

**Regulation #5113**  
**Student Attendance, Truancy and**  
**Chronic Absenteeism**  
**(formerly Student Attendance)**

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6 **I. Attendance and Truancy**

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8 A. Definitions for Section I

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10 1. **“Absence”** - any day during which a student is not considered “in attendance” at  
11 his/her assigned school, or on a school sponsored activity (e.g. field trip), for at least  
12 one half of the school day.
- 13  
14 2. **“Disciplinary absence”** - Any absence as a result of school or district disciplinary  
15 action. Any student serving an out-of-school suspension or expulsion should be  
16 considered absent. Such absence is not considered excused or unexcused for  
17 attendance and truancy purposes.
- 18  
19 3. **“Educational evaluation”** - for purposes of this policy, an educational evaluation is  
20 an assessment of a student’s educational development, which, based upon the  
21 student’s presenting characteristics, would assess (as appropriate) the following areas:  
22 health, vision, hearing, social and emotional status, general intelligence, academic  
23 performance, communicative status and motor abilities.
- 24  
25 4. **“Excused absence”** - a student is considered excused from school if the school has  
26 received written documentation describing the reason for the absence within ten (10)  
27 school days of the student’s return to school, or if the child has been excluded from  
28 school in accordance with section 10-210 of the Connecticut General Statutes  
29 (regarding communicable diseases), and the following criteria are met:
- 30  
31 a. Any absence before the student’s tenth (10<sup>th</sup>) absence is considered excused when  
32 the student’s parent/guardian approves such absence and submits  
33

**#5113R(b)**

appropriate written documentation in accordance with this regulation.

b. For the student's tenth (10<sup>th</sup>) absence and all absences thereafter, a student's absences from school are, with appropriate documentation in accordance with this regulation, considered excused only for the following reasons:

- i. student illness (verified by an appropriately licensed medical professional);
- ii. religious holidays;
- iii. mandated court appearances (documentation required);
- iv. funeral or death in the family, or other emergency beyond the control of the student's family;
- v. extraordinary educational opportunities pre-approved by the district administrators and in accordance with Connecticut State Department of Education guidance and this regulation;
- vi. lack of transportation that is normally provided by a district other than the one the student attends.

c. A student, age five (5) to eighteen (18), whose parent or legal guardian is an active duty member of the armed forces who has been called for duty, is on leave from or has immediately returned from deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting, shall be granted ten (10) days of excused absences in any school year, and, in the discretion of the administration, additional excused absences to visit such student's parent or legal guardian with respect to the parent's leave or deployment. In the case of such excused absences, the student and parent or legal guardian are responsible for obtaining assignments from the student's teacher prior to any period of excused absence, and for ensuring that such assignments are completed by the student prior to his or her return to school.

5. "In Attendance" - Any day during which a student is present at the student's assigned school, or an activity sponsored by the school, for at least half of the regular school day.

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- 6. "Student" - a student enrolled in the Madison Public Schools (the "District").
- 7. "Truant" - any student five (5) to eighteen (18) years of age, inclusive, who has four (4) unexcused absences from school in any one month or ten (10) unexcused absences from school in any school year.
- 8. "Unexcused absence" - any absence from a regularly scheduled school day for at least one half of the school day, which is not excused or considered a disciplinary absence.

The determination of whether an absence is excused will be made by the building principal or his/her designee. Parents or other persons having control of the child may appeal that decision to the Superintendent or his/her designee, whose decision shall be final.

B. Mental Health Wellness Days

Any student enrolled in grades kindergarten to twelve, inclusive, shall be permitted to take two mental health wellness days during the school year, during which day such student shall not be required to attend school. No student shall take mental health wellness days during consecutive school days. Mental health wellness days shall be excused when permission by the student's parent/guardian is documented by the student's school, regardless of the number of absences a student has accrued in the school year. Mental health wellness days will not be included in reporting or referrals related to truancy. Mental health wellness day will count as an "absence" for determining chronic absenteeism, as defined in Section II of this policy.

BC. Written Documentation Requirements for Absences

- 1. Written documentation must be submitted for each incidence of absence within ten (10) school days of the student's return to school. Consecutive days of absence are considered one incidence of absence.
- 2. The first nine (9) days of absence will be excused upon receipt of a signed note from the student's parent/guardian, a signed note from a school official that spoke in person

102 with the parent/guardian regarding the absence, or a note confirming the absence by  
103 the school nurse or by a licensed medical professional, as appropriate. For any  
104 absence due to student illness, the signed note must include the specific symptom(s)  
105 exhibited by the student so that the District can monitor trends that would suggest the  
106 spread of COVID-19.

