



5100 A

Rules and Procedures: Attendance

Regulation 5100 A

Original Adoption: 07/25/2000
Revision Dates: 10/12/2005

Effective Date: 10/13/2005

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this regulation is to establish the rules and procedures for attendance of students. The purpose is also to assure that the attendance policy is implemented in the spirit in which it was intended. To that end the district will:

- A. Communicate the policy and procedures to staff, students and families.
- B. Conduct periodic audits of the practices throughout the district to assure consistency and equity, and to identify needs for staff development.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF REGULATION

- A. **Responsibility.** Principals and Site Administrators have the responsibility to:
 - 1. administer the District policy for the students under their care;
 - 2. make such determinations regarding attendance and excuses as are delegated to them herein by the Superintendent.
 - a) The principal or site administrator may designate an assistant principal or school social worker as an additional person allowed to make decisions regarding attendance and absences;
 - b) The principal or site administrator may make such designation from time to time, and when made must communicate such designation to the parents and guardians of the students of the school or site.
- B. **Monitoring System:** All schools will establish an attendance monitoring system, including:
 - 1. attendance taken daily in elementary schools and each period in secondary schools;
 - 2. a record of excused and unexcused absences;
 - 3. a system for contact with families of students with an absence that is unaccounted for on the day of the absence(s) (phone calls, home visits, etc.);
 - 4. a clear system for documenting and communicating the educational plans of students on Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and 504 Plans to assure that students participating in planned activities covered by these plans are not recorded as absent.
- C. **Equivalency.** For purposes of both compliance with compulsory education laws and eligibility for co-curricular or extra-curricular participation in



secondary schools, any unexcused absence from one or more classes in one school day is equivalent to a full-day absence.

- D. **Absences for Co-Curricular Activities.** For all students involved in any district-approved co-curricular activity scheduled either during or outside the school day the following shall apply:
1. School-initiated absences will be accepted and participation permitted.
 2. The student has the responsibility to notify his/her teacher(s) in advance of the absence. When this requirement is followed, an excused absence will not result in any penalty for the student.
 3. A student may not participate in any co-curricular or extra-curricular activity or program if she/he has an unexcused absence from any class during the day.
 4. A student must maintain the necessary grade point average to participate in activities.
 5. If a student is suspended or removed from instruction for one day or less, she/he may not participate in any co-curricular or extra-curricular activity or program during the suspension.
 6. When a student is experiencing academic difficulties, staff will discuss with the student and his/her family the need to limit absence from instructional time. Activities that a student shall continue to participate in include, but are not limited to:
 - a) Scheduled meetings with school counselor, social worker or school psychologist;
 - b) Field Trips arranged by school staff.
- E. **Excused Absences:**
1. Students eighteen or more years of age may provide their own excuses for absences under the excusable absence circumstances in paragraph II.E.3. a-j.
 2. Parents or guardians may excuse their student under age eighteen (18) from attendance under the excusable absence circumstances in paragraph II.E.3.a-j.
 3. Excusable Absences:
 - a) ***Illness.*** An absence due to illness may be excused by the following means:
 - [i] written verification from a health care professional;
 - [ii] verification from the school nurse; or
 - [iii] a note from the student's parent, or the student (if eighteen or more years of age), however if the length of the illness is greater than three days, or if the student has accumulated more than eight days of absence during the school year, the parent



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- should contact the school nurse, or provide a health care professional's written verification.
- b) **Religious observance**, when the school is notified in advance.
 - c) **District recognized cultural observance**, when the school is notified in advance.
 - d) **Funeral attendance** for up to four (4) days; however the principal or site administrator, or designee, may grant a longer period in writing.
 - e) **Family emergency** for up to three (3) days in an academic year, however upon application by a family in extraordinary circumstances a principal or site administrator, or designee, may grant a longer period in writing. Family emergency due to relocation or moving is not an extraordinary circumstance, and should be limited whenever possible to one day's absence.
 - f) **Approved family activity** for up to five (5) days within one school year, when
 - [i] The parent or guardian requests permission for the absence ten (10) regularly scheduled school days in advance of the first absence; and
 - [ii] The absences are approved in writing by the principal or site administrator in advance of the first absence, and
 - [iii] Missed schoolwork is assigned by the student's teacher or teachers, and the parent or guardian agrees that schoolwork will be completed; and
 - [iv] The absences will not occur during state-wide testing dates; and
 - [v] Where the student has shown adequate progress and attendance prior to the request.
 - g) **Transportation problems** confirmed by the MPS Transportation Department caused by:
 - [i] A scheduled bus stop was not made;
 - [ii] A scheduled bus stop was made late;
 - [iii] The bus experienced mechanical failure.
 - h) **Transportation interruption** caused by:
 - [i] Student change of address within the school attendance boundaries when
 - (a). The parent or guardian has completed a change of address form, and
 - (b). The parent or guardian is not able to transport the student prior to the institution of the new stop for the student; and
 - (c). An existing bus stop is not within the permitted walking distance for the age of the student, or



