September 2008

Best Practices Review

Truancy Reduction Efforts

2007-2008 Joint Legislative Audit Committee Members

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Janice Mueller
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September 11, 2008

Senator Jim Sullivan and
Representative Suzanne Jeskewitz, Co-chairpersons
Joint Legislative Audit Committee
State Capitol
Madison, Wisconsin 53702

Dear Senator Sullivan and Representative Jeskewitz:

We have completed a best practices review of local government operations, as directed by s. 13.94(8), Wis. Stats. This review focuses on efforts by Wisconsin's public school districts to reduce truancy, which is the unexcused absence from school of children under the age of 18. In the 2006-07 school year, 9.3 percent of pupils in kindergarten through grade 12 were classified as habitual truants because they had five or more unexcused absences in a semester, although rates in individual school districts ranged from 0 in 47 districts to 58.2 percent in the Menominee Indian School District.

Efforts to reduce truancy are guided by a statutory framework that requires school districts to establish plans and policies, collaborate with local officials within their counties, and notify parents and guardians of their children's truancies. Districts have also established a variety of programs consistent with nationally developed best practices, which include involving parents in improving school attendance and working with human services and law enforcement agencies to provide services to pupils and to enforce local ordinances.

We have identified several best practices to assist school districts and the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) in monitoring, assessing, and reducing truancy.

We appreciate the courtesy extended to us by DPI, school district officials, other state and local government officials, and officials representing private-sector agencies that provided information for our review.

Respectfully submitted,

Janice Mueller
State Auditor

JM/KW/ss

Report Highlights ■

In the 2006-07 school year, 9.3 percent of pupils in kindergarten through grade 12 were habitually truant.

DPI's role in districts' truancy reduction efforts is limited.

School districts have implemented varied truancy reduction efforts within the statutory framework.

Truancy reduction efforts have yielded mixed results in Milwaukee Public Schools.

DPI could facilitate broader dissemination of district assessments of truancy reduction programming.

Wisconsin's compulsory attendance law, s. 118.15, Wis. Stats., requires children to remain in school until they graduate or until the end of the school term, quarter, or semester during which they turn 18 years of age. Unexcused absence from school is often associated with poor academic performance and is sometimes associated with delinquency, criminal behavior, and dropping out of school. The Legislature has enacted planning and procedural requirements to clarify the role of school districts in ensuring pupils attend school and do not become truant. Within these requirements, districts exercise autonomy in designing programs consistent with local priorities and attendance goals.

Under s. 13.94(8), Wis. Stats., the Legislative Audit Bureau is required to conduct reviews to identify local government practices that can save costs or provide for more effective service delivery. Best practices reports seek to build upon successful local efforts by identifying and publicizing efficient approaches. This report, which focuses on efforts by selected Wisconsin public school districts to reduce truancy, analyzes:

- habitual truancy rates through the 2006-07 school year, the latest year for which data were available for the 425 public school districts at the time of our fieldwork;

- school district compliance with selected statutory requirements related to attendance and truancy policies and procedures;

- the use and effectiveness of statutorily allowed municipal truancy ordinances; and

- discretionary efforts undertaken by school districts to prevent and reduce truancy.

