

Des Moines Prep Board Policies

Des Moines Prep Board Policies Manual

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Policy 501.9 – Chronic Absenteeism & Truancy

Purpose & Policy Statement Des Moines Prep recognizes that consistent, daily attendance is essential for academic achievement, personal growth, and long-term college and career readiness. Regular participation in classroom instruction and school activities ensures students have the strongest opportunity to succeed, and research clearly demonstrates the connection between strong attendance and positive student outcomes.

This Attendance Policy establishes clear expectations for students and families, outlines the attendance levels used to monitor progress, and defines the procedures for addressing chronic absenteeism and truancy in accordance with Iowa law. All absences—whether excused or unexcused—count toward total days missed unless they fall within legally defined exemptions.

Des Moines Prep partners with families to encourage strong attendance habits, support students who begin to miss school, and remove barriers that interfere with regular attendance. When concerns arise, the school will communicate early, collaborate with families to develop an Attendance Success Plan, and implement interventions designed to improve attendance. At the same time, the school will follow required state guidelines regarding chronic absenteeism and truancy, including required meetings and county attorney notification when legally applicable.

Through proactive communication, supportive interventions, and shared responsibility, Des Moines Prep is committed to helping every student attend school consistently and fully engage in their learning.

Definitions

- **Chronic Absenteeism:** Absences (excused or unexcused) exceeding **10% of the school year**.
- **Truancy:** Student absence without a valid excuse for **20% or more** of the school year.

Exemptions Absences will **not** count toward chronic absenteeism or truancy when students:

- Meet graduation requirements or have obtained a high school equivalency
- Are excused by a court or judge
- Attend religious services or instruction
- Have legitimate medical reasons
- Have accommodations under an IEP or 504 plan
- Are otherwise exempt by Iowa law (e.g., military obligations, funerals, weddings)

Procedures

1. Monitor student attendance; identify students exceeding 5%, 10%, 15% absence thresholds.
2. At 15% non-exempt absences, convene a **School Engagement Meeting** with parents/guardians to create an **Absenteeism Prevention Plan**.
3. If the plan is not followed, refer the student to the **county attorney** as required by Iowa law.

Responsibility The School Principal (or designee) oversees policy implementation. Building administrators monitor daily attendance and manage interventions.

Policy 506.1 – Education Records Access

Purpose & Policy Statement: Des Moines Prep maintains and protects the confidentiality of student education records as required by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), Iowa Code, and applicable federal regulations. The school recognizes the right of parents, guardians, and eligible students to access, inspect, and seek amendment of education records, while also ensuring that student information is disclosed only as permitted by law.

The school's policy is to ensure that all employees with access to student records uphold these privacy protections and use student information only for legitimate educational purposes. Des Moines Prep will provide annual notification of these rights and establish procedures to ensure compliance with all applicable privacy and recordkeeping requirements.

Definitions

- **Education Records:** Records maintained by the school directly related to a student.
- **Eligible Student:** A student age 18 or older, or attending post-secondary education; parents/guardians of dependent students retain access rights.

Rights of Parents / Guardians / Eligible Students

- Right to inspect and review records within **45 calendar days** of request.
- Right to request copies (fees may apply, unless it prevents access).
- Right to request explanation or interpretation of records.

Disclosure Without Consent Records may be disclosed without consent for:

- School officials with legitimate educational interest
- Other schools for transfers
- Auditing or reporting
- Health or safety emergencies
- Directory information (with annual notice)
- As otherwise permitted by law

Amendments / Challenges Parents/guardians or eligible students may request corrections; if denied, they may submit a written explanation for inclusion in the record.

Annual Notification Des Moines Prep will notify annually of these rights, in the student's/parent's primary language if feasible.

Policy 104 – Anti-Bullying / Anti-Harassment

Purpose & Policy Statement Des Moines Prep is committed to providing all students with a safe, supportive, and inclusive learning environment, free from bullying, harassment, intimidation, and discriminatory behavior. Harassment and bullying are strictly prohibited and violate both school policy and state law.

Bullying and harassment—whether electronic, written, verbal, physical, or relational—undermine student well-being and interfere with a student’s ability to learn, participate in school activities, and benefit from school services. Such conduct is not tolerated on school property, during school functions or school-sponsored activities, on school transportation, or in any setting where the conduct significantly impacts the school environment.

Des Moines Prep takes all allegations of bullying and harassment seriously. Reports will be responded to promptly, investigated thoroughly, and addressed with appropriate disciplinary and remedial actions. The school is committed to fostering an environment of respect, accountability, and prevention, ensuring that every student feels safe, supported, and empowered to thrive academically and socially.

Scope Applies to all school property, vehicles, school-sponsored events, and off-campus conduct materially affecting school participation.

Prohibited Conduct Repeated and/or targeted electronic, written, verbal, or physical conduct that:

- Places a student in fear of harm, and/or
- Substantially interferes with health or academics

Reporting / Complaint Procedures

- Complaints can be submitted by students, staff, parents, ,volunteers or members of the community
- Complaints should be submitted to the school principal who should ensure the Superintendent (or designee) is informed of the formal complaint
- Complaints must be filed within **180 days** of the incident.
- Investigations begin promptly; updates provided every 20 working days. Written findings issued within 60 working days.
- Identities and evidence kept confidential as much as possible.

Retaliation Prohibited Retaliation against complainants, witnesses, or participants is strictly prohibited. Disciplinary consequences may include suspension, expulsion, or termination.

Dissemination & Review This policy appears in handbooks, enrollment materials, and on the school website; reviewed annually by the Board.

Anti-Bullying / Anti-Harassment Forms

1. Complaint Form

Des Moines Prep – Anti-Bullying / Harassment Complaint Form

Complaint Name	
Role (<i>circle one</i>)	Student Parent Staff Volunteer Other:
Date(s) of Incident	
Location	
Description of Incident	
Alleged Perpetrators	
Witness(s)	
Requested Remedy	
Signature	
Today's Date	

2. Witness Disclosure Form

Des Moines Prep - Anti-Bullying / Harassment Witness Disclosure Form

Witness Name	
Relationship to School (circle one)	Student Parent Staff Volunteer Other:
Date(s) of Incident	
Location	
Incident Observed	
Observed Facts	
Prior Reports Made? (circle one)	Yes No Unsure
Signature	
Today's Date	

3. Disposition of Complaint Form

Des Moines Prep - Anti-Bullying / Harassment Disposition Form

Complainant Name	
Date Received	
Investigator	
Date Investigation Completed	
Findings (<i>circle one</i>)	Substantiated Unsubstantiated Inconclusive
Action Taken	
Recommendations	
Appeals Info Provided (<i>circle one</i>)	Yes No
Investigator Signature	
Today's Date	