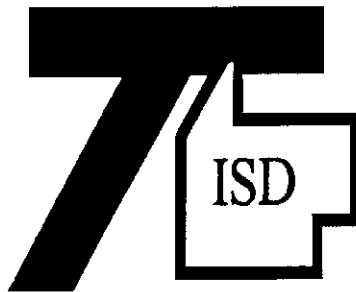


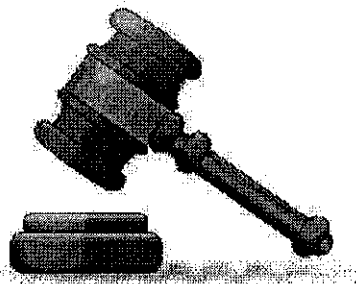
TUSCOLA ISD

2019 - 2020

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AND TRUANCY HANDBOOK



“IT’S THE LAW”



Consistent Attendance = Positive Academic Performance

Introduction:

Each year Tuscola County Truancy Services works with truant students and their families due to excessive absences and tardies. Truancy is often the beginning of a lifetime of problems for students. Each day a student is absent, she/he miss out on valuable instructional time in the classroom. This results in poor academic performance which hinders educational growth.

Truancy is a stepping stone to delinquent and criminal activity. Truant students are at a higher risk of being drawn into behavior involving drugs, alcohol, or violence. High rates of truancy are linked to high rates of daytime burglary and vandalism. Truancy has been clearly identified as an early warning sign that students are headed for potential delinquent activity, social isolation, or educational failure via suspension and expulsion.

New Compulsory School Attendance Law Ages 6-18:

380.1561 Compulsory attendance at public school; enrollment dates; exceptions.

Sec. 1561.

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 other person in this state having 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 other 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.

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TUSCOLA COUNTY TRUANCY PROCEDURES

Truancy: ***“Absences exceeding 10 percent of scheduled days of instruction.”*** This is equivalent to nine absences per semester or six absences per trimester. Both excused and unexcused will be considered by the Court.

School Responsibility: The following interventions **must** be completed by school staff before sending a truancy referral. See attached forms for Truancy Referral and Record of Interventions. These steps must be completed if future court proceedings occur.

- Absence letter sent to parent
- Phone call to parent
- Referral to school counselor/outside agency
- Administrative face-to-face meeting with parent and student at school
- Referral to Truancy Services at the Tuscola Intermediate School District
 - Referral form
 - Record of Interventions
 - Attendance record
 - Absence letter(s)
 - Documentation of School Attendance Meeting Form

Parental Responsibility:

- Providing an attitude at home that school attendance is important and valuable to the student
- Being sure their children will be in school every day that is possible
- Cooperating with the schools by making contact when absence is a must
- Providing a united front with the school in correcting any problem dealing with attendance
- Making appointments for their children outside of the school day if at all possible, so they can be in school as much as possible
- Turn in doctor notes/professional notes to school office

Student Responsibility:

- Making sure they attend every day and every period possible
- Providing reasons for absences immediately upon return to school if it has not been done already
- Being an example to friends and others that regular attendance in school is necessary

Truancy Services:

- Letter sent by TISD Truancy Services Office -- parents/guardians have five days to respond
- Phone contact with parent/guardian
- School meeting conducted to address excessive absences and tardies. Parent notified that further absences must be documented with a note from a licensed medical professional. Documentation must explain the nature of and the reason for the absence as well as the length of the absence.
- Regular attendance updates requested to monitor student
- Face-to-face follow up with student
- Petition/Warrant filed with Tuscola County Prosecutor’s Office if prior interventions are unsuccessful in gaining compliance

Court Petition Process: (Filed on students age 11-16)

- Petition filed with the Tuscola County Prosecutor's Office
- Petition is authorized by Prosecutor
- Parent/Guardian and Truancy Officer are notified of first court hearing
- Preliminary Hearing
- Pretrial Hearing
- Trial
- Disposition = ruling
 - House arrest
 - Formal probation
 - Intensive probation
 - Restitution
 - Juvenile placement
 - Community service
- Review Hearing every 3 months

Court Warrant Process: (Filed on parents of elementary students age 6-17)

- Warrant filed with Tuscola County Prosecutor's Office
- Warrant is authorized by Prosecutor
- Truancy Officer swears out the warrants with the Court Magistrate. Truancy Officer swears under oath that the facts presented are true.
- Magistrate authorizes the charge of truancy
- Notice to Appear
- Arraignment held
- Pretrial Hearing -- parent/guardian have the opportunity to plea, stand mute or no contest
- Trial
- Sentencing
 - 2 days mandatory minimum jail
 - Fines, costs, and fees
 - Probation
 - Community service
 - Counseling
 - Parenting classes

Consistent Attendance = Positive Academic Performance

“Excused Absences” means the following:

- Child’s illness/medical reason as documented by a professional health official
- Medical appointments (including but not limited to medical, counseling, dental, or optometry)
- Child’s observance of a religious holiday
- Death in the student’s family
- Mandated court appearances (additional documentation required)
- Extraordinary educational opportunities pre-approved by district administrators and in accordance with the Michigan Department of Education guidance
- Absences related to parent or guardian’s military service
- Homelessness

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Tuscola Intermediate School District
2019 - 2020 Truancy Services
Referral Guidelines

Working in collaboration with Tuscola County Juvenile Probation Services and the Tuscola County Family Court, the following truancy guidelines are being implemented for the 2019-2020 school year.

