

Adopted: 01-18-2016
Revised: 03/19/2020

ROCHESTER BEACON ACADEMY- RBA
POLICY No. 501
ATTENDANCE AND ABSENCES

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to set forth attendance requirements at RBA.

II. POLICY STATEMENT

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

III. APPLICATION OF THIS POLICY

A. Parental Responsibility

The parent of a child is primarily responsible for assuring that the child acquires knowledge and skills that are essential for effective citizenship.

B. 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 RBA 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.

IV. EXCUSED ABSENCES

A. Legitimate exceptions to required attendance. The Administration of RBA may approve of absences when a student's physical or mental health is such as to prevent attendance at school or a parent has made a specifically approved request. Such absences include:

1. Student illness, medical, dental, orthodontic, or counseling appointments;

2. Family emergencies;
 3. The death or serious illness or funeral of an immediate family member;
 4. Active duty in any military branch of the United States;
 5. The student has a condition that requires ongoing treatment for a mental health diagnosis;
 6. A parent has made a request for a special activity.
- B. Release for religious instruction. RBA 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 RBA. A student may be excused from attendance as a religious accommodation as well.

V. PROCESS FOR OBTAINING EXCUSED ABSENCE; REPORTING

- A. A parent, guardian, or other person having control of a student may apply to RBA to have the student excused from attendance for the whole or any part of the time school is in session during any school year. Application may be made to the Office Manager.
- B. RBA may ask the student's parent or legal guardian to verify in writing the reason for the student's absence from school. A note from a physician stating that the student cannot attend school is a valid excuse.
- C. The Office Manager must issue and keep a record of such excuses, under such rules as RBA may from time to time establish.

VI. CONTINUING TRUANTS; DEFINITIONS

- A. A sixth or seventh grade student. A sixth or seventh grade student is a "continuing truant" if that student is absent from instruction in RBA without valid excuse within a single school year for three days.

- B. Middle school or high school. A middle 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 at RBA 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;
 8. That if the student is subject to juvenile court proceedings, the student may be subject to suspension, restriction, or delay of the student’s driving privilege pursuant to Minnesota Statutes section 260C.201; and
 9. That it is recommended that the parent or guardian accompany the student to school and attend classes with the student for one day.
- D. If a student continues to be truant after the parent or guardian has been sent or conveyed the notice under this section, the student may be referred by RBA to the county attorney.

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 or high school student under age 17. A “habitual truant” in middle 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 the Office Manager learns of any case of habitual truancy or continued nonattendance of any student required to attend school the Office Manager 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 RBA 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. If necessary, RBA shall notify any other school or state officials to resolve the truancy matter.
 - 5. The Office Manager must act under the general supervision of the Executive Director.

Legal References: Minn. Stat. § 124E.03 (Charter Schools – Applicable Law)
Minn. Stat. § 120A.22 (Compulsory Instruction)
Minn. Stat. § 120A.32 (Neglect of Duty)
Minn. Stat. § 260A.02 (Truancy Definitions)
Minn. Stat. § 260A.03 (Notice to Parent for Continuing Truant)
Minn. Stat. § 260A.07 (Truancy)