence from school for a religious or cultural observance.

V. REQUIRED REPORTING

A. Continuing Truant

Minnesota Statutes, section 260A.02 provides that a continuing truant is a student who is subject to the compulsory instruction requirements of Minnesota Statutes, section 120A.22 and is absent from instruction in a school, as defined in Minnesota Statutes, section 120A.05, without valid excuse within a single school year for:

1. three (3) days if the child is in elementary school; or
2. three (3) or more class periods on three (3) days if the child is in middle school or high school.

B. Reporting Responsibility

When a student is initially classified as a continuing truant, Minnesota Statutes section 260A.03 provides that the school attendance officer or other designated school official shall notify the student's parent or legal guardian, by first class mail or other reasonable means, of the following:

1. that the child is truant;
2. that the parent or guardian should notify the school if there is a valid excuse for the child's absences;
3. that the parent or guardian is obligated to compel the attendance of the child at school pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, section 120A.22 and parents or guardians who fail to meet this obligation may be subject to

prosecution under Minnesota Statutes, section 120A.34;

4. that this notification serves as the notification required by Minnesota Statutes, section 120A.34;
5. that alternative educational programs and services may be available in the child's enrolling or resident district;
6. that the parent or guardian has the right to meet with appropriate school personnel to discuss solutions to the child's truancy;
7. that if the child continues to be truant, the parent and child may be subject to juvenile court proceedings under Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 260;
8. 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 Minnesota Statutes, section 260C.201; and
9. that it is recommended that the parent or guardian accompany the child to school and attend classes with the child for one (1) day.

C. Habitual Truant

1. An habitual truant is a child who is at least twelve (12) years old and less than eighteen (18) years old who is absent from attendance at school without lawful excuse for one or more class periods on seven (7) school days per school year if the child is in middle school or high school, or a child who is seventeen (17) years of age who is absent from attendance at school without lawful excuse for one (1) or more class periods on seven (7) school days per school year and who has not lawfully withdrawn from school under Minnesota Statutes, section 120A.22, subdivision 8.

Pursuant to section 260C.163, subdivision 11, habitual truant also means a child under age twelve (12) who has been absent from school for seven (7) school days without lawful excuse, based on a showing by clear and convincing evidence that the child's absence is not due to the failure of the child's parent, guardian or custodian to comply with compulsory instruction laws.

2. A school district attendance officer shall refer a habitual truant child and the child's parent or legal guardian to appropriate services and procedures, under Minnesota Statutes Chapter 260A.

Legal References:

Minn. Stat. § 120A.05 (Definitions)

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. § 120A.35 (Absence from School for Religious and Cultural Observances)
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)
Minn. Stat. § 260C.201 (Dispositions; Children in Need of Protection or Services or Neglected and in Foster Care)
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 Education of Township High School District No. 113, 66 Ill. App.3d 7, 383 N.E.2d 231 (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 References:

Policy 506 (District-Wide Student Discipline)

Policy Adopted: 9/19/88

Policy Revised: 8/18/03, 1/25/10, 5/17/10, 7/18/11, 5/14, 11/16/20, 2/27/23, 8/19/24, 7/21/25, 3/16/26

Alexandria Public Schools - No. 206

Alexandria, Minnesota

ATTENDANCE PROCEDURE

ALEXANDRIA AREA HIGH SCHOOL

The Board of Education believes full-time attendance to be an essential element in the student’s educational process. Regular attendance fosters a climate conducive to learning, perpetuates effective teaching, protects the integrity of the school day and ensures quality education. Regular attendance, a responsibility that should be shared by students, parents and school, is one means by which a student learns responsibility and self-discipline. Student absenteeism is often the cause of many failures in school. To encourage attendance, the Board of Education herein adopts the following attendance requirements for Alexandria Area High School:

ATTENDANCE PROCEDURE

- Students are required to attend all assigned classes and 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 for absence.
- Each school has established attendance procedures that support regular school attendance.
- These procedures will be shared by each school and require the support of students and families.

AAHS Attendance

- An attendance line is available twenty-four (24) hours a day at 320-762-2142 ext. 4500 for messages regarding attendance.
- If a student accrues three (3) unexcused or five (5) total absences in any given period in one semester, he/she may lose credit for the class.
- Students who accrue five (5) or more total absences for extenuating circumstances may appeal to an attendance committee for an exemption.
- All appointments (doctor, dentist, chiropractor, etc.) must be accompanied by a doctor’s note to be excused.

