

# Denmark School District's Attendance Policy

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## Attendance Information

“When you make school attendance a priority, you help your child get better grades, develop healthy life habits, avoid dangerous behavior and have a better chance of graduating from high school.

Students who attend school regularly also feel more connected to their community, develop important social skills and friendships, and are significantly more likely to graduate from high school, setting them up for a strong future.

As a parent, you can prepare your child for a lifetime of success by making regular school attendance a priority. By figuring out the reasons for your child’s absences—whether they’re physical or emotional—and taking advantage of support services—such as school counseling, nursing and social work services—you can help set your child on the path to success!”<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> from the Absences Add Up website of the Ad Council for the Department of Education

## Reporting an Absence

If your child is going to be absent or late for school, please call your school attendance office by 8:00am. ***You must contact the school every day that your child will not be in school. Any unreported absences are considered unexcused*** (see Unexcused Absences for more information).

State Statute and District Policy allows the following reasons for a student to be excused from school:

- The student is ill to the extent that they are not in proper physical or mental condition to attend school
- For observance of a religious holiday or participating for not more than 180 minutes per week in religious instruction
- Serious illness or medical condition of a member of their immediate family, and the student is needed at home
- Bereavement due to the death of an immediate family member
- The student has an appointment with a doctor, dentist, therapist, or other medical appointment, or is hospitalized. Please ensure you secure proper documentation from the provider's office to provide to the school to excuse the student's absence.
- Inclement weather, when, there is a severe weather warning in place
- The student has their parent's or legal guardian's prior written permission (see Pre-Planned Absences for more information)

## Pre-Approved Planned Absences

If your child is to be absent for a vacation or trip, a "Request for Pre-Approved Planned Absence" form must be completed and approved by your school's attendance office before the scheduled absence for those days to be considered excused.

Here is an example of what may be considered for a Pre-Approved Planned Absence:

- Family Vacation
- Hunting
- Taking a Driver's Licensing test

- College Visits
- Death of someone outside the student's immediate family

When possible, arrangements shall be made for the completion of schoolwork missed over the course of the absence.

Pre-Approved Absences should occur only for special circumstances and for no longer than 10 days in a row. There is a maximum of 10 days allowed as excused Pre-Approved Planned Absences for the entire school year.

Pre-approved school field trips do not count against the 10 allowable days. Attending WIAA State events to support Denmark Student Athletes is considered a school field trip and approved by the Board of Education. Students must be pre-approved by administration to attend.

Questions about this procedure can be answered by your school's office staff.

## Chronic Absenteeism

Your child's success in school is a goal we share. Missing just two days a month adds up to the maximum of 10 days to be missed during the school year! We work hard to partner with our families to make sure all students are at school, on time for school, and throughout the school day, every day!

Students who miss 10 or fewer school days per year are:

- More likely to be at grade level in math and in reading
- Less likely to be behind in their social-emotional development
- Less likely to drop out of high school
- Less likely to develop school refusal or school anxiety
- More likely to graduate from high school

If your child has 10 or more absences during the school year, you will be required to provide a note from a medical provider for the absence to be considered medically excused. After a child misses 10 days of school for any reason, they will be marked

unexcused unless a provider states otherwise. It is the parent's responsibility to provide such documentation. Please stay in communication with your school regarding your child's attendance, as 5 unexcused absences result in your student becoming Habitually Truant under Wisconsin State Statute (see Habitual Truancy for more information).

We understand that things come up for families during the school year and we are committed to working with you. Your school welcomes the opportunity to discuss any questions or concerns you may have regarding your child's attendance. Please feel free to contact a school official if you have any questions or concerns regarding your child's attendance.

## Habitual Truancy

Denmark School District values its partnership with families. We will be seeking your help in the event that your child becomes habitually truant. Per [Wisconsin State Statute 118.15](#), requires compulsory school attendance and defines habitual truancy as "a pupil who is absent without an acceptable excuse for part or all of 5 or more days on which school is held during a school semester."

You can take steps to prevent your child from becoming habitually truant by:

- Contacting your school every time your child is not in attendance.
- Work together with your school when they contact you by phone, email, or letter regarding your child's attendance and contact your school's Student Services Office if you have concerns about your child's attendance.

Please note by law, the school district of Denmark is required to begin the habitual truancy process once a student is considered habitually truant. The process is outlined below:

The Habitual Truancy Process consists of the following:

1. An 8 day letter will be sent when your child has missed 8 days of instruction.
2. A 10 day letter will be sent when your child has missed 10 days of instruction. This 10 day letter will include contact information of the Denmark school social worker, in which you can contact him/her to discuss your child's truancy. Per state statute you have the right to set up a meeting to discuss your student's attendance after the student has missed 10 days. Please note if your student is

open enrolled a 10 day meeting will be had with the school social worker to discuss the student's open enrollment status.

3. A 15 day letter will be sent when your child has missed 15 days of instruction. Attached to this letter will be a meeting time and place to meet with the school social worker and discuss your child's attendance. Any support needed to improve your child's attendance will be discussed at this meeting.
4. Your child's attendance will be monitored for improvement. In the event a student's attendance does not improve, a truancy citation from the Brown County Sheriff's Department may become appropriate.

**IMPORTANT:** All students who are classified as being habitually truant are in violation of Wisconsin law, and as such the student, and their parent(s)/guardian(s), may be required to appear in court. Depending upon the age of the student and circumstances related to the absences, the court may levy sanctions and require that the parent/guardian cause the child to attend school. In addition, the court may order sanctions requiring that the student receive counseling and/or perform community service.

The purpose of the Habitual Truancy Process is to identify the cause(s) of attendance problems and identify supports within the school and community that can assist your student and family.