

PROCEDURE 503 – ATTENDANCES AND ABSENCES

I. The parent/guardian of a student is to notify the school of the absence and the reason for the absence by 10:00 am as soon as possible of the day the student is absent. If the school is not informed of the absence, school personnel will contact the parent/guardian.

II. EXCUSED ABSENCES

A. Excused Absences. The following reasons shall be sufficient to constitute excused absences:

1. Illness.
2. Serious illness in the student's immediate family.
3. A death or funeral in the student's immediate family or of a close friend or relative.
4. Medical, dental, or orthodontic treatment, or a counseling appointment.
5. Court appearances occasioned by family or personal action.
6. Religious instruction not to exceed three hours in any week.
7. Physical emergency conditions such as fire, flood, storm, etc.
8. School administration decision to remove/dismiss a student from school
9. Family emergencies.
10. Situations related to parent(s)/guardian(s)/student's active duty in any military branch of the United States.
11. A student's condition that requires ongoing treatment for a mental health diagnosis.
12. Students who temporarily lack digital access during remote learning days.
13. Family safety concerns when authorized by school administration.
14. Extreme weather condition concerns of family when authorized by school administration
15. A student's religious or cultural observances.
16. A student's college and/or post-secondary program visit when authorized by school administration.
17. Transportation barriers or interruptions communicated by the district transportation department, parent/guardian or student to school staff or administrator
18. Family activities, for up to five school days within one school year which are subject to approval by school administration and where the parent(s)/guardian(s) and student have agreed that student will complete school work assigned during the absence.

B. Verification of Excused Absence. 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. In the case of a health related excused absence, a note from a physician or a licensed mental health professional stating that the student cannot attend school is a valid excuse.

C. Expectations for Excused Absences. 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.

D. Participation in Extracurricular Activities. School-initiated absences will be accepted and participation permitted. If a student is absent from school due to medical reasons, they 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. UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

A. Unexcused Absences. Absences that do not meet district criteria for excused absences may be classified as unexcused.

B. When patterns of unexcused absences emerge, the school will work collaboratively with students and families to identify barriers to attendance and provide appropriate supports and interventions. These may include:

1. Family or parent/guardian conferences
2. Attendance support or intervention plans
3. Connection to school support staff and resources
4. Additional interventions aligned with district attendance procedures

C. Prior to formal truancy referral, schools shall make reasonable efforts to:

1. Engage parents/guardians
2. Identify attendance barriers
3. Offer school and community based supports
4. Develop attendance improvement strategies
5. Nothing within this procedure limits the district's authority to initiate earlier intervention when circumstances warrant under applicable Minnesota law.

D. In situations where attendance concerns persist despite interventions and support efforts, schools will proceed in accordance with Hennepin County Truancy/Educational Neglect Reporting Requirements pursuant to Minnesota Statutes Section 260A.02 and Minnesota Statutes Section 260A.03.

IV. TARDIES

A. Students are expected to be in their assigned area at designated times. Failure to do so constitutes tardiness and may result in disciplinary or other corrective action at the discretion of school administration.

B. District administration will develop uniform tardy reporting processes that will be applied consistently across elementary and secondary schools.

~~II.V. If the school is not informed of the absence, school personnel will contact the parent/guardian.~~

~~III. Students who are absent from school or class, regardless of the reasons, are required to make up all assignments missed.~~

~~IV. The school will inform the parent/guardian if a student's absenteeism becomes excessive and there is a danger of the student losing credit due to incomplete work.~~

Legal References:

M.S. 120A.22, subd. 12 – School Attendance

Revised:

Revised: 2/20/96

Legal References:

Adopted: 7/21/76

Policy 503 Adopted: 5/20/03
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M.S. 120A.22, subd. 12 – School Attendance