Adopted: November 23, 2026
Revised:

Great Oaks Academy

Attendance Policy No. 501

I. Overview

Regular school attendance is important to a student's academic success and promotes good work habits and self-discipline. Likewise, a student who has had a proper night's rest is better prepared to learn than one who is tired due to a late night. Parents are to report all absences to the front office by telephone (651-615-0499) or email (attendance@greatoaksacademymn.com). Students are not to report their own absences. It is the student's responsibility to attend all assigned classes every day that school is in session and to be aware of and follow the correct procedures when absent from an assigned class.

Extended absences which take a student away from his/her studies is strongly discouraged, given the number of regular holidays built into the academic calendar. However, when deemed reasonable, the Director may approve absences for short family trips or other similar occurrences. No requests for extended absences should be made during assessment periods. If the Director approves an extended absence, a confirmation email will be sent to parents.

II. Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to outline Great Oaks Academy's student attendance expectations as defined by the State of Minnesota Truancy laws, county truancy support agencies, and by the Academy. This procedure acknowledges that school attendance is a shared responsibility by students, parents/guardians, teachers, and administrators.

III. Roles and Responsibilities for Attendance

A. Parent Responsibilities

1. Parents/Guardians are primarily responsible for ensuring that their child acquires knowledge and skills that are essential for effective citizenship (Minnesota Statute 120A.22 subdivision 1).
2. Parents must make every effort to ensure their child attends school each day, to inform the school in a timely manner in the event of a student absence, and to work in cooperation with the Academy to resolve any attendance problems. It is the responsibility of the student and family to obtain missing work for the day of absence.

B. Attendance Procedures for Parents/Guardians:

1. Parents must contact the school by calling the school office at 651-615-0499, using the absence notification tool in the school's Student Information System, or emailing the school office main email address at info@greatoaksacademymn.com to inform the school of student absences no later than 10:00 a.m. on the day of absence, late arrival, or early release day.

2. Missed work from the day of absence may be sent home upon the student's arrival the following day unless other arrangements are made with the child's teacher. It is the responsibility of the parent to obtain missing work from the homeroom teacher for the day of absence, if requested.
3. Makeup work may be available upon request for unplanned absences by 3:00 p.m. that day, provided notice is given by noon at the latest, to allow teachers time to gather materials. It is the student's responsibility to request any missed assignments due to an absence.
4. For extended absences not connected to a family crisis, loss, or illness, teachers will not be able to provide work in advance. This is due to the fact that the majority of our curriculum requires direct instruction and methods that are not duplicatable via distance or in packets, and because teachers cannot predict class progress. It also places undue burden on teachers to assign things in advance of where the class currently is at.
5. Parents must go to the office to sign students in after the front doors are locked and the school day has begun. Parents must sign students out before 3:00 p.m.
6. Students are required to be kept at home if the student is in poor health.
7. A maximum of 10 absences will be excused per school year except for prior approval from an administrator, accompanied with a doctor's note, and/or special circumstances. All absences without prior approval from an administrator after the 10th excused absence will be considered unexcused. The Academy reserves the right to report students as Truant if they accumulate more than 10 excused absences during the year.

C. Student Responsibilities
1. Students have a right to be in school.
2. It is the responsibility of students to attend all classes on time each day the school is in session.
3. Students must be aware of and follow the correct procedures for when they are absent from class.
4. Students must work with their parent/guardian to secure missed work, schedule make-up assessments, and complete missed coursework.
5. Students may not dismiss themselves from school, call themselves absent, or leave the building without a parent or guardian.

D. Administrator Responsibilities
1. Administrators must disseminate this attendance procedure to students, parents/guardians, and staff.
2. Administrators must require all students to attend all assigned classes.
3. Administrators must be familiar with all attendance procedures and apply these procedures to all students uniformly.
4. Administrators must maintain accurate records of student attendance.
5. Administrators must inform parents/guardians in a timely manner of their children's attendance and to work in cooperation with them to resolve any attendance problems.

IV. Required Reporting

A. Continuing Truant

1. Minnesota State Statute 260A.02 states that a Continuing Truant is a student who is subject to the Compulsory Instruction Law and is absent from instruction at school without a valid excuse within a single school year for:
    a. Three days if the student is in elementary school
    b. Three or more class periods on three school days if the child is in middle/high school
2. When a student is initially classified as a Continuing Truant, Minnesota State Statute 260A.03 provides that the Executive Director or designee will notify the student's parent or legal guardian, by first class mail or other reasonable means, of the following:
    a. That the child is truant;
    b. That the parent or guardian should notify the school if there is a valid excuse for the child's absences;
    c. That the parent or guardian is obligated to compel the attendance of the child at school pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 120A.22, and parents or guardians who fail to meet this obligation may be subject to prosecution under Minn. Stat. §120A.34;
    d. That this notification serves as the notification required by Minn. Stat. §120A.34;
    e. That alternative educational programs and services may be available for the student;
    f. That the parent/guardian has the right to meet with the appropriate school personnel to discuss solutions to the child's truancy;
    g. That if the child continues to be truant, the parent and child may be subject to juvenile court proceedings under Minn. Stat. §Ch. 260.

B. Habitual Truant

1. A Habitual Truant is a child under the age of 17 years who is absent from school without lawful excuse for either:
    a. Seven school days if the student is in elementary school
    b. One or more class periods on seven school days if the child is in middle/highschool
2. The Executive Director or designee will refer a habitually truant child and the child's parent/guardian to appropriate services and procedures as outlined in Minn. Stat. §Ch. 260A.
3. The Academy reserves the right to report students as Truant if they accumulate more than 10 excused absences during the year.

C. 15 Day Rule: (MN Statute 126C.05, Subd. 8—Average Daily Membership) A pupil, regardless of age, who has been absent from school for 15 consecutive school days during the regular school year without receiving instruction in the home or hospital shall be dropped from the roll and classified as withdrawn. Families/Guardians must be notified in writing of this consecutive absence rule and consequence before the 15 day period is over.

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V. Support for Student Attendance

Great Oaks Academy will develop procedures that promote regular student attendance and that prevent absenteeism and truancy. Whenever possible, Great Oaks Academy will work with other community organizations and agencies to support regular student attendance.

VI. Tardiness

It is important for students to arrive to class on time to benefit from the full instruction of class and to minimize disruption to instruction for other students. Seven tardies for a Great Oaks Academy student will be equivalent to one full day of absence for truancy reporting purposes. For more detail, see the Attendance Procedure on the Great Oaks Academy website

VII. Dissemination of Procedure

This procedure will be made available to all students and parents at the beginning of each school year. This procedure also be available on the school's website and by request from the school office.

Legal References:

Cross References: