

## 431 STUDENT ATTENDANCE

The District believes truancy and excessive absences affect a student's education and increase the chance of failure. The Board of Education encourages a strong partnership between the home, school, and community. It recognizes a positive relationship between good school attendance and success in school and employment. If student learning and growth are to occur, parents/guardians, students, and school personnel must recognize their responsibilities to assure regular attendance.

Following State law, any person having under his/her control a child who is enrolled in the District between the ages of six (6) and eighteen (18) years, or a child enrolled in kindergarten, shall cause the child to attend school regularly during the full period and hours, religious holidays excepted, until the end of the school term, quarter, trimester or semester of the school year in which the child becomes eighteen (18) years of age, s. 118.15 (1) (a)(am), Wis. Stats., unless the child:

- Is temporarily not in a proper physical or mental condition to attend a school program but is expected to return to a school program upon termination or abatement of the illness or condition. The school attendance officer may request the parent/guardian of the child to obtain a written statement from the treating physician, 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 (30) days.
- Is excused following the Board's written attendance procedures and with the written approval of the child's parent or guardian. A child may not be excused for more than ten (10) days in a school year. The child's truancy, discipline, or school achievement problems or disabilities as described in s. 115.76 (5), Wis. Stats., may not be used as the reason for an excuse under this paragraph.
- Has been authorized by the Superintendent/designee to attend an alternative educational program leading to high school graduation or a high school equivalency diploma.
- Has graduated from high school.

Parents/guardians have primary responsibility under State law for student attendance at school. Enforcement of student attendance and truancy policies and procedures shall be a shared responsibility between the schools, family service agencies, law enforcement officials, students, parents/guardians, and the community at large.

## **Definitions:**

- **Truancy/Unexcused Absences:** any absence of part or all of one or more days from school during which the school attendance office, principal, or teacher has not been notified of the legal cause of such absence by the parent or guardian of the absent student. It also means intermittent attendance carried on to defeat the intent of s. 118.15.
- **Habitual truant:** a student who is absent from school without an acceptable excuse for part or all of five (5) or more days a semester, and ten (10) days a year.
- **School attendance officer:** an employee designated by the school board to deal with matters relating to school attendance and truancy.
- **Religious Instruction:** With written permission of a parent or guardian, students shall be permitted to be absent from school at least sixty (60) minutes but not more than 180 minutes per week to obtain religious instruction outside of the school during the school day. The supervisor of the religious instruction shall regularly report monthly to the principal of the school, the names of the students who attended the weekly religious instruction. The Board may deny the privilege of released time to students who are absent from the religious instruction upon request of the privilege.

## **Student Absences and Excuses**

The school shares responsibility with parents/guardians in teaching young people responsible habits of dependability through regular and punctual attendance. Such habits have a pertinent carry-over to daily life and adult employment. When parents/guardians wish their children to be absent from school, they must assume full responsibility for their children's activities. Requests for absences are to be registered in advance with the principal/designee. Also, students shall not be released from school premises or a class under any circumstances unless it is determined by the principal/designee that the request has been made by a qualified person (parent or guardian) and for sufficient and good reason.

In the event of a student's absence, the parent/guardian must notify the school within one hour or as soon as practicable after the scheduled start of school. If the parent/guardian has not provided prior notice or called, then a school representative shall call the parent/guardian to inquire about the student's absence. Written notice may be required from the parent/guardian to verify all excused absences before the student is readmitted to school or class. Students absent for reasons other than those identified or excused by the Board shall be considered unexcused and truant.

The following are considered by the District as excused absences:

- Illness – mental or physical. Written verification from a licensed or certified provider may be required to verify illness excuse.
- Family emergency or crisis.
- Attendance at the funeral of a relative or friend.
- Appointments with medical specialists. Such appointments are to be made, whenever possible when school is not in session. When emergencies arise, appointments as early or as late in the school day as possible are recommended. Verification of medical appointments shall be submitted to the school to be reflected in attendance.
- Attendance at special family celebrations or religious holidays.
- Attendance at special events of educational value as approved by the principal/designee. This statement does not excuse attendance at baseball games, rock concerts, “Skip Days,” picnics, etc.
- A written request from the parent or guardian received before date(s) of absence for no more than ten (10) accumulated days in a school year as per Wis. Stats. 118.15.  
Note: “Family trips that can be taken only during the normal school term.” The intent of this statement is to provide an opportunity for students to accompany their parent/guardian on a trip, which cannot be scheduled when school is not in session. A parent/guardian shall be required to notify the building principal/designee before leaving on a trip, of the pending absence to review the student’s attendance record and overall performance record. Student trips without parent/guardian accompaniment are not excused absences.

### **School Responsibility**

- Excused Absences
  - When a student has been absent for a total of ten (10) days, an attendance notification letter will be sent to his/her parent or guardian. A statement quoting the state law governing school attendance will also be enclosed.
  - When a student has been absent for a total of fifteen (15) days, an attendance notification letter will be sent to his/her parent or guardian. If necessary, a personal parent conference will be requested by the principal or the principal’s

agent. Every possible attempt shall be made by the school district to eliminate the barriers to the student's education and his/her engagement with the school. A discussion of potential familial, psychosocial, academic, and other special needs shall be conducted. The school team responsible for completing the review may include the counselor, administrator, school psychologist, nurse, and teachers.

