

ONALASKA HIGH SCHOOL ATTENDANCE & ABSENCES POLICY

Wisconsin public schools all abide by the same attendance laws (118.15). District Policies 3330, 3331, 3332, 3333, 3340, and 3341 further define Onalaska School District's attendance guidelines. Regular school attendance is directly linked to academic and future job success. We want to work together to ensure accurate and consistent school attendance, and we will communicate with parents and students when attendance—excused or unexcused—is concerning. Parents and students also have daily access to attendance through PowerSchool. If you have any questions, feel free to contact the attendance secretary or the associate principal.

In the event of a student absence, the following is a breakdown of the two major categories and the codes that are used in PowerSchool to distinguish them:

CATEGORY #1 - EXCUSED ABSENCES:

Parent Excused:

This is when a parent/guardian calls or writes a note to excuse a student from school. Parents are **permitted up to 10 parent-excused days per school year:**

- High School - 10 days are calculated by adding up the number of hours missed

Below is a list of the most common attendance codes when a parent excuses his/her child from class:

ILL=a parent feels his/her child is too ill to attend or stay in school

PER=for personal reasons a student is not in attendance (e.g. running late, out of town, visiting someone in the hospital)

VAC=vacation

FNL=a parent excuses his/her child for a funeral

COL=college visit (juniors and seniors are granted one college visit per year that the school excuses and does not count toward parent-excuse time)

A warning letter will be issued when a student approaches the 10-day parent excused limit. Parents will also receive written notification once all 10 parent-excused days are exhausted, and future absences without a medical excuse will be considered unexcused.

Medically Excused:

This is when a student has visited a medical provider. Once written documentation of the visit is provided, the parent-excused day code is changed to one of the following and **does not apply** toward the 10 parent-excused days:

MED=student was ill and a physician indicated the day or range of days that he/she should stay home

APT=student went to a medical appointment, including dentist/orthodontist appointments. Students should bring an appointment slip to the main office with the day and time of the appointment

HOF/HEA=student went to our school health office and the nurse/health aide has determined that the student needs to lie down in the health office or go home (you will receive a call from the health office if your child is too ill to stay at school)

NOTE: Open Enrollment may be denied due to habitual unexcused/truant absences and/or tardiness.

CATEGORY #2 - UNEXCUSED ABSENCES:

Truant:

This is when a student has been absent and the period(s)/day(s) have not been excused in any way. If this occurs, parents will receive an automated call/email the day of the unverified absence.

UNV=unverified (unverified absences will change to either a parent or medical excused code or truant (TRU) if the absence cannot be cleared)

TRU=truant; absences that cannot be excused in any way or no parent-excuse days remain

*“A student is considered truant if he/she is absent without an acceptable excuse for all or part of one or more days during which school is held. A student qualifies to be habitually truant when he/she is absent without an acceptable excuse for all or part of five or more days in a school semester”
(Wisconsin State Statute 118.16).*

Students who are considered habitually truant will receive written notification requesting a meeting with school personnel and be referred to the school resource officer for possible citation.

FOR SAFETY AND SECURITY REASONS, A STUDENT LEAVING AND/OR RETURNING TO SCHOOL IN THE MIDDLE OF THE DAY FOR ANY REASON MUST SIGN IN/OUT IN THE SCHOOL’S MAIN OFFICE.

ONALASKA HIGH SCHOOL ACTIVELY DISCOURAGES VACATION TAKEN DURING A TIME WHEN A STUDENT WILL MISS SCHOOL.

If, for any reason, this is unavoidable, the student is solely responsible for completion of all schoolwork and exams missed, according to a schedule that coincides with the rest of the class, in each subject. The office and ALL teachers involved must be notified no less than five school days in advance of the student’s absence. Each teacher will determine when the missed work or exams will be due. **A Pre-Arranged Absence Form must be completed and turned into the office before the absence.**

DEFINITION OF TARDY AND DETERMINATION OF ABSENCE: (Board Policy 3331)

Attendance at the high school and middle school is taken by class period.

At the high school level, a tardy is defined as missing any part of the beginning of a class period. If a student is tardy for more than 15 minutes, he/she is considered absent.

