

# ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES OF THE MILWAUKEE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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## ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY 8.14 T R U A N C Y

### **(1) DEFINITIONS**

(a) State law defines truancy as any absence of part or all of one or more days from school when the parent or guardian has not notified the school of a legal excuse for the student's absence (see Administrative Policy 8.13). Truancy includes intermittent attendance carried on for the purposes of defeating the intent of the compulsory school-attendance law, such as unexcused morning or afternoon absences [Wis. Stat., §118.16(1)(c)].

(b) State law defines habitual truancy as any absence from school without a legal excuse for part or all of five (5) or more accumulated days on which school is held during a school semester [Wis. Stat., §118.16(1)(a)].

(c) Any organized student truancy shall be treated as individual truancy (unexcused absences) for the students involved.

(d) No pupil enrolled in a school district operating under Chapter 119, such as Milwaukee Public Schools, may be suspended or expelled from school for truancy [Wis. Stat., §120.13(1)(d)].

### **(2) IDENTIFYING TRUANT STUDENTS**

(a) All student absences shall be reported daily to the school attendance officer. At the start of each school day, the school shall determine which students enrolled in the school are absent from school and whether each absence is excused. In the event that the student's absence is not an excused absence, the student's parent or guardian shall be notified as required by state statutes [Wis. Stat., §118.16(2)(c)]. Further, the school shall seek police cooperation in the apprehension and detention of truant students until their parents call for them [Wis. Stat., §938.19(1m)].

(b) The Board wishes that every effort be made to use available alternatives for students experiencing attendance problems. The Administration shall implement a process for student evaluation and services as described in the district's truancy plan (see Administrative Procedure 8.14). If, after all existing services have been exhausted, the truancy continues, the school may take the necessary steps to institute proceedings, as detailed in the state statutes and municipal codes, against the parent or guardian who fails to cause the student to attend school regularly and against the student who continues to be truant [Wis. Stat., §118.163].

### **(3) PARENTAL NOTIFICATION**

(a) At the start of each school day, the school shall determine which students enrolled in the school are absent from school and whether each absence is excused. It is the responsibility of each school to attempt to contact the parents or guardians, by phone, within two hours after it has been determined that their children are absent from school without any notification to the school by the parents or guardians.

(b) If there has been no success contacting the parents or guardians by phone, the school shall attempt to contact the parents or guardians by another means before the end of the second day after receiving a report of an unexcused absence.

### **(4) HABITUAL TRUANCY**

(a) A habitual truant is a student who has accumulated five (5) unexcused absences within the school semester or trimester.

- (b) Upon identifying a student as a habitual truant, the school shall mail a habitual truancy letter.
- (c) The district's truancy plan (Administrative Procedure 8.14) will be implemented to resolve the problem of truancy for students who are identified as habitual truants.
- (d) If the student's truancy level is not resolved after the habitual truancy notification letter and conference process, additional supports and services shall be provided. The principal shall be responsible for making the appropriate referrals, as described in Administrative Procedure 8.14.

#### **(5) DISPUTING STUDENT TRUANCY**

A parent or guardian who disagrees that his or her child's absence is a truancy (unexcused) should request a meeting, within five (5) days of notification of the truancy (unexcused absence), with the building principal or designee to discuss the reason for determination that the absence was truancy.

#### **(6) MAKE-UP ASSIGNMENTS/EXAMINATIONS — WIS. STAT., §118.16(4)(b)**

(a) District schools shall not deny a student credit in a course or subject solely because of the student's unexcused absence or suspension from school. In all instances of excused and unexcused absences or suspensions, students are expected to complete a reasonable amount of make-up class work without penalty.

(b) Students shall be given the opportunity to make up work missed during an absence or suspension when they return to school. It is the responsibility of the student and his/her parent or guardian to contact the teacher(s) to make arrangements for making up work missed during an absence or suspension from school.

(c) The respective teacher(s) shall identify make-up work and a reasonable time frame for its completion. If any question arises as to the appropriateness and/or feasibility of making up a particular assignment, the teacher shall confer with the building principal to discuss the extent to which make-up work and/or substitute assignments are possible.

(d) Students shall be permitted to take any examinations missed during an absence or suspension. It is the responsibility of the student and his/her parent or guardian to contact the teacher(s) to make arrangements for making up examinations missed during an absence or suspension from school.

#### **(7) TRUANCY PREVENTION/INTERVENTIONS**

(a) The building principal or designee shall follow and facilitate the District Attendance Improvement Plan by using his or her professional judgment and discretion in implementing a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) to prevent and intervene with student truancy.

History: Adopted 6-30-75; revised 2-6-79; reaffirmed 3-29-95; amended 5-30-02; revised 1-29-10, 04-23-15, 03-23-23  
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