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Sent: Thursday, January 27, 2022 9:42 PM
To: K-8 eLearning
Subject: Tonka Online K-8

TonkaOnline

Tonka Online K-8

Issue #6 | January 28, 2022

Quicklinks

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Greetings Tonka Online Community,

It is hard to believe we are into the second semester! Thank you for your partnership and support as we continue to provide an outstanding learning experience for our K-8 online students.

As we head into the second half of the year, please be watching for important dates and events in both our Newsletter and from teachers. Spring is filled with activities, speakers, as well as ways to get engaged and learn more about the many opportunities in the Minnetonka Public Schools.

Have a great end to your week and as always, please reach out with any questions you might have.

Warmly,

Nicole Snedden, Ed.S. (NBCT)
Tonka Online K-8 Program Coordinator

Attendance Line

952-283-8127

Family Helpdesk

952-401-5123
familyhelpdesk@minnetonkaschools.org

District Service Center

952-401-5000

Important Dates

- February 10 - Experience Minnetonka, Virtual Tour of Minnetonka High School 5:30pm-8pm
 - February 10 - Executive Functioning Parent Session - 6:30pm-8:00pm (more information to come)
 - February 11 - Submit Photo for Tonka Online Yearbook (see information below)
 - February 18 - 2 Hour Early Release
 - February 21 - No School; Presidents Day
 - March 4 - No School; Parent/Teacher Conferences
 - March 25 - Last Day to purchase a Tonka Online Yearbook
 - March 28-April 1 - No School; Spring Break
 - April 4 - No School; Grading and Planning
 - April 5 - Classes Resume
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Yearbooks Information

Smile and say cheese! We are in the process of putting together our Tonka Online K-8 yearbook and here is where we need you. If your student had their photo taken with Strawbridge Studios in November, please don't upload another picture, as we already have these photos. If you were unable to get your photo taken, please use the - [submit photo here](#) - link to upload your student's photo. Guidelines for submissions are included in the link. Please complete this by, **Friday, February 11th**.

If you are interested in ordering a yearbook you can use the order the [Tonka Online K-8 Yearbook](#) link provided.



Skyward

Absence Requests - Skyward

There are two ways to enter an absence request:

1. Call the attendance line at 952-287-8127
2. Enter Request in Skyward (see directions below)

If you know of a future absence for your student(s), you can complete and submit an absence request in Skyward by following the steps below:

1. Go to Skyward and click on Attendance from the left column.
 2. From Attendance, click on Enter Absent Request.
 3. From here, each of your children will be listed. Click on Add Request for the child you are entering and absence for.
 4. Enter Start Date-Time, End Date- Time and the Reason and optional Comments.
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8th Grade Registration

Spring is an exciting time in the life of an 8th grader, and registration for high school is right around the corner! In the upcoming weeks you will be receiving more information, both via email and through US Mail, regarding what this entails. On **Thursday, February 10th**, Minnetonka High School Counselors will be visiting with the 8th grade class virtually from **3-3:30pm**.

Later on the evening of **February 10th, from 5:30pm-8pm**, the high school will be offering a virtual tour called, "Experience Minnetonka." This event focuses on drop in presentations and Q & A regarding the high school. More information can be found on the Minnetonka High School Registration Page, located [HERE](#).



K-5 Guest Speaker - Nothando Zulu

In February, K-5 Tonka Online students will have the opportunity to listen to well-known and local legend Nothando Zulu! Nothando has reached thousands with her lively and engaging storytelling style since she started performing in 1977. As a child she was telling traditional tales in her school in Virginia at the age of 8. Her stories truly bear witness to her rural, southern background. She performs for all ages and sizes of audiences, big or small. Years of performance earned Nothando the distinguished title of a Master Storyteller, and her skill and technique shine clearly as she captivates audiences. She is the President and Director of Black Storytellers Alliance, a non profit organization dedicated to maintaining the oral storytelling tradition as practiced by African people in the Diaspora.

UPDATED ATTENDANCE GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES

Attendance Guidelines and Procedures K-5

ATTENDANCE

It is your student's responsibility to attend school whenever he or she is healthy. For the sake of your students' education, please avoid unnecessary school absences, trips and medical appointments outside of school time if at all possible. The principal and/or coordinator will contact parents if absences become excessive.

REPORTING STUDENT ABSENCES

If your student is absent from school, please take the following steps.

1. Call the 24 hour attendance line at 952-283-8127 prior to the start of school.
2. Report the student's name (please spell the last name), grade, teacher's name, the reason for absence and length of absence.

