



Minnesota State University, Mankato  
Cornerstone: A Collection of Scholarly  
and Creative Works for Minnesota  
State University, Mankato

---

All Graduate Theses, Dissertations, and Other  
Capstone Projects

Graduate Theses, Dissertations, and Other  
Capstone Projects


---

2012

## TEAM Academy Student Attendance Policy

Jenna Lageson  
*Minnesota State University Mankato*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://cornerstone.lib.mnsu.edu/etds>

 Part of the [Elementary and Middle and Secondary Education Administration Commons](#), and the [Social Work Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Lageson, J. (2012). TEAM Academy Student Attendance Policy [Master's capstone project, Minnesota State University, Mankato]. Cornerstone: A Collection of Scholarly and Creative Works for Minnesota State University, Mankato. <https://cornerstone.lib.mnsu.edu/etds/562/>

This Other Capstone Project is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate Theses, Dissertations, and Other Capstone Projects at Cornerstone: A Collection of Scholarly and Creative Works for Minnesota State University, Mankato. It has been accepted for inclusion in All Graduate Theses, Dissertations, and Other Capstone Projects by an authorized administrator of Cornerstone: A Collection of Scholarly and Creative Works for Minnesota State University, Mankato.



# TEAM Academy Student Attendance Policy

TEAM Academy, Waseca MN

Jenna Lageson, MSW Candidate

Task Supervisor: Jill Ladwig, TEAM Academy Director

Field Liaison: Carol Goodemann, MSW, LICSW

Academic Advisor: Nancy M. Fitzsimons, PhD, MSW



## Purpose

- To create a new student attendance policy for TEAM Academy.
- To create documentation forms for staff to use to supplement the policy.
- The goal is to have an attendance policy that will have clearly defined expectations of the parents, students, teachers and other school personnel of TEAM.

## Problem Statement

- The current policy is not clearly written
- Staff does not know how to follow through with the policies and procedures that are written
- There has been a need for change in this policy within the last couple of years, as there have been several truancy issues

## Methodology

- **First Step:** A literature review was conducted on how an attendance policy is written, why attendance policies are important for student success, what the federal and Minnesota state laws are for student attendance, and what the importance for a new policy is.
- **Second Step:** Contact 12 school districts in the Waseca area. Populations less than 20,000 in the towns and student numbers less than 600. Ten schools responded, and they were organized into the table to the right with sorted criteria.
- **Third Step:** Review all of the literature obtained from:
  - Literature review
  - 10 neighboring school districts
  - MN State Statute Chapter 120A Education Code – Compulsory Education
- **Final Step:** Draft a policy proposal in compliance with the state law and grounded in the literature review and create documentation forms.

## Literature Review: Key Findings

- Minnesota Statute Chapter 120A Education Code – Compulsory Attendance (2011) provides the legal framework for policy in K-12 school attendance.
- The code's most relevant parts for TEAM include:
  - The age of a child that need to be in attendance of school
  - The responsibilities of teachers, administrators, and superintendents
  - Legitimate excuses for school absences
  - Guidance as to when the school is responsible for reporting an attendance issue.
- There are many reasons for a child to have attendance problems in school but a clear policy is what is needed before the problems can be tackled (Enea & Dafinoiu, 2009).
- Families are willing to work with schools in many situations, but they are unclear of what the expectations are if they are not clearly laid out for them (Pritchard & Williams, 2001).
- The language that is used in the policy is important to ensure that the policy is written in language that is culturally responsive and compatible with diverse populations represented in the student body and community served (Thatcher, 2000).
- The policy should provide clear expectations for students, parents/legal guardians, teachers, and administrators (Michael, Dittus, & Epstein, 2007).

Table 1: Nearby School's Attendance Policies

School #	Loss of Credit	Attendance Review Board/Teacher Meeting/Parent Meeting	Letter sent home on 3 <sup>rd</sup> absence	Letter sent home on 5 <sup>th</sup> absence	Letter sent home on 7 <sup>th</sup> absence	Letter sent home on 10 <sup>th</sup> absence	Referral to court system	Attendance Contract	Habitual Truant Definition	Tardies counting towards unexcused absences
1		X			X		X	X		X
2	X				X		X		X	X
3	X	X	X	X		X				
4					X		X			
5		X		X	X	X	X			
6		X		X	X		X	X		X
7	X	X	X		X					
8		X		X			X		X	
9		X			X	X	X	X	X	X
10	X	X			X	X	X	X		X

Green Text = Same community as TEAM Academy

## Except from the Student Attendance Policy

- **Student Responsibilities:** It is the student's responsibility to be in the classroom at 8:00 am every day that school is in session and students are required to be in attendance.
- **Parent/Legal Guardian Responsibilities:** It the responsibility of the parent or legal guardian to make sure their child is in school each day that school is in session by 8:00 am, to inform the school when their child will be absent, and to work with the school to resolve any attendance problems.
- **Teacher Responsibilities:** It is the teacher's responsibility to make sure attendance is sent to the office by 8:10 am each day. It is also the teacher's responsibility to provide any missed work to a student that has been absent by the day the student returns to school. The teacher is expected to work cooperatively with parents to resolve any attendance problems.
- **Administrator Responsibilities:** The administrator is the TEAM Academy director and/or the school social worker. It is the administrator's responsibility to be aware of all attendance procedures and to enforce them equally with all students and parents or legal guardians. The administrator will also inform the parents or legal guardians of student's attendance with a written letter and/or phone call and work cooperatively with parents to resolve any attendance problems. The administrator will use the attendance checklist when working with parents on attendance issues.

## Strengths and Limitations

### Strengths:

- The policy is grounded in Minnesota State statute and the literature reviewed.
- The policy is written to match what TEAM represents and fits the size of school and community.
- The policy is closely matched with the other schools in the community which will make policies clearer for families that change schools.
- An attendance contract was drafted that could be helpful for TEAM to use when working with parents/legal guardians
- An attendance documentation checklist was drafted to document steps implemented in the policy

### Limitations:

- The policy is written for TEAM; it cannot be replicated as written for another school. Research in the specific community would need to be done.
- The teachers need to be clear with parents/legal guardians about the school's expectations on attendance; the policy will not solve all of the truancy issues.



## References

References are available from the author upon request.

