

HARAMBEE COMMUNITY CULTURES/ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

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Attendance Policy

Truancy Intervention Project (TIP)

The Harambee Community Cultures/Environmental Science School has a School Attendance Policy (503) based on the Minnesota Compulsory Instruction Law, Minn. Stat. 120A.22, requiring all students to attend school. The District 6067 policy states that the Harambee School believes that good attendance develops life-long productive habits and is directly related to:

- Success in academic work
- Benefits students socially
- Provides for regular communication between teachers and students, and
- Establishes regular habits of dependability

The information that follows will explain the difference between excused, lawful and unlawful excuses, the responsibility of the school and the parent/guardian, the Truancy Intervention Project (TIP), and the truancy laws.

EXCUSED ABSENCES

The burden of a child being excused from school is placed on the parent/guardian of the child. A school has the right to accept or deny any application for an excused absence. Schools can develop reasonable policies for school attendance and reject invalid excuses offered by the parent. Many times, school officials are concerned that a child is being excused from school for unacceptable reasons. If it appears that a parent is excusing excessive absence or keeping a child home for unacceptable reasons (this can include illness), alleged educational neglect can be reported. A request for an excused absence, such as attendance at a camp, needs to be approved by the principal.

ACCEPTABLE REASONS FOR BEING ABSENT

1. Sickness (School may request doctor verification or that the parent bring the child to school to be seen by the school nurse.)
2. Doctors visit/mental health included (Please avoid school hours if possible)
3. Religious Holidays, religious activities including camps
4. Extreme family emergencies, legal appointments, or funeral services.
5. School sponsored trips

SOME UNLAWFUL EXCUSES

1. Staying home to babysit - work - needed at home
2. **Missed the bus**, no way to get child to school
3. Overslept - child having a bad day
4. Travel - Family Vacations
5. Too cold or stormy weather
6. Lost shoe

DEFINITION OF TRUANT

Elementary schools may refer any child to the program who has been absent three (3) or more days during a school year without LAWFUL excuse. Schools are also encouraged to refer children who are chronically tardy or have excessive illness absences.

RESPONSIBILITY OF THE SCHOOL

1. Maintain accurate attendance records and document good communication with students/ parents/ guardians. The Harambee School Attendance Committee will review attendance periodically. If your child has 3 unlawful absences, the attendance committee will make contact with you.
2. Report truancy in a timely manner to the designated authorities.

TIP - Truancy Intervention Project: TIP is a program of the Ramsey County Attorney Office that provides early and continuing intervention in matters of school truancy.

TIP STEPS

1. County Attorney Parents Meeting (Meeting held at school)
2. Student Attendance Review Team (SART)
3. Filing Petition
4. Court hearing/disposition

New Truancy Laws

Parents/guardians of children who violate the compulsory attendance laws may be found guilty of a misdemeanor punishable by imprisonment for not more than 90 days and/or up to a \$700.00 fine.

If you have questions concerning Harambee's Attendance Policy, please contact the school social worker or principal at 651-379-2500.