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BECOME HERE.**

2023-2024 DES MOINES PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Parent/Guardian Steps for Supporting Student Attendance

The Des Moines Public Schools student attendance policy is created based on the belief that all families value the importance their child's education. Through a meaningful partnership with schools and consistent communication, together we can overcome obstacles that impact regular school attendance.

- In accordance with Iowa Code, Chapter 299, "The parent, guardian, or legal or actual custodian of a child who is of compulsory attendance age (6-16 years old), shall cause the child to attend some public school, an accredited nonpublic school, or competent private instruction."
- Des Moines Public Schools strongly encourage parents/guardians to maintain communication with school staff regarding their student's attendance in school. Parents/guardians should make every attempt to notify a school in a timely manner when their student will be absent from school.
- Illness or medical injury If a student misses more than 3 days in a row due to illness, parents/guardians are encouraged to access their medical provider or DMPS Community Center and Clinic. The DMPS Community Center and Clinics (Primary Health Care Medical Clinic and Nolden Gentry Dental Clinic operated by Dental Connections) located at Kurtz are available to any student who does not have a regular medical provider. Please call the Community Center and Clinics (515- 242-8488) or contact your student's school nurse if you would like additional information about this service or other health services.
- Excessive absences - If a student meets the threshold of excessive absences of known and unknown days combined (10 days for elementary, 15 days for middle and high) doctor's notes (or working with the school nurse) will be required for all absences moving forward, or the absences will be coded as unknown. The parent/guardian may be invited to a meeting at their child's school to develop an attendance plan.
- Participation in school related activities- students may participate in school sponsored events or activities such as: athletics and activities, college and/ or career related visits, official DMPS community partner sponsored events, and others as pre-approved by a Principal or Associate Principal. Students may participate in student support services at school (i.e.: school- based therapy, visit to school nurse, visit to school counselor, etc.).
- Participation in religious or cultural activities/ observances- parents should notify their student's school in advance for absences related to religious holidays or cultural observance.
- Family related circumstances- students may miss school due to family related circumstances which may include: illness of a family member, family emergency, death of an immediate family member, or participation in a family activity.
- Other circumstances- other events that may result in a student's absence from school include: attendance at court or legal proceedings.

- All other absences or absences without contact will be considered unknown. Examples include: skipping class or missing school without notification.
- When a student reaches 10 unknown absent days in a school year, schools will review to determine if a referral to attendance mediation or truancy court will be made in addition to other interventions provided.

The following protocols exist for students who arrive late to school or leave early from school.

- **Elementary Schools**

- Students who arrive at school after the first bell of the day should check in with the office before going to class and will be considered absent for any time missed. Absences will be unexcused unless appropriate documentation is provided.
- Students who leave school before the last bell of the day will be considered absent for any time missed. Absences will be unexcused unless appropriate documentation is provided.

- **Middle and High Schools**

- Students who arrive to school after the first bell of the day should check in with the main office (middle school) or attendance office (high school) before going to class and will be considered absent for any time missed. Absences will be unexcused unless appropriate documentation is provided.
- Students who arrive to class before the end of the period will be considered tardy.
- Teachers will mark students tardy and in the comment section, enter the appropriate tardy code T1, T2 or T3.
 - T1 = student arrives in the first 5 minutes of class
 - T2 = the student arrives between 6 and 19 minutes after class begins
 - T3 = student arrives 20+ minutes after class begins
- Students who miss an entire class period will be considered absent for that period.
- Students who leave school before the last bell of the day will be considered absent for any time missed. Absences will be unexcused unless appropriate documentation is provided.
- If you are moving and your child will no longer attend their current school, please communicate with the office staff at your child's school and provide the name of the school where you will be enrolling your child.
- If your family is going to be traveling for an extended period of time, please communicate this information with the office staff at your child's school.

Attendance is the foundation for learning and achievement. When students attend class regularly, they are exposed to fundamental reading and math skills and build habits of good attendance that carry them into the next stage of their life. Des Moines Public Schools is committed to working with students, families, and the community to ensure each student's personal and academic success.