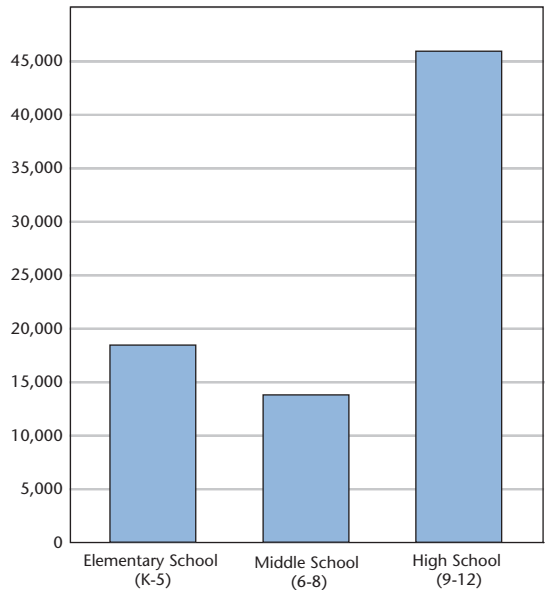
Truancy Rates

The statewide habitual truancy rate, defined as the percentage of enrolled pupils with five or more unexcused absences in a semester, has changed modestly each school year since 1998-99. In that year, 8.7 percent of public school pupils were classified as habitual truants.

The rate increased to 10.0 percent in the 2001-02 school year. In the 2006-07 school year, it was 9.3 percent, or 77,700 pupils in kindergarten through grade 12. As shown in Figure 1, most were enrolled in high school.

Figure 1

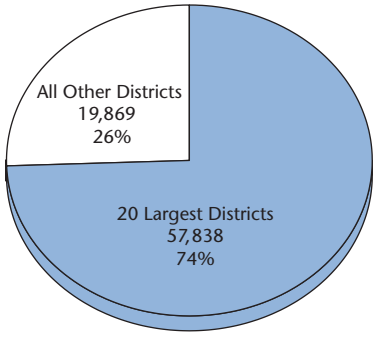
Habitual Truants
2006-07 School Year



The habitual truancy rate varied among districts in the 2006-07 school year, ranging from 0 in 47 districts to a high of 58.2 percent in one district. The 20 largest school districts account for nearly three-quarters of habitual truants, as shown in Figure 2, but we note that districts with high rates of truancy vary in size and location.

Figure 2

Habitual Truants
2006-07 School Year



DPI's Role

The Department of Public Instruction (DPI) is statutorily responsible for collecting attendance data and for reporting certain data to federal agencies. DPI is not, however, required to review or approve school districts' attendance policies, truancy plans, or truancy reduction efforts.

Over the past four school years, DPI has administered federal funds totaling $1.9 million for districts with high pupil poverty rates, higher habitual truancy rates, and inadequate yearly progress as measured by the federal No Child Left Behind Act.

Eight districts have received federal truancy reduction funds: Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS), Menominee Indian School District, Green Bay Area Public School District, the School District of Beloit, the School District of Janesville, Kenosha Unified School District Number 1, Madison Metropolitan School District, and the Racine Unified School District. These districts have formed the Peer Consultation Network for Increasing School Attendance, which meets every six to seven months to share best practices for reducing truancy and learn about resources available from other state agencies. DPI provides staff support to the Peer Consultation Network.

The attendance and truancy data DPI collects from the districts are published on the Wisconsin Information Network for Successful Schools (WINSS), a Web site implemented by DPI to meet federal reporting requirements and allow districts to assess their progress using various performance indicators. Because errors identified after publication are not corrected, it is difficult to assess the effectiveness of truancy reduction efforts in the affected districts. However, errors in the published data for two districts are not likely to have materially affected the statewide habitual truancy rate in 2006-07.

School District Efforts

Districts have generally complied with statutory requirements by developing attendance policies, monitoring attendance, and notifying families of unexcused absences. They have also adopted truancy plans, and most have completed timely reviews of their own plans and reviewed those of other districts within their counties. These periodic reviews have helped to identify policy questions, such as how a district's tardiness policy affects the number of pupils classified as truant.

Districts have implemented a variety of truancy reduction efforts. For example, social workers at some elementary schools contact pupils and their families to promote good attendance and provide resources to prevent tardiness. At the high school level, districts have developed alternative programming such as night schools and schools within schools to meet the needs of students who have not performed well in traditional classrooms.

Local ordinances enable a more immediate response to truancy and habitual truancy than is possible under state law, where enforcement involves referral to the District Attorney. However, available data indicate their effectiveness has been mixed. For example, in Kenosha Unified School District Number 1, 79.0 percent of pupils who received truancy citations did not comply with the order to attend school. In contrast, 55.0 percent of Racine Unified School District pupils who received citations had fewer instances of truancy after being cited.

