

EAGLE RIDGE ACADEMY ATTENDANCE PROCEDURE

Eagle Ridge Academy believes that regular school attendance is of crucial importance for educational achievement. Learning experiences that occur in the classroom are essential components of the learning process and time lost from class tends to be irretrievable in terms of opportunity for instructional interaction. Therefore, each student should attend school every day. Regular attendance is important to ensure achievement in school. We discourage vacations and trips taken during the school year. We also discourage medical and other appointments, when avoidable, during instructional time. When those appointments are unavoidable, students are responsible for any make-up work during their absence.

A. Strategies:

Increase awareness among staff, students, and parents by:

1. Including the procedure in the staff and school handbooks
2. Reviewing the procedure annually at staff meetings
3. Including the procedure on the school website
4. Reviewing the procedure annually at orientation
5. Reviewing the procedure at orientation and open house events

B. Responsibilities:

1. Parents:

- a. Parents should make every effort to have their child present in school each day.
- b. Parents are required to keep a sick child home until that child:
 - i. Has been fever free without medication for 24 hours
 - ii. Has not had an episode of vomiting or diarrhea for 24 hours
 - iii. Is free from any contagious rash
- c. Parents should contact the school by calling: 952-746-7760 ext. 5 or emailing attendance@eagleridgeacademy.org to inform the school of student absences no later than 8:00 a.m. on the day of the absence. This applies to absences, late arrivals, and early releases.
- d. If missed work is wanted on the day of the absence, parents of K-5 students should contact their child's teacher via email to arrange for make-up work and exams.
- e. For an absence to be excused, parents need to fill out the Planned Absence Request form if a student plans to miss school due to vacation plans or an appointment.
- f. Students leaving for a pre-excused appointment must be signed out in the office by a parent.
- g. Students returning from a pre-excused appointment must be signed in at the office by a parent. They will then receive an office pass to return to class.
- h. Students arriving to school late must be signed in at the office by a parent. When buses arrive late, students should go directly to their classroom.
- i. Family vacations, although valuable, usually put a child behind academically if instructional days are missed. Vacations should be scheduled during regular school breaks. Please note that teachers may not be able to collect all assignments that may be missed and assignments may differ depending on the progress of the class.

2. Students:

- a. Students should attend all classes, advisories, and study halls.
- b. Students must be in their seat, ready to learn, by 8:00 a.m.
- c. Students may not leave the building nor its premises during the school day without first obtaining the appropriate pass or permission from a parent or guardian. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action.
- d. Students may not dismiss themselves from school for any reason.
- e. Students who become ill at school must report to the health office.
- f. For grades 6-12, it is the student's responsibility to contact their teachers for make-up work and exams as indicated for absences.

3. Teachers:

- a. Upper School teachers are required to take online attendance each period. For periods 1 and 2, attendance must be taken by 9:00 a.m.
- b. Lower School teachers are required to take online attendance by 9:00 a.m.
- c. Teachers will leave attendance instructions for all substitutes.
- d. Teachers should address any attendance concerns with parents and administration in a prompt manner.
- e. Teachers should email the office with any attendance information they receive from parents as well as redirect those parents to the attendance line and office for reporting absences.
- f. Teachers will follow up with students regarding missing work.

4. Administrators:

- a. Administrators will address absences as quickly as possible with consistent consequences.
- b. Administrators will share the attendance policy with students, parents, and staff.
- c. Administrators will provide students with appropriate passes or paperwork as needed.
- d. Administrators will enforce the attendance policy consistently and effectively.
- e. Administrators will contact parents as needed in a timely manner.

C. Attendance Laws

1. Mandatory attendance for minors - *MN Statute 120A.22 subd. 5(a) and subd. 1*

- a. It is the primary responsibility of parents or guardians to assure that their children acquire knowledge and skills that are essential for effective citizenship.
- b. Children between the ages of seven and 17 must attend school every day and be on time unless they have a lawful reason for being absent (see Excused Absences).

2. Educational neglect - *MN Statutes 260C.16,3 subd. 11 and 260C.007, subd. 6; 260C.425 and 260C.335*

- a. A child is *educationally neglected* if absent from school due to failure of the parent to comply with compulsory education laws and the child is in need of protective services.
- b. A parent who contributes to a child's unexcused absence from school may be charged with a gross misdemeanor that is punishable by up to one year in jail and/or a \$1000 fine and /or civil action.

3. Truancy - *MN Statute 160A.02; 120A.22, subd. 8; 260C.007, subd. 19*

- a. A child who is in elementary school that has missed three days or a child in middle or high school that has missed three or more periods on different days is considered continuing truant.

- b. If a child is 12 or older, failure to attend school is presumed to be truancy. A child who misses seven days of school or seven class periods on seven different days without lawful excuse can be petitioned as a habitual truant.

