



# MILAN AREA SCHOOLS ATTENDANCE POLICY

*This policy outlines the steps followed by each of the school buildings in communicating with a student's parent/guardian regarding their student's attendance.*

## Michigan's Compulsory Attendance Law states that students must attend school from age six to 18 years of age.

Mich. Comp. Laws Ann. § 380.1561 – Compulsory School Attendance Sec. 1561. (1) Except as otherwise provided in this section, for a child who turned age 11 before December 1, 2009, or who entered grade 6 before 2009, the child's parent, guardian, or another person in this state has control and charge of the child shall send that child to a public school during the entire school year from the age of 6 to the child's sixteenth birthday. Except as otherwise provided in this section, for a child who turns age 11 on or after December 1, 2009, or a child who was age 11 before that date and enters grade 6 in 2009 or later, the child's parent, guardian, or another person in this state having control and charge of the child shall send the child to a public school during the entire school year from the age of 6 to the child's eighteenth birthday. The child's attendance shall be continuous and consecutive for the school year fixed by the school district in which the child is enrolled. In a school district that maintains school during the entire calendar year and in which the school year is divided into quarters, a child is not required to attend the public school more than 3 quarters in 1 calendar year, but a child shall not be absent for 2 or more consecutive quarters.

## Truancy and Chronically Absent Description:

School administrators will regularly monitor attendance records for signs of Chronic Absenteeism and Truancy.

"Chronically Absent": When a student is absent for 10% or more of the days in a school year, whether absenteeism is due to unexcused, excused, or disciplinary absences. Students are considered chronically absent when any of the following occurs:

- missing 3 days of school within the first month of the year
- missing 7-8 days of school within the first half of the year
- missing 18 days of school in the entire school year

Note: All absences for the school year should be counted, even if they occurred at a different school.

"Truant": When a student has **10 or more unexcused absences** at any point in the school year. Students and families who have met this criterion will be reported to Washtenaw County's Prevention, Education, & Permanency Unit for additional support. A referral to Child Protective Services for educational neglect may also be considered if determined necessary.

## Excused vs. Unexcused Absences:

The following describes excused versus unexcused absences according to the guidelines outlined by Washtenaw County's Intermediate School District and Washtenaw County's Juvenile Trial Court.

A student's first 5 absences from school are considered excused when documentation of the reason for the absence has been submitted and approved by a designated staff person. A student's 6th and subsequent absence(s) from school are considered excused only for the following reasons when documentation has been submitted and approved.

<b>Excused Absences</b>	<b>Unexcused Absences</b>
<p>Medical (MD) - Absence due to a student's illness/medical reason or medical appointments (including, but not limited to, medical, counseling, dental, or optometry).  <i>*Students sent home from school due to fever, vomiting, and/or diarrhea will be marked excused for the day sent home and the following day (24 hours after the onset of symptoms). Anything after the initial day or 24 hours will need medical documentation.*</i></p>	<p>Unexplained Absence (AU) is an absence that is not one of the excused absences to the left, and the parent/guardian did not call in on behalf of the student</p>
<p>Religious (R) - Absence due to student's observance of a religious holiday</p>	<p>Absence (A) called in by a parent/guardian but not excused according to the list of excused absences</p>
<p>Funeral (FN) - Absence due to death in the student's family</p>	
<p>Court (CT) - Absence due to mandated court appearance or placement by Juvenile Court in detention, shelter care, foster care, or residential placement</p>	
<p>School Business (SB) - Absence due to school business or activity approved by school administration (including extraordinary educational opportunities as determined and pre-approved by district administrators)</p>	
<p>Military (MT) - Absence due to student's parent/guardian's military service</p>	
<p>Homelessness (H) - Absence due to a student's status as homeless (communicated by the district's McKinney-Vento liaison)</p>	

# Late Arrivals, Early Pick-Ups, and Tardies

At the elementary level, a student who arrives later than 15 minutes past the school start time is considered absent for the morning. If a student arrives after the designated school start time up to 14 minutes past the school start time is considered tardy.

At the elementary level, a student who leaves school 30 minutes prior to the end of school is considered absent for the afternoon.

At the secondary level, a student is considered to be tardy when they arrive to class late, but within the first 10 minutes of the start of the class period. A student is considered absent when they did not report to class at all or when they have missed more than 10 minutes of the class period.

## Attendance Notification Letters:

### ***Letter #1: 8 Days of Unexcused Absences***

*At the elementary level, this could be 8 full days of school, 16 half days of school, or a combination of the two. At the secondary level, this could be 8 full days of school, 48 class periods, or a combination of the two.*

This letter is intended to inform a student's family of the number of absences their child has missed and serve as a reminder of the district's attendance policy.

### ***Letter #2: 15 Days of Unexcused Absences***

*At the elementary level, this could be 15 full days of school, 30 half days of school, or a combination of the two. At the secondary level, this could be 15 full days of school, 90 class periods, or a combination of the two.*

When a student has had 15 days of unexcused absences within a school year, the Washtenaw Intermediate School District's Education Project referral will be submitted for case review and additional support. In addition, a meeting should be scheduled with the school principal or vice principal, social worker or counselor, parent, and student (if applicable) to complete an Attendance Improvement Plan to discuss how the school and student's family can work together to improve student's attendance for the remainder of the school year.

### ***Letter #3: 20 Days of Unexcused Absences***

*At the elementary level, this could be 20 full days of school, 40 half days of school, or a combination of the two. At the secondary level, this could be 20 full days of school, 120 class periods, or a combination of the two.*

Once a student has had 20 unexcused absences within a school year, the student's parent/guardian should be notified by a third letter that the school will be filing for truancy. The student's information will be sent to Washtenaw County's Prevention, Education, & Permanency Unit for additional support.

## Drop Policy: 15 Consecutive Unexplained Absences

If a student has been absent for 15 days consecutively and the absences have been unexplained, with no communication from the student's parent/guardian, the student will be unenrolled from school. In addition, the building principal or assistant principal will file truancy with Washtenaw County's Prevention, Education, & Permanency Unit and a letter will be sent to notify the student's parent/guardian. Prior to dropping the student,

a building representative should make a reasonable effort to contact the student's parent/guardian regarding the unexplained absences.