Milwaukee Public Schools

The habitual truancy rate in MPS was 46.3 percent in the 2006-07 school year. Community collaboration—including working closely with police, the District Attorney's office, and community organizations that offer mentoring and tutoring services—has been evident in the district's truancy reduction efforts, but results have been mixed.

For example, since 1993, MPS has collaborated with the Milwaukee Police Department and a local organization to operate the Truancy Abatement and Burglary Suppression (TABS) Program. In the 2006-07 school year, 6,453 juveniles were stopped by TABS officers, 2,954 were counseled by TABS staff, and 294 received additional services, such as home visits and social service referrals. Among those who received additional services, 78 improved their attendance by an average of ten percentage points.

The effectiveness of truancy citations in MPS is also mixed. TABS staff noted that for a separate sample of pupils cited during the 2006-07 school year, 33.2 percent increased their attendance, 61.1 percent decreased their attendance, and the balance maintained the same attendance.

The effectiveness of the district's school-level efforts is also unclear. Habitual truancy rates at three of the six MPS schools that received federal truancy reduction grants in the 2006-07 school year increased from the previous year.

Further Action

Many truancy reduction efforts undertaken by school districts are consistent with best practices identified through national research, including collaboration among community service providers, family involvement, and a comprehensive approach to the pupil's social and academic needs. Districts' efforts to evaluate their programs, which is also a best practice, vary.

Districts that have not already done so would likely benefit from evaluations of their truancy reduction efforts at both the pupil and the program level. Outcome and other evaluation data would be of value to other districts seeking effective programming options in a period of constrained fiscal resources.

While DPI has supported the sharing of programming results within the Peer Consultation Network, it could identify additional cost-effective means to facilitate information sharing, such as Web sites and electronic bulletin boards.

Best Practices

It is a best practice for school districts to:

- ☑ regularly review compliance with statutory requirements for attendance monitoring and truancy planning *(p. 26)*;
- ☑ monitor habitual truancy at each grade level and develop strategies to minimize truancy in the early grades *(p. 28)*;
- ☑ identify alternative programming to help truant high school pupils obtain high school diplomas *(p. 30)*;
- ☑ involve parents and guardians in truancy-related matters *(p. 31)*;
- ☑ identify and collaborate with community service providers to meet the needs of habitually truant pupils *(p. 33)*;
- ☑ consider the full range of available sanctions for addressing truancy *(p. 37)*; and
- ☑ evaluate and modify, as necessary, their truancy reduction efforts on a regular basis *(p. 52)*.

It is a best practice for DPI to:

- ☑ research and resolve significant attendance and truancy data discrepancies before they are published on the WINSS Web site *(p. 21)*; and
- ☑ facilitate cost-effective information sharing among the districts concerning truancy reduction efforts *(p. 52)*.

▪▪▪▪

Introduction ■

By statute, children must attend school until they graduate or turn 18 years of age.

Section 118.16, Wis. Stats., defines "truancy" as any absence for all or part of a school day for which a pupil's parent or guardian has not notified school officials of the legal cause of the absence. A habitual truant is a pupil who is absent without an acceptable excuse for all or part of five or more days in a semester. School boards are statutorily required to establish written attendance policies specifying the reasons for which absences may be excused, teachers are to submit daily attendance reports, and a school attendance officer is to determine whether an absence is excused and to subsequently notify parents or guardians of unexcused absences. Statutes also direct each school board to prepare a truancy plan and review that plan at least once every two years. Key statutes related to attendance and truancy are included in Appendix 2.

