

## MIDDLETON-CROSS PLAINS AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

### Administrative Policy and Procedure Manual

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#### STUDENT ATTENDANCE

##### Policy

In accordance with state law, any person having under his/her control any child between six and 18 years of age or enrolled in 5 year old kindergarten shall cause the child to attend school regularly during the full period and hours that school is in session until the end of the term, quarter or semester in which the child becomes 18 years of age, unless he/she has a legal excuse, falls under one of the exceptions in state law, or has graduated from high school.

A child will be excused from regular school attendance if:

1. The child is temporarily not in proper physical or mental condition to attend a school program as documented by parent(s)/guardian(s) and a written physician statement when requested by the administration.
2. The District has received a parent(s)/guardian(s)'s permission to be absent from school to obtain religious instruction under the "released time" statute.
3. A parent or guardian has notified the school attendance office prior to the absence. A student may be excused by the parent(s)/guardian(s) under this provision for not more than 10 days per school year.
4. The child is absent for a reason that the Superintendent or designee has determined to be legitimate and the absence has the approval in writing of his/her parent(s)/guardian(s).
5. The child is participating in a program or curriculum modification approved by the Superintendent or designee, including programs leading to a student's high school graduation or high school equivalency diploma.
6. The child began a program leading to a high school equivalency diploma in a secured correctional facility, secured child caring institution, secure detention facility or juvenile portion of a county jail and agrees to continue to participate in the program.
7. The child has attended the National Guard Challenge Academy and has earned a high school equivalency diploma.

It is the responsibility of the parent(s)/guardian(s) to notify the school of student absences in accordance with established District procedures. When students are absent from school, the District assumes no responsibility for their activities.

The Superintendent or designee shall maintain procedures that specify the reasons for which students may be absent from school, specify the conditions under which students may be allowed to make up examinations and other coursework missed during an absence, determine appropriate action to serve as a deterrent to truancy and satisfy full attendance requirements.

## Procedures

### A. Absences and Excuses

#### 1. Excused Absences

Parent-Excused Absences - A student who is excused verbally or in writing by his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) will be excused from school. A student may be excused by the parent(s)/guardian(s) under this provision for not more than 10 days in a school year.

District-Excused Absences – The school attendance officer/designee may authorize additional absences pursuant to existing law for any of the following reasons.

(1) **Personal Illness** - Evidence that the student is not in proper physical or mental condition to attend school or an educational program. The district may request the parent(s)/guardian(s) to obtain a written statement from a physician or licensed practitioner as proof of the physical or mental condition of the student. Such excuse shall be made in writing, shall state the period of time for which it is valid and shall not exceed 30 days.

(2) **Family Illness** - An illness in the immediate family which requires the absence of the student because of family responsibility.

(3) **Appointments** - Medical, dental, chiropractic, vision or other valid professional appointments. Parent(s)/guardian(s) are requested to make their appointments during non-school hours. Parent(s)/guardian(s) may sign their child out of school before the appointment and sign them in following the appointment. A doctor's excuse may be required.

(4) **Funerals** - A death in the immediate family or funerals for close relatives.

(5) **Religious Holidays**

(6) **Court/Legal Matters** - A court appearance or other legal procedure which requires the attendance of the student or parent(s)/guardians.

(7) **Field Trips and Other Approved School Activities** - Attendance at special events of educational value as approved by the school attendance officer/designee; or approved school activities during class time.

(8) **Other** - Special circumstances that show good cause which are approved in advance by the school attendance officer or designee.

(9) **Guidelines for Consecutive Absences** – After a student is absent 15 consecutive days or more, considerations will be made for withdrawal then the principal will have ultimate discretion based on consultation with the superintendent, other level principals as necessary, and/or designee. Two possible considerations will be the history of the student absences and the reasons of absences. At the time of withdrawal, the delivery of academic instruction becomes the responsibility of the parent. The teacher and/or designee may offer guidelines and suggestions if appropriate.

(10) **Make Up Work** - With the exception of an expelled student, all students with excused absences will be given the opportunity to make up work missed in accordance with the following guidelines:

(a) It is the parent(s)/guardian(s) responsibility to contact the teacher(s) to make arrangements for making up work missed during an absence from school.

(b) Students who miss school will be given the opportunity, whenever possible, to make up work missed when they return to school.

If the parent(s)/guardian(s) feels that the absence falls under the "(8) Other" category listed above, they may submit a written statement signed by the parent(s)/guardian(s) explaining the reason for the absence. The principal/designee will make the final decision regarding the absence.