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- 108 3. For the student's tenth (10<sup>th</sup>) absence, and all absences thereafter, documentation of  
109 the absence must be submitted in accordance with paragraphs 1 and 2 above, and must  
110 also include the reason for the absence and the following additional information:

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112 a. student illness:

- 113
- 114 i. a signed note from a medical professional, who may be the school nurse, who  
115 has evaluated the student confirming the absence and giving an expected return  
116 date and including the specific symptom(s) exhibited by the student so that the  
117 District can monitor trends that would suggest the spread of COVID-19; or  
118 ii. a signed note from school nurse who has spoken with the student's medical  
119 professional and confirmed the absence, including the date and location of the  
120 consultation and including the specific symptom(s) exhibited by the student so  
121 that the District can monitor trends that would suggest the spread of COVID-  
122 19.

123 b. religious holidays: none.

124 c. mandated court appearances:

- 125 i. a police summons;  
126 ii. a subpoena;  
127 iii. a notice to appear;  
128 iv. a signed note from a court official; or  
129 v. any other official, written documentation of the legal requirement to  
130 appear in court.

- 132 d. funeral or death in the family, or other emergency beyond the control of the  
133 student's family: a written document explaining the nature of the  
134 emergency.
- 135 e. extraordinary educational opportunity pre-approved by the district  
136 administrators and in accordance with Connecticut State Department  
137 of Education guidance and this policy: written pre-approval from the  
138 administration, in accordance with this regulation.
- 139 f. lack of transportation that is normally provided by a district other than the  
140 one the student attends: none.

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142 4. Neither e-mail nor text message shall serve to satisfy the requirement of written  
143 documentation. In rare and extraordinary circumstances, a building administrator  
144 may, in his/her own discretion, accept the delivery of written documentation through a  
145 scanned copy sent by e-mail.

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147 5. The District reserves the right to randomly audit written documentation received,  
148 through telephone and other methods of communication, to determine its authenticity.

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150 6. Any absence that is not documented in accordance with this regulation within ten (10)  
151 school days after the incidence of absence will be recorded as unexcused. If  
152 documentation is provided within ten (10) school days, but is incomplete, the building  
153 principal may, at his/her own discretion, grant up to a five (5) school day extension for  
154 provision of the completed documentation.

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156 **ED.** Extraordinary Educational Opportunities

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- 158 1. To qualify as an extraordinary educational opportunity, the opportunity must:
- 159 a. be educational in nature and must have a learning objective related to the student's  
160 course work or plan of study;
- 161 b. be an opportunity not ordinarily available to the student;
- 162 c. be grade and developmentally appropriate; and

- 163 d. include content that is highly relevant to the student; while some opportunities will  
164 be relevant to all students, others will contain very specific content that would  
165 limit their relevance to a smaller group of students.  
166
- 167 2. Family vacations do not qualify as extraordinary educational opportunities.  
168
- 169 3. All requests for approval of extraordinary educational opportunities must:  
170 a. be submitted to the building principal in writing prior to the opportunity, but no  
171 later than ten (10) school days prior to the opportunity except in exceptional  
172 circumstances at the discretion of the building administrator;  
173 b. contain the signatures of both the parent/guardian and the student;  
174 c. include an outline of the learning objective of the opportunity and include detail as  
175 to how the objective is linked to the student's coursework or plan of study; and  
176 d. include additional documentation, where available, about the opportunity.  
177
- 178 4. The building principal shall provide a response in writing and include the following:  
179 a. either approval or denial of the request;  
180 b. brief reason for any denial;  
181 c. any requirements placed upon the student as a condition of approval;  
182 d. the specific days approved as excused absences for the opportunity;  
183 e. the understanding that the building administrator may withdraw its approval if the  
184 opportunity is canceled or the student fails to meet the agreed-upon requirements  
185 of the approval.  
186
- 187 5. All decisions of the building principal relating to extraordinary educational  
188 opportunities shall be final.  
189
- 190 6. Students who are granted excusal from school to participate in extraordinary  
191 educational opportunities are expected to share their experiences with other students  
192 and/or school staff when they return.  
193

194 7. Approval for an extraordinary educational opportunity is determined on a case-by-case  
195 basis and the analysis of individualized factors. An opportunity approved for one  
196 student may not be approved for another.