1997 Wisconsin Act 239 redefined habitual truancy as five unexcused absences in a semester.

While most truancy laws have been in effect since 1988, 1997 Wisconsin Act 239 changed the definition of habitual truancy to five unexcused absences per semester. 1997 Act 239 also:

- enables municipalities to enact ordinances against truancy and provides the option of citations or other sanctions at its first occurrence, before habitual truancy occurs;

- allows for increased sanctions against parents who fail to ensure their children attend school; and

- requires countywide truancy committees to meet at least once every four years to review and make recommendations to school boards on the truancy plans of all districts in the county.

Habitual truancy began to be measured using the new definition on July 1, 1998. In August 2000, we reported that the habitual truancy rate in Wisconsin public schools had increased from 6.9 percent in the 1997-98 school year, when it was defined as five or more unexcused absences in ten consecutive days or ten absences in total per semester, to 8.7 percent in the 1998-99 school year under the new definition. That report included best practices for monitoring and recording attendance and for notifying parents of unexcused absences, and it suggested municipalities consider adopting or amending municipal ordinances to better address truancy.

In completing this review, we spoke with staff at DPI and at 14 of the 20 school districts whose 2006-07 enrollments represented 36.2 percent of the total for that school year. The 14 districts we contacted are listed in Appendix 3. We also visited: the School District of La Crosse, the Racine Unified School District, MPS, and the Madison Metropolitan School District; spoke with representatives of private and nonprofit agencies that contract with school districts to provide services for truants, as well as law enforcement officials and a municipal court judge; and reviewed national literature related to school attendance and truancy.

Changes in Truancy Rates

9.3 percent of pupils statewide were habitually truant in the 2006-07 school year.

As shown in Table 1, 8.7 percent of public school pupils statewide were habitually truant in the 1998-1999 school year, while 9.3 percent were habitually truant in the 2006-07 school year.

Table 1

Habitual Truants in Wisconsin Public Schools[1]

School Year	K-12 Enrollment	Habitual Truants	Percentage of Enrollment Classified as Habitual Truants
1998-99	859,080	74,569	8.7%
1999-2000	856,598	78,200	9.1
2000-01	853,693	79,742	9.3
2001-02	852,926	85,711	10.0
2002-03	853,193	80,493	9.4
2003-04	851,595	80,333	9.4
2004-05	836,051	79,225	9.5
2005-06	842,880	82,180	9.7
2006-07[2]	836,295	77,707	9.3

[1] Data from DPI's WINSS database.

[2] Excludes the School District of Superior and the Webster School District for the 2006-07 school year because of errors in the data reported on the WINSS database.

It should be noted that although Wisconsin's compulsory attendance law applies to children between 6 and 18 years of age, the WINSS database includes kindergarten pupils who may be younger than six and other pupils older than 18 years of age. Because truancy problems are less common among younger children, it is not likely the inclusion of the pupils under six years of age affects the statewide habitual truancy rate.

Most habitual truants are from the 20 largest school districts.

The 20 largest school districts, which represented approximately one-third of public school enrollment in the 2006-07 school year, accounted for nearly three-quarters of habitual truants. As shown in Table 2, the habitual truancy rates for these districts ranged from 46.3 percent in MPS to 0.9 percent in the School District of Waukesha.

Table 2

Habitual Truancy Rate in the 20 Largest School Districts[1]
2006-07 School Year

School District	Habitual Truants	K-12 Enrollment	Percentage of Enrollment Classified as Habitual Truants
MPS	38,277	82,658	46.3%
School District of Beloit	2,303	6,862	33.6
School District of Janesville	2,052	10,375	19.8
Kenosha Unified School District Number 1	4,116	21,686	19.0
Eau Claire Area School District	1,104	10,239	10.8
School District of La Crosse	720	6,799	10.6
Green Bay Area Public School District	1,800	19,618	9.2
Racine Unified School District	1,744	20,459	8.5
Madison Metropolitan School District	2,077	24,519	8.5
West Allis-West Milwaukee School District	530	8,348	6.3
Appleton Area School District	777	14,966	5.2
Fond du Lac School District	337	7,000	4.8
Sheboygan Area School District	453	9,570	4.7
Wauwatosa School District	264	6,295	4.2
Wausau School District	341	8,332	4.1
West Bend Joint School District Number 1	253	6,788	3.7
Oshkosh Area School District	270	10,047	2.7
Stevens Point Area Public School District	192	7,209	2.7
School District of Elmbrook	109	7,559	1.4
School District of Waukesha	119	13,323	0.9
Statewide[2]	77,707	836,295	9.3

[1] Data from DPI's WINSS database.

