

BMS Handbook Changes for 2016/2017

June 29, 2016

Page 7 – Change in wording:

ATTENDANCE

Students are to be in school except in cases of emergency or for reasons stated below. All students must follow our School District's Attendance Policy. Open enrolled students could be at risk of losing open enrollment status if the policy is not followed. See page 8-11 below. Parents need to call the school one week prior to a vacation. If possible, course work may be given to students prior to their vacation. Students have two days for every day gone to make-up work (ex. gone five days = ten days to complete work).

These are the only reasons for being absent from school:

1. Personal illness - The school may require the certificate of a doctor if it is deemed advisable.
2. Illness in the family - All schoolwork should be kept current.
3. Quarantine in the home - This is limited to the length of quarantine set by the proper health official.
4. Observance of a religious holiday.
5. Funerals.
6. Any other reason must be excused by the school PRIOR to the absence.

Page 8 – 11 – Updated to current Board Policy:

K-12 Attendance Policy Bemidji Area Schools

Philosophy

Attendance is critical to student achievement. Classroom instruction and participation are essential parts of the learning process. Regular attendance in all classes is vital to insuring a quality learning experience for all students. Regular attendance in all classes is vital to ensuring a quality learning experience for all students. Regular class attendance instills self-discipline and exposes students to group interactions with teachers and peers. It enables students to hear and participate in class discussion and involves them in educational environments not available elsewhere. Make-up assignments can never fully replace the learning experience students miss when they are absent from class.

The federal ESSA (Every Student Succeeds Act) legislation insists upon good attendance (90%) and holds public schools accountable for improving student attendance. Minnesota state law specifically outlines the expectation for students to attend school. State law also states that all students have a right to a free, public education.

Bemidji Area Schools takes on the responsibility of encouraging high rates of attendance in a user-friendly environment. The Bemidji School District recognizes that daily attendance and participation are strong indicators of student success and academic achievement. Frequent absences interfere with learning and leave students at high risk for educational failure. Attendance requirements at the various grade levels are a reflection of the age of the students and the needs of that educational environment. This attendance policy respects those requirements and needs.

This policy also recognizes that class attendance is a joint responsibility to be shared by the student, parent or guardian, teacher and administrator. Attendance habits begin in the primary grades. Frequent absences interfere with the learning process and leave students at high risk for educational failure. Students at the elementary level have limited control over circumstances in the home that may

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prevent them from getting to school regularly and on time. It is the belief of the Bemidji Area Schools that the primary responsibility for student attendance at the elementary level falls on the parents/guardians.

Attendance Incentives

Each school is encouraged to develop an internal attendance incentive program. The program will include strategies for encouraging students to attend school regularly and reward those with good attendance records. The incentive program shall also include strategies to assist students who have attendance problems. The incentive programs will focus on students, but may also include parent or family rewards or incentives.

Minnesota Department of Children, Families and Learning Requirements

In accordance within the regulations of the Minnesota Department of Education and the Minnesota Compulsory Instruction Law, M.S. 120.101, the students of the school district are required to attend all assigned classes every day school is in session.

Truancy and Educational Neglect: Minnesota Compulsory Attendance Laws

According to Minnesota State Statute (260C.007, Subd. 19), "habitual truant" means 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 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, or a child who is 16 or 17 years of age who is absent from attendance at school without lawful excuse for one or more class periods on seven school days and who has not lawfully withdrawn from school under section 120A.22, subdivision 8."

As per Minnesota Statute 260A.01., an elementary student is considered continuing truant when there have been three or more unexcused absences without a lawful excuse. Parents who do not send their children to school regularly may be charged with educational neglect. Educational neglect is legally defined as a parent's failure to ensure the child's regular attendance at school.

Bemidji Middle School Attendance Policy

Student Responsibilities:

1. Students are to attend class daily and arrive on time.
2. Students and parent/guardian are asked to sign a verification form indicating the attendance policy has been read and understood.
3. Students are responsible for completing make-up assignments, tests and quizzes within two school days for each day absent unless previous arrangements have been made with the classroom teacher.
4. Students may not leave school grounds without permission for any reason. Permission may be granted to leave the building by the attendance office or the health office.
5. Student should remind the parent to contact attendance office prior to, the day of, or no later than 10:00 A.M. the day after the absence and when possible to schedule appointments during non-school hours.
6. Student is to follow admit slip procedures outlined in each building for absence and reporting late for class.

