



Book	Dodgeville School Board Policies
Section	400 Series: Students
Title	COMPULSORY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE
Code	431
Status	Active
Adopted	November 21, 1994
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The School Board believes attendance is a key factor in student achievement and believes that students must be in regular school attendance in order to successfully achieve the goal of high school graduation.

Any person having under their control a child who is between the ages of 6 and 18 years of age (including through the end of the semester in which the child becomes 18 years of age), or a child enrolled in 5-year-old kindergarten in the Dodgeville School District, shall cause the child to attend school regularly in accordance with state law. The child is expected to attend school on each day school is in session, unless they are excused from school attendance for any of the following reasons or have graduated from high school:

1. Prior Parent-Excused Absences.

A student excused by their parent or guardian prior to an absence is excused from school attendance. A student may be excused by the parent or guardian under this provision for not more than 10 school days in the school year. Students so excused are responsible for making up work missed during the absence. It is the student's responsibility to make arrangements with their classroom teacher(s) to complete any assignments or examinations that are or will be missed during the absence. Absences falling into this absence category include discretionary absences known in advance such as family vacations/travel, family weddings, hunting, and, unless within the number of visits counted as school-excused absences under the next section of these procedures, college visitation days.

2. Other Excused Absences of a Temporary Nature.

- a. Illness, including reasonable treatment for such illness, where the student is temporarily not in proper physical or mental condition to attend school.
A written statement from a health care provider may be required to be submitted as proof of the student's condition for student absences due to illness that are 3 school days or more in length. Such health care provider's excuse shall state the period of time for which it is valid, and shall not exceed 30 days.
- b. Medical appointments (although the Dodgeville School District strongly encourages parents and guardians to make every effort to schedule non-emergency medical examinations and appointments, e.g., for health maintenance/preventative care, at times that avoid or at least minimize the student's loss of instructional time);

- c. Religious holidays or instruction to the extent authorized by law;
- d. Family emergency;
- e. Severe weather conditions that, in the parent's or guardian's reasonable judgment, are a danger to the health and welfare or safety of the student;
- f. Funerals of a family member or friend;
- g. Up to two days per school year for college visitations by high school juniors and seniors;
- h. Suspension from school;
- i. Mandatory court appearances;
- j. Visiting a parent or guardian who is on active military duty and has been called to duty for or is on leave from deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting, or has returned from deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting within the past 30 days;
- k. Serving as an Election Official – Students may be excused to serve as an election official provided they have at least a 3.0 grade point average or the equivalent and have the permission of their parent(s) or guardian and the building principal;
- l. Sounding Taps – A student in grades 6 to 12 may be excused for the purpose of sounding "Taps" during a military honors funeral for a deceased veteran;
- m. Any other reasonable non-discretionary absence deemed appropriate by the school attendance officer.

Parents and guardians are required to notify the school of an absence prior to or on the day of the absence. All students with excused absences will be given the opportunity to make up class assignments missed during the absence, including tests and examinations. It is the student's responsibility to contact the teacher(s) to make arrangements for making up the work missed during an absence from school.

As indicated above, absence from school during a period of suspension will be considered an excused absence for purposes of this policy. Students serving a suspension will be permitted to make up class work and examinations missed during their suspension from school under the same conditions as other excused absences.

Students who are participating, with Dodgeville School District approval, in extracurricular activities, athletics, and other Dodgeville School District-sponsored programs or events during any portion of an instructional day are not considered absent from school, but teachers shall treat their absence from class as excused with the right to make up work to the same extent permitted in connection with excused absences from school.

3. Program or Curriculum Modifications.

A child may be excused from regular school attendance pursuant to a program or curriculum modification, as further defined under state law, that has been requested by the student's parent or guardian and approved by the building principal.

Program or curriculum modifications shall be requested in writing. The administrative decision in response to the request shall likewise be provided in writing. If a child, or their parent or guardian, is not satisfied with the decision made by the building principal, they may ask the School Board to review and act on the request. The Board shall render its determination upon review in writing, if the student's parent or guardian so requests.

4. Participation in a Board-Approved Alternative Program.

A child who is 16 years of age or older may be excused from regular school attendance to attend an alternative educational program leading to high school graduation or a high school equivalency diploma in accordance with state law provisions.

5. High School Students Who Are No Longer Subject to Compulsory Attendance.

For any student who is 18 years of age or older and no longer subject to compulsory attendance and truancy referral, the student will still be held to the distinctions between excused and unexcused absences. In addition, by state law, the Dodgeville School District may not grant a high

school diploma to any student unless, during the high school grades, the student has been enrolled in a class or has participated in an activity approved by the school board during each class period of each school day, or the student has been enrolled in an alternative education program.

