

MEDFORD AREA PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT

DATE ADOPTED: June 17, 1980 **FILE SECTOR:** STUDENTS
DATE REVISED: February 16, 1989 **POLICY TITLE:** ATTENDANCE/ TRUANCY
DATE REVISED: July 17, 1997
DATE REVISED: May 18, 2000
DATE REVISED: January 15, 2009
DATE REVISED: September 16, 2010
DATE REVISED: September 18, 2014

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

In accordance with state law, all students between 6 and 18 years of age, and students enrolled in a five-year old kindergarten program, must attend school full-time until the end of the semester in which the child becomes (18) years of age, unless they have a legal excuse, fall under one of the exceptions outlined in the state statutes, or have graduated from high school.

It is the responsibility of any person having under his/her control such a student to ensure regular attendance during the full period and hours that school is in session until the end of the semester of the school year in which the student becomes 18 years of age. Adult students over the age of 18, open enrollment and/or any other transfer or tuition students are expected to be in regular attendance.

It is the responsibility of the parent(s)/guardian(s) to notify the school of student absences in accordance with established district procedures. It is the responsibility of the principal or designee to determine whether the absence is acceptable (excused) or not acceptable (truant). When students are absent from school, their activities are the responsibility of their parent(s)/guardian(s).

Ordinances and/or legislation developed at the municipal, county or state level shall be adhered to as they affect school attendance.

CROSS REFERENCE: EBBA, ID, IGBG, IGBH, IGBI, and IKE
LEGAL REFERENCE: §118.15 & 118.16 Compulsory School Attendance, School Attendance Enforcement, Truancy Committee and Plan

MEDFORD AREA PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT

DATE ADOPTED:	February 16, 1989	FILE SECTOR: STUDENTS
DATE REVISED:	August 20, 1998	POLICY TITLE: ATTENDANCE/ TRUANCY
DATE REVISED:	May 18, 2000	GUIDELINES
DATE REVISED:	January 15, 2009	
DATE REVISED:	September 16, 2010	
DATE REVISED:	September 18, 2014	

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE OFFICER

“School Attendance Officer” means an employee designated by the board of education to deal with matters relating to school attendance and truancy.

The district administrator shall designate a person in each building of the district to serve as attendance officer. This person will deal with all matters relating to school attendance and truancy.

Each building principal shall adopt specific procedures for handling absences in accordance with district attendance policies. A written copy of these procedures shall be provided for each student and/or his/her parent(s)/guardian(s).

Each teacher shall submit daily attendance reports to the attendance officer on all students under his/her charge.

Each school shall determine daily which students enrolled in school are absent from school and whether that absence is excused or truant in accordance with board of education policy and procedures and state statutes.

The district administrator, and/or the school attendance officer, may visit any place of employment in the school district to ascertain whether any minors are employed there contrary to state law. The school attendance officer shall report any cases of illegal employment to the proper school authorities and to the Department of Workforce Development.

The school attendance officer shall have access to information regarding the attendance of any student between the ages of six (6) and eighteen (18) years who is a resident of the district or who claims or is claimed to be in attendance at a private school program located in the district.

The school attendance officer, under the discretion of the district administrator, may contact home-based private educational programs in an attempt to discover whether such programs meet the program criteria established by law. All such contacts should be documented.

The school attendance officer shall release student record information to appropriate agencies for purposes outlined in state law and board of education policy.

EXCUSED ABSENCES

The responsibility for a child's regular school attendance rests upon the child's parent(s)/guardian(s).

No absence shall be recorded when a student is physically away from school because he/she is participating in school sponsored, and/or teacher chaperoned, field trips, athletic events, workshops, contests, etc.

In order for a student to be excused the parent(s)/guardian(s) must provide written verification which is to be submitted to the principal or attendance officer in advance of the absence, or prior to re-admittance to school. The only exception is if an eighteen year old lives independently from their parent(s)/guardian(s) in which case he/she will be allowed to provide his/her own written rationale for the absence.

The school attendance officer or designee is authorized to approve a legal excuse for a student if that student is not in proper physical or mental condition to attend school or an educational program, requires medical or dental treatment which cannot be scheduled outside of the school day, or is under a quarantine imposed by a public health officer. The parent(s)/guardian(s) must submit a written statement from a physician or licensed practitioner as proof of the physical or mental condition or treatment of the student. This written excuse shall state the period of time (not to exceed 30 days) for which it is valid.

