

Adopted: August 14, 2014
Revised: August 8, 2016
Reviewed: March 13, 2023

COMMUNITY OF PEACE ACADEMY POLICY No. 5.2.1 ATTENDANCE AND ABSENCES

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to set forth attendance requirements at Community of Peace Academy.

II. POLICY STATEMENT

It is the policy of Community of Peace Academy to fully comply with state laws regarding student attendance at public schools.

III. APPLICATION OF THIS POLICY

A. Students between the ages of 7 and 17.

1. Every person between the ages of 7 and 17 years of age must receive instruction unless the person has graduated.
 2. Any student who is 17 years old and is enrolled in Community of Peace Academy who seeks to withdraw from school, must meet with school representatives along with the student's parent or guardian to discuss alternative educational opportunities and to sign a written election to withdraw from school.
- B. Students under age 7 enrolled in kindergarten.**
1. Every student under the age of 7 who is enrolled in a half-day kindergarten, or a full-day kindergarten program on alternate days, or other kindergarten programs shall receive instruction.
 2. Once a student under the age of 7 is enrolled in kindergarten or a higher grade in Community of Peace Academy, the pupil is subject to the compulsory attendance provisions of this policy.
 3. Withdrawal of pupil. A parent or guardian of a student under age 7 who is enrolled may withdraw the student from enrollment in Community of Peace Academy, for good cause by notifying the school office. Good cause includes, but is not limited to, enrollment of the student in another school or the immaturity of the student.

Once a student under age 7 withdraws, the student is no longer required to attend school for the remaining academic year.

IV. EXCUSED ABSENCES AND TARDIES

- A. Legitimate exceptions to required attendance. The Administration of Community of Peace Academy may approve of absences when a student's physical or mental health is such as to prevent attendance at school. Such absences include:
1. Illness, injury or hospitalization of the student.
 2. Disability of the student. If a student suffers from a permanent or temporary disability which prevents them from regular attendance, verification from the student's physical specifying the nature of the disability and the anticipated duration of the disabling condition will be required once per school year. For each absence, the student's parent must provide the office with a signed note verifying the reason for the absence.
 3. Medical and dental appointments which cannot be scheduled outside of school hours.
 4. Family emergency, serious illness of family member, or death in the family.
 4. Religious events.
 5. Mandatory court appearances.
 6. Suspensions. Absence from class as a result of an in-school suspension or out-of-school suspension is counted as excused.
 7. Pre-approved college visits taken with a parent. A maximum of 4 days in one semester, not to exceed a total of 8 days per school year, will be excused to permit a student to travel with a parent to visit colleges. For such instances, parents are expected to complete a Pre-excused Absence Request Form. At the Principal's discretion, an absence for a college visit that exceeds 4 days may be counted as excused.
 8. Pre-approved testing, including college testing and military testing. Approval must be obtained from the Principal at least 24 hours prior to the absence.
 9. Pre-excused participation in a school-sponsored activity. Examples include, but are not limited to, absence from class in order to participate in a school-sponsored field trip, athletic contest, or school-sponsored music performance. The student

must have been in attendance for the three class periods preceding the school-sponsored event in order for participation to be considered excused.

- B. Kindergarten students. Community of Peace Academy shall excuse a kindergarten student from part of a school day at the request of the student's parent.
- C. Release for religious instruction. Community of Peace Academy shall excuse a student for a period or periods not exceeding in the aggregate three hours in any week, in order for the student to attend a school for religious instruction conducted and maintained by some church, or association of churches, or any Sunday school association incorporated under the laws of this state, or any auxiliary thereof. This school for religious instruction must be conducted and maintained in a place other than Community of Peace Academy.

V. PROCESS FOR OBTAINING EXCUSED ABSENCE OR TARDY; REPORTING

A. Parent Responsibilities:

1. Send a note of explanation for the student's absence or tardiness.
 2. Conference with an administrator when necessary for student re-admittance from dismissal or suspension.
 3. Discuss with their student the importance of attendance to school and to class.
 4. Meet with an administrator if necessary to make an attendance contract.
- B. Procedures. All students must provide the office with a note signed by the student's parent/guardian, or must receive a phone call from the student's parent/guardian, stating the valid reason for the absence. An emancipated student, one who does not live with and is not economically dependent upon his or her parent, may sign the note himself or herself.
 - C. Verification. The school may request verification from a physician or a licensed mental health professional stating that the student cannot attend school in the event of excessive absence due to illness.
 - D. Excused Tardies. If a student is tardy to class but has a written note from a teacher, social worker, nurse or administrator, the tardy will be excused. If a student arrives to school late and has a valid excuse signed by a parent, the office will provide the student with a written note excusing the tardy. An excuse signed by a parent will be deemed valid if it stated that one of more of the conditions in section IV A. caused the student's tardiness.

- E. Any absence or tardy which is not excused under this policy will be unexcused. Oversleeping, a malfunctioning alarm clock, vehicle problems, missing the bus are among the reasons that are not basis for an unexcused absence or tardy.

VI. CONTINUING TRUANTS; DEFINITIONS

- A. Elementary student. An elementary student is a “continuing truant” if that student is absent from instruction in Community of Peace Academy without valid excuse within a single school year for three days.
- B. Middle school, junior high school, or high school. A middle school, junior high school, or high school student is a “continuing truant” if the student is absent without a valid excuse within a single school year for three or more class periods on three days.
- C. Upon a student’s initial classification as a continuing truant, the school attendance officer or other designated school official shall notify the student’s parent or legal guardian, by first-class mail or other reasonable means, of the following:
 - 1. That the student is truant;
 - 2. That the parent or guardian should notify the school if there is a valid excuse for the student’s absences;
 - 3. That the parent or guardian is obligated to compel the attendance of the student at school and that parents or guardians who fail to meet this obligation may be subject to prosecution;
 - 4. That this notification serves as the notification required by Minnesota Statutes section 120A.34;
 - 5. That alternative educational programs and services may be available in Community of Peace Academy or in the student’s resident district;
 - 6. That the parent or guardian has the right to meet with appropriate school personnel to discuss solutions to the student’s truancy;
 - 7. That if the student continues to be truant, the parent and student may be subject to juvenile court proceedings under Minnesota Statutes section 260C;

VII. HABITUAL TRUANTS; DEFINITIONS AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

- A. Elementary school. A habitual truant in elementary school means a student who is absent from attendance without lawful excuse for seven school days per school year.

- B. Middle school, junior high school or high school student under age 17. A habitual truant in middle school, junior high school or high school means a student who is absent from attendance without lawful excuse for one or more class periods on seven school days per school.
- C. 17 year old student. A habitual truant includes a student who is absent from attendance at school without lawful excuse for one or more class periods on seven school days per school year and who has not lawfully withdrawn from school under section.
- D. When Community of Peace Academy learns of any case of habitual truancy or continued nonattendance of any student required to attend school the Principal must:
 - 1. Immediately notify the person having control of the student to send and keep the student in school.
 - 2. If the student's resident school district or Community of Peace Academy offers truancy programs and services the parents shall be notified of those programs and services.
 - 3. Attendance officers or other designated school officials must ensure that the notice required for a student who is a continuing truant is sent.
 - 4. The Principal must act under the general supervision of the Executive Director.

Legal References: Minn. Stat. §124E (Charter School Law)

Minn. Stat. §120A.22 (Compulsory Instruction)

Minn. Stat. §120A.32 (Neglect of Duty)