



Q & A: School Attendance Age Limitations

The Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) Division of Compliance and Assistance has developed this document to provide technical assistance to districts and parents that have raised questions about the age limitation for students attending school.

Question 1: Is there an upper age limit pupils to attend a public secondary school?

Answer: Yes. A pupil is eligible to attend public school and receive a free education through age 21. Once a student turns 21 after enrollment, that student is eligible for continued free public school enrollment until one of the following occurs:

- (1) the first September 1 after the pupil's 21st birthday,
- (2) the pupil's completion of the graduation requirements;
- (3) the pupil's withdrawal with no subsequent enrollment within 21 calendar days; or
- (4) the end of the school year.

See Minn. Stat. § 120A.20, subd. 1.

Questions 2: May a district offer an adult basic education program to persons over the age of sixteen who are not attending an elementary or secondary school?

Answer: Yes. A school district may offer a day or evening basic education program to persons over the age of 16 who are not attending a public elementary or secondary school. The program must be offered for free to persons under the age of 21 or who are unable to pay. The purpose of the program is to offer academic instruction necessary for a person to earn a high school diploma or equivalency certificate.

See Minn. Stat. § 124D.52, subd. 1.

Authority: Minn. Stat. § 120A.20, subd. 1; Minn. Stat. § 124D.52, subd. 1