

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 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because the student has already completed state and district standards required to graduate from high school, has withdrawn, or has a valid excuse for absence.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

- a. 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.
- b. The administrator will maintain accurate records on student attendance and prepare a list of the previous day's absences stating the status of each. The administrator will count a student as in attendance on each day the student receives supervision, instruction, or services from school staff in accordance with applicable program parameters. Records will be kept in a sufficient manner to allow the district to comply with reporting requirements set forth in state law for the purposes of funding.
- c. 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 each school's *Student and Family Handbook*.

IV. 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 (3) cumulative days if the child is in elementary school; or
 - b. Three (3) or more class periods on three (3) 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 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 either (a) seven (7) cumulative school days if the child is in elementary school or (b) one (1) or more class periods on seven (7) cumulative school days if the child is in middle school or high school. Also, a habitual truant is 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 and who has not lawfully withdrawn from school in accordance with state law.

Under state law, 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. 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 twelve (12) excused absences during the year.

V. Student Status

A pupil, regardless of age, who has been absent, whether exempt, excused or unexcused, from school for fifteen (15) consecutive school days during the regular school year or for five (5) 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. 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 five (5) days prior to the absence for it to be considered excused.

VII. Request for Modified Learning Experience

School 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 will 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
- Attendance challenges associated with unique learning needs

Families seeking approval of a modified learning experience must do so six (6) weeks prior to the experience's beginning date. The district review and decision of the proposal will be completed within four (4) weeks of the received proposal. The modified proposal can be found in Appendix III.

VIII. Support for Student Attendance

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.

IX. Dissemination of Policy

This policy will be made available to all students and parents at the commencement of each school year in the applicable *Student and Family 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. § 120A.35 (Absence from School for Religious and Cultural Observances)

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 a Continuing Truant)
Minn. Stat. § 260C.007, Subd. 19 (Habitual Truant)
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 (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)

Student and Family Handbook, for the relevant Edina Public Schools location.

Policy

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 273

adopted: 06/16/08

Edina, Minnesota

amended: 05/21/12

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revised: 04/17/17

revised: 06/12/17

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revised: 04/08/24

revised: 08/10/26

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 call the school office before noon on the day of the absence. Digital reporting of absences is preferred. Phone calls through the attendance line are 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 forty-eight (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. Students must be in school for a minimum of three (3) 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 school-sponsored activity after school.
- C. 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. These requests should be brought to the school health office before classes start in the morning.

II. Classification of Absences

A. Exempt Absence

An exempt 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 (2) days per day of exempt absence from school. Students should proactively request work or assignments in cases of prearranged absences. Exempt absences will be treated the same as excused absences except they will not be counted toward cumulative absences (see Section III.D.). The following absences are considered exempt:

- 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 (3) hours in any week
5. Religious holiday or observance or American Indian cultural practice, observance, or ceremony.
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 school district or school leadership and is up to the discretion of building administration.
12. Surgery or inpatient hospitalization with medical documentation.
13. Medical recovery lasting four (4) or more consecutive days (Health Services Discretion).

B. 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 (2) days per day of excused absence from school. Students should proactively request work or assignments in cases of prearranged absences. Excused absences will be counted toward cumulative absences (see Section III.D.) The following are excused absences:

1. Illness (non-chronic) (a doctor's note may be required after a student has three (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 ($\frac{1}{2}$) 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. 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 (5) 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

C. 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 or II.B. 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 district
2. Any absence in which the student failed to comply with any reporting requirements of the district's attendance procedures within forty-eight (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 pre-arranged as described in Section II.B.4.
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 exempt, 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 exempt and 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 not exempt absences as described in Section II) a student has incurred.

Elementary and Middle School	
3 Unexcused Absences	School administration may communicate with parents/guardians about attendance concerns via letter, email, or phone call. Parents/guardians may be required to meet with the school social worker, counselor, or administrator. Schools mail a Three-Day Continuing Truant notification 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 six (6) absences are unexcused.
9 Unexcused Absences	The student will be required to participate in a conference with the building administrator or designee. Truancy Report 1 will be filed through the Hennepin County "Be@School" program at the seventh (7th) 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 twelve (12) unexcused absences, Truancy Report 2 will be filed through the Hennepin County "Be@School" program, 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 seventeen (17) days, school sends Truancy

	Report 3 to Be@School to update attendance, contact information, or any additional concerns. A student that reaches eighteen (18) cumulative (excused and unexcused absences) may be recommended for retention.
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*These are total absences throughout the school year.

High School

UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

Any Unexcused Absence	Family will be notified via automated phone call. Family has <u>forty-eight (48)</u> hours to excuse the absence via the online system. Students have the opportunity to make up missed work for up to seventy-five percent (75%) or equivalent.
3 Unexcused Absences	At three (3) 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 (7) 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 school 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.

*These are total absences throughout the school year.

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 (2) 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 seventeen (17) days, school sends Truancy Report 3 to Be@School to update attendance, contact information, or any additional concerns.

*These are total absences throughout the school year.

The district reserves the right to report students truant if they accumulate more than twelve (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.

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 (30) minutes. Any student arriving later than thirty (30) minutes will be marked as a half ($\frac{1}{2}$) day absence.
- B. At the Middle School and High School levels, tardiness is late arrival to school or to a class, not to exceed ten (10) minutes.

Tardiness, other than the first (1st) 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 (4th) unexcused tardy in any given quarter will result in an intervention (e.g., attendance plan, parent/guardian meeting, team meeting).

- C. Tardiness or half ($\frac{1}{2}$) day absence is classified as exempt, excused, or unexcused, depending on whether the reason is defined as exempt, excused, or unexcused in Section II.

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Appendix II to Policy 503

**Form for Pre-Arranged Personal Absences, Family Vacations,
and Significant Educational Opportunities**

Entire form must be filled out **five (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 / Cultural 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:

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 into the office **at least five (5) school days** prior to departure. Forms not turned in five (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: _____

(08/26)

Appendix III to Policy 503 and 509

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(s): _____ Date: _____

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

(08/26)