



**Today's Learners.  
Tomorrow's Leaders.**

Berlin Area School District  
Attendance Plan

Revised July 2023

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This document provides additional detail to district policy #5200: Attendance; and should be read in conjunction with this policy.

## Attendance

1. The compulsory school attendance law requires any person having children under their control between the ages of 6 to 18 to cause those children to attend school regularly [118.15(1)(a)]
  - a. State law also requires the parent or guardian of a child who has been enrolled in a 5-year-old kindergarten class to cause the child to attend school regularly until the end of the school term [118.15(1)(am)]
2. Each building has an administrator who has been designated as that school's Attendance Officer by the District Superintendent.

## Absences

At the secondary (6th-12th grade) level, an absence is defined as *not being present for 15 or more minutes*, regardless of when in the school day it occurs. At the elementary (pre-K-5th grade) level, an absence is defined as *not being present for 30 or more minutes of instructional time*, regardless of when in the school day it occurs.

## Excused Absences

A student shall be coded with an excused absence from school for the following reasons when prior notice is provided to the school's Attendance Office:

1. Children can be excused by their parent/guardian, for any reason, for *up to ten days a year*. Students are required to make up any work missed during the absence [118.115(3)(c)]. Excused absences include but are not limited to the following:
  - a. Appointments that cannot be scheduled outside of the school day.
  - b. A court appearance or other legal procedure that requires the student's presence.
  - c. A death in the immediate family or funerals for relatives or close friends.
  - d. Religious instruction or holidays.
  - e. Attendance at special events of educational value such as college visits, job fairs, etc.
2. Evidence that the student is temporarily not in proper physical or mental condition to attend school. When such an absence is expected to be for several days, the parent is expected to obtain a written statement from a physician, dentist, chiropractor, optometrist, or psychologist, or Christian Science practitioner residing in the state and listed in the Christian Science Journal as proof of the physical or mental condition of the student.
  - a. Such an excuse shall be in writing and shall state the period of time, which shall not exceed 30 days. Absences beyond 30 days require another written statement.

- b. This form is available in this plan's appendices, in each Attendance Office, and is also available on the district's website under the resources for parents.
3. Religious instruction (see Policy 5223)
  - a. The Board shall permit students, with prior written parental permission, to be absent from school during required school periods at least sixty (60) minutes but not more than 180 minutes per week to obtain religious instruction outside of school.
  - b. A student must be properly registered and a copy of such registration must be filed with the principal. The supervisor of the religious instruction must report monthly to the District the names of the students who are attending the weekly instruction.
4. The observance of religious holidays consistent with the student's creed or belief.
5. The student is serving a suspension or expulsion.
6. Approved school activities during class time.
7. The Board has excused the student from regular school attendance to participate in a program or curriculum modification leading to high school graduation or a high school equivalency diploma as provided by State law.
8. The Board has excused a student from regular school attendance to participate in a program leading to a high school equivalency diploma in a secured correctional facility, a residential care center, a secure detention facility, or a juvenile portion of a county jail, and the student and their parent or guardian agree that the student will continue to participate in such a program.
9. The student is a "child at-risk" as defined under State law and is participating in a program at a technical college on either a part-time or full-time basis leading to a high school graduation, as provided under State law.

The school Attendance Officer or designee is authorized to consider approving any of the following as excused absences, without prior consent:

1. Any of the absences listed in #3 above, provided that the parents provide an acceptable excuse within 48 hours of the absence.
2. An emergency in the family or other crisis that requires the absence of the student because of family responsibilities.
3. A quarantine imposed by a public health officer or Board of Education's Communicable Disease Policy.
4. A student who serves as an election official if the student has a grade point average of 3.0 or higher.
5. Special circumstances that show good cause and which are approved by the school attendance officer or designee.