A child may be excused by his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) in writing prior to the child's absence, for no more than 10 days in a school year.

The school attendance officer or designee is authorized to approve a legal excuse for any student for the following reasons upon written verification from a parent(s)/guardian(s). A student may be excused under this provision for not more than 10 days in a school year for any of the following reasons:

- (1) A court appearance or other legal procedure which requires the student's presence.
- (2) A death in the immediate family or funerals for relatives or close friends.
- (3) Attendance at special events of educational value (i.e., college visits, job fairs).
- (4) Illness for which a medical appointment or treatment was not sought.
- (5) An emergency in the family or other crisis which requires the absence of the student because of family responsibilities.
- (6) Religious holiday.
- (7) Special circumstances that show good cause and which are approved by the school attendance officer or designee.
- (8) Serving as an election official.

Under this provision, after a student has missed 10 days in a given school year, he/she may be required to provide a medical excuse from a physician for future absences to be excused. If no medical documentation is provided, the absence may be considered truant.

TRUANT ABSENCE

“*Truancy*” 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 by the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the legal cause of such absence of the student. This also means intermittent attendance carried on for the purpose of defeating the intent of the state attendance statutes (118.15).

Students who are absent without an acceptable reason shall be considered truant.

The school attendance officer, or designee, shall notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) of a student who has been truant, of the student’s truancy and direct the parent(s)/guardian(s) to return the student to school not later than the next day on which school is in session or to provide an excuse. The notice under this paragraph must be given before the end of the second school day after receiving a report of a truant absence. The notice may be made by personal contact, mail or telephone call of which a written record is kept. Notice by personal contact or telephone call shall be attempted before notice by mail is given.

HABITUAL TRUANT

“*Habitual truant*” means a student who is absent from school without an acceptable excuse, based on the district attendance policies, for part or all of 5 or more days on which school is held during a school semester.

The parent(s)/guardian(s) of a student who is a habitual truant shall be notified by certified or registered mail when the student initially becomes a habitual truant. The notice shall include the following:

- (1) A statement of the parent’s/guardian’s responsibilities under state law to cause the student to attend school regularly.
- (2) A statement that the parent(s)/guardian(s) or student may request program or curriculum modifications for the student and that the student may be eligible for enrollment in a program for students at-risk.
- (3) A request that the parent(s)/guardian(s) meet with appropriate personnel to discuss the student’s truancy. The notice must include the name of the school personnel with whom the parent(s)/guardian(s) 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 must be within five school days after the date that the habitual truancy notice has been sent to the student’s parent(s)/guardian(s). The date for the meeting may be extended for an additional five school days, with the consent of the student’s parent(s)/guardian(s).
- (4) A statement of the penalties under state law and county ordinance that may be imposed on the parent(s)/guardian(s) if he/she fails to cause the student to attend school regularly as required by state law.

A referral may be brought against a student for habitual truancy or against his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) for failure to cause the student to attend school regularly. The school attendance officer shall provide evidence that appropriate school personnel have, within the school year during which the truancy occurred, attempted all of the following:

- (1) Met with the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) to discuss the student's truancy or attempted to meet with the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) and received no response or were refused. This does not apply if the required parent(s)/guardian(s) meeting is not held within 10 school days after the date the habitual truancy letter was sent.
- (2) Provided to the student an opportunity for educational counseling to determine whether a change in the student's curriculum would resolve the student's truancy, and have considered curriculum modifications possible within the current school program.
- (3) Evaluated the student to determine whether learning/emotional problems may be a cause of the student's truancy and, if so, have taken steps to overcome the learning problems. The student need not be evaluated if test administered to the student within the previous year indicate that the student is performing at his/her grade level.
- (4) Conducted an evaluation to determine whether social problems may be a cause of the student's truancy and, if so, taken appropriate action or made appropriate referrals to community agencies.

Items (2), (3), and (4) above do not apply if the school attendance officer provides evidence that appropriate school personnel were unable to carry out the activity due to the student's absences from school.

All of the above will be documented by the attendance officer and the student's counselor and made available for the court.

