

## STUDENTS

### Compulsory Attendance

To reach the goal of maximum educational benefits for every child requires a regular continuity of instruction, classroom participation, learning experiences, and study. Regular interaction of students with one another in classrooms and their participation in instructional activities under the tutelage of competent teachers are vital to the entire process of education. This established principle of education underlies and gives purpose to the requirement of compulsory schooling in every state in the nation. A student's regular attendance also reflects dependability and is a significant component of a student's permanent record.

Parents or legal guardians or legal custodians are responsible for seeing that their children of age seven (7) or older prior to the first day of school, attend school until the later of the following dates:

1. The child's sixteenth (16th) birthday;
2. Date the child completes the eighth (8<sup>th</sup>) grade.

The provisions above do not apply in the following cases:

- a) The child has been excused under one of the conditions specified in 20-5-102.
- b) The child is absent because of illness, bereavement, or other reason prescribed by the policies of the trustees.
- c) The child has been suspended or expelled under the provisions of 20-5-202.
- d) The child is excused pursuant to 20-7-120.
- e) The child is excused pursuant to 40-6-701(1) or Policy 2159.

Compulsory attendance stated above will not apply when children:

1. Provided with supervised correspondence or home study;
2. Excused because of a determination by a district judge that attendance is not in the best interests of the child;
3. Enrolled in a nonpublic or home school;
4. Enrolled in a school of another district or state under the tuition provisions of this title;
5. Excused by the Board upon a determination that such attendance by a child who has attained the age of sixteen (16) is not in the best interests of the child and the school.

Missoula County Public Schools will continue tuition-free attendance of resident students not reaching 19 years of age by September 10. Students in MCPS are expected to attend and be enrolled as full time students. However, with the approval of the building principal and Superintendent or designee, students may be enrolled less than full-time if the student is enrolled for at least one clock hour per day (including passing periods).

Requirements for part-time attendance are described in MCPS Policy 3150. This applies to students currently enrolled in MCPS' schools as well as home school students and private school students. This

provision applies to students in grades K-12. Part-time students must participate in the statewide student assessment which any student in the grades designated for assessment is required to take.

Any student who wishes to receive a diploma from a Missoula County Public School high school, must be enrolled as a student during his/her senior year and meet the same credit requirements as other students in MCPS' schools.

Any student who has been expelled from another school district will not be allowed to attend or enroll in MCPS during the term of expulsion from the expelling school district.

**Legal Reference:**

- § 20-1-308, MCA Religious instruction released time program
- § 20-5-101, MCA Admittance of child to school
- § 20-5-102, MCA Compulsory enrollment and excuses
- § 20-5-103, MCA Compulsory attendance and excuses (revised by Senate Bill 518)
- § 20-5-104, MCA Attendance officer
- § 20-5-106, MCA Truancy
- § 20-5-107, MCA Incapacitated and indigent child attendance
- § 20-5-108, MCA Tribal agreement with district for Indian child compulsory attendance and other agreements
- § 20-5-202, MCA Suspension and Expulsion
- § 40-6-701, MCA Interference with fundamental parental rights restricted

**Cross Reference:** Policy 3150, Part-Time Attendance

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