## Tardies

1. In the Berlin Area School District, a tardy is defined as *being late to school or class (for any period) any amount of time less than 15 minutes.*

2. Classification of a tardy is the responsibility of the school Attendance Officer or designee. A pattern of tardiness on the part of any student shall be brought to the attention of the student's parent/guardian. If it appears that the student is negligent with being at school/class on-time, appropriate disciplinary action shall be taken.
3. Depending upon the frequency and amount of school missed, tardiness may be classified as an absence and therefore reportable as truancy or habitual truancy.

## Attendance Codes

As a parent/guardian, you are able to monitor your child's attendance in PowerSchool Attendance Monitor. The codes that you will see and their definitions are explained in the following table.

Code	Definition
AB	Unexcused Absence
EXC	Excused Absence
EXM	Excused Absence
EXI	Excused Absence
REL	Excused Absence
SRF	Excused Absence
OSS	Excused Absence
TUNX	Unexcused Tardy
TEX	Excused Tardy

## Truancy

1. A truant is a student who is *absent from school without notification of an acceptable excuse* to the Attendance Officer or designated office personnel *for any part or all of any day* in which school is held during a semester.
2. In the Berlin Area School District, "part-of-a-day" is defined as:
  - a. *15 or more minutes per period during the district-defined school day for grades 6-12; and*
  - b. *15 or more minutes of instructional time per school day at the elementary level.*

3. A habitual truant is 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 semester.  
[118.16(1)(a)]

## Make-up Course Work and Examinations

1. Students who are absent from school, shall be permitted to make-up course work and examinations missed during the absence when they return to school; with the exception of an expelled student.
2. It is the student's responsibility to contact their teachers to determine what coursework and examinations must be completed.
3. Teachers shall have the discretion to assign substitute coursework 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.
4. The time for completing the work shall be commensurate with the length of the absence, unless extended by the principal based upon extenuating circumstances.

## Attendance/Truancy Procedures

1. Teachers will take attendance every day.
  - a. Arrivals/departures to/from school that occur after attendance shall also be recorded.
  - b. At the secondary level, attendance is taken at the beginning of every period.
2. From the teacher reports, the attendance clerks will create absentee reports, which will be disseminated to all appropriate school personnel.
3. Parents/guardians will be notified of their child's absences, if at all possible on the same day, but no later than the end of the second school day after the office receives a report of an absence. This notice will:
  - a. First be attempted by phone, then email; and be considered made if the parent is directly reached, or a voicemail or email message can be left.
  - b. Be made by mail (letter or postcard) if the phone/email attempt does not work.
  - c. Direct the parent or guardian to return the child to school or to provide an excuse as listed above under Absences no later than the next day on which school is in session.
4. Documentation of such notifications will be electronically maintained within each student's record in the district's student management system (SMS).
5. In the spirit of being proactive, school Attendance Officer will send "letters of concern" at a variety of thresholds. These letters are intended to alert the parents/guardians to the accumulation of absences, provide an opportunity for home and school to discuss the impact of these absences, and collaboratively problem-solve how to keep the student successful in school.

