## Student Attendance Procedures Bemidji Area Schools

### **Philosophy**

Attendance is critical to student achievement. Classroom instruction and participation are essential parts of the learning process. Regular attendance in all classes is vital to insuring a quality learning experience for all students. Regular class attendance instills self-discipline and exposes students to group interactions with teachers and peers. It enables students to hear and participate in class discussion and involves them in educational environments not available elsewhere. Make-up assignments can never fully replace the learning experience students miss when they are absent from class.

Minnesota state law specifically outlines the expectation for students to attend school. State law also states that all students have a right to a free, public education.

Bemidji Area Schools takes on the responsibility of encouraging high rates of attendance in a safe and friendly environment. The Bemidji School District recognizes that daily attendance and participation are strong indicators of student success and academic achievement. Frequent absences interfere with learning and leave students at high risk for educational failure. Attendance requirements at the various grade levels are a reflection of the age of the students and the needs of that educational environment. This attendance policy respects those requirements and needs.

This policy also recognizes that class attendance is a joint responsibility to be shared by the student, parent or guardian, teacher and administrator. Attendance habits begin in the primary grades. Frequent absences interfere with the learning process and leave students at high risk for educational failure. Students at the elementary level have limited control over circumstances in the home that may prevent them from getting to school regularly and on time. It is the belief of the Bemidji Area Schools that the primary responsibility for student attendance at the elementary level falls on the parents/guardians.

### **Attendance Incentives**

Each school is encouraged to develop an internal attendance incentive program. The program will include strategies for encouraging students to attend school regularly and reward those with good attendance records. The incentive program shall also include strategies to assist students who have attendance problems. The incentive programs will focus on students, but may also include parent or family rewards or incentives.

### Minnesota Department of Children, Families and Learning Requirements

In accordance within the regulations of the Minnesota Department of Education and the Minnesota Compulsory Instruction Law, M.S. 120.101, the students of the school district are required to attend all assigned classes every day school is in session.

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### **Truancy and Educational Neglect: Minnesota Compulsory Attendance Laws**

According to Minnesota State Statute (260C.007, Subd. 19), "habitual truant" means a child under the age of 16 years who is absent from attendance at school without lawful excuse for seven school days if the child is elementary school or for one or more class periods on seven school days if the child is in middle school, junior high school, or high school, or a child who is 16 or 17 years of age who is absent from attendance at school without lawful excuse for one or more class periods on seven school days and who has not lawfully withdrawn from school under section 120A.22, subdivision 8."

As per Minnesota Statute 260A.01., an elementary student is considered continuing truant when there have been three or more unexcused absences without a lawful excuse. Parents who do not send their children to school regularly may be charged with educational neglect. Educational neglect is legally defined as a parent's failure to ensure the child's regular attendance at school.

## **Roles And Responsibilities**

This policy recognizes that class attendance is a joint responsibility to be shared by the student and the parent or guardian. Teachers and administrators have specific responsibilities to record and report attendance, to encourage good attendance, and to intervene when students are not attending.

### I. Student Responsibilities

Elementary	Middle School High Scho	ol
1. Students are to attend each class daily and arrive on time.	1. Students are to attend class daily and arrive on time.  1. Students are to attend class time.	daily and arrive on
2. Students are responsible for completing make- up assignments, tests and quizzes within two school days for each day absent unless previous arrangements have been made with the classroom teacher.	<ol> <li>Students are responsible for completing makeup assignments, tests and quizzes within two school days for each day absent unless previous arrangements have been made with the classroom teacher.</li> <li>Students are responsible for up assignments, tests and up assignments for each day a school days for each day a Excused or Unexcused, up arrangements have been more classroom teacher.</li> </ol>	quizzes within two bsent, whether less previous
3. Students may not leave school grounds without permission for any reason. Permission may be granted to leave the building by the attendance office or the nurse's office.	<ul> <li>3. Students may not leave school grounds without permission for any reason. Permission may be granted to leave the building by the attendance office or the nurse's office.</li> <li>3. Students may not leave solve permission for any reason. Office or the Health Office permission to a student to</li> </ul>	The Attendance may grant
4. Student should remind the parent to contact attendance office prior to, the day of, or no later than 10:00 a.m. the day after the absence and when possible to schedule appointments	4. Student should remind the parent to contact attendance office prior to, the day of, or no later than 10:00 a.m. the day after the absence and when possible to schedule appointments during  4. Permit to Leave may be Health Office or an Attendance of the Attendan	dance Office.