- **Unexcused Absences**

When a student meets the criteria as habitual truant (students who are absent from school without an acceptable excuse for all or part of five (5) or more school days in a given semester), the school shall request in writing a meeting of the parents/guardians with the designated school personnel with such meeting to be held within five (5) school days upon the consent of the child's parent/guardian. This notice shall include the name of the school personnel with whom the parent or guardian 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 school official will schedule a truancy conference pursuant to Wis. Stats. §118.16(2)(cg) with the parents/guardians and the child. Notice shall be first-class mail or electronic notice. If the meeting does not occur within ten (10) school days after the notice being sent, the school may initiate legal proceedings relating to the truancy without the meeting. If a student continues to be truant, after the truancy conference has been attempted or held, a truancy referral may be submitted to the Williams Bay Police Department. School officials assess each case and determine the most appropriate way to address the truancy problem.

- **Suspension/Expulsion:**

The period in which a student is absent from school due to suspension or expulsion is not an unexcused absence. Students will be permitted to make up class work, including examinations, missed during the period of suspension.

- **Class work and Credits:**

Credit in a course or subject shall not be denied solely because of a student's unexcused absence from school or suspensions from school. A student whose absence from school was unexcused shall be permitted to make up course work. Quarterly, semester or grading period examinations missed during the absence can be made up. It is the student's responsibility to contact his or her teachers to determine what course work and examinations must be made up. Teachers shall have the discretion to assign substitute course work and examinations. Teachers shall also have the discretion to specify where and when examinations and course work shall be completed, including outside regular

school hours. The time for completing the work shall be commensurate with the length of the absence, unless extended by a school administrator based upon extenuating circumstances.

A limited number of absences may be required criteria for participation in certain programs. In these situations, the requirement for attendance will be honored in order to keep the integrity of the program.

Any student, who withdraws from school under the law, has the right to be readmitted upon request so long as he/she remains of school age. The principal shall specifically inform the student who withdraws from school of this right for re-admittance. A student requesting re-admittance must wait until the beginning of the next semester to return to school, unless an alternate start date is mutually agreed upon between the administrator and student.

### **Requests for Program or Curriculum Modifications**

Any student's parent/guardian, or the student if the parent/guardian is notified, may request the District in writing to provide the student with program or curricular modifications. These program or curriculum modifications shall be considered by the District under the following circumstances:

1. The student is temporarily not in proper physical or mental condition to attend a school program.
2. The parent or guardian has obtained a written statement of the physical or mental condition from a licensed physician, dentist, chiropractor, optometrist, psychologist, physician's assistant, nurse practitioner, certified advanced practice nurse practitioner, 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 student.
3. This written statement, Statement from Medical Professional to Consider Homebound Instruction, shall indicate the time period for which it is valid, not to exceed 30 calendar days.
4. A team consisting of the parent and school personnel knowledgeable about the student shall review the physical or mental condition statement and make a determination regarding the need for homebound study. These program or curricular modifications may include but are not limited to nonsectarian correspondence courses or other courses of study approved by the District or nonsectarian tutoring provided by the District.
5. This team shall review the need for program or curricular modifications as needed.

If the District denies the request for program or curriculum modifications, the parent may appeal the denial.

The provisions of this policy are applicable to all students enrolled in the District, including those designated as children with disabilities and those who have reached the age of majority.

LEGAL REFERENCE: Wisconsin Statutes, Sections 118.15, 118.153, 118.16, 118.162, 118.165

APPROVED: February 10, 2003

REVISED: September 11, 2017

August 13, 2018

REVIEWED: February 22, 2021

Williams Bay School District  
500 W. Geneva Street  
Williams Bay, WI 53191  
Fax (262)245-5877

Instructions: Medical professionals – Complete this form and mail or fax to the student’s school. The District processes this Statement to consider the need for Homebound Instruction and retains in the appropriate file.

STATEMENT FROM MEDICAL PROFESSIONAL TO CONSIDER HOMEBOUND INSTRUCTION

Student Name *Last, First, Middle Initial*

Birthdate *Month/Day/Year*

Sex  M  F

Parent(s), Guardian(s) Name

School of Attendance

Address *Street, City, County, State, ZIP*

**Statement from Medical Professional**

1. Diagnosis:

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2. Description of physical or mental condition that prevents school attendance:

3. Is the student able to attend her/his school program?

Yes  No  Part-time *Explain:*

4. Is the student able to tolerate an instructional program outside of the school setting?

Yes  No *If no, list medical restrictions which may interfere with the educational program.*

5. Anticipated number of days hospitalized \_\_\_\_\_

Anticipated number of days homebound \_\_\_\_\_

(Another Statement shall be required for days exceeding 30 per **Wis. Stats. 118.15(3)(a)**)

Medical Professional’s Name *Print or Type* Medical Professional’s Signature Date Signed

Clinic Name /Office Address *Street, City, State, ZIP Telephone Area Code, No.*

\*Definition of medical professional under **Wis. Stats. 118.15(3)(a)**: A licensed physician, dentist, chiropractor, optometrist, psychologist, physician’s assistant, nurse practitioner, certified advanced practice nurse practitioner, or Christian Science practitioner living and residing in this state, who is listed in the Christian Science Journal.