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198 D.E. Truancy Exceptions:

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200 1. A student five (5) or six (6) years of age shall not be considered truant if the parent or  
201 person having control over such student has appeared personally at the school district  
202 office and exercised the option of not sending the child to school at five (5) or six (6)  
203 years of age.

204

205 2. Until June 30, 2023, A student seventeen (17) years of age shall not be considered  
206 truant if the parent or person having control over such student consents to such  
207 student’s withdrawal from school. Such parent or person shall personally appear at the  
208 school district office and sign a withdrawal form indicating such consent. Such  
209 withdrawal form must include an attestation from a guidance counselor or school  
210 administrator from the school that the district provided the parent (or person having  
211 control of the child) with information on the educational options available in the  
212 school system and community.

213

214 3. Beginning July 1, 2023, a student who is eighteen (18) years of age or older may  
215 withdraw from school. Such student shall personally appear in person at the school  
216 District office and sign a withdrawal form. Such withdrawal form must include an  
217 attestation from a guidance counselor or school administrator from the school that the  
218 District provided such student with information on the educational options available in  
219 the school system and community.

220

221 4. Beginning July 1, 2023, a student seventeen (17) years of age shall not be considered  
222 truant if the parent or person having control over such child withdraws such child from  
223 school and enrolls such child in an adult education program pursuant to Conn. Gen.  
224 Stat. § 10-69. Such parent or person shall personally appear at the school District  
225 office and sign an adult education withdrawal and enrollment form. Such adult  
226 education withdrawal and enrollment form shall include an attestation (1) from a  
227 school counselor or school administrator of the school that the District has provided  
228 such parent or person with information on the educational options available in the  
229 school system and in the community, and (2) from such parent or person that such

230 child will be enrolled in an adult education program upon such child's withdrawal  
231 from school.

232  
233 35. If a parent or guardian of an expelled student chooses not to enroll the student  
234 in an alternative program, the student shall not be considered to be “truant.”

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236 EF. Readmission to School Following Voluntary Withdrawal

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238 1. Except as noted in paragraph 2 below, if a student voluntarily withdraws from school  
239 (in accordance with Section D.2, above) and subsequently seeks readmission, the  
240 Board may deny school accommodations to the student for up to ninety (90) school  
241 days from the date of the student’s withdrawal from school.

242  
243 2. If a student who has voluntarily withdrawn from school (in accordance with Section  
244 D.2, above) seeks readmission within ten (10) school days of his/her withdrawal, the  
245 Board shall provide school accommodations to the student not later than three (3)  
246 school days after the student requests readmission.

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248 EG. Determinations of Whether a Student is “In Attendance”:

249  
250 1. A student serving an out of school suspension or expulsion shall be reported as absent  
251 unless he or she receives an alternative educational program for at least one half of the  
252 regular school day. In any event, the absence is considered a disciplinary absence, and  
253 will not be designated as excused or unexcused.

254  
255 2. On early dismissal days and days shortened due to inclement weather, the regular  
256 school day for attendance purposes is considered to be the amount of instructional time  
257 offered to students on that day. For example, if school is open for four hours  
258 on a shortened day scheduled, a student must be present for a minimum of two hours  
259 in order to be considered “in attendance.”



261 3. Students placed on homebound instruction due to illness or injury in accordance with  
262 applicable regulations and requirements are counted as being “in attendance” for every  
263 day that they receive instruction from an appropriately certified teacher for an amount  
264 of time deemed adequate in accordance with applicable law.

265

266 **GH.** Procedures for students in grades K-8\*

267 1. Notification

268 a. Annually at the beginning of the school year and upon the enrollment of any child  
269 during the school year, the administration shall notify the parent or other person  
270 having control of the student enrolled in grades K - 8 in writing of the obligations  
271 pursuant to Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-184 to ensure that such a student attends school  
272 regularly or to show that the child is elsewhere receiving equivalent instruction in  
273 the studies taught in the District.

274

275 b. Annually at the beginning of the school year and upon the enrollment of any child  
276 during the school year, the administration shall obtain from the parent or other  
277 person having control of the student in grades K-8 a telephone number or other  
278 means of contacting such parent or other person during the school day.