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non-school hours. during non-school hours. the Attendance Office prior to, the day of, or no later than 10:00 a.m. the day after an 5. Student should follow admit slip procedures 5. Student is to follow admit slip procedures absence and to schedule appointments during outlined in each building for absence and outlined in each building for absence and non-school hours. reporting late for class. reporting late for class. 6. Student is to follow admit slip procedures 6. When a student is absent the student will ask the outlined in each building for absence and teacher for their missing assignments and reporting late for class. establish when they are due.

### II. Parent/Guardian Responsibilities

Elementary	Middle School	High School
1. Parents are expected to insure that their children	1. Parents are expected to insure that their	Parents are expected to ensure that their
attend school.	children attend school.	children attend school.
2. Parents shall inform the school of absences prior to, the day of, or no later than 10:00 a.m. the day after the absence.	2. Parents are asked to inform the school of absences prior to, the day of, or no later than 10:00 a.m. the day after the absence.	2. In order to have an absence excused, parents must inform the school of absences prior to, the day of, or no later than 10:00 a.m. the day after the absence. Parents are
3. Parents are asked to help their children complete their make-up work.	3. Parents are asked to try to schedule student appointments outside the school day to	asked to state a reason for the absence.
4. Parents are asked to try to schedule student appointments outside the school day to	minimize the impact of his/her absence on attendance.	3. Parents should schedule student appointments outside the school day.
minimize the impact of his/her absence on attendance.	4. Parents are asked to notify the attendance office of an extended absence prior to the start of the absence.	4. Parents are asked to notify the attendance office of an extended absence prior to or at
5. Parents are asked to notify the attendance office		the start of the absence and to make
of an extended absence prior to the start of the absence.	5. Parents are asked to contact the attendance office, counselor, social worker, Indian education or teacher if there are any concerns	arrangements for the student to make up the work.
6. Parents are asked to contact the attendance office, counselor, social worker, advisor or	about the student's attendance.	5. Parents are asked to contact the attendance office, counselor, social worker, Indian
teacher if there are any concerns about the student's attendance.	6. Parents who suspect their child is not attending school should contact the school attendance office.	education or teachers if there are any concerns about the student's attendance.

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	6. Parents who suspect their child is not attending school should contact the school Attendance Office. Parents/guardians may call the Attendance Office and check on their child's attendance at any time during the school day.
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#### III. **Teacher/School Responsibilities**

Elementary	Middle School	High School		
Teachers will take attendance daily, regularly and accurately.	Teachers will take attendance daily, regularly and accurately.	Teachers will take attendance daily, regularly, and accurately.		
2. When a student is absent teachers will inform the student of the assignments they have missed and when they are due.	Teachers will encourage students to attend school and will report frequent absences.	2. When a student is absent, teachers will inform the student of the assignments they have missed and when they are due.		
3. Teachers will encourage students to attend school and will report frequent absences.	Teachers are expected to communicate concerns about attendance to parents.      Teachers about a result asset and discuss in the concerns are all asset as a few discussions in the concerns.	3. Teachers will encourage students to attend school and will report frequent absences.		
4. Teachers are expected to communicate concerns about attendance to parents.	4. Teachers should report any discrepancies in the daily attendance to the attendance office.	4. Teachers are expected to communicate concerns about attendance to parents.		
5. Teachers will report discrepancies in the daily attendance to the attendance office.	5. Teachers should be familiar with all procedures governing attendance and to apply these procedures uniformly.	5. Teachers should report any discrepancies in the daily attendance to the attendance office.		
6. Teachers should be familiar with all procedures governing attendance and to apply these procedures uniformly.	7. The attendance office will automatically send out a letter notifying families if their child has missed 20% of the school days for the quarter regardless of the excuse.	6. Teachers must be familiar with all procedures governing attendance and to apply these procedures uniformly.		
	8. The attendance office will send home a letter if your child has 6 or more tardies in class.	7.		

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#### **Administrator Responsibilities** IV.

