

Revised:

## 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 an ethic of responsibility and dependability on the part 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 administrators. This policy will encourage 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. It is also the teacher's responsibility to be familiar with all procedures governing attendance and to apply these procedures uniformly. Furthermore, 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 regulations of the Minnesota Department of Education and the Minnesota Compulsory Instruction Law, Minn. Stat. § 120.101, 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 completed the studies ordinarily required in the tenth grade and has elected not to enroll or has a valid excuse for absence.

B. Attendance Procedures

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

### III. REQUIRED REPORTING

A. Continuing Truant

Minn. Stat. § 260A.02 provides that a continuing truant is a student who is subject

to the compulsory instruction requirements of Minn. Stat. § 120.101 and is absent from instruction in a school, as defined in Minn. Stat. § 120.05, without valid excuse within a single school year for:

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

A student is not continuing truant if the child is withdrawn from school by the child's parents because of a dispute with the school concerning the provision of special education services under the Individual with Disabilities Education Act or accommodations and modifications under the Americans with Disabilities Act, if the parent makes good faith efforts to provide the child educational services from any other source.

**B. Reporting Responsibility**

When a student is initially classified as a continuing truant, Minn. Stat. § 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 Minn. Stat. § 120.101 and parents or guardians who fail to meet this obligation may be subject to prosecution under Minn. Stat. § 127.20;
- 4.that this notification serves as the notification required by Minn. Stat. § 127.20;
- 5.that alternative educational programs and services may be available in the 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 Minn. Stat. Ch. 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 Minn. Stat. § 260.191; and

9.that it is recommended that the parent or guardian accompany the child to school and attend classes with the child for one day.

C. Habitual Truant

1.An habitual truant is a child under the age of 16 years who is absent from attendance at school without lawful excuse for seven school days if the child is in elementary school or for one or more class periods on seven school days if the child is in middle school, junior high school, or high school.

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 Minn. Stat. Ch. 260A.

- Legal References:*
- Minn. Stat. § 120.101 (Compulsory Instruction)
  - Minn. Stat. § 120.102 (Reporting)
  - Minn. Stat. § 120.103 (Enforcement and Prosecution)
  - Minn. Stat. § 120.11 (School Boards and Teachers, Duties)
  - Minn. Stat. § 120.14 (Attendance Officers)
  - Minn. Stat. §§ 127.26-127.39 (Pupil Fair Dismissal Act)
  - Minn. Stat. § 260A.02 (Definitions)
  - Minn. Stat. § 260A.03 (Notice to Parent or Guardian when Child is Continuing Truant).
  - 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 (1978)
  - Gutierrez v. School District R-1, 585 P.2d 935 (Co. Ct. App. 1978)
  - Knight v. Board of Education, 348 N.E.2d 299 (1976)
  - Dorsey v. Bale, 521 S.W.2d 76 (Ky. 1975)

*Cross References:* Policy 506 (Student Discipline)

