

Important Attendance Information for Put-in-Bay School Families

A recently enacted **Ohio law** has changed how schools track and report student attendance. Beginning this school year, **all missed instructional time counts toward “chronic absenteeism”, regardless of the reason for the absence.** This includes full-day absences, partial-day absences, tardies, and absences related to illness or medical appointments.

Put-in-Bay School will continue to distinguish between **excused and unexcused absences** as required by our Student Handbook. However, both excused and unexcused absences count toward a student’s total missed instructional time when determining chronic absenteeism.

What Does “Chronically Absent” Mean?

The state of Ohio defines a student as **chronically absent when they miss 10% or more of their total instructional time.** Schools are also required to notify parents or guardians when a student’s missed instructional time reaches **5%**, giving families and schools an opportunity to address attendance concerns before they become more significant.

It is important to understand that it does not take a large number of absences to reach these percentages. Even occasional absences, tardies, or partial-day absences can add up over the course of a school year. We want to be transparent with our families about this change and ask for your partnership as we work together to help every student maintain strong attendance.

What This Means for Families

This change does not mean that students should attend school when they are sick or that families should send an ill child to school. Rather, it emphasizes the importance of communication, documentation, and understanding how missed instructional time can accumulate throughout the school year.

Families can help by:

- Reporting absences promptly.
- Following the attendance procedures outlined in the Put-in-Bay School Student Handbook.
- Providing appropriate documentation when required, particularly for medical appointments, illness, or religious observances.
- Communicating with Put-in-Bay School staff when circumstances may affect a student’s ability to attend school regularly.

Chronic Absenteeism vs. Truancy

It is also important to understand that chronic absenteeism and truancy are not the same thing. Chronic absenteeism looks at all missed instructional time, regardless of whether an absence is excused or unexcused.

Habitual truancy, on the other hand, continues to be based on **unexcused absences** and is governed by separate legal requirements and thresholds under Ohio law.

Our Goal Is Support, Not Punishment

The purpose of these changes is not to increase penalties for students or families. Instead, the goal is to identify attendance concerns early so that schools and families can work together to provide support before missed school becomes a barrier to student success.

When attendance concerns arise, Put-in-Bay School staff will work collaboratively with families to understand the circumstances and identify appropriate resources and support. Depending on the situation, this may include conversations about transportation, health concerns, anxiety, family circumstances, or other challenges that may be affecting a student's attendance.

Attendance Matters

Regular attendance is one of the strongest predictors of student success. Students who are consistently present have more opportunities to build strong academic foundations, develop meaningful relationships with teachers and classmates, participate in hands-on learning, and fully engage in their educational experience.

Put-in-Bay School is committed to partnering with our families to ensure that every student is present, engaged, and prepared for success.

Thank you for your partnership and support as we navigate these changes together.

Sample Notification Letter

[School District Letterhead / Logo]

[Date]

To the family of [Student Name]:

We want to partner with you to help your child succeed. Regular attendance helps students build confidence, stay connected with friends, and learn important skills. [\[1\]](#)

Our records show that as of **[Date]**, **[Student Name]** has missed **[X]** days (or **[Y]** hours) of school. Under Ohio law, missing 10% or more of the school year—for *any* reason, including excused illnesses, doctor visits, or family trips—counts toward chronic absence tracking. [\[1, 2, 3\]](#)

We know that absences happen and that health or other challenges can make coming to school difficult. We want to work together to find solutions so your child does not fall behind. [\[1, 2\]](#)

Next Steps and How to Reach Us

Please contact us so we can talk about how to support your child: [\[1\]](#)

- **Phone:** [School Phone Number]
- **Email:** [School Email Address]
- **Meeting Link / QR Code:** [Insert QR code or link to schedule a chat] [\[1\]](#)

Sincerely,

[Name]

[Title, e.g., Principal / Attendance Officer]

[School Name]

Sample Chronic Absenteeism Notification Letter

[School Letterhead / District Name]

[Date]

Dear Family of **[Student Name]**,

We are writing to partner with you because your child's success is important to us. Under Ohio law, attendance is tracked by total instructional hours missed for any reason—including excused and unexcused absences. [\[1\]](#), [\[2\]](#), [\[3\]](#)

Our records show that **[Student Name]** has missed **[Number]** instructional hours so far this school year. This places your child near or above the state threshold of missing 10% of school hours, making them a student at risk for or affected by chronic absenteeism. [\[1\]](#), [\[2\]](#), [\[3\]](#)

Why Every Day Matters

- Missing school adds up quickly, whether due to illness, appointments, or days off.
- Consistent attendance helps students build strong reading and math skills, feel connected with friends, and stay confident in class. [\[1\]](#), [\[2\]](#), [\[3\]](#)

How We Can Help Together

We know that challenges happen and getting to school isn't always easy. We want to work with you—not punish you—to find solutions that fit your family's needs. [\[1\]](#), [\[2\]](#)

Please reach out to us so we can support your child: [\[1\]](#)

- **Phone:** [School Phone Number]
- **Email:** [Contact Email]
- **Meeting Link / QR Code:** [Insert Link or QR Code to schedule a chat] [\[1\]](#)

Thank you for your time and partnership in helping your child succeed. [\[1\]](#), [\[2\]](#)

Sincerely,

[Principal/Administrator Name]

[School Name]