279

280 2. Monitoring

281 Each school shall implement a system of monitoring individual unexcused absences of  
282 students in grades K-8. Whenever such a student fails to report to school on a  
283 regularly scheduled school day, school personnel under the direction of the building  
284 principal [or ~~his/her~~ designee] shall make a reasonable effort to notify the parent or  
285 other person having control of such student by telephone and by mail of the student's  
286 absence, unless school personnel have received an indication that the parent or other  
287 person is aware of the student's absence. [Reasonable efforts shall include two (2)  
288 attempts to reach the parent or other person at the telephone number provided by the  
289 parent or other person. Such attempts shall be recorded on a form provided by the  
290 Superintendent.] Any person who, in good faith, gives or fails to give such notice  
291 shall be immune from liability, civil or criminal, which might otherwise be incurred or

292 imposed and shall have the same immunity with respect to any judicial proceeding  
293 which results from such notice or failure to give notice.

294

295 HI. Procedures applicable to students ages five (5) to eighteen (18)

296 1. Intervention

297 a. When a student is truant, the building principal or his/her designee shall schedule a  
298 meeting with the parent (or other person having control of such student) and  
299 appropriate school personnel to review and evaluate the reasons for the student's  
300 truancy. This meeting shall be held no later than ten (10) days after the student  
301 becomes truant. The district shall document the meeting, and if parent or other  
302 person declines to attend the meeting, or is otherwise is non-  
303 responsive, that fact shall also be documented and the meeting shall proceed with  
304 school personnel in attendance.

305 b. When a student is truant, the Superintendent or his/her designee shall coordinate  
306 services with and referrals of students to community agencies providing child and  
307 family services, as appropriate. The district shall document efforts to contact and  
308 include families and to provide early intervention in truancy matters.

309 c. When a student is truant, the Superintendent or designee shall provide notice to the  
310 student's parent or guardian of the information concerning the existence and  
311 availability of the 2-1-1 Infoline program, and other pediatric mental and  
312 behavioral health screening services and tools described in Conn. Gen. Stat. § 17a-  
313 22r.

314  
315 d. Beginning July 1, 2023, when a student is truant, an appropriate school mental  
316 health specialist, as determined by the District, shall conduct an evaluation of the  
317 student to determine if additional behavioral health interventions are necessary for  
318 the well-being of the child. "School mental health specialist" means any person  
319 employed by the District to provide mental health services to students, including  
320 but not limited to a school social worker, school psychologist, trauma specialist,  
321 behavior technician, board certified behavior analyst, school counselor, licensed  
322 professional counselor or licensed marriage and family therapist.

323  
324 ee. If the Commissioner of Education determines that any school under the jurisdiction  
325 of Madison Board of Education (the "Board") has a disproportionately high rate of  
326 truancy, the district shall implement in that school a truancy intervention model  
327 identified by the Department of Education pursuant to Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-198e.

328 **ef.** In addition to the procedures specified in subsections (a) through (c) above, a  
329 regular education student who is experiencing attendance problems should be  
330 referred to the building Child Study Team [or other appropriate school-based team]  
331 to consider the need for additional interventions and/or assistance. The Team will  
332 also consider whether the student should be referred to a planning and placement  
333 team (“PPT”) meeting to review the student’s need and eligibility for special  
334 education. A special education student who is experiencing attendance problems  
335 should be referred to a PPT meeting for program review.

336 **eg.** Where the documented implementation of the procedures specified in subsections  
337 (a) through (d) above does not result in improved outcomes despite collaboration  
338 with the parent/guardian, the Superintendent or his/her  
339 designee may, with written parental consent, refer a student who is truant to a  
340 Youth Service Bureau.

341

342 **IJ.** Attendance Records

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344 All attendance records developed by the Board shall include the individual student’s  
345 state-assigned student identifier (SASID).

346

347 **II. Chronic Absenteeism**

348 **A. Definitions for Section II**

349 1. “Chronically absent child” - a child who is enrolled in a school under the  
350 jurisdiction of the Board and whose total number of absences at any time  
351 during a school year is equal to or greater than ten percent (10%) of the total  
352 number of days that such student has been enrolled at such school during such  
353 school year;

354 2. “Absence” - an excused absence, unexcused absence or disciplinary absence,  
355 as those terms are defined by the State Board of Education pursuant to section  
356 10-198b of the general statutes and these administrative regulations;

357           3. “District chronic absenteeism rate” - the total number of chronically absent  
358           children under the jurisdiction of the Board in the previous school year divided  
359           by the total number of children under the jurisdiction of the Board for such  
360           school year; and

361           4. “School chronic absenteeism rate” - the total number of chronically absent  
362           children for a school in the previous school year divided by the total number of  
363           children enrolled in such school for such school year.