Parent/Guardian Responsibilities:

1. Parents are expected to insure that their children attend school.
2. Parents are asked to inform the school of absences prior to, the day of, or no later than 10:00 A.M. the day after the absence.

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3. Parents are asked to try to schedule student appointments outside the school day to minimize the impact of his/her absence on attendance.
4. Parents are asked to notify the attendance office of an extended absence prior to the start of the absence.
5. Parents are asked to contact the attendance office, counselor, social worker, advisor or teacher if there are any concerns about the student's attendance.
6. Parents who suspect their child is not attending school should contact the school attendance office.

Teacher/School Responsibilities:

1. Teachers will take attendance daily, regularly and accurately.
2. When a student is absent teachers will inform the student of missing assignments and dates they are due.
3. Teachers will encourage students to attend school and will report frequent absences.
4. Teachers are expected to communicate concerns about attendance to parents.
5. Teachers should report any discrepancies in the daily attendance to the attendance office.
6. Teachers should be familiar with all procedures governing attendance and to apply these procedures uniformly.
7. Teachers should have students and parents sign a verification form stating they have received, read and understand the attendance policy.

Administrator Responsibilities:

1. Administrators will inform students, teachers and parents/guardians of the attendance policy.
2. Administrators will communicate and apply procedures developed to address attendance concerns.
3. Administrators are expected to communicate with parents when student attendance becomes a concern and encourage parents to remediate any attendance problems.
4. The administrators will ensure that attendance of students is monitored regularly. Parents or guardians will be contacted when attendance concerns (absences and tardies) are noted.
5. Administrators will plan interventions for students with excessive absences/tardies.
6. Administrators will hold teachers accountable for recording accurate attendance.
7. Administrators will facilitate and participate in the appeals process.

General Procedures:

Classifications for "Excused" and "Unexcused" absences will exist for the purpose of tracking trancies and for safety reasons. Excused absences will be any absence excused by the parent ahead of time, the day of the absence, or up until 10:00 A.M. the day following the absence. "Unexcused" absence will be any absence in which the parent does not contact the school within the designated time frame. Contact can be by phone or in the form of a note, however a phone call is preferred. Number to call: 333-3215 extension # 52004.

Interventions and Reporting:

Absences will be recorded in the attendance office when a written note or phone call is received from the parent or guardian. Parents are to contact the attendance office prior to the absence, the day the absence occurs or up until 10:00 the day following the absence.

The Attendance Review Team (ART) is made up of the principals, counselors, social worker, truancy intervention coordinator, Indian Education Home School Liaison etc.

Extra curricular activities are not counted as absences.

BMS Offers a volunteer Beltrami County truancy/tracker program at parent or school request.

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First Intervention:

- Students who are absent are required to make up assignments or complete alternative assignments as determined by the classroom teacher.
- Students will be given two days for each day missed or as arranged through contract with the teacher to complete make-up assignments.
- A student's attendance concerns are reviewed at an attendance review meeting.
- An attendance printout and a school policy letter will be sent to parents/guardians of students whose average daily attendance falls below 80 percent.

Second Intervention:

- Review absences of students who miss 20 percent or more days and/or students who are truant two or more times.
- The attendance monitor will personally contact students (and phone home) who miss additional days/periods after the printout is sent home.

Third Intervention:

- If there is no improvement in attendance, the case will be reviewed by the Attendance Review Team (ART) and one or more of the following will be implemented:
 - a. home visit or parent meeting
 - b. students will be referred to the Truancy Intervention Program
 - c. referral to social services for educational neglect

Fourth Intervention:

- If there is no improvement in attendance after the third intervention has been made, a truancy petition will be filed.

Other:

- All students shall be provided a copy of the attendance policy and procedures.
- When a student's average attendance falls below 80 percent, the parent will be notified by letter at mid-quarter or on the report card at the end of each quarter.

