



Attendance/Truancy Plan

Approved by the Board of Education on

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Introduction

State law requires that any person having a child under their control who is between the ages of 6 and 18, shall cause the child to regularly attend school. The state law now also requires the parent or guardian of a child who is enrolled in a 5-year-old kindergarten class to cause the child to attend school regularly until the end of the school term. Any student who misses a part of any day of school without an acceptable excuse is truant. If a student misses all or part of 5 or more days during a school semester without an acceptable excuse, they are considered to be a habitual truant.

In addition to legal requirements, truancy results in significant consequences for students who miss school as well as for the community as a whole. The economic prosperity of the county, its crime rate and the general quality of life are all greatly impacted by truancy. Waupaca County competes economically, in the state as well as nationally and internationally. An educated workforce that can understand and perform tasks beyond the simplest levels is critical to local economic success. Criminal justice issues and the need to protect our community are also significantly influenced by truancy. Experts in the juvenile justice field overwhelmingly recognize that one of the greatest predictors of a young person's committing delinquent or criminal acts is a history of truancy. However, the biggest victims are the truants themselves. Statistics of the U.S. Census Bureau show that a person who graduates from high school can earn almost twice as much as someone who does not. An education will help students be informed citizens and have a better quality of life.

Wisconsin State Statute 118 states that each school board shall adopt a plan to address truancy. Therefore, the School District of Manawa adopts the following plan to address truancy:

Section A

Wis. Stats §118.162(4)(a)

Procedures to be followed for notifying the parents or guardians of the unexcused absences of habitual truants under §118.16(2)(cr) and for meeting and conferring with such parents or guardians.

State law requires that a school district notify parent(s)/guardian(s) of an absence by the end of the 2nd school day after the absence. Notice may be by personal contact, phone, or mail, but notice by personal contact or phone shall be attempted before notice by mail may be issued. The School District of Manawa will attempt to notify parent(s)/guardian(s) of a student's truancy on the day the unexcused absence occurred. A written record will be kept of all notices.

When the school notifies the parent(s)/guardian(s) of a child's truancy, it will direct the parent(s)/guardian(s) to return the child to school or provide a written request that the absences be excused under §118.15 by no later than the next day on which school is in session.

In the event that the district does due diligence in the truancy process and has circumstantial data that verifies the student is no longer residing within the School District of Manawa, the student can retroactively be end dated in the district's student information system as of the last day the student was documented to have been in attendance in the school district. This process would be applicable in a situation such as (but not limited to) when a student/family no longer resides within the school district boundaries and no known forwarding address has been provided to the district.

Due diligence shall include (but is not limited to):

- telephone call
- follow-up mailed letter summarizing telephone communications
- certified letter and regular mail

- welfare visit made to the last known home address by at least two of the following:
Principal, School Counselor, School Nurse, or Police Officer

When a student meets the criteria to be considered a habitual truant (any part of five days of a semester), the school official will schedule a truancy conference pursuant to Wis. Stats. §118.16(2)(cg) with the parents/guardians and the child. Notice shall be by certified mail, restricted delivery.

If a student continues to be truant, after the truancy conference has been attempted or held, a truancy referral may be submitted to the Waupaca County Department of Human/Social Services Juvenile Intake Offices. It is important to note that truancy referrals are not submitted on all habitual truants. School officials assess each case and determine the most appropriate way to address the truancy problem. This does not always include a truancy referral. Other options are considered and may be pursued.

In certain cases when it is determined by school personnel that the parent or guardian is contributing to the truancy of the child, a referral must be done through the Manawa Police Department or Waupaca County Sherriff's Department. Wis. Stats. §118.15. (See Section E)

Section B

Wis. Stats §118.162(4)(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.

The School District of Manawa believes that the primary purpose of schooling is for students to learn and be successful. In order for students to learn, they must attend school and attend school on a consistent basis. We also believe that all students can learn given sufficient time and appropriate support. School failures are often created by students not having sufficient time to master essential skills due to numerous hours and days away from the learning environment. Major gaps in learning are created by this lack of exposure to new materials and lack of sufficient time to process the new information.

School attendance and engagement is a major focus for the School District of Manawa. We know that without these features, students may not learn to their potential. Students who have high rates of nonattendance or truancy issues do not feel connected to the school. Without this engagement, it becomes very easy for students to walk away from the school, which leads to minimizing their future potential and success.