364           B. Establishment of Attendance Review Teams

365           If the Board has a district chronic absenteeism rate of ten percent (10%) or higher,  
366           it shall establish an attendance review team for the school district.

367  
368           If a school under the jurisdiction of the Board has a school chronic absenteeism  
369           rate of fifteen percent (15%) or higher, it shall establish an attendance review team  
370           for that school.

371  
372           If the Board has more than one school with a school chronic absenteeism rate of  
373           fifteen percent (15%) or higher, it shall establish an attendance review team for the  
374           school district or at each such school.

375  
376           If the Board has a district chronic absenteeism rate of ten percent (10%) or higher  
377           and one or more schools with a school chronic absenteeism rate of fifteen percent  
378           (15%) or higher, it shall establish an attendance review team for the school district  
379           or at each such school.

380  
381           C. Composition and Role of Attendance Review Teams

382           Any attendance review team established under these regulations may include  
383           school administrators, guidance counselors, school social workers, teachers,  
384           representatives from community-based programs who address issues related to  
385           student attendance by providing programs and services to truants, as defined under  
386           I.A.7, and chronically absent children and their parents or guardians.

387 Each attendance review team shall be responsible for reviewing the cases of truants  
388 and chronically absent children, discussing school interventions and community  
389 referrals for such truants and chronically absent children and making any  
390 additional recommendations for such truants and chronically absent children and  
391 their parents or guardians. Each attendance review team shall meet at least  
392 monthly.

393

394 D. State Chronic Absenteeism Prevention and Intervention Plan

395 The Board and its attendance review teams, if any, will consider any chronic  
396 absenteeism prevention and intervention plan developed by the State Department  
397 of Education.

398

399 **III. Reports to the State Regarding Truancy Data**

400 Annually, each local and regional board of education shall include information  
401 regarding the number of truants and chronically absent children in the strategic school  
402 profile report for each school under its jurisdiction and for the school district as a  
403 whole submitted to the Commissioner of Education. Measures of truancy include the  
404 type of data that is required to be collected by the Department of Education regarding  
405 attendance and unexcused absences in order for the department to comply with federal  
406 reporting requirements and the actions taken by the board of education to reduce  
407 truancy in the school district.

408

409 **IV. Evolving State Department of Education Guidance**

410 The Board will comply with any and all guidance issued by the State Department of  
411 Education regarding attendance requirements, including during periods of blended  
412 learning, and regarding attendance requirements of students who choose not to  
413 participate.

414

415 Legal References:

416

417 Connecticut General Statutes § 10-220

418

419 Connecticut General Statutes § 10-184

420

421 Connecticut General Statutes § 10-186

422

423 Connecticut General Statutes § 10-198a

424

425 Connecticut General Statutes § 10-198b

426

427 Connecticut General Statutes § 10-198c

428

429 Connecticut General Statutes § 10-198d

430

431 Connecticut General Statutes § 10-198e

432

433 Connecticut General Statutes § 10-198f

434

435 Guidelines for Reporting Student Attendance in the Public School Information System  
436 (Connecticut State Department of Education, January 2008)

437

438 Connecticut State Board of Education Memorandum, *Definitions of Excused and*  
439 *Unexcused Absences* (June 27, 2012)

440

441 Connecticut State Department of Education, *Guidelines for Implementation of the*  
442 *Definitions of Excused and Unexcused Absences and Best Practices for Absence*  
443 *Prevention and Intervention* (April 2013)

444

445 Connecticut State Department of Education, *Reducing Chronic Absence in*  
446 *Connecticut's Schools: A Prevention and Intervention Guide for Schools and Districts*  
447 (April 2017)

448

449 Connecticut State Department of Education Memorandum, *Youth Service Bureau*  
450 *Referral for Truancy and Defiance of School Rules* (February 22, 2018)

451

452 Connecticut State Department of Education, *Youth Service Bureau Referral Guide*  
453 (February 2018)

454

455 ~~Connecticut State Department of Education, *Adapt, Advance, Achieve: Connecticut's*~~  
456 ~~*Plan to Learn and Grow Together* (June 29, 2020), available at [https://portal.et.gov/-](https://portal.et.gov/-/media/SDE/COVID-19/CTReopeningSchools.pdf)~~  
457 ~~[/media/SDE/COVID-19/CTReopeningSchools.pdf](https://portal.et.gov/-/media/SDE/COVID-19/CTReopeningSchools.pdf)~~

458

459 Connecticut State Department of Education Memorandum, *Mental Health Wellness*  
460 *Days* (January 24, 2022)