D. Excused Absence

1. We expect all students to be regular in attendance. A student absent from school on a day of instruction shall be excused for the following reasons:
 - a. Illness
 - b. Serious illness in the student's immediate family
 - c. A death or funeral in the student's immediate family or of a close friend or relative
 - d. Medical, dental, or orthodontic treatment or counseling appointment
 - e. Court appearances occasioned by family or personal action
 - f. Religious instruction not to exceed three hours a week
 - g. Physical emergency conditions such as flood, fire, storm, etc.
 - h. Official school field trip or other school-sponsored outings
 - i. Removal of a student pursuant to a suspension
 - j. Religious observance
 - k. Family vacation when approved by administration, using the Planned Absence Request form
2. A maximum of ten excused absences will be excused per school year with the exception of prior approval from an administrator, absence accompanied with a doctor's note, and/or special circumstances. All absences without prior approval from an administrator after the tenth excused absence, will be considered unexcused.

E. Unexcused Absence:

An unexcused absence is defined as an absence that is not covered by one of the foregoing exceptions. Each unexcused absence will be entered on the student's record.

F. Prearranged Absences:

Families who know in advance that their child will miss one or more of their classes are required to complete a Planned Absence Request form found on the school website and submit to the school principal. When deemed reasonable, the principal will approve absences for short family trips and similar occurrences. If the principal approves the absence, they will sign the Planned Absence Request form and a confirmation will be sent from the front office.

G. Extended Excused Absences:

Due to the individual nature of extended excused absences (four or more consecutive days), including but not limited to acute or chronic illnesses/injuries, a terminally ill family member, or family death, the parent/guardian can expect to be informed by the Principal or their designee of the general expectation of the faculty related to the completion of assignments and status for moving to the next grade, if applicable.

H. Tardies:

A student who is not in the classroom by the start of school (a late a.m. bus does not count) or class is considered tardy. An office pass is required for entry into the classroom at the start of school.

1. A student is limited to three excused tardies per semester at the beginning of the school day (for traffic, road conditions, etc). Any tardy after the third will be considered unexcused.
2. Seven unexcused tardies will be recorded as one unexcused absence for truancy reporting purposes.

I. Consequences:

1. Tardies:

- a. With the third through sixth unexcused tardy, a notification will be sent home which includes a copy of the attendance procedure. A detention will also be given to students in grades 6-12.
- b. With the seventh unexcused tardy, a meeting between parents, student, and administrator will be held.

2. Absences:

- a. After three unexcused absent days, a letter will be sent home which includes a copy of the attendance procedure and a consequence will be given.
- b. With the fifth unexcused absent day, the school will request a conference via phone or in person, and the student's attendance will be reported to the county. A letter will go home with another copy of the attendance policy and a consequence will be given.
- c. A seventh unexcused absence is considered educational neglect and/or truancy depending on the child's age. The school will report to the county and continue to follow individual county procedures.

J. Illness Guidelines:

How sick is too sick?

Parents may wonder whether they should send their child to school if the child has symptoms of illness or is being treated for an infection or communicable disease. The child may have sustained an injury which would preclude them from being in school for their own safety and well-being. At times, children will become ill or injured at school and parents will be contacted to take the child to a medical facility or home.

The following guidelines are consistent and can help parents, caregivers, and school staff as they determine *how sick is too sick*:

- Child has a condition that requires immediate medical diagnosis or intervention, e.g., needs emergency dental care, sutures, bone-setting, or medical care.
- Child needs ongoing supervision, above and beyond that normally provided in daycare or school, which cannot be managed in the routine setting.
- Child is not able to function because of illness, e.g., fever, toothache, vomiting, loose stools, migraine headache.
- Child has untreated pediculosis or scabies.
- Child has an open, draining, infected skin lesion which cannot be covered with a protective barrier.
- Child has a persistent, productive cough.
- Child has an undiagnosed rash.
- Child poses a significant health risk to others in the normal course of the day in day care or school activities, such as
 - Is in the infectious stage of a serious airborne-transmitted communicable disease including, but not limited to, chicken pox, measles, mumps, pertussis, tuberculosis, or rubella
 - Is unable to hygienically manage bowel and/or bladder functions expected of their age and/or is in the infectious stage of an oral-fecal transmitted communicable disease (Hepatitis A, giardiasis, salmonella, shigella, rotavirus, or parasites such as pin worm)

Children may not be excluded from school when the risk of transmission of a communicable disease is non-existent in that setting or when transmission can be controlled through education of staff and child and the provision of readily available supplies to carry out hygiene measures.

If your child shows signs of illness at the beginning of the school day, check their temperature. Keep your child home if their temperature is 100 degrees F or greater before use of fever-reducing medication. The child should not return to school until their temperature has been below 100 degrees F for 24 hours. If your child has diarrhea or vomiting, they cannot return to school until 24 hours after it has stopped. Sending a sick child to school is hard on them and can expose others to contagious illnesses. When a child has a communicable disease, the school office must be informed so that the parents of classmates can be notified. After beginning an antibiotic, your child must remain at home for a full 24 hours before they are considered non-contagious.

Parents, care providers, and school staff are encouraged to contact a health care professional for specific information and recommendations about the ill or injured child's need for exclusion from the setting and possible medical assessment and intervention.