Billings School District 2

STUDENTS

Attendance Policy and Removal of Student During School Day

Student Attendance

Introduction

Regular attendance is basic to meeting the educational needs of students. Maximum classroom instructional benefits can happen only when the student is in attendance. Regular and punctual attendance being essential to educational welfare, it follows that student, parents, and educators need clear understanding as to rights and responsibilities relating to attendance.

Rights

Students have the right to an appropriate education and are legally required to attend until they are 16 years old and have completed the 8th grade. Parents have the right to expect competent instructors and a school climate conducive to learning. Educators have the right to expect reasonable cooperation from students and parents.

Responsibilities

Students have the responsibility to participate in the educational opportunities given them. Parents are responsible for supporting the policies and programs of the School District, including seeing that students attend regularly and are to class(es) on time. The school has the responsibility to provide a significant curriculum, competent teachers, and adequate facilities and programs. The school also has the responsibility to maintain accurate records and practice diligence in reporting of attendance records.

Chronic Truancy May Lead to Expulsion

When appropriate, the Board shall, upon recommendation of the District Superintendent, consider expulsion for chronic truants.

Attendance Policy - K-5

It is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to assure their student is in school regularly. When a student must be absent for illness or other unforeseeable emergencies, parents must inform the school of the student's absence. In cases where doubt occurs concerning the validity of an excuse, the administration may request verification. If a student is not present and the parent has not notified the school of the absence, the school will attempt to call the parent.

Each student is allowed 7 excused absences per trimester, regardless of reason. After 7 absences, a doctor’s note is required. Any absence without a doctor’s note or administrative permission will be unexcused.

Attendance Policy - Grades 6-12

The intent of the attendance policy is to provide a structure within which 9-12 grade students can gain maximum benefit from the instructional program. The regular contact of the pupils with one another in the classroom and their participation in well planned instructional activities under the tutelage of a competent teacher are vital to this purpose.

Each student is allowed 10 excused absences per semester, regardless of reason. After 10 absences, a doctor's note is required. Any absence without a doctor's note or administrative permission will be unexcused.

Excused Absences

Excused absences are categorized as follows:

illness
medical appointments which cannot be scheduled outside the school day
participation in school activities
bereavement
verifiable family emergencies
necessary absences approved by the parent

Unexcused Absences/Truancies

In the event the principal determines an absence unnecessary, the absence will be considered as unexcused.

leaving the building without checking out
excuses such as oversleeping, car trouble, missing the bus, and being late from lunch
disciplinary suspensions
incarcerations

Truancy, defined as an absence from school not verified as valid by the parent &/or building administrator for all or any part of a school day equivalent to the length of one class period of a child required to attend a school under 20-5-103, MCA. Absences which are unexcused or not cleared within 48 hours are also considered truancies. Chronic truancy for students K-5, means recorded unexcused absences of 9 or more days or 18 or more parts of a day, whichever is less, in 1 semester. Chronic truancy for students 6-12 means recorded unexcused absences of 9 or more days or 54 or more parts of a day, whichever is less, in 1 semester. Chronic truants will be reported to legal authorities as prescribed by law.

The Billings School District has an attendance officer of the District.

Parent (or Guardian) Responsibilities

When a student must be absent from class for illness, or other unforeseeable emergencies, parents must inform the school office of the absence. If the school is not notified within 48 hours of the last absent day, the excuse will not be accepted and the absence will be considered truancy. The principal may make exceptions to this general policy and excuse the absence, after consultation with the teacher(s) who are involved, and after giving consideration to the circumstances related to the failure to notify and to the frequency of the student's absence. In cases where the validity of an excuse is in question, the administration may require verification from other sources.

Checking Out of School

When a student finds it necessary to leave after the start of the school day, the student shall follow the office procedures for checking out of school. Failure to follow this procedure may be considered truancy and appropriate action as defined in this policy will be taken.

Suspensions

Suspended students may not participate in extracurricular activities while on suspension. One day suspension usually will cover a 24-hour period. Suspensions are counted as days absent from school.

Parents will be notified of all suspensions. Students who are absent as a result of a suspension are responsible for the work missed.

Limit on Total Absences

If the total number of absences from any high school class exceeds 10 per semester, the student may be dropped from the class for the rest of the semester and assigned to a study hall. Absences from classes due to school sponsored activities are not counted in the ten (10).

Students may appeal the 10 absences per semester limit. A student who anticipates that an extended absence will exceed the 10 day limit may appeal in advance. Consequences for students identified as disabled will be determined by appropriate planning meetings.

Implementing Policy 3120 Attendance Policy and Removal of Student During School Day

Cross References:	Policy 6430	Development of Administrative Procedures
	Procedure 3120-P1	Compulsory Attendance
Legal References:	§ 20-5-103(2), MCA	Compulsory Attendance and Excuses
	§ 20-5-106, MCA	Truancy
	§ 20-5-107, MCA	Incapacitated and Indigent Child Attendance
	§ 20-1-308, MCA	Religious Instruction

Procedure History:

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