# Habitual Truancy Procedures

1. Schools shall notify the parent or guardian by certified mail when a child becomes a habitual truant. The notice must include:
  - a. A statement of the parent's responsibility to cause their child to attend school.
  - b. A statement that the parent, guardian, or student may request program or curriculum modifications for the student under State law; and that the student may be eligible for enrollment in a program for children at-risk.
  - c. A request that the parents meet with school officials to discuss the truancy. The school must schedule this meeting with the parents within five school days of when the notice is sent. If the parent or guardian requests to reschedule the meeting, the date for the meeting may be extended an additional 5 school days.
  - d. The name of the school administrator 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.
  - e. A statement of the penalties that can be issued to the parents for failing to cause their child to attend school.
2. Before any proceeding can be brought against a student for being habitually truant (whether it be in the municipal court or circuit court systems) or against the parents for failing to cause a child to attend school regularly, the school must provide evidence that the following steps have been taken. These steps must be taken within the school year during which the truancy occurred.
  - a. School staff have met with or attempted to meet with the parent or guardian to discuss the truancy.
  - b. The school has provided an opportunity for educational counseling to determine whether a change in the child's curriculum would resolve the truancy.
  - c. The school has evaluated the child to determine whether learning problems may be a cause of the truancy. The evaluation is not necessary if tests administered within the previous year show the child to be functioning at grade level. If a learning problem has been identified, the school must have taken steps to address before proceeding through the court.
  - d. The school has conducted an evaluation to see whether social problems are a cause of the truancy. If social problems are identified, educational counseling services will be offered.
    - i. In some situations, the family may also be referred to other community agency resources at the family's expense.
3. The school is not required to complete the activities of #2 above if they can provide evidence that they were unable to carry out the activities due to the child's absence from school (118.16(5m)).
4. Once the school has completed the responsibilities in #1 & 2 above and the student continues to be truant, a truancy referral may be submitted to the Green Lake or Waushara or Winnebago County Department of Health and Human Services - Juvenile Intake Office.

- a. It is important to note that truancy referrals are not submitted on all habitual truants. School officials assess each case and determine the most appropriate way to address the truancy problem. This does not always include a truancy referral. Other options are considered and may be pursued.
5. In certain cases when it is determined by school personnel that the parent or guardian is contributing to the truancy of the child, a referral may be made for prosecution of the parent or guardian in the Green Lake, Waushara, or Winnebago County Circuit Court, as described in Wis. Stats. §118.15.
6. If evidence is provided by the school that the activities under 118.16(5) have been completed or were not required to be completed, the municipal court may exercise jurisdiction regardless of the juvenile's age 938.17(2)(a)1.

## Other Plan Requirements

1. Methods to increase and maintain public awareness of and involvement in responding to truancy within the School District (§118.62(4)(c)).
  - a. Green Lake, Waushara, and Winnebago County have established a standing Truancy Stakeholders Committee that meets 3-4 times a school year and is focused on reducing truancy in the Berlin Area School District. Attendees typically include the District Superintendent, building administrators, pupil services staff, County Human Services workers, a representative from the District Attorney's office, and the Corporation Counsel's office.
  - b. Articles and information related to attendance and truancy are posted in district and building newsletters.
  - c. District policies are published on the district's website.
  - d. District procedures and expectations for attendance and truancy are listed in student and parent handbooks.
2. The immediate response to be made by school personnel when a truant child is returned to school (§118.162(4)(d)).
  - a. A meeting will be offered to or held with a parent or guardian or adult student to comply with §118.16(5)(a).
  - b. Every possible attempt will be made by the BASD to eliminate the barriers to the student's education and their engagement with the school. Options would include but are not limited to:
    - i. Student Success Team (SST) meeting
    - ii. Alter student schedule
    - iii. Provide educational counseling
    - iv. Facilitate referral to outside agencies (with parental consent at parental cost)
    - v. Engage county social worker if one is assigned to the student
3. The types of truancy cases to be referred to the District Attorney for the filing of information under §938.24 or prosecution under §118.15(5) and the time periods within which the District Attorney will respond to take action on the referrals (§118.162(4)(e)).