[2] Excludes the School District of Superior and the Webster School District for the 2006-07 school year because of errors in the data reported on the WINSS database.

In the 2006-07 school year, habitual truancy rates ranged from 0 to 58.2 percent.

Statewide, habitual truancy rates in the 2006-07 school year ranged from 0 in 47 districts to 58.2 percent in the Menominee Indian School District. In 46 of the 47 school districts with no habitual truants, total enrollment was less than 1,000 pupils. Districts with high rates of habitual truancy vary in size and location; 7 of the 50 school districts with the highest rates of habitual truancy had fewer than 500 pupils, while 4 had more than 20,000 pupils.

Habitual truancy rates for each of Wisconsin's public school districts in the 2005-06 and 2006-07 school years are shown in Appendix 4.

■ ■ ■ ■

Role of DPI in Truancy Reduction■

Although DPI is responsible for the collection of attendance data and certain federal reporting, statutes do not direct it to review or approve school districts' attendance policies and truancy plans. DPI does award federal funds to the districts and encourages efforts of other state agencies to improve attendance. In recent years, DPI has also provided consultation services related to districts' truancy reduction efforts, as well as staff support to the Peer Consultation Network of eight districts with high rates of habitual truancy.

Funding for Truancy Reduction Efforts

DPI awarded $1.9 million in federal truancy reduction grants over the past four school years.

The Legislature has not appropriated funds specifically for truancy reduction efforts, but the federal Title 1 program provides some funding for truancy reduction to districts with high rates of pupil poverty. This funding is administered by DPI and totaled an estimated $1.9 million for the four-year period ending with the 2007-08 school year.

DPI awards Title 1 funds for truancy reduction programming to districts with higher habitual truancy rates that also failed to meet the yearly progress requirements specified in the federal No Child Left Behind Act. As shown in Table 3, the distribution of grant funds has fluctuated over time. For example, eight districts received grants in the 2006-07 school year. Because of changes in eligibility requirements, funding for the 2007-08 school year was limited to MPS middle and high schools and the Menominee Indian School District.

Table 3

No Child Left Behind Truancy Reduction Grants
2004-05 through 2007-08 School Years

School District	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	Total
MPS	$125,000	$375,000	$375,000	$510,000	$1,385,000
Menominee Indian School District	85,000	85,000	85,000	85,000	340,000
Green Bay Area Public School District	15,000	20,000	20,000	–	55,000
School District of Beloit	–	–	20,000	–	20,000
School District of Janesville	–	–	20,000	–	20,000
Kenosha Unified School District Number 1	–	–	20,000	–	20,000
Madison Metropolitan School District	–	–	20,000	–	20,000
Racine Unified School District	–	–	50,000	–	50,000
Total	**$225,000**	**$480,000**	**$610,000**	**$595,000**	**$1,910,000**

DPI has assigned a portion of the time of one full-time staff member, the Compulsory Attendance Consultant, to oversee truancy reduction efforts. Other DPI staff support school district programming related to truancy and attendance, including school social work services and school-age parent programs; school psychology programs; alcohol, tobacco, and other drug abuse programs; and community learning center programs. We were unable to quantify the amount of time these staff dedicate specifically to truancy reduction.

Additional federal support for truancy reduction efforts has been available to schools and communities through the Office of Justice Assistance (OJA), which administers the funds according to priorities established by the Governor's Juvenile Justice Commission. However, these funds have neither been targeted exclusively for truancy reduction nor directed exclusively to school

districts. OJA anticipates awarding approximately $500,000 in federal grant funds for projects targeting truancy, substance abuse, and/or mental health in September 2008.