The School District of Manawa truancy plan is a collaborative model. It includes the students, parents, administrators, faculty, staff, and pupil services team. Teachers will take attendance every day in each class. From the teacher reports, school office staff will create absentee reports, which will be disseminated to all appropriate school personnel. Parents/guardians will be notified of their child's absences. School staff will attempt to contact them by phone and inform them of their child's absence(s). Messages will be left on home answering machines regarding the absence. Letters will be mailed to the home when parents/guardians are not directly contacted. Parents must notify the school of their child's absence, by calling the school or by sending a note to school regarding their child's absence(s). This collaborative team must work together responsibly, for it is a major foundation in keeping our students in school on a consistent basis.

The school administrators are the fulcrum of this collaborative model. They will maintain contact with the students and parents regarding their absences. The school administrator along with a school counselor, nurse, or law enforcement officer may make home visits to see if the family has special needs that may be addressed. If the absences do not decrease or cease, the school administrator may implement a truancy referral.

If social and/or learning problems are identified, the school must see that services are made available to the family to address these problems. Services may be provided on campus or the

student and/or family may be referred to outside counseling agencies. Where appropriate, the school district will offer counseling services, which are not of a clinical nature, through the school counselors, and at times, the school psychologist.

The relationship between the school and the home should be a shared, collaborative effort, which is focused on keeping the student in school, with consistent school attendance and with academic success.

Section C

Wis. Stats. §118.62(4)(c)

Methods to increase and maintain public awareness of and involvement in responding to truancy within the School District.

The School District of Manawa, in conjunction with the Waupaca County Truancy Committee, will, as a part of the Truancy Plan, prepare and submit for publication in local newspapers, periodic articles, commentaries and/or press releases. These pieces, relating to truancy statistics, court procedures, the consequences of truancy, and intervention options, should be published as can be arranged, but preferably in the beginning of the fall and/or spring semesters.

The School District of Manawa shall provide each student and their parents with a written attendance plan that includes the school's response to the truancy contained within each school's handbook.

The School District of Manawa, in conjunction with the Waupaca County Truancy Committee, will engage school staff and/or students in educational programming designed to teach them about the legal system's response to truancy. This program will cover, among other things, county circuit court prosecution for individual or multiple truanies, circuit court procedures and the possible outcome of circuit court intervention for habitual truants. This training may include presentations by staff from the Waupaca County District Attorney's Office, City of Manawa Police personnel, the county department of human/social services, and school counselor.

The goal of all of these efforts is to increase and maintain public awareness and involvement in truancy issues within the school district. It is ultimately intended to reduce truancy in the School District of Manawa by making students aware of the negative impact truancy has on the student's education as well as the consequences of violations of state and local laws related to truancy.

Section D

Wis. Stats §118.162(4)(d)

The immediate response to be made by school personnel when a truant child is returned to school.

Every possible attempt will be made by the school district to eliminate the barriers to the student's education and his/her engagement with the school.

The schools may use a transitional process to re-engage the student. Assessment of familial, psychosocial, academic and other special needs will be conducted. The school team responsible for completing the assessment may include the counselor, administrator, a law enforcement officer, school psychologist, nurse, teachers, and where appropriate, the county human services agent.

Mentoring or tutoring programs may be used to help minimize the academic gaps. The student may be given informal assessments to measure academic progress.

All students who are have truancy issues will be discussed at a school's building consultation team (BCT) meeting. The BCT may develop academic alternatives and/or an intervention plan to help the student become successful. If the student continues to have academic distress and to be truant, the BCT may make a referral for further assessment which may include the school psychologist. This assessment, along with other school data, will advise the parents and the school officials if the student may have any learning or emotional needs.

Any support services staff member, i.e., school counselor, or school psychologist, may provide counseling services. If more intense psychosocial services or family counseling is needed, a referral may be made to the appropriate agency.

Section E

Wis. Stats. §118.162(4)(e)

The types of truancy cases to be referred to the District Attorney for the filing of information under §938.24 or prosecution under §118.15(5) and the time periods within which the District Attorney will respond to take action on the referrals.

Where appropriate, the school district will refer habitual truancy cases to the appropriate county's department of human/social services juvenile intake office pursuant to §938.24 after the school has completed the requirements under §118.15(5).

The school district will use forms as directed by the district attorney for the student's county of home residence. This will ensure that the necessary information for successful prosecution of the case is provided to the district attorney's office.

An intake worker reviews the referral and decides initially how to best address the situation. A decision may be made to close the case, to handle the matter informally, or to send the matter on to the district attorney's office so that court action can be pursued. Upon receipt of a request for prosecution of a habitual truancy case from an intake worker, the representative of the district attorney's office may file a JIPS petition under §938.13(6), or otherwise act upon the request. The final decision whether or not to file a JIPS petition shall be at the discretion of the assistant district attorney (ADA) assigned to this case.