- a. Where appropriate, the BASD will refer *habitual* truancy cases to the Green Lake, Waushara, or Winnebago County Department of Human Services Juvenile Intake Office pursuant to §938.24 after the school has completed the requirements under §118.15(5). An intake worker will review the referral and decide initially how to best address the situation.
  - b. The BASD will use forms as directed by the Green Lake, Waushara, or Winnebago County Department of Human Services Juvenile Intake Office and the Green Lake, Waushara, or Winnebago County District Attorney's Office depending on which county in which the student resides. This will ensure that the necessary information for successful prosecution of the case is provided to the correct District Attorney's Office/Corporation Counsel.
4. Plans and procedures to coordinate the responses to the problems of habitual truancy, as defined under §118.16(1)(a), with public and private social service agencies (§118.162(4)(f)).
  - a. The Green Lake, Waushara, and Winnebago County Department of Human Services are working cooperatively to address school truancy. The BASD Truancy Stakeholder group has been created to address truancy in the district. School officials, Green Lake, Waushara, and Winnebago County Department of Human Services workers, police officers, health care professionals, and other community resources meet quarterly to discuss the situation and to plan how to address the problem.
  - b. The Green Lake, Waushara, and Winnebago County Department of Human Services is responsible to address all habitual truancy referrals received from the BASD, depending on in which county the student resides. This is done in accordance with and in compliance with Chapters 938 and 118 of the Wisconsin Statutes. The Green Lake, Waushara, and Winnebago County Department of Human Services have established procedures to respond to habitual truancy referrals and to service and supervise habitual truants.
  - c. After completing all of the requirements under §118.16(5) BASD schools may submit a truancy referral to the Green Lake, Waushara, or Winnebago County Department of Human Services Juvenile Intake Office. Once a referral is received in the Juvenile Intake office, an intake worker will be assigned to assess the situation and make an appropriate intake decision.
5. Methods to involve the truant child's parent or guardian in dealing with and solving the child's truancy problem (§118.162(4)(g)).
  - a. The BASD's goal is to increase student engagement. Engagement increases attendance and academic success. To accomplish this, there must be a collaborative relationship between the school and the parents/guardians of the students. Parental involvement in solving a child's truancy problems is critical. That involvement may include weekly checks with the school to make sure the child is attending school as required as well as doing the work and avoiding behavior problems, all of which are important elements in the child's educational success.

- b. All parents have access to the parent portal of the district's student management system. This allows them to continuously monitor their child's attendance.

## Appendices

### Materials for Truancy Meeting

- [Sample Agenda for Truancy Meeting](#)
- Parent Handout: Court Disposition for Truancy (GLC, Waushara, [Winnebago](#))

### Official Truancy Action Forms

- [Green Lake County Truancy Referral](#)
- [Waushara County Truancy Referral](#)
- [Winnebago County Truancy Referral](#)
- Lakeside Municipal [Truancy Checklist](#) and [Request for Sanctions](#)

### Sample Letters of Concern

- 3 Day Unexcused Absence Notice (AB, TUNX)
- 5 Day Unexcused Absence Notice (AB, TUNX)
- 7 Day Parent Excused Notice (EXC)
- 10 Day Parent Excused Notice and Meeting Request (EXC)
- 7 day Excused Illness Notice (EXI)
- 10 Day Excused Illness Notice (EXI)

### **3 DAY UNEXCUSED ABSENCE NOTICE (AB, TUNX)**

Date

Parent/Guardian Contact Information

Dear Parent/Guardian & Student:

At **Berlin Middle School** we are committed to-student achievement and are concerned when a student misses school for any reason. Often, the number of days that students are absent accumulates without families realizing how many days have been missed. This letter is being sent to you to help prevent this from happening and to inform you that the student has missed all or part of 3 days of school this semester, without an allowable excuse.

**Attendance Matters:** By 9th-grade, attendance gives us a better idea of who will graduate than 8th-grade test scores. Students who miss just one or two days of school each month can fall seriously behind.

- When students are absent from school, they miss out on consistent instruction that is needed to develop basic skills.
- Students in early grades are particularly susceptible to falling behind in fundamental reading skills, which can have a snowball effect that impacts future learning.
- Students who are chronically absent may not learn crucial school readiness skills and can fall behind their peers in social-emotional development.

\*Read more about the research on the [Attendance Works Seminal Research website](#).

School attendance and parent/guardian involvement are central to making sure that each of our students is able to reach their fullest academic potential. Should you find that it's necessary for your child to be absent from school for any reason, please call the school attendance line at **(920) 361-2000 and press "1"**. This is available 24 hours a day. If the absence is due to a medical appointment, we ask that you provide the office with a medical note upon your child's return to school. Also, please contact us right away if you feel there are circumstances causing your child to miss significantly more school than usual.