Pursuant to the Michigan Compulsory School Attendance Law, MCL 380.1561, the child's parent, guardian, or other 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 following should be considered guidelines for local districts in making truancy referrals to the Tuscola ISD Truancy Services Program:

- ❖ A truancy referral may be made once a student accumulates nine undocumented full day absences per semester or six undocumented full day absences per trimester.
- ❖ The local school district administration must prove they have attempted to meet with the parent and student regarding the attendance issue.
- ❖ Referrals may be accepted or rejected at the discretion of the Tuscola ISD Truancy Services Coordinator.
- ❖ For elementary students, if the problem cannot be corrected after working with TISD Truancy Services, a petition may be filed and parents may be prosecuted. Parents may incur fines and court costs, jail time and/or probation.
- ❖ For middle school and high school students, if the problem cannot be corrected after working with TISD Truancy Services, a petition may be filed with the prosecutor's office. Parents may incur fines and court costs. Students may incur a juvenile record and intensive probation services.

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Tuscola Intermediate School District Truancy Services

Truancy Referral Form

2019 - 2020 School Year

		Referral Date: _____	
Student Name: _____	Male _____	Female _____	
Student Birthdate: _____	Grade Level: _____		
Parents DOB: _____	Parents DOB: _____		
If parents/guardian married, list both names in this box.		If parents/guardian married, list both names in this box.	
Name (s): _____	Name (s): _____		
Address: _____	Address: _____		
City/Zip: _____	City/Zip: _____		
Phone # & Name: _____	Phone # & Name: _____		
Phone # & Name: _____	Phone # & Name: _____		
Is this the child's primary residence? Yes _____ No _____	Is this the child's primary residence? Yes _____ No _____		
School District: _____	Building: _____		

Total # Undocumented absences: _____

Michigan School Law applies to students between the ages of 6-18.

*Please check appropriate boxes:

- | | | | |
|--|-----------|----------|--|
| 1. Absences primarily related to illness | Yes _____ | No _____ | |
| 2. Absences primarily related to suspensions | Yes _____ | No _____ | |
| 3. Prior history of attendance problems | Yes _____ | No _____ | |
| 4. Student classified as special education | Yes _____ | No _____ | |
| 5. Student 504 eligible | Yes _____ | No _____ | |

Comments:

X

 School Official and Title Date

- * **Printout of student's attendance must be attached.**
- * **Record of Interventions checklist on back must be completed.**

Submit to: **Angila Heinitz, Truancy Officer**
 Tuscola Intermediate School District
 1385 Cleaver Road, Caro, MI 48723

Please note: Incomplete forms will be returned to the school official with problem areas highlighted.

**Tuscola Intermediate School District Truancy Services
Truancy Referral Form
2019 - 2020 School Year**

To prove a case in court, it is necessary for school officials to document every action taken in potential truancy cases. That means keeping a record of all contacts with the parent and/or child, including who was involved in the contact, the date, time and location of the contact, and a summary of what was said or done.

The following highlighted steps must be completed by the district before a referral is made:

_____ **Initial parent/guardian contact made.** Date: _____
*Letter sent to the home (Attach copy of letter)

_____ **Student referred to the counseling staff/school social worker.** Date: _____
Name of Counselor: _____

_____ **Meeting with the student and parent/guardian
was held at the school.** Date: _____
(Attach copy of your DISTRICT ATTENDANCE MEETING DOCUMENTATION FORM AND LETTER
SENT HOME SCHEDULING MEETING.)

_____ Student is currently on probation. List name of probation officer and offense if known:

Comments or other action taken:

**Tuscola Intermediate School District
School Attendance Meeting Documentation 2019 - 2020**

School District: _____

Student's Name: _____

Today's Date: _____ Age/DOB: _____

Parent's Name: _____

Parent's Name: _____

School Concerns/Why student is absent from school?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> School Anxieties | <input type="checkbox"/> Peer Conflicts |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Skipping school | <input type="checkbox"/> Bullying |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Missing Bus | <input type="checkbox"/> Late to class |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tired/Oversleep | <input type="checkbox"/> Suspension |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Expulsion |

School Attendance Expectations:

1. Attend school and all assigned class periods.
2. Arrive on time. No late arrivals or early outs.
3. Follow all school rules.
4. Complete and turn in assignments on time.
5. Provide the school with medical documentation of illnesses/medical appointments. Non-contagious illnesses and appointments should be limited to less than ½ day absence. Parents: Notify school staff in the morning if your child is absent and provide a reason for the absence. Any and all absences after the school attendance meeting is held **MUST BE DOCUMENTED**.

Additional Notes:

Student Signature: _____

Parent Signature: _____

School Administrator/Attendance Staff: _____

Other: _____

TUSCOLA INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL DISTRICT TRUANCY FLOWCHART

DISTRICT ACTION

Follow District Attendance Policy

Documented District Action
Review attendance history & grades. Contact parent/guardian and student. Initial contact MUST come from local district.

District Meeting with Parent/Guardian
Discuss problems and develop action plan.
* See District Attendance Meeting Documentation Form

Utilize Resources
DHHS, P2P, School Psychologist, Counselor, etc.

Exhausted all Efforts
Failure of response or cooperation from parent, guardian, or student results in referral to Tuscola ISD

Failure of response or cooperation from parent results in ISD referral.

TISD ACTION

Letter sent to the parent/guardian. Parent/guardian has 3 days to respond.

Contact with parent/guardian

Investigation finds justified absences = no further action

OR

Investigation finds absences are undocumented = continued monitoring and truancy meeting

Exhausted all Efforts
Court Referral

Failure of response or cooperation from parent results in court referral.

COURT ACTION

After school district and ISD truancy officer:
* have exhausted all resources
* parent/guardian's failure of response
* failure of cooperation from parent/guardian/student.
Elementary students will be referred to the prosecutor - parent charged. Middle School & High School students will be referred to the prosecutor - student charged. Student placed on probation.

Parents who are charged with truancy can be jailed, fined, placed on probation or all three.

Students who are placed on probation through the court will be monitored by the truancy officer and probation officers.