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.

B. This policy also recognizes that class attendance is a joint responsibility to be shared by the student, parent or guardian, teacher, and administrators. This policy will assist students in attending class.

Adopted with revision from MSBA Model Policy 503, Orig. 1995, Rev. 2009, 2011, 2014, 2022, 5/4/26

503 STUDENT ATTENDANCE

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

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 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'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 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 a school administrator 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 in the district's student information system.

B. Attendance Procedures

Attendance procedures are included in all student handbooks. These handbooks shall be presented to the School Board for review and approval.

III. RELIGIOUS AND CULTURAL OBSERVANCES ACCOMMODATION

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 observance or American Indian cultural practice, observance, or ceremony. Requests for accommodation 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 on the school district's website. This policy shall also be available upon request in each principal's office.

B. The student handbooks will provide specific procedures of the school district's policy relating to attendance and 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, junior high 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 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 260C;

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.

C. 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 one or more class periods on seven (7) school days per school year if the child is in middle school, junior high 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 Truancy Prevention Specialist 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 a 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 (1975)
Slocum v. Holton Bd. of Educ., 429 N.W.2d 607 (Mich. App. Ct. 1988)
Campbell v. Bd. of Educ. of New Milford, 475 A.2d 289 (Conn. 1984)
Hamer v. Bd. of Educ. of Twp. High Sch. Dist. No. 113, 66 Ill. App.3d 7, 383 N.E.2d 231 (1978)
Gutierrez v. Sch. Dist. R-1, 585 P.2d 935 (Co. Ct. App. 1978)
Knight v. Bd. of Educ., 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 (Student Discipline)