

## **SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY**

According to 118.15 of the Wisconsin State Statutes any individual who is of school age shall attend school regularly during the full period and hours that the school is in session, unless in the opinion of the principal and guidance counselor it is advisable to arrange a modified program for individuals with special circumstances. Under state law, enrollment in school beyond the compulsory age is an option that a student exercises according to his/her and the family's wishes. It is basically the parents' responsibility to monitor their child's attendance and the school district's responsibility to enforce state laws concerning student attendance. Any student who is absent from school without an acceptable excuse will be considered truant. Absences will be excused or unexcused. All absences will be unexcused unless verbal or written communications have been made with the principal's office within three (3) school days of the absence. To be excused an absence must fall into the categories listed below:

- Personal illness of the student (a doctor's note may be required for illnesses of three (3) consecutive days or if in excess of ten (10) days per year)
- Family emergency
- Trips with parents or guardians if work is made up beforehand or as arranged with individual teachers
- Medical/dental appointment if it cannot be arranged outside of school hours
- Recognized religious services
- Driver's examination
- Necessary work at home for which arrangements have been made in advance
- Activities deemed necessary by parents and within guidelines of state and local attendance policies
- All others not listed but approved by the building principal

Wisconsin Act 239, which became effective as of June 18, 1998, modifies existing district policies and procedures. Some of these modifications include:

- Any student excused in writing by his/her parent or guardian before an absence is excused from school attendance. A student may be excused by the parent/guardian for not more than ten (10) days in the school year under this new provision. The school board must require a student so excused to complete the coursework missed during the absence.

Absences for reasons other than those listed above will be considered unexcused. Students who are habitually absent from school, or part of the school day, will be subject to discipline according to the State of Wisconsin School Attendance Statutes. The definition of habitual truant has also been revised. A "habitual truant" now means a student 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. School districts are now required by law to schedule a meeting with the parent(s)/guardian of a habitual truant to discuss the student's truancy within a specific time period. The day 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/guardian. With the consent of the student's parent/guardian, however, the date for the meeting may be extended for an additional five school days. This law also states that a school does not need to meet the requirement of having to meet with the student's parent/guardian if the meeting is held within ten (10) school days after the date that the habitual truancy notice is sent.