

STUDENT ABSENCE/ATTENDANCE/TRUANCY POLICY

- School Attendance Officer:

The district administrator, or designee, will serve as the school attendance officer for the district and deal with all matters relating to school attendance and truancy.

1. The school shall determine daily which students enrolled in the school are absent from school and whether that absence is excused in accordance with Board policy.
2. All students between the ages of six (6) and eighteen (18) must be in attendance full time at public school, private school, or involved in an alternative education program. If a student is eighteen (18) or older and chooses not to follow the rules, regulations, and/or policies of the school district, that student will be asked to cease attendance.
3. If a student is designated EEN, the school district must provide the opportunity of educational services for that student until the age of twenty one (21). However, that student may choose not to follow the rules, regulations, and/or policies of the school district and thereby shows an unwillingness to participate in provided services. That student will be asked to cease attendance due to an unwillingness to participate in the provided educational program as determined by the school district.

- **Truancy** means any absence of part of 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 and also means intermittent carried on for the purpose of defeating the intent of compulsory education.

Habitual Truancy means a pupil who is absent from school without an acceptable excuse for part of or all of 5 or more days on which school is held during a semester. [118.15 & 118.16(4)]

- The only legal course for absence is:
 - In situations where the student is not in proper physical or mental condition to attend school;
 - When any child is excused by the School Board in accordance with the School Board's written policy;
 - Or when instruction approved by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction is being substituted.
- When a parent/guardian knows that their child will be absent it is requested that the parent/guardian give the school **prior written notice of the upcoming absence**. When it is necessary for a student to be absent due to illness or emergency reasons, a parent/guardian is requested to call the high school attendance line (648-0104) before 10:00 a.m. on the day of the absence to indicate the reason for the student's absence so that the school can maintain accurate records. Absences are un-excused until parent/guardian contact is made. All absences must be excused within 24 hours of the initial absence.
- Absences: A student is deemed truant when he/she is absent from school without an acceptable excuse for part of or all of any day(s) on which school is held and during which the attendance officer or designee has not been notified in writing of the legal cause of the students absence by the parent/guardian. **What is excused or un-excused is determined by the school. Parents/guardians must contact the school as described in paragraph D above.** The attendance officer is empowered to approve a legal excuse to any student under the following conditions:
 - Evidence that the student is not in proper physical or mental condition to attend school or an educational program; a medical excuse may be requested. (Medical, dental, chiropractic, optometry, psychological, or other valid medical appointments.) Every effort should be made to schedule appointments during non-school hours.
 - A court appearance or legal procedure.
 - A quarantine as imposed by a public health officer.
 - Approved school activities during class time.

- A child may be excused in writing by his/her parent/guardian by state statute **prior** to any additional absence. A child shall not be excused more than ten (10) days in a school year. As per Wisconsin State Statutes all absences beyond ten (10) days would be deemed un-excused and treated accordingly. The School Board requires a child excused under the above to complete any course-work missed during the absence.
 - Special circumstances that show good cause which are approved in advance by the Building Administrator or the School Attendance Officer.
- Release during School Hours: Student(s) in Grades 9-12 may be granted permission by the Building Administrator or Attendance Officer to leave the school premises during the school day:
 - To receive instruction at another site.
 - To participate in a work experience program.
 - To work at places of employment as part of a work/study program.

A written request by the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) for such absence must be filed with the High School Building Administrator.

- Release for School Closings: All schools in the District are to remain open in accordance with the school calendar except as follows:
 - Closure by the health officer.
 - Emergency situations.
 - Severe weather conditions as determined by the District Administrator.
 - Changes in the calendar approved by the School Board and the De Soto Education Association.
- Medical Confirmation: Building Administrator may require an excuse signed by a physician for re-entry to school if illness is the cause of the absence of three (3) or more consecutive days.
- **Age of Majority**: Students 18 years of age and above must attend all assigned classes, home-rooms, assemblies, and follow all school rules. Reaching the age of majority does **not** imply any specific rights. If a student is eighteen (18) or older and chooses not to follow the rules, regulations, and/or policies of the school district, that student will be asked to cease attendance.
- Un-excused absence occurs when a pupil is voluntarily absent with or without the consent of his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) for reasons not recognized by Wisconsin Statutes and/or School Board Policy. Credit will not be given for class-work missed during an un-excused absence. Students have the obligation to **obtain**, understand, retain for future reference and use all materials presented during their un-excused absence. All students with an un-excused absence will be permitted to make up an examination missed during an un-excused absence. Examples of un-excused absences include, but are not limited to:
 - * missing the bus * car problems
 - * leaving the building without approval * working
 - * haircuts and/or other appointments pertaining to grooming * oversleeping
 - * preplanned absence without prior written notification from parent/guardian.