Wisconsin state law states that unexcused absences beyond five (5) may be referred to municipal or county authorities for habitual truancy, but we would like to work with you to avoid this outcome.

Although your child is not yet at five (5) or more unexcused absences, we still feel it is important to communicate with you for the sake of your child's academic success. Please support us in our efforts to ensure your child is given every opportunity for success while at **Berlin Middle School**.

Signed: **Attendance Officer**

**5 DAY UNEXCUSED ABSENCE NOTICE**  
**AND MEETING REQUEST (AB, TUNX)**

**Date**

**Parent/Guardian Contact Information**

Dear Parent/Guardian & Student:

We would love to connect with you. We notice that **student** has missed all or part of 5 days of school this semester unexcused. We wish the best for your child and want them to reach their goals. We are inviting you to meet with us so we can hear more about the challenges related to attendance and problem-solve together.

**Please Meet with Us:** We have scheduled a meeting at the school to meet with you, your child, and school staff.

**Meeting date/time**

**Need to Change the Meeting Details:** Please contact us as soon as possible if you prefer a different time, day, place, or if you would prefer to meet virtually. **School Staff Name, Phone, Email**

**Your Team:** Let us know if you or your child would like specific school staff members present at the meeting, or if there are others who are important to include.

**What does Habitual Truancy Mean:** A student is considered habitually truant when they are absent without an acceptable excuse all or part of five or more days in a school semester. Each school district determines what constitutes “part of a day.” Our school district defines “part of a day” as 15 minutes at middle/high school and 30 minutes at elementary school.

**What are the Consequences:** Our biggest concern is that your child may fall behind. We want to help with improving your child’s attendance and avoid other negative consequences. According to state law, we must include the information below:

It is the parent's or guardian's responsibility, under Wis. Stat. § 118.15(1)(a) and (am), to cause the student to attend school regularly. If you fail to do so, you may be subject to penalties under Wis. Stat. § 118.15(5). Such penalties may include:

- For the first offense, a fine of not more than \$500 or imprisonment for not more than 30 days or both.

- For a second or subsequent offense, a fine of not more than \$1,000 or imprisonment for not more than 90 days or both.

You may be required to perform community service work for a public agency or a nonprofit charitable organization in lieu of the penalties listed above.

You may also be ordered to participate in counseling at your own expense or to attend school with your student, or both.

We look forward to meeting with you to discuss the needs of your child and work together to improve your child's attendance.

Signed: Attendance Officer

## 7 DAY PARENT EXCUSED NOTICE (EXC)

Date

Parent/Guardian Contact Information

Dear Parent/Guardian & Student:

At Clay Lamberton, we are committed to student achievement, and the most important way to ensure high levels of achievement is through attendance. Often, the number of days that students are absent accumulates without families realizing how many days have been missed. We notice that student has missed all or part of 7 days of school, excused by you for reasons other than illness. Under Wisconsin law, students are only allowed parent/guardian excused absences for all or part of 10 days, after which time these absences become unexcused.

**Attendance Matters:** By 9th-grade, attendance gives us a better idea of who will graduate than 8th-grade test scores. Students who miss just one or two days of school each month can fall seriously behind.

- When students are absent from school, they miss out on consistent instruction that is needed to develop basic skills.
- Students in early grades are particularly susceptible to falling behind in fundamental reading skills, which can have a snowball effect that impacts future learning.
- Students who are chronically absent may not learn crucial school readiness skills and can fall behind their peers in social-emotional development.

\*Read more about the research on the [Attendance Works Seminal Research website](#).

### What you can do:

- Provide a medical note when your child is out due to illness.
- Make school a priority.
- Set routines and share the importance of school.
- Complaints of headaches or stomach aches may be signs of anxiety, contact information follows.
- Communicate with the school. Your child's school counselor can be reached at [School Counselor contact information](#).

