

ATTENDANCE POLICY

September 2021

The school year will soon be upon us and that brings a great deal of excitement and enthusiasm for a new year of learning and interacting with friends and teachers. As we start the school year, we would like all parents/guardians and students to know that **Eden Prairie Schools values attendance!**

We know that attendance is important for learning. It only makes sense: the more students are in school, the more they will learn. We also know that being at school, being involved in school, and being engaged in learning increases the likelihood of positive life outcomes. Eden Prairie Schools has joined with Hennepin County, the State of Minnesota, and the federal government in promoting consistent school attendance.

In order for an absence to be excused, a **parent should call the school attendance line (952-975-7601)** prior to, or the day of, the absence and state when the child will be absent and explain the reason for the absence. The following are appropriate reasons for students to be absent from school, and may be considered excused absences:

- Illness (excessive absences will require a physician's statement in order to be excused)
- Funeral or serious family emergency
- Religious observance
- Professional appointment (i.e. doctor, dentist, etc.)
- Family vacation (limited to five days per year)
- If a student misses 15 consecutive school days, it will result in an automatic withdrawal. To re-enroll, please contact the district registration office at 952.975.7008.

A school absence that occurs for a reason other than those listed above will be considered an "unexcused" absence.

Changes in attendance with the Hennepin County *be@school* program:

- **School-Based Interventions**
After 3 unexcused absences, school personnel will mail the mandatory 3 unexcused absences letter to parents.
- **Parent Group Meeting (PGM)**
If a child reaches 6 unexcused absences the school is required to make a referral to the Hennepin County Attorney's Office (HCAO). The HCAO representative will send parents a letter encouraging them to attend a "Parent Group Meeting".
- **STAR Referral**
If a child has 3 more unexcused absences after the PGM report, a STAR referral is made. The family is offered an individual meeting and access to community agency services.
- **Educational Neglect**
If a child has 6 additional unexcused absences after the STAR referral (15 unexcused days total), an Educational Neglect or Truancy report is made to HCAO. The report is reviewed for possible child protection involvement.

We believe that every student should be in school every day, so student attendance records are now monitored consistently by personnel at each site. Kindergarten through eighth grade students with ten or more absences (excused or unexcused) in the year will have their attendance reviewed by an attendance team.

WE LOOK FORWARD TO A GREAT YEAR WITH EVERY CHILD IN SCHOOL EVERY DAY!