Your cooperation helps us be sure of the safety and whereabouts of each of our students. If we do not hear from you and your parent/guardian, attendance staff will attempt to telephone you at home or at work. They may leave a message.

If you know of a future absence for your student(s), you can complete an absence request in Skyward by following the steps below.

1. Go to Skyward and click on Attendance from the left column.
2. From Attendance, click on Enter Absent Request.
3. From here, each of your students will be listed. Click on Add Request for the student you are entering and absence for.
4. Enter Start Date-Time, End Date-Time and the Reason and optional Comments.
5. Please submit prior to the absence in order to have up to a yearly total of 5 days accepted as an excused absence.

If a short-term family emergency arises and you cannot arrange for prior approval, the absence is unexcused but should not be reported if provided the student attends school regularly.

If a student comes to school after the start of the school day, the student is marked tardy for the morning. Attendance will be marked as present in the afternoon.

Attendance Policies: Schools are required to keep daily attendance on all students and hourly attendance records on second grade. Attendance is submitted to the state as part of the Compulsory Instruction law. Schools are required to inform parents of what absences are not excused. The law indicated that excused absences include medical and religious reasons as well as completion of Rule requirements. Schools are required to make reports of child neglect and or truancy to government agencies for students with unexcused absences per year.

It is our intention to work cooperatively with families to document the reasons for a student's absence. We know that families have many reasons beyond illness and emergencies, including vacations and celebrations. To that end, we established a process to allow up to a certain number of family activities/vacations to be documented as an excused absence provided the parent/guardian complete a school form and receive approval from the principal for such absences.

Attendance Guidelines and Procedures 6-8

Excerpts from Policy #502: We believe that regular attendance in school and being in class on time are important factors in student success in academic work, including success in meeting state and local requirements for graduation. Students who attend school on time develop better socially, establish better communication with their teachers, acquire important lifetime habits such as self-sufficiency and responsibility and have more success academically.

STUDENT'S RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the student's responsibility to:

1. attend all assigned classes and other instructional activities on time every day that school is in session;
2. be aware of and follow the correct procedures when absent from an assigned class or other instructional activity;
3. request any missed assignments due to an absence; and complete assigned work in a timely manner.

School authorized excused absences:

1. Approved field trips
2. Interscholastic athletic and fine arts competitions and events
3. Student recognition/awards ceremonies

4. Suspension from class or school
5. Other activities as approved by the school

Note: Excused absences due to Vacation and Personal Family reasons, are limited to 5 days per school year.

Unexcused Absences: These are absences which are not authorized by the parent or guardian or the school. The following are absences which will not be excused:

1. Class “cuts” or “skips”.
2. Family trips/vacations for which NO PRIOR arrangements have been made with the school.
3. Other absences not authorized by the school or parent/guardian.

To view the entire District Policy #502 (Student Attendance and Truancy), visit:

<https://link.edgepilot.com/s/do3ccb24/LeSx5TTdHEiKw6gNstFlg?u=http://www.minnetonkaschools.org/uploaded/Do>

Teachers may require students to be present in their Google Meet during part or all of a class period. What does this look like for Tonka Online students?

Teachers need verification that students are present and ready for learning. They are able to do this in the following ways:

- Initial check in at beginning of synchronous classes via video, voice, or chat
- End of class check for synchronous classes via video, voice, or chat
- Asynchronous check in not tied to a learning target (ie: exit ticket, discussion board post, etc.)

Before students leave synchronous classes for quick breaks (bathroom, home issue, etc.):

- They must tell the teacher BEFORE leaving that they need to step away with an expected return time—no reason needed.
- If the teacher has concerns about length of time or frequency of breaks, they will contact the student privately, and if necessary, teachers will work with the counselor and coordinator to help resolve any issues.
- Teachers will discuss with students when it is and isn't appropriate to leave the Meets (not during brief instructions or activities, etc.).

When students stop engaging:

If teachers notice a student is not participating in class (ie: in a breakout session, class discussion, via chat), they will:

- Call the student via chat and voice
- Message student privately via Schoology
- If there is no response to the teacher, the teacher will mark the student absent, and parents will be contacted.

Minnetonka Public School District would like to continue connecting with you via email. If you prefer to be removed from our list, please contact Minnetonka Public School District directly. To stop receiving all email messages distributed through our SchoolMessenger service, follow this link and confirm: [Unsubscribe](#)

SchoolMessenger is a notification service used by the nation's leading school systems to connect with parents, students and staff through voice, SMS text, email, and social media.