Elementary	Middle School	High School	
Principals will inform students, teachers and parents/guardians of the attendance policy.	Principals will set the standard for what parts of the handbook teachers should review with students regarding the school attendance policy.	Principals will inform students, teachers and parents/guardians of the attendance policy in handbook.	
Principals will communicate and apply procedures developed to address attendance concerns.	Principals will communicate and apply procedures developed to address attendance concerns.	Principals will communicate and apply procedures developed to address attendance concerns.	
<ul><li>3. Principals are expected to communicate with parents when student attendance becomes a concern and encourage parents to remediate any attendance problems.</li><li>4. The principal will ensure that attendance of</li></ul>	3. Principals oversee the Attendance Review Team weekly meetings and facilitate the team's efforts to bring awareness to students and their families who are at risk of being truant.	3. Principals oversee the Attendance Review Team weekly meetings and facilitate the team's efforts to bring awareness to students and their families who are at risk of being truant.	
students will be monitored regularly. Parents or guardians will be contacted when attendance concerns (absences and tardies) are noted.  5. Principals will plan interventions for students	4. The principal will ensure that attendance of students is monitored regularly. Parents or guardians will be contacted when attendance concerns (absences and tardies) are noted.	4. The principal will ensure that attendance of students will be monitored regularly. Parents or guardians will be contacted when attendance concerns (absences and tardies) arise.	
with excessive absences/tardies.  8. Principals will hold teachers accountable for	5. Principals will plan interventions for students with excessive absences/tardies.	Principals will refer students with attendance problems to appropriate channels for	
recording accurate attendance.	6. Principals will hold teachers accountable for recording accurate attendance.	interventions.	
	7. Principals will facilitate and participate in the appeals process.	Principals will hold teachers accountable for recording accurate attendance	
		7. Principals will facilitate the appeals process.	

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### **PROCEDURES**

## **Elementary School Procedures**

Parents are to contact the attendance office prior to the absence, the day the absence occurs, or up until 10:00 a.m. the day following the absence. If parents do not contact the school within the time frame specified the absence will be unexcused. Family vacations require pre-notification in writing; they are not excused if the school is not notified ahead of time.

Absences that exceed two days for head lice are unexcused. Student attendance should be considered for review and possible intervention any time after a student is absent or tardy three or more school days (not consecutive, excused or unexcused). A weekly review meeting is recommended to identify attendance problems.

At the elementary level, a student will be counted absent for the morning if arriving more than 30 minutes after the school start time and absent for the afternoon if leaving school more than 60 minutes before school is dismissed. Classifications for "Excused" and "Unexcused" absences will exist for the purpose of tracking truancies and for safety reasons. Excused absences will be any absence excused by the parent ahead of time, the day of the absence, or up until 10:00 the day following the absence. "Unexcused" absence will be any absence for which the parent does not contact the school within the designated time frame. Contact can be by phone or in the form of a note, however a contact by phone is preferred.

### **Numbers to Call**

Gene Dillon School	333-3400	Northern School	333-3260
JW Smith School	333-3290	Horace May School	333-3240
Lincoln School	333-3250	Solway School	467-3232

### **Middle School Procedures**

- Classifications for "Excused" and "Unexcused" absences will exist for the purpose of tracking truancies and for safety reasons. Excused absences will be any absence excused by the parent ahead of time, the day of the absence, or up until 10:00 the day following the absence. "Unexcused" absence will be any absence in which the parent does not contact the school within the designated time frame. Contact can be by phone or in the form of a note, however a phone call is preferred.
- After 12 days of excused absences are reported a letter will be sent requiring a parent to bring a doctor's note or other state approved excuse before the
  absence is considered excused.
- Bemidji Middle School will follow their tardy policy for those students who are habitually late to class with 6 or more tardies per quarter.
- Students need to attend, at minimum, one half of a school day in order to be allowed to participate in extra curricular activities or after school incentives.
- A continuing Truant Letter will be sent home after the student has missed 7 days unexcused.

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• The decision to file truancy is a team decision made by the Attendance Review Team and is considered a final effort to help a student attend school more frequently.

### **Number to Call**

#### Middle School 333-3215

## **High School Procedures**

### **Excused and Unexcused Absences**

Classifications for "Excused" and "Unexcused" absences exist for the purpose of tracking truancies and for determining whether a student is eligible to appeal a loss of credit.