Alliance for Attendance

The habitual truancy rate in MPS has been among the highest in Wisconsin for the past ten years, and nearly one-half of habitual truants statewide are enrolled in MPS. In February 2002, the Milwaukee Common Council created the City of Milwaukee Truancy Abatement Task Force to focus community attention on truancy. Task force members included city, county, and state elected officials; law enforcement officials; representatives of MPS and the Milwaukee Teachers Education Association; local organizations providing truancy reduction activities; and DPI's Compulsory Attendance Consultant. In a report issued in October 2002, the task force included recommendations to engage various community agencies and governmental units in efforts to reduce truancy, to develop an ongoing working group, and to continue to monitor truancy abatement efforts.

The Milwaukee Alliance for Attendance is the ongoing working group recommended by the task force. Between November 2003 and August 2004, the State Superintendent of Public Instruction conducted a series of meetings with Milwaukee citizens—including pupils, parents, principals, and leaders in the faith-based community—focusing on school attendance and truancy. In August 2004, the Superintendent called for a summit to develop specific strategies to combat truancy, which resulted in the formation of the Alliance for Attendance. Beginning in the 2004-05 school year, ten working groups of alliance members began meeting to discuss strategies for implementing truancy abatement measures. The education working group remained active through the 2007-08 school year, convening the countywide truancy committee and launching other truancy reduction programs. However, at the time of our review, DPI and MPS officials were unable to verify whether the other nine working groups remain active and could offer only limited commentary on their accomplishments.

Peer Consultation Network

Since 2005, the Peer Consultation Network has focused on improving attendance and reducing truancy in eight districts.

Improved school attendance is the goal of truancy reduction efforts and is the focus of DPI's involvement with the eight districts that participate in the Peer Consultation Network, which was established in 2003 as a group of districts focusing on efforts to provide assistance to pupils who had been suspended or expelled from school. Beginning in 2005, the network shifted its focus to improving

attendance and reducing truancy. Participation is primarily focused on the eight districts listed in Table 3, which have received federal truancy reduction funds.

For the network's first truancy reduction meeting in March 2005, school district representatives were asked to provide baseline information on the magnitude of truancy in their districts and to share successes and challenges in:

- using truancy ordinances effectively against truancy, habitual truancy, and dropouts;
- enforcing district truancy policies and practices;
- working with parents, guardians, and families;
- collaborating with key community partners; and
- securing current funding and identifying new funding resources.

Grant funds from state agencies have been used to support district efforts to reduce truancy, as well as related community issues.

State agency representatives from the Department of Workforce Development (DWD), the Department of Children and Families (DCF, formerly the Department of Health and Family Services), and the Department of Corrections (DOC), were also invited to share information on their programming and resources to support truancy reduction. For example:

- DWD shared information on the Workforce Investment Act Youth Program, which it administers. The program provides federal funding for eligible at-risk youth, including low-income youth between 14 and 21 years of age who are deficient in literacy skills, dropouts, homeless, runaways, foster children, pregnant or parents, juvenile offenders, or who need additional assistance to complete an educational program or secure and retain employment. The program's goal is to provide youth—particularly those who are out of school—with the skills and experience necessary for a successful transition into adulthood, including preparation for further education and future employment. Through contracts with the State's Workforce Development Areas, participants are offered services such as case management, tutoring and study skills training, mentoring, occupational skills training, alternative high school programming, and guidance counseling. Funding for FY 2007-08 totaled $10.8 million. Funding is expected to total $11.9 million in FY 2008-09.