Students who are absent from school without an acceptable excuse as authorized above will be considered truant and shall be dealt with in accordance with state law and established Dodgeville School District procedures. Students with unexcused absences (truant students) will be permitted to make up tests and examinations that were missed during the unexcused absence period provided that that test/examination can be completed independently and by a reasonable deadline that is established by the teacher. Such students will also be permitted to make up assignments missed during their truancy to the extent such assignments can be completed independently and were not integrated with an in-school or group-based activity that the student missed while truant. Truant students may receive less than full credit for make-up assignments and make-up tests/exams. Teachers shall be expected to apply the same standard for making up missed classroom assignments to all truant students on a fair and consistent basis. With the approval of the building principal, a school may establish periods of supervised study, either during or outside of the regular school day, during which students who need to make-up work will be expected to complete the make-up work. The Dodgeville School District shall not deny student credit in a course or subject solely because of a student's unexcused absences.

The building principal shall serve as the primary school attendance officer and deal with all matters relating to school attendance and truancy. The building principal may designate one or more licensed staff members as deputies who shall also be permitted to serve in the role of school attendance officer provided that each such deputy is sufficiently familiar with the relevant requirements and procedures.

The District Administrator (or their administrative-level designee) and building principals shall establish necessary procedures to encourage regular student attendance, to identify excused and unexcused absences, and to determine appropriate action to respond to and serve as a deterrent to truancy. These procedures shall be in line with recommendations of the county truancy committee(s), the Dodgeville School District's truancy plan, and state law requirements.

Teachers, students, and parents and guardians shall be informed of the Dodgeville School District's student attendance policy and procedures annually via school handbooks or other means necessary to provide proper notice of student attendance-related responsibilities.

Legal References

Wisconsin Statutes

- [Section 115.28\(51\)](#) [state superintendent duty; encourage school boards to grant excused absences for students sounding "Taps" during a military honors funeral of a deceased veteran]
- [Section 115.997\(5\)\(e\)](#) [military compact on educational opportunity for military children]
- [Section 118.125\(2\)\(cg\)](#) [disclosing student attendance records to law enforcement agency]
- [Section 118.125\(2\)\(ch\)](#) [disclosing student attendance records to fire investigator]
- [Section 118.15](#) [compulsory school attendance]
- [Section 118.16](#) [school attendance enforcement]
- [Section 118.162](#) [truancy committee and plan]
- [Section 118.163](#) [municipal truancy and dropout ordinances]
- [Section 118.18](#) [teacher attendance reporting requirements]
- [Section 118.33\(1\)\(b\)](#) [high school graduation requirements]
- [Section 948.45](#) [contributing to truancy]

Cross References



Book	Dodgeville School Board Policies
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Definitions

1. The District Administrator is designated as the District Attendance Officer. The Administrator may appoint a person to oversee the day-to-day attendance record keeping.
2. The Principal serves as the School Attendance Officer of his/her building or designates an agent with approval of the District Administrator.
3. "Truancy" means any absence of part or all of one or more days from school during which the school attendance officer 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 s. 118.15.
4. The School Attendance Officer is responsible for maintaining concise attendance data for each student on a daily basis. That person must report excessive absenteeism cases to the Administrator as they arise.
5. By state law, a habitual truant is defined as a pupil who is absent from school without an acceptable excuse for part or all of five or more days on which school is held during a school semester.
6. Recognizing the importance of attendance to the educational process, the following reasons are acceptable excuses for absence from school (see policy EPS Code: JED Student Absences and Excuses):
 - Illness
 - Death of a family member
 - Unavoidable appointments with physicians and/or dentists
 - Other absence when permission from the Principal was granted in advance.

School Attendance Enforcement

In accordance with s. 118.16 the following procedures will be used when absence is defined as truant or habitual truant.

The Dodgeville School District will implement the Iowa County Truancy Intervention Program (see Policy EPS Code: JEDA-R). In addition to implementation of the Iowa County Truancy Intervention Program, the Dodgeville School District will refer truant and/or habitually truant students to local law enforcement agencies in those municipalities (including Iowa County) that have adopted municipal truancy and dropout ordinances under s. 118,163 as described herein.