The district attorney's office is responsible for prosecuting habitual truants and/or their parents. When prosecuting parents or legal guardians of habitually truant students, the district attorney's office must look at two separate factors. Prior to commencing a prosecution, evidence must be provided to show that the school complied with all of the requirements under §118.16(5), Wis. Stats. Next, the situation must be evaluated to ensure that all of the elements of the offense can be proven beyond a reasonable doubt.

When prosecuting parents, the elements of the offense require that the child be 17 years of age or under when the trancies occurred, that the child was under the control of the individual charged, and that the person charged did not cause the child to regularly attend school. Here failure to "regularly attend school" means five or more unexcused absences. Failing to "cause a child to regularly attend school" includes preventing the child from attending and failing to make the child attend.

Section 118.16(5) Wis. Stats. sets forth procedural requirements a school must meet prior to referring a truancy situation for prosecution. First, a school representative must meet or attempt to meet with a parent or guardian. This meeting is designed to discuss and to try and resolve the truancy problem. For a meeting to be attempted, the school must notify the parent/guardian of the situation and establish a time and place to meet. If the parent/guardian either fails to appear or to contact the school to reschedule, or refuses to meet, the attempt is complete. State statute requires that a school send notice of this meeting, via registered or certified mail. The meeting shall be within 5 school days after the date that the notice is sent, except with the consent of the parent or guardian the date for the meeting may be extended for an additional 5

school days. Second, the school must provide an opportunity for educational counseling to determine whether a change in class schedule will resolve the truancy problem. The majority of cases involving the prosecution of parents involve elementary school children where a change in curriculum is not available. Third, the child must be evaluated to determine if a learning problem is contributing to the truancy. A new evaluation is not necessary if an evaluation was completed within the last school year. If it is determined that there are learning problems that are contributing to the truancy, the school must take steps to overcome the learning problems. Lastly, the child must also be evaluated to determine whether a social problem exists that is contributing to the truancy. If such a problem is found, the school must take appropriate action to resolve or refer the matter to the appropriate agency for resolution.

Once all the procedural requirements under §118.16(5) are met, the matter is evaluated to determine whether the evidence will prove the elements of the offense. If the procedural requirements are not met, the matter is referred back to the school for compliance with §118.16(5).

Section F

Wis. Stats. §118.162(4)(f)

Plans and procedures to coordinate the responses to the problems of habitual truancy, as defined under 118.16(1)(a), with public and private social service agencies.

Habitual school truancy is a problem that can have a serious impact on a community. The county department of human/social services and the schools of Waupaca County are working cooperatively to address school truancy.

The county department of human/social services is responsible to address all habitual truancy referrals received from the county school districts. This is done in accordance with and in compliance with Chapters 938 and 118 of the Wisconsin Statutes. The county departments of human/social services have established the following procedures to respond to the habitual truancy referrals and to service and supervise habitual truants.

After completing all of the requirements under 118.16(5) the schools may submit a truancy referral to the Human Services Juvenile Intake Office of the student's county of residence. Once a referral is received in the Juvenile Intake office, an intake worker will be assigned to access the situation and to make an appropriate intake decision. The referral may be closed if the intake worker determines that there is not enough information in the referral to support the charge or if all of the statutory requirements have not been met. When appropriate, the intake worker will attempt to enter into a Deferred Prosecution Agreement and handle the truancy referral outside of court. In some cases the referral will have to be forwarded to the District Attorney's office so that the violation can be processed through the juvenile court system.

Whenever an intake worker determines that an attempt should be made to handle a truancy referral outside of court, an intake conference will be scheduled to discuss the situation with the student and their parents/guardians. A school representative is to attend these intake conferences. The following factors will be considered at the intake conference when determining whether or not to set up a Deferred Prosecution Agreement: prior referral history, the student's and the family's cooperation with prior services, the extent of the family's treatment needs, and the family's cooperation at the intake conference.

In some cases the Deferred Prosecution Agreement will hold the case open without services. If this should be agreed upon at the intake conference, it will be the school's responsibility to notify the juvenile intake office of further problems. Depending on the circumstances, the Deferred Prosecution Agreement can be amended or the original referral can be processed through court.