An Excused absence is any absence excused by the parent ahead of time, the day of the absence, or up until 10:00 a.m. the day following the absence. Parents may not excuse a student to be on campus but not attend scheduled classes.

Parents may contact the Attendance Office by phone or in writing, although contact by phone is preferred. The Attendance Offices have 24-hour voice mail for parents' convenience. Any absence not reported by 10:00 a.m. the day following the absence will be recorded as an Unexcused absence.

Number to call: 444-1600 Gr. 9-12 / Last Name A – K, Ext. 63301 Gr. 9-12 / Last Name L-Z, Ext. 63303

### **Tardies**

To ensure clarity and closer communication with families, as well as to better distinguish between minor delays and significant disruptions to instruction, the following policy regarding tardiness will be enforced:

- Students will be marked tardy if they arrive within 0-15 minutes after the designated start time of the class/session.
- Arrival beyond the 15-minute mark will be considered late and marked in a distinguishing manner.

It is important to note that this policy aims to differentiate between occasional minor delays and instances where a student misses a significant portion of instructional time, which can have a notable impact on their learning experience.

### **Truancy**

- 1. Absences not authorized by the parent or guardian of the student and/or by the school district will be termed Unexcused.
- 2. Failure of the student or parent or guardian to notify the Attendance Office no later than 10:00 a.m. the day following the absence will result in an Unexcused absence.

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3. Students who are under the age of 16 may be referred to the truancy intervention program and/or to county social services for educational neglect.

### **Student Dismissal During the School Day**

Before a student leaves the building during the school day, he/she must obtain a Permit to Leave from either the Attendance Office or the Health Office.

Students who leave school without permission are considered truant. The student must also check in with the Attendance Office when returning to school.

### **Attendance and Participation in Co-Curricular**

Co-curricular activities add to students' high school experience in many positive ways. Participation in co-curricular activities is encouraged. With such participation, however, come additional responsibilities, some of which are related to attendance:

- 1. A student may not participate in any activity or program on the day that a student has missed more than half of his/her classes without an excuse.
- 2. If a student is suspended from school or if the student is assigned to detention, he/she may not participate in any co-curricular program on that day.
- 3. Coaches and activity advisors are responsible for enforcing the attendance policy in regard to the activity they supervise.
- 4. Co-curricular activities are school-sponsored activities; therefore, classes missed due to the student's participation are not recorded as an absence toward loss of credit.

#### NOTIFICATION PROCEDURES FOR PARENTS AND GUARDIANS OF HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

To excuse a student for an absence, the student's parent or guardian must notify the Attendance Office with a phone call, in person or in writing, stating the reason for the absence. This notification must occur prior to the absence, the day of the absence, or before 10:00 a.m. the day after the absence in order to be Excused.

### Make-up Work

Whether a high school student's absence is Excused or Unexcused, the student is required to make up all assignments as deemed appropriate. Students will be given two days for each day missed to make up the work.

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## **Procedures for Communicating with Parents Regarding Excessive Absences**

- 1. The school will attempt to contact parents to report any Unexcused absences. Parents may call the attendance office at any time during the school day to inquire about their child's attendance.
- 2. Letters of concern will be sent to the parent and the student's parent or guardian may be requested to attend a conference with the school administrator.

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# **Elementary Reporting and Interventions K-3**

