

Compulsory Student Attendance

I. SCHOOL ATTENDANCE MONITORING PROCEDURES:

- A. A copy of the school district's attendance policy shall be provided and reviewed with each student at the beginning of the school year.
- B. The attendance policy shall be sent home via a school newsletter. A contact person shall also be listed to answer any questions dealing with the school district's attendance policy.
- C. Parents or guardians are required to notify the child's school early in the morning, or as soon as possible, of the reason for their child's absence. If the school is not notified, the school shall make appropriate efforts to contact the parents or guardians. The school then determines if the absence is excused or unexcused.
- D. When a child is absent from school without an acceptable excuse, the school shall notify the parent or guardian about the child's truancy and direct the parent or guardian either to return the child to school no later than the next day or to provide an acceptable excuse for the child's absence. The notice shall first be attempted by personal telephone or personal contact. If such contact fails, written notice shall then be given by mail. Please refer to Appendix A. The school may also decide to send written notices to confirm all unexcused absence situations. The school's attendance officer shall maintain a written record of all contacts and the written notice shall be given before the end of the second day after an unexcused absence is reported. The attendance officer shall take appropriate action.

School officials may decide to send written notice to confirm all unexcused absences. The attendance officer shall maintain a written record of all contacts, and the written notice to a parent/guardian of a truant child shall be mailed before the end of the second day after an unexcused absence is reported. Upon return to school, the child who has been truant shall report immediately to the attendance officer who shall take appropriate action.

- E. After a child experiences **part or all of 10 school day absences during a school year**, a letter of concern shall be sent to the parent or guardian.
- F. After a child experiences **part or all of 5 school day absences during the school semester**, a letter of concern may be sent to the parent or guardian requesting that any further absences this semester must be accompanied with a medical or clergy

excuse in order to be excused. A meeting as detailed in (C.) may also be requested. After a child experiences **part or all of 5 school day unexcused absences during a semester**, habitual truancy procedures shall be implemented.

- G. School districts may continue to communicate and/or meet with parents or guardians as detailed in (C.) and (D.) at specifically defined intervals; examples, 12 days of absence, 15 days of absence, et cetera.

II. HABITUAL TRUANCY PROCEDURES

In the event that a child is absent from school **without an acceptable excuse for part or all of five (5) or more days during a semester**, it is required that all school districts in Jefferson County implement the following habitual truancy procedures:

- A. The school district shall serve notice in accordance with Wisconsin Statute 118.16. In municipalities where municipal ordinances have been enacted, school officials may also involve their local law enforcement agency in filing formal truancy charges.
- B. A meeting shall be conducted in accordance with Wisconsin Statute 118.16. The school district may request representatives from law enforcement, Jefferson County Human Services, and other agencies attend this meeting. During this meeting, parents or guardians may be requested to consent to release the child's confidential information to permit the school and Jefferson County Human Services to exchange information.
- C. In cases where the child under review has participated solely in the traditional school program, the school team shall consider modifying the child's educational program in accordance with Wisconsin Statute 118.15 with input from the child, the child's parents or guardians, and other agency representatives. The board of education or its designee shall take action on all modified educational program plans. In cases where the child under review has already participated in a modified educational program and the school team determines that the existing modified educational program continues to be appropriate, the school attendance officer or designee shall file a truancy referral with Jefferson County Human Services.
- D. In situations where the school has made a first-time attempt to develop and provide a modified educational program for a child or has significantly altered the content of the previously developed modified educational program and the child is absent from the modified educational program **without an acceptable excuse for part or all of 5 or more school days during a semester**, the school attendance office or designee will file a truancy referral with Jefferson County Human Services. After the school has filed a truancy referral with Jefferson County Human Services, the school attendance officer or designee shall continue to

monitor the child's attendance.

- E. Jefferson County Human Services shall determine whether or not to refer for petition within 40 days of the receipt of a truancy referral. Usually the determination is made within two weeks.
- F. In cases where Jefferson County Human Services requests a truancy petition, the Jefferson County District Attorney shall act within 20 days of their receipt unless the petition requires further investigation. Requests for a criminal complaint charging the responsible adult shall be considered within the three-year statute of limitations. (Generally, upon submission of a fully investigated request, the charging decision is made within three weeks.)

III. ENABLING RULES

- A. **EARLY MONITORING OF ATTENDANCE:** The Board of Education directs that a concerted effort be made by all District staff to monitor closely school attendance patterns in the elementary school, because poor attendance patterns of many children become apparent in the lower grades.
- B. **COUNTY-WIDE COMMUNICATIONS:** The Board of Education directs that the administrators of the district should continue their dialog with other school districts and agencies in Jefferson County to achieve more effectiveness in dealing with the problem of student truancy. Inter-agency communication, planning, and resource management will better serve the needs of troubled youth in Jefferson County.
- C. **PUBLIC AWARENESS:** In order for students, their parents/guardians, and the general public to gain an insight and understanding of the Johnson Creek School District's Truancy Plan, and an awareness of the State's compulsory School Attendance Law, the Board of Education directs that Sections I.-III. of the policy be publicized in the District's Newsletter each year before the start of a new school year. A copy of this policy will also be included in student handbooks.

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