Unexcused Absences	Excused Absences	Exempt Absences
Semester Credit <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students who incur two (2) unexcused absences will be given a notice that additional absences will result in loss of credit • Students who incur three (3) unexcused 	Semester Credit <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students who incur three (3) or more absences of a class period in a semester (including unexcused absences) will be given an attendance notice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School sponsored events in which the student is a participant • Statewide testing • Class field trips • Students participating in MN State High School League events

<p>absences and have received an attendance notice will receive no credit for the course</p> <p>Examples of Unexcused Absences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No contact from parents/guardians • Overslept • Car Troubles • Lunch with parents • Three (3) excessive tardies will equal one (1) unexcused absence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students absent five (5) class periods in a semester (including unexcused absences) and have received an attendance notice may lose credit for that class <p>Examples of Excused Absences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Illness • Medical/Dental appointments that have a doctor's note verifying time of appointment • College Visits • Vacation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spectators at MSHSL events where Alexandria teams are participating who have parent/guardian approval and a valid ticket stub
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For students with extenuating circumstances (long-term illness, ongoing illness, family emergency, etc.), an appeal can be made to an attendance committee who will meet monthly consisting of:

- Building Administration
- School Counselor
- School Social Worker
- Classroom Teacher
- District Designee

ATTENDANCE PROCEDURE

DISCOVERY MIDDLE SCHOOL

The Board of Education believes that regular school attendance is directly related to success in academic work, benefits students socially, provides opportunities for important communications between teachers and students and establishes regular habits of dependability important to the future of the student. The purpose of this policy is to encourage regular school attendance. It is intended to be positive and not punitive. This policy also recognizes that class attendance is a joint responsibility to be shared by the student, parent or guardian, teacher and administration. This policy will assist students in attending class.

Pre-Arranged Absence

Forms are available in the office for students to communicate a future absence to their teachers to gather make-up work. Parents should communicate the upcoming absence to the attendance secretary through a note or phone call and students should obtain the form in the office.

Tardiness

Tardiness is late arrival to school or to a class. Tardies are classified as excused and unexcused. Examples are as follows:

- Excused: Illness, medical/dental appointments, family emergencies, pass from school personnel
- Unexcused: Oversleeping, car trouble, missing the bus, ride did not come, etc.

The fourth unexcused absence/tardy during a class period in any given trimester will result in detention for the student. Detention will result from each succeeding incident.

Truancy/Unexcused Absences

An unexcused absence indicates that the student is absent from school or class without the consent of the parent(s)/guardian(s). Make-up work is required. Consequences for unexcused absences may include 1 hour of detention for every class hour unexcused.

If a student is deemed habitually truant/unexcused, a letter will be filed with the Douglas County Attorney's Office stating that this child is in need of protective services.

ATTENDANCE PROCEDURE

ALEXANDRIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

The Board of Education believes full-time attendance to be an essential element in the student's educational process. Regular attendance fosters a climate conducive to learning, perpetuates effective teaching, protects the integrity of the school day and ensures quality education. Regular attendance, a responsibility that should be shared by students, parents and school, is one means by which a student learns responsibility and self-discipline. Student absenteeism is often the cause of many failures in school. Consequently, the attendance policy is intended to be positive and not punitive.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Student: Students have the RIGHT to attend classes at the elementary school level. Students attending an elementary school have the RESPONSIBILITY to maintain punctual, regular attendance. The school reserves the right to determine if an absence is excusable.

Parent/Guardian: It is the responsibility of the student's parent/guardian to encourage the student to attend school, to inform the school in the event of a student's absence and to work cooperatively with the school and the student to develop acceptable attendance patterns.

Teacher: Alexandria Public Schools will provide certified, competent teachers in all classes. The teachers will conduct well-planned, educational, orderly and timely instruction in all classes. Teachers will record and report to the office accurate attendance for each student.

Administrators: 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 and to maintain accurate records on student attendance. 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.

ATTENDANCE PROCEDURE

If a student is absent or will be absent from class, will arrive late to school or leaves school prior to the regular dismissal time, the student's parent or guardian must notify the school office prior to the beginning of the school day. Notifications can be made through a phone call, personal contract or by a note. Absences not reported by parents may be counted as unexcused. The student has 24 hours to change the absence from unexcused to excused. If a parent is unable to follow the above procedure, the principal must be contacted.

Office personnel will attempt to contact parents of unexcused students after the school day has begun to ensure their location; however, the student's absent status may still be considered unexcused.

If a parent or guardian does not call the child in absent, an administrative designee will attempt to call all of the phone numbers listed in our student information system. In some events, law enforcement may be called to do a “safety check” at the child’s home to ensure that the student is safe.

If students arrive after school has started, parents need to check them in. The schools will be locked after school starts and students need to be brought into the building.