

Student Attendance

Education is a cooperative venture to which the student learner, the teacher, and the parent/guardian contribute. The collaboration of students with one another in the classroom, coupled with their participation in well-planned learning activities under the guidance of a classroom teacher, are vital to their mastery of subjects and skills conducive to a productive life. This established principle of education underlies and gives purpose to the requirement of compulsory schooling in every state in the nation. Public education exists as the foundation for developing the communication and collaboration skills necessary for participating on the global stage.

Because regular school attendance is integral to this process and to the individual success of each student, Missoula County Public Schools provides a structure within which students in grades Pre-K through twelve can gain the maximum benefit from the instructional program.

Enrolled students are expected to be in attendance every day as required by law and/or District policy and procedures. A record of student absences and tardies shall be maintained. Specifics regarding excused and unexcused absences, numbers of absences, and consequences for excessive absenteeism for all students are found in the student handbooks.

A student is “truant” when persistent nonattendance occurs without excuse for all of the school day or any part of the school day equivalent to the length of one class period the student is required to attend under Montana law. “Habitual truancy” means recorded unexcused absences of 9 or more days or 54 or more parts of a day, whichever is less, in 1 school year.

Missoula County Public Schools has appointed the superintendent as the Attendance Officer of the District. The Attendance Officer is vested with police powers and shall have the following authority to:

- Serve warrants;
- Enter a student’s place of employment in order to enforce the compulsory attendance provisions of the State and;
- Make reports in the manner and to whomever the Board designates.

The Attendance Officer(s) shall have the duties stated in 20-5-106, MCA.

Legal References: § 20-5-104 – 20-5-106, MCA Attendance Officer, Truancy
 § 41-5-103, MCA Youth Court, Definitions

Policy History:

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