

SECONDARY ATTENDANCE POLICY

Purpose

The intent of an attendance policy is to encourage students in their attendance at school. The entire process of education requires a regular continuity of instruction, classroom participation, learning experiences, and study in order to reach the goal of maximum educational benefits for each individual child. The regular contact of the students with one another in the classroom and their participation in instructional activities under the tutelage of a competent teacher are vital to this purpose. This is an established principle of education that underlies and gives purpose to the requirement of compulsory schooling in this and every other state in the nation. The good things that schools have to offer can only be presented to students who are in attendance. Attendance reflects a student's dependability and is a significant factor on the student's permanent record. Future employers are as much concerned about punctuality and dependability as they are about academic record. School success, scholarship, and job opportunity are greatly affected by a good attendance record. Students should be absent only for legitimate, verifiable reasons.

Verifiable Absences

Students at Madison High School and Madison Jr. High will be allowed no more than eight (8) verifiable absences in each class in each trimester*. It is the responsibility of the student and parent(s) to verify all absences when the student is gone. All absences must be appropriately cleared with the school office or they will be termed unverified absences and credit may be lost. Unverified absences not appropriately cleared may be treated as a truancy and either Saturday School or In-School Suspension may result. Students who plan on missing school to work in potato harvest need to fill out an "Absentee Petition Form". These forms serve as a communication between parents, teachers, and students as to the possible risk of lower grades or failure of classes if the student and parents choose to miss school and the work is not completed. Forms are available in the office.

*Exception to the Eight Absence Rule:

1. Major or chronic illness verified in writing by a physician.
2. School sponsored activities.
3. Work release permits as part of the annual harvest.

Consequences of Excessive Absences

If a student is sixteen years of age or older and exceeds the days allowed as described above in two or more classes, the student will lose credit in all classes and will be released to the custody of the parent or guardian for the remainder of the trimester. The student may choose to enroll in Central High School for the remainder of the trimester. The student may re-enroll in regular classes at the beginning of any trimester thereafter, upon successfully demonstrating that attitude and behavior warrant re-admittance.

If the student is under sixteen years of age and exceeds the eight absence rule in two or more classes, credit will be denied in all classes for the trimester and the student must remain in the class(es) and continue working for the remainder of the trimester. However, if it is determined that the student is disruptive to the educational atmosphere in the classroom or continues to violate the attendance policy, the student may be removed to the custody of the parent or guardian. The student will then be referred to all agencies involved in the juvenile justice system. Excessive absences could also prohibit a student from participating in activities that take place during the day in which it would not be in their best interest to be absent from class instruction.

Unverified Absences and Truancies

An unverified absence is any absence not appropriately cleared with the school office. To verify an absence, a student needs written or verbal communication from the parent, teacher, or administrator depending on circumstances. Failure to verify will be considered a truancy, which will result in disciplinary action. Habitual truancy will result in a parental conference and a contract with the school. Violation of the contract will result in being released for the trimester and/or expulsion. A truancy is defined as follows:

1. The student is in the school building but is not in attendance at a regularly scheduled class without permission of the teacher or the school office. Parental permission is not valid when a student misses a class and remains on school grounds. It is mandatory to receive permission from the teacher of the class you are leaving or permission from the office.
2. The student leaves the school building without prior approval by the parent or guardian (given by phone or written note) and without checking out through the office.
3. The student does not come to school and parents are unaware of their absence.

Notification Responsibility of the School

1. The school will make the attendance policy available to all students and parents at the beginning of each school year and/or upon enrollment of the student for the first time.
2. Due to the availability of PowerSchool to parents or guardians, notification will be given as a courtesy upon the initial fifth absence from a class. Upon the initial eighth absence, the parent or guardian will again be notified.

Right of Appeal

The secondary attendance policy will be administered by the administration of Madison High School and Madison Jr. High. Any appeal from the decisions of the school administration will go first to the superintendent of schools. Any appeal from the decision of the superintendent of schools will go to the Board of Trustees.

Attendance Final Exams

In order to give incentives for students to improve their grades and attendance in school the following procedures have been implemented:

1. High school students who have 5 or fewer absences plus 3 or fewer tardies or Jr. High students who have 5 or fewer absences plus 5 or fewer tardies have the option of taking or skipping the attendance final exam. If a student elects not to take the final, he or she does

not have to attend class on the day the final has been scheduled. Students may elect to take the final to raise their grade.

2. There will be no restriction on days students miss for school excused activities.
3. If a student is caught sluffing in one or more classes, they will take all attendance final exams.
4. Tests will be given on the last day of the first and second trimesters and a date to be determined in third trimester.
5. Attendance/Tardy Limits:
 - a. 1 Truancy – Student takes all attendance finals.
 - b. 4 or 6 Tardies – Attendance final must be taken in that class.
 - c. 6 Absences – Attendance finals must be taken in that class.
 - d. 9 Absences – Credit will be lost.
 - e. All school excused absences are exempt from the absence limit.
 - f. Any exceptions must be approved by the administration.

Legal Reference: Art. IX, § 9, Idaho Constitution – Compulsory Attendance at School

I.C. § 33-202	School attendance compulsory
I.C. § 33-204	Exemption for Cause
I.C. § 33-205	Denial of School Attendance
I.C. § 33-207	Proceedings against parents or guardians

Policy History:

Adopted on: February 12, 2013

Revised on: