

Book	Policy Manual
Section	Policies for the Board, 33-2
Title	Copy of ATTENDANCE
Code	po5200 Jon, Julie, Katie - Done
Status	
Adopted	December 9, 2019
Last Revised	March 11, 2024

## 5200 - **ATTENDANCE**

The Board will enforce regular student attendance in the District's program in which each student is enrolled as required pursuant to State law. Further, the Board recognizes that the District's educational program is predicated upon the participation of each student in the program of instruction in which the student is enrolled and required to attend. Student success requires continuity of instruction and program participation. For purposes of this policy, the regular period and hours of instruction including both those periods and hours a student's program require that they are in school as well as any attendance requirements defined as part of a course of virtual instruction, or a combination of the more than one type of instructional delivery.

All children between six (6) and eighteen (18) years of age shall attend school regularly during the full period and hours, religious holidays excepted, that the school in which the child is enrolled is in session until the end of the term, quarter, or semester of the school year in which the child becomes eighteen (18) years of age, unless they fall under an exception under State law, this policy, or administrative guideline issued under this policy. A child who is enrolled in five (5) year-old kindergarten shall attend school regularly, religious holidays excepted, during the full period and hours that kindergarten is in session until the end of the school term.

### **Parent Notification of Absence Required**

The District Administrator shall require, from the parent of each student or from an adult student, who has been absent for any reason either a written or oral notification stating the reason for the absence and the time period covered by the absence, except a parent-excused, pre-planned absence requires written notification as indicated below. The Board reserves the right to verify such statements and to investigate the cause of each absence.

### **School Attendance Officer**

The District Administrator shall designate an administrator at each school to be the School Attendance Officer. The School Attendance Officer shall perform any duties and responsibilities as required by State law, this policy, and any administrative guidelines issued by the school. The duties of the School Attendance Officer shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

- A. Determining daily from attendance reports submitted by teachers which students enrolled in the school are absent from school and whether the absence is excused.
- B. Initiate communication with parent, guardian, and/or student to verify absence and promote school engagement.
- C. Submitting to the District Administrator, on or before August 1st of each year, a report of the number of students enrolled in the school who were absent in the previous year and whether the absences were excused. The District Administrator shall then submit this information to the State Superintendent.
- D. Providing student attendance information to individuals and agencies for purposes authorized by State law and the Board's Policy 8330 - Student Records.

### **Excused Absences**

As required under State law, a student shall be excused from school for the following reasons:

**A. Physical or Mental Condition**

The student is temporarily not in proper physical or mental condition to attend a school program. Absences for this reason may be excused by oral or written notification to the attendance officer by the adult student or minor student's parent. The attendance officer in appropriate circumstances may require a written statement from a health care provider describing the condition and excusing the student for a period not to exceed thirty (30) calendar days.

**B. Obtaining Religious Instruction**

To enable the student to obtain religious instruction outside the school during the required school period (see Policy 5223 - Absences for Religious Instruction).

**C. Parent-Excused Pre-Planned Absence**

The student has been excused in writing by their parent before the absence for any reason. A student may not be excused for more than ten (10) days per school year under this paragraph and must complete any course work missed during the absence. Examples of reasons for being absent that should be counted under this paragraph include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. professional and other necessary appointments (e.g., medical, dental, and legal) that cannot be scheduled outside of the school day
2. to attend a funeral
3. legal proceedings that require the student's presence
4. college visits
5. job fairs
6. vacations

**D. Religious Holiday**

For observance of a religious holiday consistent with the student's creed or belief.

**E. Suspension or Expulsion**

The student has been suspended or expelled.

**F. Program or Curriculum Modification**

The Board has excused the student from regular school attendance to participate in a program or curriculum modification leading to high school graduation or a high school equivalency diploma as provided by State law.

**G. High School Equivalency – Secured Facilities**

The Board has excused a student from regular school attendance to participate in a program leading to a high school equivalency diploma in a secured correctional facility, a secured child caring institution, a secure detention facility, or a juvenile portion of a county jail, and the student and the student's parent(s) agree that the student will continue to participate in such a program.

**H. Election Day Official**

A high school student, including students enrolled in private schools and students enrolled in home-based private education, age sixteen (16) or seventeen (17) is permitted to be excused to serve as an election official provided that the following criteria are met: 1) the student has the permission of their parent to serve as an election official on election day; 2) the student has signed up and the municipal clerk has informed the principal that the student has been assigned to serve in this capacity; and 3) the student has at least a 3.0-grade point average or equivalent, or has met alternative criteria established by Board, if any. The principal shall promptly notify the municipal clerk or the board of election commissioners of the municipality that appointed the child as an election official if the child no longer has at least a 3.0-grade point average or the equivalent, or no longer meets the

established alternative requirements. A student's absence to serve as an election official under this policy shall be treated as an excused absence. Where possible students are encouraged to provide advance notice as much as possible. Students are responsible for completing any missed school work and responsible for making appropriate arrangements to do so.

**A student may be excused from school, as determined by the School Attendance Officer, or the School Attendance Officer's designee, for the following reasons:**

**( x ) Quarantine**

**Quarantine of the student's home by a public health officer.**

~~**( - ) Illness of an Immediate Family Member**~~

~~**The illness of an immediate family member.**~~

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~~**( - ) Emergency**~~

~~**An emergency that requires the student to be absent because of familial responsibilities or other appropriate reasons.**~~

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~~**( - ) Work at Home Due to Absence of Parents**~~

~~**To work at home due to the absence of the student's parents. Absences under this section shall not exceed \_\_\_\_\_ ( ) days nor be granted to any student younger than \_\_\_\_\_ ( ) years of age.**~~

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~~**( - ) Severe Weather Conditions**~~

~~**In the parent's reasonable judgment, weather conditions are a danger to the health and welfare or safety of the student.**~~

**( X ) Sounding Taps**

**A student in grades 6-12 may be excused for the purpose of sounding "Taps" during military honors funeral for a deceased veteran.**

**Parent Communication**

It is the expectation that the parent/guardian initiates communication with school personnel within 48 hours of the absence to verify the absence.

**Unexcused Absences**

Unexcused absences are absences from school for part or all of one (1) or more days from school without an acceptable excuse. Unexcused absences demonstrate a deliberate disregard for the educational program and are considered a serious matter. The District Administrator shall develop administrative guidelines to address unexcused absences.

**Definitions**

**A. Truancy**

A student will be considered truant if the student is absent part or all of one (1) or more days from school during which the School Attendance Officer, principal, or a teacher has not been notified of the legal cause of such absence by the parent of the absent student. A student who is absent intermittently for the purpose of defeating the intent of the Wisconsin Compulsory Attendance Statute 118.15, Wis. Stats., will also be considered truant.

**B. Habitual Truant**

A student will be considered a habitual truant if the student is absent from school without an acceptable excuse for part or all of five (5) or more days on which school is held during a school semester.

**C. Part of a School Day**

Part of a school day is any time period within a school day, which is from the time the first class period of that day begins until the end of the last class period of that day.

**Tardiness/Late Arrival and Early Dismissal**

It is necessary that a student be in attendance throughout the school day, or as required by the student's virtual instruction program, in order to benefit fully from the educational program of the District. Unless excused per this policy, tardiness, or

late arrival, occurs when a student arrives at the student's registered class location after the courses scheduled start time. Unless excused, early dismissal occurs when a student leaves the student's registered class location prior to the end of the class period or the end of the school day. Tardiness and early dismissal can occur more than once per day. Tardiness and early dismissal constitute being absent for part of a school day.

The Board recognizes, however, that from time-to-time compelling circumstances require that a student be late to school or dismissed before the end of the school day.

As agent responsible for the education of the children of this District, the Board shall require that the school be notified in advance of such absences by written or personal request of the student's parent, who shall state the reason for the tardiness or early dismissal. Justifiable reasons shall be determined by the School Attendance Officer.

No student shall be released to anyone who is not authorized such custody by the parents.

### **Partial and Full Day Absence**

Per the Wausau School District:

One-Half Day of School Absence: Arriving at or leaving school and missing thirty (30) minutes or more of either the morning or the afternoon session at the elementary level and missing 50% of the instructional day at the secondary level. Attendance at the secondary level is taken by class period. Missing ten (10) minutes of a class period constitutes an absence for that class period.

Full Day of School Absence: Three-fourths (3/4) of the instructional day at the secondary and elementary level is considered a full day absence.

### **Truancy**

A student will be considered truant if s/he is absent part or all of one (1) or more days from school during which the School Attendance Officer, principal, or a teacher has not been notified of the legal cause of such absence by the parent of the absent student. A student who is absent intermittently for the purpose of defeating the intent of the Wisconsin Compulsory Attendance Statute Sec. 118.15, Wis. Stats. will also be considered truant.

A student will be considered a habitual truant if s/he is absent from school without an acceptable excuse for part or all of five (5) or more days on which school is held during a school semester.

Designated school staff will consistently review student attendance records and attempt to actively engage the student and parent/guardian when attendance concerns are identified. The following actions may be utilized, but not limited to, to support and promote student attendance:

- A. procedures to be followed for notifying the parents of the unexcused absences of a student who is truant or a habitual truant and for meeting and conferring with such parents
- B. plans and procedures for identifying truant children of all ages and returning them to school, including the identity of school personnel to whom a truant child shall be returned
- C. methods to increase and maintain public awareness of and involvement in responding to truancy within the School District
- D. a provision addressing the immediate response to be made by school personnel when a truant child is returned to school
- E. the types of truancy cases to be referred to the District Attorney and the time periods within which the District Attorney will respond to and take action on the referrals
- F. plans and procedures to coordinate the responses to the problems of habitual truants, as defined under Sec. 118.16(1)(a), Wis. Stats., with public and private social services agencies and law enforcement
- G. methods to involve the truant child's parent in dealing with and solving the child's truancy problem

### **Notice of Truancy**

The School Attendance Officer shall notify a truant student's parent of the student's truancy and direct the parent to return the student to school no later than the next day on which school is in session or to provide an excuse for the absence. The notice under this paragraph shall be given before the end of the second school day after receiving a report of an unexcused absence. The notice may be made by electronic communication, personal contact, telephone call, or 1st class mail, and a written record of this notice shall be kept. This notice must be given every time a student is truant until the student becomes a habitual truant.

### **Notice of Habitual Truancy**

When a student initially becomes a habitual truant, the School Attendance Officer shall provide a notice to the student's parent, by registered or certified mail, or by 1st class mail. The School Attendance Officer may simultaneously notify the parent of the habitually truant student by an electronic communication. The notice must contain the following:

- A. a statement of the parent's responsibility under State law to cause the student to attend school regularly;
- B. a statement that the parent or student may request program or curriculum modifications for the student under State law and that the student may be eligible for enrollment in a program for children at risk;
- C. a request that the parent meet with the appropriate school personnel to discuss the student's truancy;

The notice shall include the name of the school personnel with whom the parent should meet, a date, time, and place for the meeting, and the name, address, and telephone number of a person to contact to arrange a different date, time, or place. The date for the meeting shall be within five (5) school days after the date that the notice is sent, except that with the consent of the student's parent the date for the meeting may be extended for an additional five (5) school days.

- D. a statement of the penalties, under State law or local ordinances that may be imposed on the parent upon failure to cause the child to attend school regularly as required by State law;-
- E. if the student is attending the District through the Open Enrollment Program, each notification shall also inform the parent: (1) that the student's open enrollment may be terminated if the student is habitually truant; and (2) the process described in Board Policy 5113 - Open Enrollment Program (Inter-District), which the parent or student may follow if they believe the student was erroneously marked truant.

The School Attendance Officer will also continue to notify the parent of a habitual truant's subsequent unexcused absences.

### **Referral to the District Attorney**

Truancy cases may be referred to the District Attorney. The School Attendance Officer will ensure that appropriate school personnel have done the following before any case is referred to the District Attorney:

- A. met with the student's parent to discuss the student's truancy or attempted to meet with the student's parent and received no response or were refused;
- B. provided an opportunity for educational counseling to the student to determine whether a change in the student's curriculum would resolve the student's truancy and have curriculum modifications under State law;
- C. evaluated the student to determine whether learning problems may be a cause of the student's truancy and, if so, have taken steps to overcome the learning problems, except that the student need not be evaluated if tests administered to the student within the previous year indicate that the student is performing at grade level;
- D. conducted an evaluation to determine whether social problems may be a cause of the student's truancy and, if so, have taken appropriate action or made appropriate referrals.

Note that paragraph A. is not required if the meeting between school personnel, the student, and the student's parent, which was requested in the Notice of Habitual Truancy to the parent, did not occur within ten (10) school days after the Notice was sent. Paragraphs B., C., and D. are not required if appropriate school personnel were unable to carry out the activity due to the student's absences from school.

### **Make-up Course Work and Examinations**

Students who are absent from school, whether the absence was excused or unexcused, shall be permitted to make-up course work and examinations missed during the absence when they return to school. It is the student's responsibility to contact his/her teachers to determine what course work and examinations must be made-up. Teachers shall have the

discretion to assign substitute course work and examinations. Teachers shall also have the discretion to specify where and when examinations and course work shall be completed, including outside regular school hours. The time for completing the work shall be commensurate with the length of the absence unless extended by the principal based upon extenuating circumstances.

Revised 7/13/20

Revised 6/13/22

Revised 5/8/23

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Legal                      7.30(2)(am), Wis. Stats.  
                                  118.15, Wis. Stats.  
                                  118.153, Wis. Stats.  
                                  118.16, Wis. Stats.  
                                  118.162, Wis. Stats.