Reporting	First Intervention	Second Intervention	Third Intervention	Fourth Intervention	Fifth Intervention
Parents are to contact the	Student attendance	Student attendance	Student attendance		If improvement is made,
attendance office prior to	concerns are reviewed	concerns are reviewed	concerns are reviewed	Student attendance	no further interventions
the absence, the day the	weekly at an attendance	weekly at an attendance	weekly at an attendance	concerns are reviewed	are necessary.
absence occurs or up	review meeting.	review meeting.	review meeting.	weekly at an attendance	Attendance will
until 10:00 the day				review meeting.	continue to be
following the absence.	A decision is made at the	A decision is made at the	A decision is made at the		monitored.
	review meeting whether	review meeting whether	review meeting whether	A decision is made at the	
If parents do not contact	intervention is	intervention is	intervention is	review meeting whether	If no improvement is
the school within the	warranted.	warranted.	warranted.	intervention is	made, or there is no
prescribed time frame the				warranted.	contact with
absence will be	If intervention is	If intervention is	If intervention is		parent/guardian, a
unexcused.	warranted, the	warranted, the	warranted, the	If intervention is	referral will be made to
	attendance monitor is to	attendance monitor will	attendance monitor will	warranted, a home visit	Social Services.
Absences that exceed	contact the parent; if	send a second letter.	send a third letter	will be conducted.	
two days for head lice	there is no phone in the		requesting a meeting		
are unexcused.	household, a first letter	Review the student's	with the attendance		
	will be sent.	attendance the following	team.		
		week.			
	Review the student's		Attendance review team		
	attendance the following	If improvement is made,	identifies services		
	week.	no further interventions	available to assist the		
		are necessary.	family in improving the		
	If improvement is made,	Attendance will continue	child's attendance if		
	no further interventions	to be monitored.	meeting is held.		
	are necessary.				
	Attendance will continue		If improvement is made,		
	to be monitored.		no further interventions		
			are necessary.		
			Attendance will continue		
			to be monitored.		

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**Elementary Reporting and Interventions 4-5** 

Elementary Reporting and Interventions 4-3							
Reporting:	First Intervention	<u>Second</u>	Third Intervention	<u>Fourth</u>	Fifth Intervention		
Parents are to contact	(3 Unexcused or 5	<u>Intervention</u>	(7 Unexcused or 9 Excused)	<u>Intervention</u>	(16+ Excused and/or		
the attendance office	Excused)	(5 Unexcused or 7 Excused)		(8 - 15 Unexcused or 10 - 15	Unexcused)		
prior to the absence, the			The Attendance Review	Excused)			
day the absence occurs	Student attendance	Principal or Teacher	Team identifies services		If no improvement is		
or up until 10:00 a.m.	concerns are reviewed	contacts the	available to assist the	A second home visit	noted a referral will be		
the day following the	with the Principal and	parents/guardian via	family in improving the	will be conducted and a	made to Social Services		
absence.	Teacher.	phone and/or letter.	child's attendance.	follow-up letter sent.	with the student's county of residence.		
If parents do not contact	If intervention is	The Principal or	The Attendance Review	Nudge Letter sent home.	-		
the school within the	warranted, the	Teacher will offer	Team arranges for a	8	On Campus meeting		
prescribed time frame	classroom teacher is to	parent/guardian the	home visit with the	Attendance Incentive	with parent/guardian		
that absence will be	contact the	opportunity to meet and	student's family.	Program continued with	requested.		
unexcused.	parent/guardian; if there	discuss how to improve		school staff.			
diferences.	is no phone in the	attendance.	2nd Letter will be sent		Attendance Incentive		
Family vacations	household, a personal		home.		Program continued with		
require pre-notification;	letter will be sent.	First Letter will be sent			school staff.		
they are counted as		and a follow up call	Attendance Incentive				
unexcused if the school	Review the student's	may be done too.	Program initiated with				
is not notified ahead of	attendance the following	may et delle tee.	school staff.				
time.	week at our Attendance						
time.	Committee Meeting.						
Absences that exceed	8						
two days for head lice	If improvement is made						
are unexcused; reentry	no further interventions						
is subject to a head	are necessary.						
check by the nurse or							
health assistant.	Attendance will						
neath assistant.	continue to be						
	monitored.						

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**Middle School Reporting and Interventions** 

