

## School Attendance Matters (SAM): Students Under 12 years old

### What is SAM?

SAM is a Saint Paul Public School District initiative aimed at improving attendance as well as explaining the truancy process to families and guardians.

### What is Minnesota law regarding school attendance?

Once enrolled in school, a child 5 years old to 17 years old (unless already graduated from High School), must attend school every day, every class, on time, unless lawfully excused.

### What is considered an excused absence or tardy?

Absence and Tardy (Excused)	Absence and Tardy (Unexcused)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Illness:</b> Fever 100° or higher, vomiting, diarrhea (for 3 or more days of illness, a doctor's note may be required)</li> <li>• <b>Religious Holidays</b></li> <li>• <b>Extreme Family Emergencies:</b> House fire, death in the family, etc...</li> <li>• <b>Medical, Mental or Dental Appointments:</b> When possible, schedule appointments outside the school day</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Travel</b></li> <li>• <b>Weather</b></li> <li>• <b>Babysitting</b></li> <li>• <b>Needed at Home</b></li> <li>• <b>Tired from work or travel</b></li> <li>• <b>Car Trouble</b></li> <li>• <b>Missed Bus</b></li> <li>• <b>Not Immunized</b></li> <li>• <b>Overslept</b></li> </ul>

### What will happen if my child has absences or tardies that are unexcused?

Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Step 5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Attendance Alert , Letter sent home</li> <li>➤ Attendance printout sent home with letter</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Referral to Informational Meeting with the Ramsey County Attorney's SAM Program.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Attendance contract completed and signed by family and school staff at school or by phone</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Referral to Student Attendance Review Team (SART): A private meeting with Ramsey County Attorney's office, School District Staff and Ramsey County Child Protection</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Referral to Petition for Court and referral to Child Protection</li> </ul>

### How can I Avoid SAM Action?

Parent/Guardian must communicate every time a child is absent. **Please note not all absences will be excused even when communicated to school staff.** Call or send a note to the main office and state the reason for the absence (be specific as to why your child missed school).

### Where can I find more information?

- Saint Paul Public Schools SAM Page <https://www.spps.org/attendance>