

# TrekNorth Attendance Policy

The following TrekNorth Junior & Senior High School Attendance Policy was updated in August 2017. This policy is posted on the TrekNorth website and is updated in the TrekNorth Parent Handbook. It will be reviewed with students on the first day of school, and, together with their student, parents and/or guardians will agree to follow this policy when they sign the TrekNorth Contract.

To receive credit for any TrekNorth course, a student may not exceed **fifteen (15) absences per semester per class**. This includes excused and unexcused absences.

**I. RESPONSIBILITIES:** Attendance responsibilities are shared by students, parents, and the school staff.

**A. Student Responsibility:**

- Attend all assigned classes and study halls on time, every day that school is in session.

**B. Parent/Guardian Responsibilities:**

- Encourage and require your student to attend school every day on time as you would expect them to attend a job. School is training for future employment.
- **Inform the school by telephone (444-1888, ext. 1), in person or email ([kganske@treknorth.org](mailto:kganske@treknorth.org)), of a student absence no later than 10:00AM the day of absence.**
- Inform the school if something is occurring that is preventing your student from attending school regularly.
- Work cooperatively with school personnel to solve any attendance problems that may arise.

**C. Teacher Responsibilities:**

- Take accurate daily attendance and to maintain accurate attendance records for each assigned class.
- Communicate makeup work policies to students and apply those procedures uniformly.
- Report any attendance problems that may arise to the TrekNorth Administration and work constructively with administration, parent/guardian, and the student to help the student get back on track.

**D. Administration Responsibilities:**

- Require all students to attend assigned classes and study halls.
- Inform parents, students, and staff of school attendance regulations.
- Supervise and administer the attendance policy and regulations.
- Maintain accurate records on student attendance.
- Inform students and their parent/guardian of student's absences through use of Powerschool, telephone, personal conference, e-mail, or mail.
- Work constructively with the student and parent/guardian to achieve regular attendance.
- Report cases of habitual truancy to Beltrami County Social Services.

## II. ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

**A. Absences:**

1. Definition: A student will be considered absent when he/she is not in school or class
2. Reporting Absences: Absences shall be reported and records of absences kept in accordance with regulations adopted to implement this policy.
3. Special Absences: Special absences are not counted in the maximum absence rule. Students are granted special absences for the following reasons:
  - (a.) Religious instruction not to exceed three (3) hours per week conducted in accordance with Minnesota Statutes 120A.22, Subd. 12 (3).
  - (b.) Students who are assigned to ISS (In-School Suspension) for disciplinary purposes.
  - (c.) Students placed on OSS (Out-of-School Suspension) for disciplinary purposes in accordance with Minnesota Statutes 121A.41, Subd. 10 and 121A.46.

- (d.) School sponsored activities.
- (e.) Medical verification from a doctor stating the student requires homebound instruction.
- (f.) An Individual Education Plan or 504 plan that amends the attendance expectation for a student.

4. The following absences are **excused** but **DO count towards the maximum absence rule** . NOTE: All excused absences must be verified by parent/guardian by phone call before 10:00AM the day of the absence. Failure to do so may result in the absence being counted as unexcused.

- (a.) Illness of pupil.
- (b.) Serious illness in the immediate family [mother, father, step-parent, guardian, brother, sister, grandparents].
- (c.) Death in the immediate family/funeral.
- (d.) Attendance at a court or other judicial proceeding upon written verification by the court or hearing officer of the specific date and time.
- (e.) Family vacation subject to prior approval of the TrekNorth Administration.
- (f.) Important events requiring student participation. Requires pre-approval from TrekNorth administration.

Students whose absences are excused are required to make up all assignments missed or to complete alternative assignments as determined by the classroom teacher. Work missed because of excused absence must be completed within a time limit decided by the teacher of the missed course(s). Any work not completed within this period shall result in “no credit” for the missed assignment. However, the TrekNorth Administration or the classroom teacher may extend the time allowed for completion of makeup work in the case of an extended illness or other extenuating circumstance. **Excused absences count towards the maximum absence rule for a semester long class. Fifteen absences in a semester long class will result in a loss of credit.**

5.. The following are considered **unexcused absences that count toward the maximum absence rule**:

- (a.) Any absences that is not excused by the parent or guardian
- (b.) Absences that do not fit into one of the above excused categories.

6. Tardiness: tardiness is disruptive to the learning of other students and the student who is tardy.

**Being tardy to class is arriving after the bell rings. Arriving 20 minutes after the start of class is an absence.**

- 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Tardy: Teacher uses discretion in deciding consequences
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Tardy: When a student is tardy to a class three or more times in one semester the student will conference with TrekNorth administration to determine consequences. Habitual tardiness will result in a phone call home to parents, in-person meeting, or other consequence determined by the administrator.

7. Truancy: the willful missing of a school day or class period.

**Truancy is an unexcused absence, and the protocol for unexcused absences will apply.**

- After the first incident of truancy, students will be assigned to In-School Suspension until all the work missed because of the truancy is completed.
- Work missed because of truancy will be given credit only at the discretion of the teacher
- If the behavior reoccurs, the student will be assigned to In School Suspension for one full day, or until all of their missed work is completed, whichever is longer.

8. Loss of credit

At the high school level, fifteen (15) absences in a semester long class will result in a loss of credit for that class. **Both excused and unexcused absences will accumulate towards the loss of credit.** When a student reaches the fifteenth absence, the School Social Worker will meet with the student to explain the loss of credit and the appeal process. The school will notify the parent/guardian about the loss of credit and to discuss whether the student intends to appeal the decision. If the student wishes to contest the loss of credit, the request for appeal should be addressed to the TrekNorth administration and submitted in writing to the School Social Worker within three (3) days of notification of the loss of credit. If no appeal is being sought, the student will be reassigned to a quiet study and receive no credit for the class. At the junior high level, 15 or more absences may result in the student repeating their current grade level.

### **III. GENERAL PROCEDURES REGARDING ABSENTEEISM**

- A. TrekNorth will communicate with parents when their student is missing from school. If there has not been a phone call from a parent or guardian, TrekNorth may call the home to determine the reason the student is absent. In addition, TrekNorth will mail letters home when a student reaches 5 absences excused or unexcused to inform parents of TrekNorth attendance policy.
- B. Students who have missed three days or class periods on separate days unexcused are considered continuing truants under the law and will receive a letter from TrekNorth informing them of their legal obligation to attend school.
- C. Student who have missed seven days or class periods on separate days unexcused are considered habitual truants under Minnesota law and will receive a letter requiring the student and a parent or guardian to attend a meeting with TrekNorth administration to work together on a plan for regular attendance. If this plan does not work, TrekNorth may be obligated to report the truancy to Beltrami County.
- D. Students who have excessive excused absences (absent more than 10% of the time) will be contacted by the School Social Worker to determine how best to support regular student attendance. In some situations, doctor's notes documenting medical need for the absences may be required for the absences to remain excused.

### **IV. Extenuating Circumstances:**

The Executive Director shall determine whether there are extenuating circumstances affecting a student which justify waiving this policy on an individual, case-by-case basis. The Director may conduct the review without request from the parents. It is the intent of this provision to prevent parents from having to appeal the loss of credit for situations involving extenuating circumstances.