The district's truancy plan shall be followed when dealing with habitual truants. This plan shall be reviewed and, if necessary, revised every two years consistent with state law requirements.

MAKE-UP ASSIGNMENTS AND EXAMINATIONS

All students with absences shall be given the opportunity to make up examinations and work missed in accordance with the guidelines outlined below. Credit in a course or subject shall not be denied solely because of a student's truant absence from school.

It is the student's responsibility to contact the teacher(s) to make arrangements for making up work missed during an absence from school. Students have the obligation to obtain understanding, and retain for future reference and use, all materials presented during their absence.

EXCUSED ABSENCES

- (1) Students who are absent from school with the **prior written permission of their parent(s)/guardian(s)** are required to make up work missed during the absence. Students shall obtain this make up work from their teacher(s) before the absence. The arrangements for making up course work and examinations shall be the same as for other excused absences.
- (2) Students who are absent from school for reasons that are determined to be **excused** by the school attendance officer or designee shall be given the opportunity to make up work missed when they return to school. The respective teacher shall

identify make-up work. If any question arises as to the appropriateness and/or feasibility of making up a particular assignment, the teacher shall discuss with the building principal the extent to which make-up work and/or substitute assignments are possible. A student has one day to make up work for each day absent. The principal or designee has discretion to extend make-up opportunities if warranted by extenuating circumstances.

- (3) Examinations missed during an excused absence shall be taken at a time mutually agreed upon by the student and the teacher as outlined in the student handbook.

TRUANT ABSENCES

All students with truant absences shall not be given the opportunity to make up work missed with the exception of the following:

- (1) Credit in a course or subject shall not be denied solely because of a student's truant absence from school.
- (2) Students with truant absences shall be permitted to make up major examinations (quarter, semester, or grading period). Examination make-up date(s) shall be determined by administrator/teacher discretion. Students in these circumstances shall be prepared to make up exams within the number of days absent or a grade of zero may be recorded.
- (3) A student will receive a zero for class participation for all classes missed if participation grades were given the day the student was absent.

This policy shall apply to the regular school year. Separate attendance procedures may be established for summer sessions.

STUDENT WITHDRAWALS

Students may be excused from regular school attendance prior to the time that they graduate or that they have reached 18 years of age under the following conditions:

1. Any student who is 16 years of age may be excused from regular school attendance by the board of education upon the student's request and with the written approval of the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) if the student and the parent(s)/guardian(s) agree, in writing, that the student will participate in a program or curriculum modification leading to the student's high school graduation. Possible modifications include the following:
 - a) Modifications within the student's current academic program.
 - b) A high school work training program if available.
 - c) Enrollment in an alternative public school or program in the district.
 - d) Home study consisting of correspondence courses or other independent study type courses approved by the school and arranged for by the student and/or his/her parent(s)/guardian(s).
 - e) Enrollment in any public educational program outside the district, subject to the approval of the district, and pursuant to a contractual agreement between school districts.

2. Any student who is 17 years of age may be excused from regular school attendance by the board of education upon the student's request and with the written approval of the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) if the student and his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) agree, in writing, that the student will participate in a program or curriculum modification (as listed above) leading to the student's high school graduation or leading to a Wisconsin High School Equivalency Diploma.
3. Any student who is 17 years of age or over shall be excused from regular attendance if the student began a program leading to a high school equivalency diploma in a secured correctional facility, a secured student caring institution, a secure detention facility or a juvenile portion of a county jail, and the student and his or her parent(s)/guardian(s) agree that the student will continue to participate in such a program.
4. A written agreement shall be drawn up between the student, his/her parent(s)/guardian(s), the board of education, and a representative of the High School Equivalency Program or other programs leading to the student's high school diploma. This agreement shall be drawn prior to the student's admission to such program(s). The agreement will state the services to be provided, the time period needed to complete the program and how the student will be monitored.
5. The board of education, or their designee, will monitor the written agreement at least once each semester. If the board of education, or their designee, determines that the student is not complying with the agreement, the principal will notify the student and his/her parent(s)/guardian(s), in writing, that the agreement may be modified or suspended in 30 days. If the agreement is suspended the parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified, in writing, and if the student does not return to school, the student may be considered truant.