If a student accumulates more than 10 tardy notations in his/her attendance record during the semester, the school attendance officer or a designee will attempt to meet with the student and/or the student’s parent or guardian to evaluate the reasons for the tardiness, to consider any available strategies the parent/student can use to avoid future tardiness, and to establish progressive consequences. Following such a meeting (or attempt to hold a meeting) that involves the student’s parent or guardian, tardiness during the remainder of the semester that also involves an unexcused lack of the student’s physical presence at school will be considered an instance of truancy under these procedures, but prior to such a meeting (or attempted meeting) such tardiness will not be considered truancy.

High School - Tardies Contributing to Truancy

Before and during school tardies can contribute to truancy at the high school level.

After 5 Unexcused Tardies/Semester	After 10 Unexcused Tardies/Semester	Each Successive Unexcused Tardy for Rest of Semester
Truancy Warning Letter	Issue Truancy Warning Letter – if First Truancy Notice (by personal contact, email, or phone call then by 1st class mail) Parent/Guardian Meeting	Each successive unexcused tardy equals a truant period. See Table A for school and law enforcement action.

CONSEQUENCES FOR VIOLATION OF STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

The Classroom Misconduct Policy: A student who shows a lack of respect or responsibility will be subject to the following procedures and or loss of privilege at the discretion of the administration (see next page for privilege list):

Step 1: Parent notification from classroom teacher.

Step 2: Referred to administration for a warning and/or loss of privileges.

Note: Some behaviors (e.g. vulgarities directed toward a staff member or student) warrant immediate administrative referrals for possible suspensions.

Misconduct / Attendance Violations in Study Hall and other areas outside of the classroom:

Could result in one of the following:

- A. warning
- B. parent notification
- C. removal of privileges (computer labs, LMC, 340, parking passes, etc.)
- D. in-school suspension
- E. out-of-school suspension

Truancy Procedures: Parents will be contacted regarding unexcused absences through the attendance phone system. State law provides the school with the final say on what is an excusable absence. If eighteen-year-old students do not comply with the attendance/behavior expectations of Onalaska High School, they will be subject to discipline as stated in the above section addressing Misconduct/Attendance in Study Hall and other areas outside of the classroom. If 18-year-old students continue to be truant, they may not be allowed to participate in their graduation ceremony.

Co-curricular Participation Attendance:

- An unexcused absence(s) or truant(s) during a season will be reviewed by the coach/advisor, activities director, and administration and will result in suspension from the next contest, performance, or event.
- When a student is marked unverified, he/she can participate. If it is concluded that he/she were truant, the result will be suspension from the next contest, performance, or event.

Note: Administration may assign detentions or other consequences for truant periods to help support student attendance.

Truancy action will be sent in the following manner:

DESCRIPTION	SCHOOL ACTION	LAW ENFORCEMENT ACTION
First 8 (equivalent to one full day)-Unexcused Period Absences	Issue First Truancy Notice (by personal contact, email, or phone call then by 1 st class mail) Warning sent after 4 unexcused periods	Consideration for issuing Simple Truancy One Citation and/or Contributing to Truancy Citation
Next 8 (equivalent to one full day)-Unexcused Period Absences	Issue Second Truancy Notice and schedule face-to-face meeting with parent/guardian	Consideration for issuing Simple Truancy Two Citation and/or Contributing to Truancy Citation
Next 8 (equivalent to one full day)-Unexcused Period Absences	Issue Third Truancy Notice	Consideration for issuing Simple Truancy Three Citation and/or Contributing to Truancy Citation
Next 8 (equivalent to one full day)-Unexcused Period Absences	Issue Fourth Truancy Notice	
Next 8 (equivalent to one full day)-Unexcused Period Absences	Issue Notice of Habitual Truancy (by certified mail and set up meeting with parent/guardian	A Habitual Truancy Citation may be issued and/or a JD1702 referral to LaCrosse County.

School Action and consideration for any Law Enforcement Action may occur up to two weeks after the actual truancy days/periods so that students and /or parents have the opportunity to clear up any unexcused absence(s).

Tardies: Students are expected to be in their respective classrooms when the bell rings. Students who are tardy more than fifteen minutes will be considered truant. See previous page for tardy policy and procedures.