When a child meets the definition of truancy under I. E. (above), then the following procedures will be implemented:

1. A letter from the school principal will be sent to the parents/guardians on each day (1-5) of unexcused absence from school by their son/daughter.
2. School Officials will notify the District Attorney when a student is truant from school for the third time. The District Attorney will notify the parent/guardian in writing that a meeting will take place in the office of the District Attorney to discuss truancy matters.
3. The parents/guardians and the student will be asked to sign a School Attendance Contract when they meet with the District Attorney.

4. Upon the fifth unexcused absence or tardy during a semester, the principal will notify (in writing) parents/guardians that their son/daughter meets the criteria necessary to be considered a "habitual truant." The letter must contain information regarding a meeting to be held with school officials to discuss the child's truancy.
5. Five student unexcused tardies in grades 6-12 are equivalent to one student unexcused absence. Tardiness applies for all of the class periods of the school day. In grades K-5 tardiness applies only at the start of the school day. Five unexcused tardies equals one unexcused absence. Consequences for student tardiness during the school day (late to class) will be handled by the teaching and administrative staff of each elementary school.
6. Once a student meets the criteria for "habitual truancy," (five unexcused absences from school) a certified letter scheduling a meeting between school officials and parent/guardian will be sent to the parent/guardian. The certified letter receipt will serve as documentation that an attempt was made to conduct the meeting, should the parent/guardian not attend. After the meeting has taken place and the truancy referral criteria set forth in subsection IV below has been met, a "habitual truancy" referral will be sent by school officials to the offices of the Iowa County Juvenile Intake Officer and the Iowa County District Attorney.
7. After a "habitual truancy" referral has been sent by school officials to the offices of the Iowa County Juvenile Intake Officer and the Iowa County District Attorney, if the student is again truant or habitually truant, school officials may notify any local law enforcement agency with jurisdiction over the matter of such additional truancy. Local law enforcement officials may proceed to enforce any ordinance enacted under s. 118.163(2).
8. Pupils will not be denied credit in a course or subject solely because of the pupil's unexcused absences or suspensions from school. Truant pupils may be suspended or assigned to detention or to a supervised, directed study program. The programs need not be held during the regular school day. Credit may be given for work completed during the period of suspension, detention or assignment to a supervised, directed study program. A pupil shall be permitted to take any examinations missed during a suspension or a period of assignment to a supervised directed, study program. (See policy EPS Code: JED Student Absences and Excuses.)

Exceptional Cases

According to state statute, this policy does not apply to:

1. Any child who is excused by the school board because the child is temporarily not in proper physical or mental condition to attend school or an educational program under s. 115.85 (2), but who can be expected to return to school or the program upon termination or abatement of the illness or condition. The Administrator will request the parent or guardian of the child to obtain a written statement from a licensed physician, dentist, chiropractor, optometrist, or psychologist or Christian Science practitioner living and residing in this state, who is listed in the Christian Science Journal as sufficient proof of the physical or mental condition of the child. An excuse under this paragraph shall be in writing and shall state the time period for which it is valid, not to exceed thirty days.
2. Any child excused by the school board in accordance with the school board's written attendance policy under s. 118.16 (4) and with the written approval of the child's parent or guardian. The child's truancy, discipline or school achievement problems or exceptional needs as described in s. 115.76 (3) may not be used as the reason for an excuse under this paragraph. The excuse shall be in writing and shall state the time period for which it is effective, not to extend beyond the end of the current school year.
3. Instruction in a home-based private educational program that meets all of the criteria under s. 118.165 (1) may be substituted for attendance at a public or private school.

Truancy Referrals

Prior to any truancy proceeding being brought against a child under s.s. 938.13(6) for habitual truancy or under 938.125(2) or 938.17(2) for a violation of an ordinance enacted under s. 118.163(2) or against the child's parent or guardian under 118.15, the District Administrator shall provide evidence that appropriate school personnel in the school or school district in which the child is enrolled have, within the school year during which the truancy occurred done the following:

1. Met with the child's parent or guardian to discuss the child's truancy or have attempted to meet with the child's parent or guardian and been refused.
2. Provided an opportunity for educational counseling to the child to determine whether a change in the child's curriculum would resolve the child's truancy and have considered curriculum modifications under s. 118.15 (1)(d).
3. Evaluated the child to determine whether learning problems may be a cause of the child's truancy and, if so, have taken steps to overcome the learning problems.
4. Conducted an evaluation to determine whether social problems may be a cause of the child's truancy, and, if so, have taken appropriate action or make appropriate referrals.

Legal References

Wisconsin Laws: 118.15, s. 118,163

Federal Law

Cross References: **Former Policy Code:** 431.2 TRUANCY (Re-named 431 - Rule), JEDA