Appeal Process:

1. Within five school days after the eighth absence, a student and parent or guardian must request an appeal by the Attendance Review Team. The request may be in writing, in person, or by a phone call to the school administrator. The Attendance Review Team may consist of: counselor, social worker and/or Indian Education liaison, and at least one of the student's classroom teachers. A request for review of absences in a timely manner may be made in writing, in person, or by phone call to the school administrator.
2. At the appeal, the administrator's role will be to present the information and reasons for the prior decision to the ART. The Attendance Review Team (ART) shall hear all appeals.
3. A parent or guardian and the affected student should appear in person at the appeal.
4. Upon recommendation of the review committee or administrator, the school administrator will notify the student and parent within three school days of the decision of the appeal.
5. After the appeal, the student will be expected to attend all scheduled classes. The parents/guardians may call the attendance office and check on their child's attendance.

ISD NO.31

SBR 400-25-1

ORIGINAL: JULY 17, 2000

REVISED: JULY 21, 2003

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Page 11 – Updated Behavior Ticket to:

BEHAVIOR TICKET	
Name _____	Date _____ Pod _____
<u>HALLWAY/CLASSROOM</u> (Explain on Back)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Running <input type="checkbox"/> Cafeteria <input type="checkbox"/> Language <input type="checkbox"/> No Hallway Pass	<input type="checkbox"/> Pushing/Shoving/Kicking <input type="checkbox"/> Classroom Disruption <input type="checkbox"/> Insubordination <input type="checkbox"/> Misuse of Electronics during school hours
Staff recommendation <input type="checkbox"/> Warning <input type="checkbox"/> Lunch or After School Detention <input type="checkbox"/> Room 1003	
Staff Signature _____	Administrator Signature _____

Page 12 – Added “Parties” to this paragraph:

DANCES/PARTIES

Parties and Dances will be held from 6:30 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. unless otherwise advertised. School personnel will leave at 9:30 p.m. Only current active students attending Bemidji Middle School will be allowed to attend

- Students assigned to all or part of the day in Room 1003 the week of the dance will not be allowed to attend the dance.
- Students assigned an Out of School Suspension during the week of the dance will not be able to attend the dance.
- Students will dress and act appropriately for school dances.
- Students must be in school or at a school activity on the day of a dance to be eligible to attend.
- Because consistent supervision cannot be provided, students should not stay after school to wait for a dance to begin.

Page 13 – Added writing on self or others:

DISCIPLINE - OTHER VIOLATIONS

Inappropriate hallway/classroom behavior	Detention/room 1003/suspension
Locker sharing/destruction of	Detention/room 1003
Skipping/No pass in hallway	Detention/ loss of privileges
Cell Phones and other electronic devices	Parents will pick up items from the office
Throwing Snowballs	Detention/Room 1003
Excessive writing on self or others	Detention/room 1003/suspension

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Page 13 - 14 – Change in wording:

DRESS GUIDELINES

All of the attitudes and behaviors of students and staff contribute to the climate of the Middle School. Individual student dress and the appearance of students contribute to a school climate in a positive or negative manner. Wearing apparel and hair shall be neat, clean, safe and should not disrupt the instructional process.

The safety of all students is a parallel issue thus all students are expected to dress appropriately. Staff members who feel a student is dressed inappropriately will refer student to the office.

Students not adhering to this dress code will be asked to change into appropriate clothing, have a parent conference, be assigned detention/ Room 1003 and/or will be sent home.

The following are examples of unacceptable dress/clothing:

- Caps and hats
- Backless, low cut, off shoulder shirts, spaghetti straps, midriff shirts, see-through garments
- Excessively tight or clothing less than finger tip length (shorts, shirts, skirts, pants etc...)
- Clothing with revealing holes or cutouts
- Visible underclothing, including bra straps and underwear
- Apparel that is sexually suggestive or that features crude/vulgar printing or pictures that depict drugs, tobacco, alcoholic beverages, racial/ethnic slurs or gang affiliation
- Any gang related apparel such as altered hats and bandannas of any color
- Wallet chains 12 or more inches long
- Baggy pants and shorts worn below the waist
- Extra-long belts
- Bare feet, stocking feet or slippers
- Wearing or carrying coats, backpacks, or sling bags during school hours

Pages 24 - 43 – Updated the following to current Board Policies:

- Bullying Prohibition Policy
- Student Personnel – Miscellaneous School Discipline Policy
- BMS Extra Curricular Program
- Harassment and Violence Policy
- Hazing Prohibition Policy