Reporting	First Intervention	Second Intervention	Third Intervention	Fourth Intervention	<u>Other</u>
Absences will be	Students who are absent	Review absences of	If there is no	If there is no	All students shall be
recorded in the	are required to make up	students who miss 20% or	improvement in	improvement in	provided a copy of the
attendance office when	assignments or	more days	attendance, the case will	attendance after the	attendance policy and
a written note or phone	complete alternative	Review unexcused	be reviewed by the	third intervention has	procedures.
call is received from the	assignments as	absences of students who	Attendance Review	been made, a	
parent or guardian.	determined by the	are truant (unexcused)	Team and one or more	truancy/educational	Current attendance
Parents are to contact	classroom teacher.	three or more times.	of the following will be	neglect petition will be	records are available to
the attendance office		Certified mail will be sent	implemented:	filed.	parents/guardians upon
prior to the absence, the	Students will be given	to these students along			request.
day the absence occurs	two days for each day	with an attendance print	a. home visit or parent		
or up until 10:00 the	missed or as arranged	out.	meeting		
day following the	through contract with	The Attendance Review			
absence.	the teacher to complete	Team (ART) will contact	b. students will be		
	make-up assignments.	families whose student	referred the Attendance		
Absences may not be		missed additional	Support Program with		
reported for more than 6	A student's attendance	days/periods after the	the Attendance Support		
days at a time	records are reviewed at	printout is sent home.	Case Manager.		
	weekly attendance				
The Attendance Review	review team (ART)	Students who have 12	c. referral to social		
Team is made up of the	meetings.	excused absences during	services for		
principals, dean,		the year will be sent a Dr. Note Referral letter, along	educational neglect		
counselors, social	Attendance Referral	with an attendance			
worker, attendance	Notices along with	printout. This will require			
support case manager,	attendance printout will	a dr. note for any future			
etc.	be sent to parents/	absences to be excused.			
	guardians of students				
Extra curricular	whose falls below 80				
activities are not	percent (5 or more				
counted as absences.	absences per quarter.				

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**High School Reporting and Interventions** 

Reporting	First Intervention	Second Intervention	Third Intervention	Truancy	Other
				<u>========,</u>	
Reporting  Parents or guardians are asked to notify the attendance office of an absence prior to, the day of, or by 10:00 a.m. the day following an absence.  An absence by a student that is not authorized by the parent or guardian and/or the school district will be termed unexcused.	Students who are absent are required to make up all assignments missed or to complete alternative assignments as deemed appropriate by the classroom teacher.  Students will be given two days for each day missed or as arranged through contract with the teacher to complete make-up assignments.  A student's attendance concerns are reviewed at an attendance review meeting.	Review unexcused absences of students who miss 25 unexcused (approximately 5 days) periods or more.  Student attendance is monitored by the Student Support Team, A continuing attendance letter will be sent home notifying the family of attendance concerns.	Third Intervention  Student attendance is monitored by the Student Support Team, A continuing attendance letter will be sent home notifying the family of attendance concerns.  One or more of the following may be implemented:  A.home visit or parent meeting  B. students will be referred to attendance support case management.  C. A continuing attendance letter will be sent home notifying the family of attendance concerns.	Student attendance is monitored by the Student Support Team, A continuing attendance letter will be sent home notifying the family of attendance concerns.  Students under age 16 may be referred for the truancy intervention program and/or to county social services for educational neglect when the student has accumulated seven or more unexcused absences.	All students shall review the attendance policy and procedures in the handbook online.  The attendance office will notify parents via a phone call when there is an absence.  Students leaving during the school day: A Permit to Leave must be obtained from the Attendance Office or Nurse's Office by any student leaving school during the school day before leaving the building. The student must check in with the Attendance Office when returning to school.  The student's parent or guardian must notify the Attendance Office with a phone call, in person or in writing, stating the

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### **APPEAL PROCESS**

Families may appeal decisions made in regard to the provisions of the ISD #31 attendance policy. The following procedures have been set forth.

### Middle School

- 1. Parents may appeal the interventions by requesting a conference with the assistant principal and the school support staff directly associated with the student or Attendance Review Team.
- 2. At the appeal, the administrator's role will be to present the information and reasons for the prior decision to the ARC. The Attendance Review Committee (ARC) shall hear all appeals.
- 3. A parent or guardian and the affected student should appear in person at the appeal.
- 4. Upon recommendation of the review committee or administrator, the school administrator will notify the student and parent within three school days of the decision of the appeal.
- 5. After the appeal, the student will be expected to attend all scheduled classes. The parents/guardians may call the attendance office and check on their child's attendance.

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### **Elementary Appeal Process**

Parents may appeal the interventions by requesting a conference with the school principal and the school attendance monitor.

### **High School**

Parents may appeal the interventions by requesting a conference with the assistant principal and the school support staff directly associated with the student or Attendance Review Team.

ISD NO. 31

SBR 400-25-1R MSBA 503 PROCEDURES

ORIGINAL: 17 JULY 2000 (ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE SCHOOL)

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