When services are provided as part of the Deferred Prosecution Agreement or when a student is placed on a JIPS Court Order for habitual truancy, the following plan of action is implemented by the county department of human/social services:

1. A case manager is assigned to work with the family and the school.
2. The case manager will complete a thorough assessment of the family situation so as to identify the needs of the family and the issues that are contributing to the student's truant behavior.
3. The case manager will formulate a case plan with the family and the school that addresses the identified needs and establishes outcome objectives.
4. Mentors/tutors are assigned to work with the students on their case plan, collaborating with school staff as needed.
5. The case manager will make appropriate referrals to outside resources to address the identified needs. These community service providers will provide a variety of services that might include counseling, family support, tutoring, mentoring, life skills, AODA treatment, psychological and psychiatric evaluations, and psychotherapy and psychiatric care.
6. The case manager will monitor the family's progress in meeting their case plan and will maintain regular contact with the family, school staff, and community service providers. To assist in monitoring the student's attendance, the school will send weekly attendance reports to the case manager.
7. The case manager will notify the court or the juvenile intake worker of the family's progress and any problems the family had complying with the Court Order or the Deferred Prosecution Agreement.

Section G

Wis. Stats §118.162(4)(g)

Methods to involve the truant child's parent or guardian in dealing with and solving the child's truancy problem.

It is School District of Manawa's belief that parental involvement in solving a child's truancy problems is critical. Where appropriate, the truant child's parent(s) or guardian(s) will be asked to be an active participant in solving the child's truancy problem. That involvement may include weekly checks with the school to make sure the child is attending school as required as well as doing the work and avoiding behavior problems, all of which are important elements in the child's educational success.

The school district's goal is to increase student engagement. Engagement increases attendance and academic success. In order to increase the student's engagement and thereby his/her attendance, there must be a collaborative relationship between the school and the parents/guardians of the students.

The school district must help the parent to understand the importance of regular school attendance. Parents must also understand how important their support is in getting the student to attend school.

Parental support of the educational process is key to the success of children. School officials and/or truancy committee members may conduct presentations that make parents aware of the importance of school and the importance of their support. As attendance increases, school engagement increases, which leads to academic success.

A school official will contact the parents regarding attendance infractions. Home visits will be made to help the family minimize or eliminate barriers to regular attendance. Referrals may be

made to social service agencies to assist the families with other needs that may be causing an attendance issue.

Parenting skills groups may be used to help parents learn skills in managing and promoting student attendance. Discipline and behavior management skills will be introduced to parents who have a difficult time with these skills.

Parent/teacher conferences will be held so that the parent and the school may discuss the student's needs. The purpose of the meeting will be to formulate an action plan that the family may use to encourage and increase school attendance. Parents will be asked to help the school better understand their child. It is believed that this collaborative approach will enhance the student's future and his/her level of excellence.

Truancy

Overview

A student shall not be expelled for truancy. A habitual truant is a student who is absent from school without valid excuse for all or part of five days in one school semester or one-half of the school year. The period during which a student is absent from school due to a suspension or expulsion is neither an absence without an acceptable excuse nor an absence without legal cause under the compulsory attendance law.

Truancy means any absence for 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 student, and also means intermittent attendance carried on for the purpose of defeating the intent of §118.15.

The School Board designates the building principal to serve as the school attendance officer.

The school attendance officer:

- Shall determine daily which students enrolled in the school district are absent from school and whether that absence is excused under §118.15, Wis. Stats.
- Annually, on or before August 1, shall determine how many students enrolled in the school district were absent in the previous year and whether the absences were excused under §118.15, Wis. Stats., and shall notify the State Superintendent of the determination.
- Recognizes that a student may be excused in writing by his or her parent or guardian for not more than ten school days in a school year and shall be allowed to complete any missed coursework.
- Except as provided under §118.16(2)(cg) and (cr), Wis. Stats., shall notify the parent or guardian of a child who has been truant of the child's truancy and direct the parent or guardian to return the child to school no later than the next day on which school is in session or to provide an excuse under §118.15, Wis. Stats. 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 personal contact, mail or telephone call of which a written record is kept, except that notice by personal contact or telephone call shall be attempted before notice by mail may be given.
- Shall notify the parent or guardian of a child who is a habitual truant, by registered or certified mail, when the child initially becomes a habitual truant. The notice shall include all of the following:

Checklist

- ✓ A statement of the parent's or guardian's responsibility, under §118.15(1)(a), Wis. Stats., to cause the child to attend school regularly.
 - ✓ A statement that the parent, guardian or child may request program or curriculum modifications for the child under §118.15(1)(d), Wis. Stats., and that the child may be eligible for enrollment in a program for children at risk under §118.153(3).
 - ✓ A request that the parent or guardian meet with appropriate school personnel to discuss the child's truancy. The notice shall include the name of the school personnel with whom the parent or guardian 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 of the meeting shall be within five school days after the date that the notice is sent, except that with the consent of the child's parent or guardian the date for the meeting may be extended for an additional five school days.
 - ✓ A statement of the penalties, under §118.15(5), Wis. Stats., that may be imposed on the parent or guardian if he or she fails to cause the child to attend school regularly as required under §118.15(1)(a), Wis. Stats.
 - ✓ Except as provided under par. (d), unless the child is excused under sub. (3), any person having under his or her control a child who is enrolled in 5-year-old kindergarten shall cause the child to attend school regularly, religious holidays excepted, during the full period and hours that kindergarten is in session at the public or private school in which the child is enrolled until the end of the school term.
- After the notice required under §118.16(1)(cg), Wis. Stats., has been given, shall notify the parent or guardian of a habitual truant of the habitual truant's unexcused absences as provided in the plan under §118.162(4)(a), Wis. Stats. After the notice required under §118.16(1)(cg), Wis. Stats., has been given, §118.16(c) does not apply.
 - May visit any place of employment in the school district to ascertain whether any minors are employed there contrary to law. The officer shall require that school certificates and lists of minors who are

employed there be produced for inspection, and shall report all cases of illegal employment to the proper school authorities and to the Department of Workforce Development.

- Shall have access to information regarding the attendance of any child between the ages of 6 and 18 who is a resident of the school district or who claims or is claimed to be in attendance at a private school located in the school district.

Formal Truancy Procedure

1. When a student is absent from school, the school office telephones the parent/guardian the morning of an absence if the parent/guardian has not already notified the school via the attendance reporting line to determine the reason for the absence.
2. If the school office is unable to reach a parent to confirm the reason for the absence, the absence will be recorded as unexcused and a letter to confirm a student absence will be sent to the parent at the end of that school week requesting information that could lead to the absence being excused.
3. If the absence is determined by school personnel to be an unexcused absence, the parent/guardian will be notified within 48 hours. The school will keep a communication log documenting notification attempts. A letter of concern documenting the unexcused absence will be sent to the parent.
4. When a child is truant from school (an unexcused absence), one or more of the following actions shall be taken by the School District of Manawa:
 - a. A letter of concern is mailed to the parent requesting medical excuse documentation. A copy of Statute 118 will be included on the back of the letter.
 - b. Principal with a second person (school nurse, school counselor, etc.) may make a home visit that could include providing one-time transportation to school and would include the development of a plan and support systems to facilitate positive school attendance.
 - c. Meet with parent or guardian to develop a plan for positive attendance
 - d. Make referral to school counselor
5. If truancy concerns continue following the attempted actions described in number 4 above, a certified letter will be mailed to the parent and a request for law enforcement to issue a citation will be made. Legal truancy is defined as any unexcused absences for all or part of a day on which school is held during a semester (part of a day is 15 minutes after school has begun). When the student reaches a minimum of five documented unexcused absences in a semester/half school year, the next step is to set up the Habitual Truancy Meeting. To meet requirements, the habitual truancy letter must be sent through certified mail and designate a date and time for a parent meeting. Regular mail delivery will also be used. Documentation of this mailing should also be maintained. The parent meeting needs to be set up within five school days of sending out the certified letter. The principal or the designee keeps all copies of the certified letter and receipts, as this will need to be sent along with the paperwork to Juvenile Intake. If the parent fails to attend the meeting, the principal shall document that they did not participate. The principal must allow them the opportunity to reschedule and wait at least 10 school days after the initial notice before proceeding.
6. Citation may be issued by local law enforcement official (Citation fines range from \$175.50 to \$500.)
 - a. For students 12 years of age or older, the student may receive a citation as well as the parent.
 - b. For students under 12 years of age, the parent may receive a citation.
7. After the Habitual Truancy meeting, a court referral can be submitted if the student has one more unexcused class period. If necessary/appropriate truancy paperwork may be submitted to Juvenile Intake in the student's county of residence.



School District of Manawa

"Students Choosing to Excel, Realizing their Strengths"

800 Beech Street | Manawa, WI 54949 | (920) 596-2525

District Fax (920) 596-5305 | Elementary Fax (920) 596-5339 | Jr.-Sr. High Fax (920) 596-2665

www.manawaschools.org

Date:
To the Parent/ Guardian of:
Date of Birth:

According to our records, your child was absent from school on the following date(s), and the school was unable to contact you to verify the absence(s). Therefore, the absence(s) listed have been recorded as UNEXCUSED. Please contact the school office at 920-596-2238 within 24 | hours to verify the reason for the absence(s).

Wisconsin State Statute S.118.15 states that students between the ages of 6 and 18 years old are expected to attend school regularly. For more information, see State Statute 118.15.

