

Attendance

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 regular habits of dependability that are important for life-long success. The purpose of this policy is to partner together to encourage regular school attendance. It is intended to be positive and not punitive. Attendance is the responsibility of the student, parent/guardian, and the school. It is our hopes that this policy will assist students in attending school on a regular basis. According to Minnesota Compulsory Attendance Law, 7-17 year old students are required by law to attend school on a regular basis. All reasonable efforts should be made by families to make school attendance a priority in the home and ensure that students are in school each and every student contact day. Parent/guardian involvement can reduce truancy.

Student Responsibilities

- Attend all classes on a daily basis and arrive on time.
- Follow all check-in and check-out procedures. Check in by signing in the Attendance Office if the student arrives after 8:00am.
- Students may not leave school grounds without permission for any reason. The Attendance Office or the Health Office may grant permission to a student to leave the building and will provide him/her a pass.
- Contact teacher to arrange make-up work.
- Ensure that a teacher changes the absence notation to a tardy if a student is late to class within the first five (5) minutes.
- Complete all make-up work for all absence types within two (2) days of return. Previously announced projects and/or assessments must be turned in or taken on the day of the student's return to school. If extenuating circumstances exist, the teacher may grant additional make-up time.

Parent/Guardian Responsibilities

- Ensure that their child attend school.
- Be aware of their child's attendance: online access through Synergy is available for parents.
- Inform the school of absences prior to, the day of, or no later than 9:00am the day after the absence stating a reason for the absence. (**Attendance Line: 507.379.5344 or e-mail tara.roberts@alschools.org**).
- Parents are asked to notify the Attendance Office and fill out an Advance Absence form for an extended absence prior to or at the start of the absence and to make arrangements for the student to make up work.
- Schedule student appointments outside the school day when possible.
- Contact the Attendance Office, Administration, Counselor, or teachers if there are any concerns about the student's attendance.
- If you suspect your child is not attending school, contact the Attendance Office.

Tardiness

A tardy is defined as a student not in the classroom when the class period bell rings up to but not to exceed five (5) minutes of the class. Arrival after five (5) minutes is considered an absence. Three (3) tardies equals one unexcused absence. **Student will be assigned detention for each unexcused absence.**

Ten Day Absence Rule

There is a cap of ten (10) total absences (excused) per class per semester. This includes excused vacation days, college visits, drivers test, etc. If a student misses more than 10 days, credit for the class may not be awarded based on this policy. Parents/guardians will receive notification of the third (3), fifth (5) and tenth (10) absence in a course. Three (3) unexcused tardies in a course will equal one (1) unexcused absence for that course and apply to the Ten Day Absence Rule. Failure of parent/guardian to contact (phone/email) the attendance office by 9:00am the following day will result in an unexcused absence and apply toward both the Ten Day Absence Rule and student's county truancy program. Students are expected to attend their study hall. On any unexcused absence, the teacher will address such absences with the student and parent. Absence from study halls will be treated as it would be with a regular class

Appeals Process

Students and parents who feel that extenuating circumstances should exempt them from Ten Day Absence Rule may appeal the Ten Day Absence Rule by submitting an Attendance Appeal Form to the Attendance Office within five (5) school days of the tenth (10) absence. The Attendance Review Committee will review and respond to an appeal within five (5) days following submission. Students will remain in class until the appeals process is completed. This must be initiated by the student/parent. The Attendance Review Committee will meet on an as needed basis with attendance concerns. Deadline for appeals will be five (5) school days after the Ten Day Absence Rule letter is received. Students and parents are invited to speak during the Attendance Review Committee meeting. Decisions of the Attendance Committee are final.

Make-Up Work

Students are required to make up all assignments missed or to complete alternative assignments as deemed appropriate by the classroom teacher. All make-up work for all absence types must be completed and turned in within two (2) days of return.

Previously announced projects and/or assessments must be turned in or taken on the day of the student's return to school.

If extenuating circumstances exist, the teacher may grant additional make-up time. No extra credit work will be allowed if a student has not completed missing make up work.

Excused Absences

- Absences with proper written verification (written parent note or office form)
- Pre-approved vacation (Paperwork turned in prior to absence)
- College visit (paperwork turned in in advance)
- Drivers test appointment
- Funerals
- Illness with a parent note

Unexcused Absences

- Babysitting
- Missing the bus
- Oversleeping
- Running late
- Transportation problem
- Work/job
- Other reasons that are not listed under excused absences.

Absences that are ALWAYS excused and do not count toward the cap of Ten Day Absence Rule

- 504s and IEPs that have attendance clauses in them
- Court appearances
- School-sponsored activities
- Suspension
- Verified meeting with office personnel
- Doctor-ordered absence
- Official religious holidays
- Death of an immediate family member (parent, step-parent, guardian, sibling, grandparent)
- Unique or emergency circumstances which are authorized by a school administrator

Advance Absences: Vacation/College visit/Medical

Students must pick up these forms from the Attendance Office, have them completed by his/her teachers and administrator and returned to the Attendance Office. Failure to submit these forms in advance may result in unexcused absences. Vacation days and college visits will be included in the attendance cap per semester.

First Unexcused Absence and Second Unexcused Absence

- Automatic phone call to parent/guardian
- Student may be assigned detention

Third Unexcused Absence

- Automatic phone call to parent/guardian
- Truancy letter sent home
- Student will be discussed at weekly attendance meeting (Administration and Freeborn County Truancy Officer)
- Student will meet with school administrator
- Student may be assigned detention
- Freeborn County Truancy Referral Form will be recommended

Fourth - Tenth Unexcused Absence

- Automatic phone call to parent/guardian
- Truancy letter sent home
- Student will meet with school administrator about absence
- Student may be assigned detention
- Referral to Freeborn County Truancy Diversion Program and Freeborn County Truancy Officer

Truancy

Continuing Truant

MN. Stat. 260A.02 provides that a continuing truant is a student who is subject to the compulsory instruction requirements of MN. Stat. 120A.22 and is absent from instruction in a school, as defined in MN. Stat. 120A.05, without a valid excuse within a single school year for: three or more class periods on three days if the child is in middle school, junior high school, or high school.

Habitual Truant

MN Statute 260A.02 provides that a 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, 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.

A school district attendance officer or other designated school official shall refer a habitual truant child and the child's parent or legal guardian to appropriate services and procedures, under MN. Stat. Ch. 260A.

Reporting Responsibility

When a student is initially classified as a continuing truant, MN. Stat. 260A.03 provides that the school Attendance Office or other designated school official shall notify the student's parent/guardian, by first class mail or other reasonable means, of the following:

- The child is truant.
- The parent/guardian should notify the school if there is a valid excuse for the child's absence.
- The parent/guardian is obligated to compel the attendance of the child at school pursuant to MN. Stat. 120A.22 and parents/guardians who fail to meet this obligation may be subject to prosecution under MN. Stat. 120A.34.
- This notification serves as the notification required by MN. Stat. 120A.34.
- Alternative educational programs and services may be available in the district.
- The parent/guardian has the right to meet with appropriate school personnel to discuss solutions for the child's truancy.
- If the child continues to be truant, the parent and child may be subject to juvenile court proceedings under MN. Stat. Ch. 260.
- 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 MN. Stat. 260C.201.