- (d). The existing bus stop is deemed unsafe (as defined by the Transportation Department) for students in Hi-5 through fifth grade.
 - [ii] Student change of address outside of the school attendance boundaries when
 - (a). The student is properly identified as meeting the definition of homeless or highly mobile, and
 - (b). The parent or guardian is not able to transport the student prior to the institution of the new stop for the student.
 - i) **Extreme weather conditions** considered by the parent to be too dangerous for the student to attend school.
 - j) **Student appointments** with health care providers or other professionals when unable to schedule outside school hours and when the appointment is confirmed in writing by the health care provider or other professional;
 - k) **Student appearances** in a judicial or quasi-judicial meeting ordered by a court when unable to schedule outside school hours and when school is notified in advance by the parent or guardian, the court or the adult student.
 - l) **College visits** , up to two (2) days when the request is made in writing prior to the first absence.
 - m) **Non-District competitions or events**, a parent or guardian, or an adult student, may request an excused absence for participation in a non-district sponsored athletic, dramatic or musical event.
 - [i] The request must be in writing in advance of the first absence; and
 - [ii] Documentation from the sponsor must be provided along with the request identifying the location, dates and time of the event; and
 - [iii] Missed schoolwork must be assigned by the student's teacher or teachers, and the parent or guardian or adult student agrees that schoolwork will be completed.
 - n) **Administrative Decisions.** The site administrator or principal may excuse an absence due to an activity or event, that due to its confidential nature will not be otherwise identified to protect the privacy interests of the student or family.
 - o) A student in tenth grade who has completed all graduation requirements may be absent for any reason.
- F. **Changes in Entered Attendance Codes.**
- 1. Any excusable absence for which an unexcused absence has been recorded and which does not require prior approval or notice to the school may be



excused in writing by the parent or guardian, principal or the adult student and

- a) No more than three (3) school weeks (holidays and release days included) have passed since the absence sought to be excused; and
 - b) Any required documentation is provided at the time of the request.
2. Any excusable absence for which an unexcused absence has been recorded may be excused in writing by a court.
 3. Changes in recorded attendance codes other than as provided above may be made only by the principal.
 4. Clerical errors in the entering of an absence code may be corrected by the school staff without requiring a formal request from a parent or adult student.

III. APPEALS

- A. A parent or an adult student may appeal the decision of a principal regarding school absence to the appropriate school superintendent.
- B. A parent or an adult student may appeal the decision of the appropriate school superintendent to the Superintendent of Schools.
- C. A parent or an adult student may appeal the decision of the Superintendent of Schools to the Board of Education.
- D. All appeals must be in writing, submitted to the appropriate school or district office within ten (10) days of the receipt of the notice of the decision, regardless of form of receipt.

III. COMMUNICATION

- A. Schools shall communicate expectations to students and families regarding State Truancy Laws and District policies.
- B. Schools shall use a consistent method to inform families of student absences and missed work.
- C. Schools shall have a system for making contact with the family of every student with an unaccounted-for absence, on the day of the absence.
- D. Principals shall send letters of information to families after three (3) unexcused absences.

Legal References:

20 U.S.C. §1681, et seq. (Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972)



Minn. Stat. § 120A.22 (Compulsory Instruction)
Minn. Stat. § 120A.24 (Reporting)
Minn. Stat. § 120A.26 (Enforcement and Prosecution)
Minn. Stat. § 120A.28 (School Boards and Teachers, Duties)
Minn. Stat. § 120A.30 (Attendance Officers)
Minn. Stat. § § 121A.40 - 121A.56 (Pupil Fair Dismissal Act)
Minn. Stat. § 260C.007, Subd. 19 (Habitual Truant defined)
Minn. Stat. § 260A.02 (Definitions)
Minn. Stat. § 260A.03 (Notice to Parent or Guardian when Child is Continuing Truant)
Goss v. Lopez, 419 U.S. 565,95 S.Ct., 729 (1975)
Slocum v. Holton Board of Education, 429 N.W.2d 607 (Mich. App. Ct. 1988)
Campbell v. Board of Education of New Milford, 475 A.2d 289 (Conn. 1984)
Hamer v. Board of Education of Township High School District No. 113, 66 Ill. App.3d 7 (1978)
Gutierrez v. School District R-1, 585 P.2d 935 (Co. Ct. App. 1978)
Knight v. Board of Education, 348 N.E.2d 299 (1976)
Dorsey v. Bale, 521 S.W.2d 76 (Ky. 1975)

Cross References:

MPS Policy 5200 (Citywide Discipline Policy)
MPS Policy 5560 (Co-Curricular Eligibility)
MPS Policy 5650 (Work Release and Student Internship Programs)
MPS Policy 5100 (Attendance)
MPS Policy 6510 (Work Based Learning)

MPS Regulation 5100 B
MPS Regulation 5100 C
MPS Regulation 6521 C (Interscholastic Athletics, Contests, Activities, Eligibility)