Sincerely,

Principal

Cc: Cumulative File
School Counselor



Dr. Melanie J. Oppen
District Administrator
mjoppen@manawaschools.org
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Daniel J. Wolfgram
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School District of Manawa

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www.manawaschools.org

Date:

To the Parent/Guardian of:

The School District of Manawa believes that attendance is very important for all students. Valuable minutes of instructional time are missed each time your child is tardy or absent. Enclosed is a copy of your child's attendance.

Excused Absences:

Unexcused Absences:

Tardies:

At this point, we are concerned with the amount of school your child has missed. His/Her attendance is approaching truancy as defined in Wis. Stats. §118.16:

1. Part or all of five or more days on which school is being held during a school semester, and are unexcused {118.16(a)} or
2. Part or all of ten or more days on which school is being held during a school year, and are excused or unexcused. {118.15(b)}

We believe that a strong partnership between home and school is essential in the education of children. We share your concern about your child's success in school. Please contact us within three business days so that we can work together to develop a plan to address your child's attendance situation. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Principal

Attachments: Student's Attendance Detail Report

Cc: Cumulative File
School Counselor



Dr. Melissa J. Oppor
District Administrator
(920) 696-2625
(920) 696-2622

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Jr./Sr. High School Principal
Middle School Coordinator
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Michelle Fukita
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School Counselor
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Business Manager
(920) 696-2622

Danielle Bracer
Communic. Ed. Director
(920) 696-2621



School District of Manawa

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District Fax (920) 595-5306 | Elementary Fax (920) 595-5338 | Jr./Sr. High Fax (920) 595-2655

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Re: Wisconsin Truancy Law

To the Parent/Guardian of:

DOB:

Attendance in school is mandatory under Wisconsin Law. Truancy is defined as missing all or part of a given day. Your child has been absent all or part of ____ days, constituting habitual absence.

I am extremely concerned about your child, and would like to assist you to get him/her/them to school at the appropriate time. Please let me know what I can do to assist in this important matter. Needless to say, our concern is solely for your child, as missing school is detrimental to educational growth.

Though children do need to be home when they are ill, the number of days absent and tardy has become excessive. Please see the attached summary detailing absences and tardies for your child. Understand that continued absence or tardiness may result in necessitating a physician's documentation of illness to declare future absences as "excused".

Your child must be at school by the first bell. Please work with your child to be sure he/she is in our building by the designated time. If you have questions or concerns regarding this statute or our enforcement of this statute, please contact the school office.

Thank you for your cooperation in this matter. Please let me know what I can do to assist you to have your child to school on time.

Sincerely,

Principal

Attachment: Student's Attendance Detail Report

CC: Student Cumulative File
School Counselor
Classroom Teacher



Dr. Melanie J. Oppor
District Administrator
(920) 595-2525

Daniel J. Wolfgren
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School District of Manawa

"Students Choosing to Excel, Realizing their Strengths"

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District Fax (920) 596-5306 | Elementary Fax (920) 596-5309 | Jr./Sr. High Fax (920) 596-2665

www.manawa.k12.wi.us

Truancy Recommendation Form

Date:

Manawa Police Department:

The School District of Manawa respectfully recommends the following dispositions of the truancy citation before the court regarding:

Student's Name:

Student's Address:

DOB:

Date of Truancy: Please see attached attendance record.

Respectfully,

Principal

Attachment: Student's Attendance Detail Report

cc: Cumulative File
School Counselor
District Nurse



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Explanation of Responsibilities, Rights, and Penalties Relating to State Statutes

The compulsory school attendance law [Wis. Stats. §118.15(1)(a)] requires that:

“...any person having under control a child who is between the ages of 6 and 18 years shall cause the child to attend school regularly during the full period and hours, religious holidays excepted, that the public or private school in which the child should be enrolled is in session until the end of the school term, quarter, or semester of the school year in which the child becomes 18 years of age.”

You, as a parent, guardian, or child (if over age 18), may request program or curriculum modifications if you feel the need to do so. Further, you may also wish to review eligibility for enrollment in a program for children at risk as we discuss alternatives that may assist improved attendance.

Please also be informed that if after evidence has been provided that: (1) the activities under W.S. 118.16(5) have been completed as set forth above and in the letter on the reverse side and (2) an evaluation has determined if learning or social problems may be the cause of your child's truancy with appropriate action having been taken, the school attendance officer may file information on any child who continues to be truant with Winnebago County Circuit Court under Ch. 938 in accordance with §938.24. Filing information on a child under this subsection also allows concurrent prosecution of the child's parent or guardian under §118.15(5). The penalties for violating this section include a fine of not more than \$500 or imprisonment of not more than 30 days or both. By working with us to resolve this matter, such action will not be necessary.

