

School Attendance

School begins at 8:15 AM. Careful records are kept on all cases of absence or tardiness. Attendance is a key indicator of a student's academic success, and it is important to communicate with the school office if your child needs to be absent or tardy. It is our goal to work with students, families, and communities to support regular school attendance and improve academic achievement.

As a safety check, we ask that you call the school office before 8:10 a.m. if your child will be absent or tardy. A student is considered tardy if he/she is not in the classroom by the 8:15 AM bell. Students will need to check into the office if they arrive after 8:15 AM. If it ever becomes necessary for a student to leave school early, stop in the office and sign them out. There is a student sign-out book in the office. We want to be sure they are in good hands.

For every absence, please call the SCHOOL OFFICE at 507-847-5963, even if you have contacted the teacher.

It's the Law

Minnesota law states that all students are required to attend school from age 7, or when they enter kindergarten (whichever comes first) until they are 18 years old. A student's failure to attend school may lead to legal action for the parents/guardians and the student.

EXCUSED ABSENCES

- Illness of the student, which causes him/her to remain home or go to the doctor.
 - 5 consecutive absences due to illness will require a doctor's note. All absences after 10 cumulative days due to illness will require a doctor's note.
- Serious illness in the student's immediate family.
- Medical, dental, orthodontic, or counseling appointment.
- Death of a family member or near relative.
- Court appearances occasioned by family or personal action.
- Physical emergency conditions such as fire, flood, storm, etc.
- Official school field trip or school-sponsored event.
- Removal of student pursuant to a suspension. Students will be able to complete make-up work.
- A student's condition that requires ongoing treatment for a mental health condition.
- Family vacations (please notify teachers and the school office of upcoming absences).
 - We understand it is sometimes difficult to plan family vacations outside of the school year. However, vacations during regular instructional days should be avoided if possible. Students will be required to complete their assignments when returning to school.

EXCUSED ABSENCES PROCEDURES

- 6 days of excused absences per quarter – a letter will be sent to the parent, on a case-by-case basis.
- 12 days or more of excused absences per school year may warrant an Educational Neglect Report to Jackson County. This will be determined on a case-by-case approach.

UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

- Truancy - an absence by the student that was not approved by the parent and/or the school district.
- Any absence in which the student did not comply with any reporting requirements of the school district's attendance procedures.
- Absences resulting from accumulated unexcused tardies.
- Any other absence not included under the attendance procedures set out in this policy, such as, but limited to:
 - Parents who do not call the school office to report their child's absence on the same day their child is absent.
 - Overslept
 - Missed the bus
 - Car trouble
 - Baby-sitting
 - Needed at home
 - Vacations without permission in advance or with incomplete required work

UNEXCUSED ABSENCES CONSEQUENCES

- 1 day – contact by phone informing a parent of absence
- 3 days – first letter to parent
- 5 days – letter to parent requesting a doctor's note for any further absence and phone call or meeting with parent, and school personnel to put together a Student Support Plan
- 7 days – Educational Neglect or Truancy Report filed with Jackson County and a letter to parents informing them of the filing.

EXCUSED TARDIES

- Illness
- Serious illness in the student's immediate family.
- Medical, dental, orthodontic, or counseling appointment.
- Death of a family member or near relative.
- Court appearances occasioned by family or personal action.
- Physical emergency conditions such as fire, flood, storm, etc.
- Any tardiness for which the student has been excused in writing by an administrator or faculty member.

UNEXCUSED TARDIES

- Failing to be in an assigned area at the designated time class period commences without a valid excuse.

UNEXCUSED TARDINESS CONSEQUENCES

- 5 unexcused tardies – a phone call to a parent about our concerns.
- 6 unexcused tardies equal an unexcused absence.

AM/PM ABSENCE/TARDY

- When a student arrives after 8:15 AM and leaves from school before 3:00 PM, the following guideline is used to determine if the student is counted as being tardy or absent from school:
 - Arrive before 9:00 AM = Tardy
 - Arrive between 9:00 AM - 11:30 AM = AM Absence
 - Leave between 11:30 AM - 2:30 PM = PM Absence

BECOMING ILL DURING THE SCHOOL DAY

A student who becomes ill during the school day will be sent/escorted to the Main Office with proper notification from the teacher. The student will be encouraged to remain in school if possible. If necessary, parents will be contacted to make plans for the student to return home or to receive medical attention.

TRUANCY

Students between the ages of 7-17 are subject to the state's Truancy Law. Students ages 5 and 6 are also subject to the state's Truancy Law if they have been enrolled in a kindergarten program. A student is considered a habitual truant and subject to state laws concerning truancy when he/she is absent from instruction in a school without a valid excuse within a single year for one or more class periods on 7 (seven) days. If a student is habitually truant, Minnesota Statute 260A.03 will be followed and a referral will be made to human services.

When a student reaches 15 (fifteen) consecutive absences, the school district will be required to withdraw him/her from the system, per the Minnesota Department of Education MARSS (Student Accounting) Policy Manual. Educational Neglect will be filed on the student unless the school district receives a signed order from a doctor stating the student is unable to attend classes and requires homebound education.

EDUCATIONAL NEGLECT

State law mandates the attendance of all school-age children unless excused for legal reasons. Attendance is the responsibility of the student and his/her parents or guardians. Students who are absent from school without acceptable reasons will be regarded as an issue of educational neglect. Please contact the principal if you need assistance with your child's attendance. Truancy applies to children 12 years and older, but will follow the same for reporting as educational neglect.

WITHDRAWAL OF STUDENTS

In case of a change of residence where your child must be withdrawn from school, please notify your child's principal and teacher. This will enable the personnel involved to complete the necessary paperwork and help your child receive a better start in his new school.

[\(Policy 503\)](#)