

Section 8000 – Students

8020-R Attendance and Tardiness

8020-R

Showing up for school plays a significant role in ensuring a student’s academic success starting in preschool and continuing through high school. Even as children grow older and more independent, families play a key role in making sure students get to school safely every day and understand why attendance is so important for success in school and in life.

It is the responsibility of the parent(s)/guardian(s) to see that their child attends school. Schools, on the other hand, must inform parent(s)/guardian(s) when their child is not in school. Consequently, a specific attendance procedure has been adopted by the public schools that are understandable and reasonable in its expectations of students and parent(s)/guardian(s).

Responsibilities and Consequences

Everyone has a role:

1. Administration shall:
 - a. Clearly communicate expectations about attendance to all stakeholders.
 - b. Support teaching staff by monitoring student attendance and tardiness.
 - c. Contact parent(s)/guardian(s). (This may include various modes of personal outreach by the administrator or designee.)
 - d. Coordinate, develop, implement, and evaluate interventions for students identified with attendance concerns.
 - e. Monitor tardy/attendance school-wide.
2. All staff shall:
 - a. Make every effort to monitor the hallways before and after class.
 - b. Make every effort to monitor the school campus.
3. Teachers shall:
 - a. Monitor the hallways during class passing periods.
 - b. Record hourly/daily attendance in a timely manner.
 - c. Require a pass for student movement within the building during class time.
 - d. Encourage prompt arrival to class in a positive manner.
 - e. Admit tardy students to class.

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4. Students shall:
 - a. Arrive to each and every class on time prepared to learn.
 - b. Monitor their own attendance and adhere to the consequences.
 - c. Report attendance errors to their teacher.
5. Parents/Guardians shall:
 - a. Support their child in arriving to school on time.
 - b. Communicate and reinforce school expectations around attendance.
 - c. Monitor accumulated absences and tardies.
 - d. Report attendance errors to the teacher, attendance office, Principal, or designee.
 - e. Contact the school to report the absences daily.

Consequences

Consequences for absences and tardies may vary. See Student Policy Handbook.

Definitions

The Michigan Compulsory Attendance Law states that “a child who turned age 11 before December 1, 2009, or who entered grade 6 before 2009, the child’s parent, guardian, or other person in this state having control and charge of the child shall send that child to a public school during the entire school year from the age of 6 to the child’s sixteenth birthday. Except as otherwise provided in this section, for a child who turns age 11 on or after December 1, 2009 or later, the child’s parent, guardian, or other person in this state having control and charge of the child shall send the child to a public school during the entire school year from the age of 6 to the child’s eighteenth birthday.” The child’s attendance shall be continuous and consecutive. The Grand Rapids Board of Education strongly supports a policy using every resource available to involve students in an ongoing educational program based on regular attendance in school.

Frequent absences from school disrupt the continuity of instruction, learning, and the benefit of regular classroom instruction. The entire process of education requires continuity of instruction, classroom participation, meaningful learning experiences, and study in order to reach the goal of maximum educational benefits for each individual student. This well-established principle of education underlies and gives purpose to the

requirement of compulsory schooling in Michigan. Therefore, the District shall develop procedures reflecting the following:

- The importance of a student’s attendance and punctuality.
- The importance of staff, parent(s)/guardian(s), and community members working collaboratively to ensure students are present and on time to each class.
- The importance of guidance for gaining an understanding that attendance and timelines are imperative to a student’s success in our society.
- The importance of monitoring attendance procedures and providing timely responses.

It is the responsibility of the parent(s)/guardian(s) to see that their child attends school. School personnel, on the other hand, must inform parent(s)/guardian(s) when their child is not in school.

1. Tardiness

Elementary/K-8: A student is considered tardy if he/she arrives late or leaves early by 30 minutes in the morning/afternoon.

Middle/High: A student is considered tardy if he/she arrives 15 minutes late to class. The principal and staff shall handle excessive tardiness. Tardiness may be excused for other reasons that the principal or designee considers appropriate.

2. Excused Absence

Students are excused if parent(s)/guardian(s) contact the school attendance office before or during the first day of absence or within 24 hours of the student’s return to school, and the reason provided is accepted by the school principal or designee. If parent(s)/guardian(s) request homework for their student because of extended illness, etc., they should allow at least 24 hours for teachers to prepare such homework assignments. (Refer to Student Policy Handbook for examples.)

3. Unexcused Absence

Parent(s)/guardian(s) are expected to contact the school attendance office before or during the first day of absence in order to report the reason for their student’s absence. If that was not done, and 24 hours without parent/guardian contact have elapsed since the student’s return to school, accumulated absences are recorded as

“unexcused” in teacher records. Students may also receive unexcused absences if the principal or designee does not accept the reason given for the absence. (Refer to Student Policy Handbook for examples.) The principal or designee may use discretion when excusing absences.

4. Excused Tardiness

Pass to class.

5. Unexcused Tardiness

No pass to class, but admitted to class.

6. Extracurricular Participation

A student athlete must be in attendance at school for at least three hours in order to participate in a sporting event or extracurricular performance that day. All absences must be excused on the day of participation. This requirement may only be waived by administration per rules established by the Michigan High School Athletic Association.

7. Legal Action

The Department of Human Services (DHS) policy effective October 1, 2012, requires that Michigan parents whose children don't attend school will lose welfare cash benefits under a new state policy. The Michigan Department of Human Services will require children ages 6-15 to attend school full-time to keep the family eligible for cash benefits. The DHS policy requires school attendance for children ages 16-17 and will not cut cash aid for the family; however, it will affect the allocation received for that student.

The Grand Rapids Board of Education strongly supports a policy using every resource available to involve students in an ongoing educational program based on regular attendance in school.

The District reserves the right to take legal action if the above stated strategies do not result in ongoing, regular attendance; namely, forwarding cases to the Grand Rapids Police Department and/or the City's Prosecuting Attorney.

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8. Other Considerations

- All students must notify the Attendance Office staff before leaving the school during the school day. If they leave the building without doing so, they are unexcused.
- Only parent(s)/guardian(s) are allowed to call in absences.

Rules Accepted: June 29, 2009

Rules Revised: May 19, 2014