Truancy will be dealt with on an individual basis using input from appropriate personnel and conversations with the parent(s)/guardian(s). Appropriate procedural letters will be sent home from school as truancy frequency increases.

3. **Habitual Truant**  
Means a pupil who is absent from school without an acceptable excuse under sub (1) and s.118.15 for part or all of 5 or more days on which school is held during a semester, 118.16(1)(a).
4. **Truancy/Unexcused Absence**  
Means any absence of part or all of one or more days from school during which the school attendance officer, principal, or teacher has not been notified of the legal cause of such absence by the parent or guardian of the absent pupil, and also means intermittent attendance carried on for the purpose of defeating the intent of s. 118.15 (118.16(1) (c)).
5. **Tardy**  
A pattern of tardiness on the part of any student will be brought to the attention of the student's parent(s)/guardian(s). If it appears that the student is negligent, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken.

### **Responsibility for Attendance**

#### **1. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) Responsibility**

- a). When a student is absent, his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) shall contact the school during the day by the time established at each school. Failure to contact the school will result in a telephone call to the home or work place of the student's parent(s)/guardian(s).
- b). Parent(s)/guardian(s) are required to provide an explanation of absence(s) if one has not been provided on the day of the absence.
- c). In the case of anticipated absences, parent(s)/guardian(s) will provide an explanation prior to the absence.
- d). Parents should always check in and out at the office when they leave and return to school. Absences will be unexcused if the student does not first obtain a pass from the office and check out.
- e). If a student has seen a physician, dentist, chiropractor or other licensed health care professional, the District may require verification of the office visit.

#### **2. Student Responsibility**

- a). Students are required to attend all of their scheduled classes, and study halls unless they have obtained parental permission beforehand and a pass approved by the student attendance officer or designee.
- b). A student must complete any the course work assigned by the teacher(s).

#### **3. Teacher Responsibility**

- a). Teachers are required to emphasize the importance and necessity of good attendance.

- b). Teachers are required by law to take daily attendance in their classes and maintain a record of absences.
- c). Teachers with concerns about attendance are encouraged to contact parents (after approximately 3 days absence from a class)

**4. Principal (or Designee) Responsibility**

- a). Principals shall maintain office records for all excused and unexcused absences that occur in their school building.
- b). After repeated or frequent absences due to a student's illness, a principal may request the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) to obtain a written statement from a physician or licensed health care practitioner as proof of the physical or mental condition of the student. Such excuse shall be made in writing, shall state the period of time for which it is valid and shall not exceed 30 days.
- c). Attend meetings, when scheduled, with (community) service providers to discuss truancy and other problems.
- d) Principal/designee communicates with parents:
  - Initial Attendance Concern (more than 5 days)
  - Excessive absence (more than 10 days)
  - Tardiness (more than 10 days)
  - Truancy (5 unexcused absences after the first 10 days)
  - Habitual Truancy (more than 6-plus unexcused after the first 10 days)
    - 1. Social Assessment (contact social services to see if open file exists)
    - 2. Possible home visit with police or guidance
    - 3. Referral to police for violation of ordinance citation

Contacts with families may include one or more of the following:

- Phone call
- Letter or email
- Conference
- In-person visit
- Social worker involvement
- Community service providers

**5. School District Responsibility**

- a). The school district has a responsibility to communicate on a routine basis, the importance of regular school attendance to students and parent(s)/guardian(s)/

LEGAL REF.: Sections 118.15 Wisconsin Statutes  
118.153  
118.155  
118.16  
118.162  
118.163  
118.165  
Wisconsin Act 41

CROSS REF.: 323.3, Religious Observances  
342.2, Homebound Instruction  
342.4, Student at Risk Programs  
342.6, Program or Curriculum Modifications  
343.42, Youth Options Program  
345.6, Graduation Requirements  
347, Student Records  
420, School Admissions  
424, Public School Open Enrollment  
433, Assignment of Students to Schools (including Intradistrict Transfers)  
434.2, Student Work Release  
447.3, Student Suspension/Expulsion  
453.1, Emergency Nursing Services  
453.3, Communicable Diseases  
District Truancy Plan  
Gifted and Talented Program Plan  
Students at Risk Program Plan  
School Age Parents Program Plan  
Special Education Policy and Procedure Manual  
Student Code of Conduct

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