If you have any questions regarding attendance do not hesitate to contact me. Like you, we want to ensure your child is given every opportunity to grow and learn while at Clay Lamberton.

Signed: Attendance Officer

**10 DAY PARENT EXCUSED NOTICE**  
**AND MEETING REQUEST (EXC)**

Date

Parent/Guardian Contact Information

Dear Parent/Guardian & Student:

At Clay Lamberton, we are committed to student achievement, and the most important way to ensure high levels of achievement is through attendance. We notice that student has missed all or part of 10 days this school year, excused by you for reasons other than illness. To avoid further requests becoming unexcused absences we are inviting you to meet with us so we can understand the challenges related to attendance and problem-solve together.

**Please Meet with Us:** We have scheduled a meeting at the school with you, your child, and school staff to discuss the current situation and the consequences of unexcused absences. Please understand that multiple unexcused absences may result in-the potential filing of truancy with our municipality and/or county authorities.

**Meeting date/time**

**Need to Change the Meeting Details:** Please contact us as soon as possible if you prefer a different time, day, place, or if you would prefer to meet virtually. School Staff Name, Phone, Email

**Your Team:** Let us know if you or your child would like specific school staff members present at the meeting, or if there are others who are important to include.

We look forward to meeting with you to discuss the needs of your student and work together to improve your student's attendance.

Signed: Attendance Officer

## 7 DAY EXCUSED ILLNESS NOTICE (EXI)

Date

Parent/Guardian Contact Information

Dear Parent/Guardian & Student:

At **Clay Lamberton**, we are committed to student achievement, and the most important way to ensure high levels of achievement is through attendance. Often, the number of days that students are absent accumulates without families realizing how many days have been missed. We notice that **student** has missed all or part of 7 days of school due to illness, without a medical note.

**Attendance Matters:** By 9th-grade, attendance gives us a better idea of who will graduate than 8th-grade test scores. Students who miss just one or two days of school each month can fall seriously behind.

- When students are absent from school, they miss out on consistent instruction that is needed to develop basic skills.
- Students in early grades are particularly susceptible to falling behind in fundamental reading skills, which can have a snowball effect that impacts future learning.
- Students who are chronically absent may not learn crucial school readiness skills and can fall behind their peers in social-emotional development.

\*Read more about the research on the [Attendance Works Seminal Research website](#).

**What you can do:**

- Provide a medical note when your child is out due to illness.
- Complaints of headaches or stomach aches may be signs of anxiety, contact information below.
- Communicate with the school. Your child's school counselor can be reached at **School Counselor contact information**.

If you have any questions regarding attendance do not hesitate to contact me. Like you, we want to ensure your child is given every opportunity to grow and learn while at **Clay Lamberton**.

Signed: **Attendance Officer**



**10 DAY EXCUSED ILLNESS NOTICE**  
**AND MEETING REQUEST (EXI)**

Date

Parent/Guardian Contact Information

Dear Parent/Guardian & Student:

At Clay Lamberton, we are committed to student achievement, and the most important way to ensure high levels of achievement is through attendance. We notice that student has missed all or part of 10 days due to illness, without a medical note. To avoid further requests becoming unexcused absences we are inviting you to meet with us so we can understand the challenges related to attendance and problem-solve together.

**Please Meet with Us:** We have scheduled a meeting at the school with you, your child, and school staff to discuss the current situation and the consequences of unexcused absences. Please understand that multiple unexcused absences may result in-the potential filing of truancy with our municipality and/or county authorities.

**Meeting date/time**

**Need to Change the Meeting Details:** Please contact us as soon as possible if you prefer a different time, day, place, or if you would prefer to meet virtually. School Staff Name, Phone, Email

**Your Team:** Let us know if you or your child would like specific school staff members present at the meeting, or if there are others who are important to include.

We look forward to meeting with you to discuss the needs of your student and work together to improve your student's attendance.

Signed: Attendance Officer