Materials for Truancy Meeting

1. Agenda for Truancy Meeting and Court Disposition for Truancy Violations
2. “Keeping Kids in School,” A Parent’s Guide to Truancy

Agenda for Truancy Meeting

Date: _____

Schedule the truancy meeting within seven days from sending the letter/date on the letter.

Copy of updated attendance for student.

Copy of truancy law given to parents

- Review definition of truant
- Refer to number of days student has been truant

Questions (these are questions that will be asked at intake):

1. **Why are you late/truant?**

2. **Are there learning problems that keep you from getting to school?**

3. **Are there social problems that keep you from getting to school?**

4. **Modifications/Accommodations to assist improved attendance.**

Plan to improve attendance (alarm(s), ride to school, etc.)

“The referral to juvenile intake is in our hands. If there is even one more truancy, I will be obligated to refer you to juvenile intake.

COURT DISPOSITIONS FOR TRUANCY VIOLATIONS

If your son or daughter is found to be in need of protection and/or services due to school truancy, the judge shall impose one or more of the following decisions under Wisconsin State Statutes 938.342 and 938.345.

1. Order the juvenile to attend school.
2. Order the juvenile's parent, guardian or legal custodian to attend school with the juvenile.
3. Suspend the juvenile's operating privilege for not less than 30 days nor more than 1 year. If the juvenile is determined to be a school drop-out, the court shall order suspension of operating privilege until age 18.
4. Order the juvenile to participate in counseling, a supervised work program or other community service work. Cost may be assessed against the juvenile, the juvenile's parents or guardian, or both.
5. Order the juvenile to remain at home – except when attending religious worship, a school program or with parents.
6. Order that the juvenile be placed in an alternative school program.
7. Order revocation of the juvenile's work permit.
8. Place the juvenile in a Teen Court Program.
9. Order the juvenile's parent, guardian or legal custodian to participate in counseling at their expense.
10. Counsel juvenile and/or parents.
11. Place the juvenile under supervision with court ordered conditions.
12. Place the juvenile in Volunteers in Probation Program.
13. Order the juvenile to participate in an Intensive Supervision Program.
14. Place the juvenile outside the home in a foster home, group home, residential treatment center, an independent living situation (17 year olds only), the home of a relative, or an unlicensed home (30 days max).
15. Order monitoring by an electronic monitoring system.
16. Transfer legal custody to a relative of the juvenile a county agency, or a licensed child welfare agency.
17. Order that parents provide needed special care and treatment as identified by physical, psychological, mental or developmental examination.
18. Order that an integrated service plan be developed and implemented.
19. Order out-patient alcohol or drug treatment or participation in an AODA education program.
20. Order that the juvenile submit to drug testing.
21. Order the juvenile to participate in a wilderness challenge program or some other experiential education program.
22. Order the juvenile to report to a youth report center.
23. Order the juvenile to participate in a juvenile offender education program.
24. Order that the juvenile complete a vocational assessment, counseling, and training.
25. Transfer juveniles to a foreign country in which they are a citizen.
26. Order a forfeiture of not more than \$500 plus costs. The forfeiture may be assessed against the juvenile, the juvenile's parents or guardians, or both.
27. Order any other reasonable conditions, including a curfew, restrictions as to going to or remaining on specified premises, and restrictions on associating with other juveniles or adults.
28. Stay the original order contingent on the juvenile's satisfactory compliance with set conditions.

KEEPING KIDS IN SCHOOL

A Parent's Guide to Truancy

**A Publication of the Winnebago County Department of Human
Services Juvenile Intake Office and the Winnebago County District
Attorney's Office**

September 2003

School Attendance Requirements

In the State of Wisconsin, it is the law that all children attend school until the age of 18. Parents are required to send children between the ages of 6 and 18 to school whenever school is in session. This document has been created to help parents understand what is required of them and their children as well as the legal consequences for habitual truancy.

State law does require that each school board establish written attendance policies specifying the reasons for which pupils may be permitted to be absent from school. It is not uncommon for parents to have questions about what is an acceptable excuse. Please feel free to contact your child's school for more information on their attendance policies. The following are examples of excuses that may be acceptable:

- Illness
- Family emergency
- Funerals
- Religious holidays

The following are examples of absences that are not acceptable:

- Missing a ride
- Oversleeping
- Staying home to babysit
- Not feeling like going to school

Law enforcement may issue municipal citations or fines when a student fails to have an acceptable excuse for being absent from school.

Students are considered to be habitually truant when they have been absent from school without an acceptable excuse for any part of five or more days in which school is held during a semester.

