



TRM Attendance Policy

Date Created: 11/5/21

Approved By: TRM Board of Directors

Date Approved: 11/26/21

PURPOSE OF POLICY

Three Rivers Montessori (TRM) believes that regular school attendance contributes to the academic success of students while setting a regular routine and allows for students to be present for important communication with teachers and peers. Regular attendance builds student confidence and responsibility.

Supporting regular student attendance is the work of the student, parent/guardian, teachers and school administrators. The following policy will assist families in determining what is or is not an excusable absence at TRM as well as attendance requirements.

GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

- I. Responsible parties for student attendance:
 - A. Responsibility of the parent/guardian: Parents and/or guardians have the responsibility to ensure their student attends school. It is also the responsibility of the parent to notify the school as soon as possible should the child be absent. TRM asks parents/guardians to work together with school administration in regards to any attendance issues to adequately support student's regular attendance.
 - B. Responsibility of the student: The student is responsible to attend all classes as scheduled and to complete any missed assignments in a timely fashion when possible by communicating with the classroom teacher (with assistance from the child's parent/guardian as necessary).
 - C. Responsibility of the teacher: Teachers are responsible for collecting daily attendance and reporting any absences or tardies to administration. Teachers will

also provide missed assignments and/or practice work for students that have notified the school of an absence. Teachers will work in conjunction with parents and guardians regarding absences to support student learning.

- D. School administration responsibilities: It is the responsibility of TRM administration to require students to attend classes unless otherwise excused according to this policy. School administration must also be familiar with all procedures regarding attendance and to apply the procedures uniformly to all students. School administration must have accurate attendance records for all students and communicate with families regarding absences while working on solutions.
- E. In accordance with the Minnesota Compulsory Instruction Law, Minn. Stat. § 120A.22 students are required to attend all assigned classes each day school is in session. The only exception would be an excusal by the TRM School Board because the student has completed state and school district standards necessary to graduate from high school, has withdrawn, or has a valid excuse for absence.

II. Attendance Procedures

- A. Excused Absences. For a student to be considered for an excused absence TRM asks that the student's parent or legal guardian provide a written notice with a reason for the absence. If the child has a note from a physician or a licensed mental health professional stating that the student cannot attend school the child will be excused. This note must be provided if the child is absent for three consecutive days.
- B. The following reasons are acceptable for an excused absence:
 - The student is ill
 - A family member of the student is ill
 - Death or funeral of someone close to the student or student's family
 - Medical or counseling appointment
 - Religious observances
 - Physical emergency conditions such as fire, flood, storm, etc.
 - Vacation with family
 - Family emergencies
 - Mental health evaluations
 - Court appearances by family members or guardians
- C. Consequences of Excused Absences. If a student is excused from regular school attendance, the student is expected to make up any missed assignments if the student is mentally/physically well enough to do so. The teacher will provide the appropriate due date and extend the due date as appropriate if the child is ill.

D. Unexcused Absences. The following are absences that are typically marked unexcused:

- An absence by a student not approved by the student's parent/guardian
- An absence the parent did not communicate to TRM in accordance with these procedures
- Absences resulting from accumulated unexcused tardies. Three (3) tardies equal one (1) unexcused absence.
- Removal of a student pursuant to a suspension. Suspensions are to be handled as excused absences and students will be permitted to complete make-up work.
- Any other absence not included under the attendance procedures set out in this policy: Parent/guardian errands/appointments, parents/guardians working from home, oversleeping, missing the bus, running late, and other incidents as determined by administration.

E. Consequences of Unexcused Absences.

1. Suspension. Absences resulting from official suspension will be handled in accordance with the Pupil Fair Dismissal Act, Minn. Stat. § 121A.40-121A.56. Days during which a student is suspended from school shall not be counted in a student's total accumulated unexcused absences. In cases of recurring unexcused absences, the administration may also request the county attorney to file a petition with the juvenile court, pursuant to Minnesota's statutes.
2. Student discipline for unexcused absences.
 - a) Work missed because of unexcused absence must be made up within the assigned time frame as provided by the child's primary teacher.
 - b) After three unexcused absences, TRM will notify the parent/guardian by email or phone and may refer the student to the appropriate Human Services Agency.
 - c) After such notification, the student or his/her parent or guardian may, within five (5) business days, request a conference with school officials regarding the student's absences and the prescribed discipline. The notification will state that the school strongly urges the student's parent/guardian to request such a conference.
3. Tardiness.
 - a) Students are expected to be in their assigned classroom at designated times. Failures to do so constitute tardiness.
 - b) Procedures for Reporting Tardiness:

- (1) A student is considered tardy if she/he arrives after the start of the school day until 9:00 a.m.
- (2) A student is considered absent for a half-day if he/she misses more than 60 minutes but less than 4 hours of the day.
- (3) A student is considered absent for a full day if he/she misses more than 4 hours of the day.

4. Excused Tardiness. Valid excuses for tardiness are:

- The student is ill
- A family member of the student is ill
- Death or funeral of someone close to the student or student's family
- Medical or counseling appointment
- Religious observances
- Physical emergency conditions such as fire, flood, storm, etc.
- Vacation with family
- Family emergencies
- Mental health evaluations
- Court appearances by family members or guardians

5. Unexcused Tardiness. Unexcused tardiness is failing to be in the classroom at the start of the school day without a valid excuse. Three (3) unexcused tardies equal one (1) unexcused absence. TRM will send an email home to the parents/guardians indicating three unexcused tardies have turned into one unexcused absence.

III. Dissemination of policy copies of this policy shall be made available to all students and parents on the TRM website: threeriversmontessori.org. This policy shall also be available upon request.

IV. Required Reporting

- A. Continuing Truant. Minn. Stat. § 260A.02 states that a continuing truant is a student who is subject to the compulsory instruction requirements of Minn. Stat. § 120A.05 and is absent from instruction in a school, as defined in Minn. Stat. § 120.05, without valid excuse within a single school year for three (3) days if the child is in elementary school.
- B. Reporting Responsibility. When a student is initially classified as a continuing truant, Minn. Stat. §260A.03 provides that the school official shall notify the student's parent or legal guardian, by first class mail or other reasonable means, of the following:
 1. The child is truant;

2. The parent/guardian should notify the school if there is a valid excuse for the child's absence;
3. That the parent/guardian is obligated to ensure a child's attendance at school pursuant to Minn. Stat. §120A.22. Parents or guardians who fail to meet this obligation may be subject to prosecution under Minn. Stat. §120A.34;
4. That this notification serves as the notification required by Minn. Stat. §120A.34;
5. That alternative educational programs and services may be available in the district;
6. That the parent/guardian has the right to meet with appropriate TRM personnel to discuss solutions to the child's truancy;
7. That if the child continues to be truant, the parent and child may be subject to juvenile court proceedings under Minn. Ch. 260; 5
8. It is recommended that the parent/guardian accompany the child to school and attend classes with the child for one day.

- a) Habitual Truant. A habitual truant is a child under the age of 16 years who is absent from attendance at school without lawful excuse for seven (7) school days if the child is in elementary school. TRM shall refer a habitual truant child and the child's parents or legal guardian to appropriate services and procedures as stated under Minn. Ch. 260A.

NOTE: The School Leader reserves the right to address student attendance at any time for any reason. Any attendance issues/concerns that arise and do not fit within the policy guidelines as stated above will be dealt with on a case by case basis, if deemed necessary by school administration.