

# Minnetonka High School Attendance Policy 2010-2011

## TOP QUESTIONS FOR STUDENTS AND PARENTS

**Here is a list of the top questions about our attendance policy. Good attendance is critical to learning and achieving your potential. There is a direct link from attendance in class to a student's grade point average.**

- **Average GPA for MHS students with 0-4 absences/year—3.2**
- **Average GPA for MHS students with 10-19 absences/year—2.7**

### **1. What are the goals with the attendance policy?**

- To have students attend class at least 90% of the time.
- To provide immediate and proactive interventions for students with unexcused absences.
- To provide a total number of allowable absences (both excused/unexcused) per semester course.
- To eliminate the connection between grades and attendance.

### **2. If my child is absent from school/class, what do I need to do?**

- Please call the school attendance office 401-5800 at any time your child will be absent from school. Minnesota's compulsory attendance laws require all children 6 – 18 to be in school and for schools to account for each child's attendance.
- Or, log on to Parent Notification through Skyward and excuse your student online. Your assistance is greatly appreciated.

### **3. When is the parent/guardian required to call in an absence?**

- **For planned absences:** Please call the attendance office prior to the absence. Your teen should also speak with his/her teachers in advance to arrange for missed work.
- **For unplanned absences:** Please call the **day of the absence or within 24 hours** of your son/daughter's return to school.
- NOTE: Excused absences require a parent/guardian to call the attendance office. Notes are not accepted. Without a call from the parent/guardian absences are recorded as unexcused.

### **4. Are there guidelines on the number of unexcused and/or excused absences a student may have?**

- **No longer are absences categorized (i.e. vacation, doctor visits, family emergency.) Students have a total number of allowable absences (both unexcused and/or excused) per semester course.**
- Students who incur three unexcused absences in a **semester course** will be placed on an attendance contract. Students absent **four class periods**, unexcused, from a semester credit course during one semester and have been placed on an attendance contract prior to the fourth absence will receive a loss of credit for the course. For a list of unexcused absence types, please refer to the school handbook, the Navigator, located at the MHS website.
- Students who incur nine excused and/or unexcused absences (including combinations) in a **semester course** will be placed on an attendance contract. Students absent **ten class periods** from a semester credit course during one semester and have been placed on an attendance contract prior to the tenth absence may receive a loss of credit for the course. For a list of excused absence types, please click here for the link to the MHS website.
- For a list of school authorized absences, please refer to the school handbook, the Navigator, located at the MHS website.

### **5. What are the consequences for an excused and/or unexcused absences?**

- With each unexcused absence, the family will receive an automated phone call. As well, the student will receive detention and talk with staff. Upon the 2<sup>nd</sup> absence, a letter will be sent to the family. Next, upon the 3<sup>rd</sup> unexcused absence, the student will sign an attendance contract with a principal. The final consequence, upon the 4<sup>th</sup> unexcused absence, is the loss of credit for the particular semester course.

- There are no disciplinary consequences for excused absences. Upon the 7<sup>th</sup> absence (excused and/or unexcused combination,) the family will receive a letter. Lastly, upon the 9<sup>th</sup> absence (excused and/or unexcused combination,) the student will sign an attendance contract with a principal. The final consequence, upon the 10<sup>th</sup> excused/unexcused absence, an attendance appeal must be completed and returned to the Attendance Office. This appeal must be granted to avoid potential loss of credit for the semester course.
  - For a complete list of the interventions, please refer to the school handbook, *the Navigator*, located at the MHS website.

**6. What does a loss of credit mean? Is there an appeals process?**

- Students will receive a loss of credit when they accumulate 4 unexcused absences in a course or 10 excused/unexcused combinations of absences.
- Upon receiving a loss of credit for a semester course, the student may appeal the decision within 5 days. The final decision rests with the MHS Administration.
- Families may request a meeting with a principal to discuss credit recovery options.

**7. How is make-up work handled?**

- The student is responsible for requesting make-up work.
- Upon the student's return to school, a maximum of **four total days** is allowed for make-up work. Additional days for make-up work are at the discretion of each teacher.
- 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.
- An administrative conference will be held with students who exhibit a pattern of unexcused absences on assessments days.

**8. If my child has to leave school during the school day and I have called in the absence, does my child still need to check out through the attendance office?**

- **Yes**, when students **leave school early**, they **must check out** through the Attendance Office and be issued a blue off-campus pass.
- Students **must check in** through the Attendance Office also if they **arrive late** to school to obtain an admittance slip to class. **Students missing more than half a class period will be considered "absent."**

**9. Can students leave school on their own and without permission during the school day?**

- No, MHS is a closed campus. All students are to remain on campus during the school day, unless a parent/guardian has called in an absence.
- Seniors, however, are eligible for a semester off-campus lunch pass, provided they have submitted a signed parent/guardian permission form to the office and are not on any attendance contract. The form is available on the school web-site at the MHS website.

**10. What if my son/daughter has a long-term illness or a chronic health condition?**

The attendance policy may be modified for some long-term or chronic health conditions. Please contact the Health Office Personnel for assistance at 952-401-5771. We will work with the student who has a illness (non-chronic) that requires the him/her to be out for a significant amount of time.

**11. When is a student considered tardy for class?**

Students who arrive to class after the second tone sounds are considered tardy. Students arriving after 10 minutes without a pass will be considered unexcused. Please encourage your teen to be on time for class to maximize learning and decrease disruptions for all students.

- Consequences for being tardy are at the discretion of the teacher and will be clearly communicated to students and parents.

**The full MHS Attendance Policy is available on the MHS website at**

**[www.minnetonka.k12.mn.us/mhs](http://www.minnetonka.k12.mn.us/mhs)**

**For further information, please call one of the principals 952.401.5700**