School Attendance Requirements

State law requires that schools send written notice to the parents when a child meets the criteria to be considered habitually truant. This notice must be sent by registered or certified mail and must include the date and time of a meeting when the parents will be able to discuss their child's alleged truancy with the school officials. The law requires that this meeting be scheduled within five school days after the letter is sent to the parents. It can be rescheduled to a later date at the parents' request. If there should be any further unexcused absences after the parental meeting or after the meeting was attempted, the school can request that law enforcement issue a municipal citation for habitual truancy or they can process a truancy referral to the juvenile intake office. When doing either of these, the school must show that they have done all of the following:

- Met with the parents or guardian to discuss the child's truancy or attempted to meet with them and received no response or were refused.
- Provided an opportunity for educational counseling to determine whether a change in the child's curriculum would resolve the child's truancy.
- Evaluated the child to determine whether learning problems may be a cause of the child's truancy, and if so, have taken necessary steps to overcome the learning problems.
- Conducted an evaluation to determine whether social problems may be caused of the child's truancy, and if so, have taken appropriate action to address the problems or made appropriate referrals.

Once a truancy referral has arrived in the juvenile intake office, staff will evaluate the situation and determine what action needs to be taken. If it is determined that the matter might be able to be handled without a court hearing, an intake conference will be scheduled to review the referral. The truant student and their parents will be invited to meet with a school representative and an intake worker to discuss the truancy referral. At this meeting a decision is made as to whether the referral gets processed to court or gets handled outside of court in the juvenile intake office. If the case is handled in the juvenile intake office, a Deferred Prosecution Agreement will be created outlining the expectations that will be placed on the juvenile and the parents. Failure to abide by these expectations can result in termination of the agreement and processing of the case to court.

The Legal Consequences of Truancy

If the case is processed to court and the juvenile is found guilty of the violation, there are a number of options available to the court. Some of these options are:

- A suspension of a juvenile's driving privilege.
- A requirement that a parent or guardian attend school with their child.
- A requirement that the juvenile participate in counseling to try and identify and resolve the problems that are causing the truancy.
- A requirement that a juvenile complete a quantity of supervised work or other community service work.
- A requirement that a juvenile remain at home at all times unless they are attending religious worship, a school program, or out with their parents.
- Revocation of the juvenile's work permit.
- Placement of the juvenile under the supervision of an organization identified by the court with court ordered conditions.
- Placement of the juvenile outside of their home in a foster home, group home, or residential care facility.
- Placement of the juvenile with a relative and transfer of legal custody to the relative.
- Monitoring of the juvenile through the electronic monitoring system.
- Placement of the juvenile in an outpatient alcohol and drug abuse treatment program, or a requirement that they participate in an alcohol and drug abuse educational program.
- A requirement that a juvenile submit to random drug testing.
- A forfeiture of not more than \$500 plus court costs.
- Other reasonable conditions as identified by the court. These may include curfews, restrictions on where one goes and whom they associate with.

For a complete list of all dispositional options, see Wisconsin State Statutes 938.345, 938.34 and 938.342.

Parents may also be processed through court for failing to send their child to school. In these cases the following options would be available to the court:

- For the first offense, a fine of not more than \$500 and/or imprisonment for not more than 30 days.
- For a second or subsequent offense, a fine of not more than \$1,000 and/or imprisonment for not more than 90 days.
- A requirement that the parents participate in counseling at their expense.
- A requirement that the parents attend school with their child.

Tips To Improve School Attendance

- Make your child's education a family priority.
- Tell your children how important it is to you that they get a good education.
- Insist that your children attend school and do their homework.

- Understand the school attendance policies of your child's school.
- Make sure your children obey curfew laws and get plenty of sleep at night.
- Encourage your child's independence by providing them with an alarm clock.
- Show your children that you care about them.
- Do not enable your child by calling the school to cover unexcused absences.
- If your child does not want to attend school, find out why. If there is a problem, try to work together with your child and/or the school to resolve it.
- If your child refuses to go to school, do not be afraid to ask for help. Talk to the school staff to determine the nature of the problem and what resources might be available to assist you.
- Give your child positive feedback and focus on their strengths.

All children deserve a solid education to prepare them for the challenges of today's world. If a child is not in school, he or she will not learn. Young people who fail to graduate from high school severely limit their opportunities in life. Truancy has been found to be an early indicator of future criminal behavior. Young people who stay in school are less likely to get into trouble.

We would urge you to work with your child's school to try and resolve attendance problems. They do want to help you. They are interested in seeing your child successfully complete their education.

