

## Elementary Student Handbook Changes and Adaptations

The only change in the elementary student handbook is the attendance policy. This policy is uniform to the junior high and high school policy that has been in place for several years. The policy is suggested by county officials to be uniform and consistent as well as provide clarity around expectations.

### Pages 4-6: Attendance Policy:

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 (MN Statute 121A.40-121A.56). It is the student's responsibility to request any missed assignments due to an absence.

### ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

Students will be allowed nine excused absences per semester (10%). Absences will need to be called into the office the day of **or before** the absence for it to be excused. In the event that a parent/guardian does not call in the student and it is within the first nine absences the student will be marked an unexcused absence. On the tenth absence per semester the student will be unexcused unless a doctor's note can be provided to the office staff within 48 hours of the student returning to school.

If a student is sent home by the nurse because they have a temperature or are ill it is excused. If a student comes to the nurse and it is not medically necessary for them to go home the nurse will not excuse the student. **Students should not call or text their parent(s) to excuse them from school, the nurse will contact the parent(s) and discuss the health situation and recommend if the student should leave school to go home.**

**School sponsored events, bereavement and college visits are all considered excused, but a parent must call the office and follow protocol for the absence to be excused.**

### UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

The following are examples of absences that will not be excused **(but not limited to)**:

1. Educational Neglect. An absence by a student which was not approved by the parent and/or school district (forging note/pass) as in leaving class without the approval of the teacher.
2. An absence in which the student failed to comply with any reporting requirements of the school district's attendance procedures as in leaving school.
3. More than **(5 minutes)** late to class without an excused pass, **all tardies will be marked unexcused unless a parent calls to excuse the student.**
4. Any other absence not included under the attendance procedures set out in this policy.
5. Removal of a student pursuant to a suspension. Students will complete make-up work and receive credit for that work. Work will be due the following day or upon returning to school.

### CONSEQUENCES OF UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

Absences resulting from official suspension will be handled in accordance with the Pupil Fair Dismissal Act, MN. Stat. 127.26-127.319. In cases of recurring unexcused absences, the administration may also request the county attorney to file a petition with the juvenile court, pursuant to Minnesota Statutes.

A student with unexcused absences will be subject to discipline in the following manner:

- After the **(third/fifth)** unexcused absence in a class, a student's parent(s) or guardian will be notified by mail and/or telephone to inform them of the absence. Students with educational neglect issues and their parents may meet with the Principal and school counselor to discuss their situation and decide on corrective measures.
- The student or his/her parents or guardian may, within three regular school days after the first notice by telephone or letter, request a conference with the principal regarding the student's absence(s). Any notification will state that the school strongly urges the student's parent or guardian to request such a conference.

### **TARDINESS**

Students are expected to be in their assigned area at the designated time. Failure to do so constitutes tardiness. The classroom teachers will report all tardies to the office through the attendance program.

**TELEPHONE NUMBERS ARE: Please contact the office by 8:00 AM regarding student absences**

**Waterville Elementary: Phone 362-4439 Fax 362-4762**

***When prompted please select the attendance line.***

If your child's absence will cause him/her to miss more than two days of school, arrangements should be made to get assignments, either through the office or your child's teacher. Students that will be gone from school for non-sick related reasons for extended periods of time need to get prior approval from the Principal. Students that are absent, or go home sick during the school day, should not participate or attend school activities that evening. Teachers and secretaries will notify the Principal of any questionable or unusual absences. Periodically, school officials will review each student's attendance record for excessive absences and tardiness. At that time, he/she may deem it necessary to meet with the parents of the student to discuss the student's future attendance.

After the third/fifth unexcused absence, a student's parent(s) or guardian will be notified by mail and/or telephone to inform them of the absences. Students with truancy issues and their parents may meet with the Principal and/or other school officials to discuss their situation and decide on corrective measures. Additionally, absences beyond three unexcused days are considered "continuing truant""educational neglect" under the law. (260C.007, subdivision 6(3) and 6(14) and Minn. STAT. 120A.22) and may be referred to county officials for further action.

Because of the number of extenuating circumstances that may exist, the administration has the authority to deviate from any of the above attendance regulations and/or procedures if it feels it is in the best interest of the student and/or school.

### **EXCUSING CHILDREN FROM SCHOOL EARLY**

Parent/guardian requests to excuse a child early from school should be made in writing to the principal or secretary. Teachers are not allowed to release a child directly to any adult. Parents/guardians are requested to pick up their children in the office. If you are asked for identification before we allow a child to be released from school, please understand that this is done for the protection of the child. **All parents/guardians must sign out their child from the elementary office if they will be leaving school early.**