- **Truancy/Un-excused Absence procedures:** The following describes the normal procedure for dealing with truancy/un-excused absences.
 - For the first two truancy/un-excused absences a letter of warning may be sent to the parents/guardians stating that future occurrences could result in violations of the Vernon County Truancy Ordinance 99-1. A Truancy citation may be issued.
 - For the third and fourth truancy/un-excused absences truancy citations may occur. According to Vernon County Truancy Ordinance 99-1; dispositions for truancy results in "a forfeiture of not more than \$50 plus costs for a first violation, or a forfeiture of not more than \$100 plus costs for any 2nd or subsequent violation committed within 12 months or a previous violation, subject to s. 938.37 and subject to a maximum cumulative forfeiture amount of not more than \$500 for all violations committed during a school semester. All or part of the forfeiture plus costs may be assessed against the person, the parents or guardian of the person, or both." A Truancy meeting may be considered in-order to determine if Habitual Truancy needs to be filed with the appropriate county officials.
 - For the fifth and any subsequent truancy/un-excused absences that occur, a habitual truancy meeting may occur in-order to determine if Habitual Truancy needs to be filed with the appropriate county officials. Dispositions for habitual truancy is at the discretion of the appropriate county court.

- Teacher responsibility: Teachers are required by law to take daily attendance and maintain a record of absences and inform the administration building office daily of absentees.

- Truant students will be dealt with according to legal procedures and laws of Wisconsin.

- Any student who is of the age of sixteen (16) or older may be excused from school attendance by the Board provided:
 - The school has received written approval from the student's parent/guardian that the student is a child at risk and enrolled, in lieu of high school, in a technical college program leading to the student's high school equivalency. **Or**
 - The student and his/her parent/guardian agree, in writing, that the student will participate in a program/curriculum modification leading to a high school equivalency. **And**
 - The written agreement is approved by the Board and Administration. **And**
 - The student complies with the written agreement. If the agreement is suspended due to non-compliance, the student will be expected to resume attendance at school on a regular basis in accordance with established city or county ordinances.

Possible alternative educational programs would be:

- Attendance at a vocational school in lieu of high or on a part-time basis
- Modifications within current academic program.
- A District work training or work study program. Continued on next page
- Enrollment in an alternative public school or program within the De Soto School District.
- Enrollment in any non-sectarian school.
- Home-bound study in an approved program meeting the required classroom contact hours and in the core subjects as stipulated by the Department of Public Instruction's Standards.
- Enrollment in any public educational program outside the school district.

- Any student who is 17 or older may be excused by the School Board from regular attendance if the student and his/her 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 or leading to a high school equivalency diploma. The program must be specifically determined.
- Withdrawal Procedures.
 - Prior to withdrawal from school, the Attendance Officer, Guidance Counselor and Building Administrator will discuss the program or curriculum modification options with the students and his/her parent(s) or legal guardian(s).
 - The Attendance Officer and/or Building Administrator will notify the District Administrator, in writing, of the withdrawal request and program modification as agreed upon by the student and his/her parent(s) or guardian(s).

- The District Administrator will present the proposal to the Board for approval.
- A written agreement must be signed by the student, his/her parent(s)/guardian(s), the Board, and the Building Administrator.
- At least once each semester, the school Attendance Officer or Building Administrator will review compliance with each student's agreement.
- If the agreement is suspended, the student will be expected to attend school on a regular basis in accordance with Wisconsin State law, Board policy, and established procedures. Failure to attend school will result in forfeiture for truancy in accordance with established State and County law ordinances.

SCHOOL CONSEQUENCES FOR TARDINESS

- **Tardiness/Late Arrivals:** All students are expected to be in attendance in their regularly scheduled classes by the time the bell rings to begin class. Students who arrive late to school must report to the office upon arrival at school. Repetitive tardiness at the start of the day or during school hours may result in the school pursuing action as simple or habitual truancy. If a student arrives late to class, the teacher will handle the situation. If a student has been detained by a teacher, the student is to ask for a late slip from the person who detained the student before going on to the next class. Any student five (5) or more minutes late to a class for any un-excused reason **may** be considered by the office as un-excused absent for that period.

B. Teachers shall determine their own policies dealing with un-excused tardiness. After three (3) tardies the teacher may choose to refer the student to the office for consequences. The consequence may include no credit for that day's class work.

- If these consequences are found to be ineffective, then alternative consequences including, but not limited to, out of school suspension may be assigned.

D. A record of tardiness will be kept by the office. Tardiness will be recorded on the student's permanent record.

- Student must be in class and on time or excused in order to practice or participate in an activity that same evening.