- DCF provided information on the Brighter Futures Initiative, which was created by 1999 Wisconsin Act 9, the 2000-01 Biennial Budget Act. This initiative supports evidence-based, positive youth development and prevention strategies, including efforts to prevent and reduce youth violence and delinquency, substance abuse, and nonmarital pregnancy and to increase adolescent self-sufficiency and encourage graduation and job readiness. Ten counties currently receive funding, including five with school districts in the Peer Consultation Network. Brighter Futures Initiative funding for calendar year 2008 totaled $4.0 million, including $1.7 million in general purpose revenue and $2.3 million in federal funds. The amount of funding allocated to each county varies. In 2008, Milwaukee County received $2.7 million, which is approximately two-thirds of the total. DCF staff reported that they do not anticipate any changes in funding for 2009.

The Peer Consultation Network has met every six to seven months, and agendas—which are developed by participating districts—have included strategies for addressing truancy issues at the start of each school year, teen courts and gang issues, and teacher education and parent communication. The April 2008 meeting focused on relationship-building and using community partnerships to improve attendance. The range of issues addressed illustrates the array of strategies districts use in attempting to improve pupil attendance and reduce truancy.

Attendance and Data Reporting

State statutes require DPI to collect and report attendance and habitual truancy data.

Section 115.38, Wis. Stats., requires DPI to collect and report information on:

- pupil academic achievement, such as test scores, advanced placement statistics, and graduation rates;

- school and school district performance, such as attendance, truancy, dropout, suspension, and expulsion rates; and

- staffing and financial information.

DPI publishes this information on the WINSS Web site, which was implemented in fall 2000 to meet federal reporting requirements and to allow districts to assess their progress on various performance indicators. Attendance and habitual truancy rates for a given school year are not published until spring of the following school year.

Attendance data published on WINSS are collected using the Individual Student Enrollment System (ISES), which was implemented in the 2004-05 school year to meet federal reporting requirements. ISES allows DPI and districts to track attendance information for each pupil. In contrast, habitual truancy information collected though DPI's School Performance Report collection system does not allow individual pupil truancy to be tracked.

Districts are required to submit habitual truancy data to DPI by June 30 of each year, while attendance and other data collected though ISES must be submitted by the following November. As data are received, DPI reviews for errors and allows districts to make corrections. A private contractor, Sligo Computer Services, Inc., then prepares the data for publication on WINSS. Publication generally occurs in March or April. DPI's contracting expenses for FY 2007-08, which include expenses for truancy data, totaled $96,800.

DPI is aware of the importance of providing districts with timely access to data; however, it has indicated it is still adjusting to ISES and WINSS, as are the districts. Additionally, DPI indicated that switching to ISES has increased the time districts need to gather and submit their data, as well as the time DPI needs for review.

DPI's review is important in ensuring the comparative analyses of habitual truancy rates among districts can be made and will be accurate. Some changes in rates may be the result of changing practices in a district. For example, DPI noted that changes in the frequency with which attendance is recorded (for example, from two times per day to once each class period) can change habitual truancy rates. DPI also indicated that district software may not save attendance data correctly; this can be problematic because once published on WINSS, no further changes are made to the district data.

During the course of our fieldwork, after the information had been published on WINSS, we compared habitual truancy rates among the districts for the 2005-06 and 2006-07 school years. We noted a significant decline in the School District of Superior's habitual truancy rate, and a significant increase in the Webster School District's rate. Both changes are the result of errors in the data submitted to and reviewed by DPI, but DPI does not plan to amend the WINSS data for the 2006-07 school year to reflect the corrections the districts are

making to their records. As we completed our review, DPI was in the process of receiving year-end data for the 2007-08 school year.

While the discrepancies in the Webster and Superior school districts' data are not likely to have materially affected the statewide habitual truancy rate in 2006-07, they are significant in the assessment of truancy reduction efforts in those districts.

☑ Best Practice

It is a best practice for the Department of Public Instruction to ensure significant discrepancies in attendance and habitual truancy data reported by school districts are researched and resolved before they are published on the Web site of the Wisconsin Information Network for Successful Schools.

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School Districts' Efforts to Reduce Truancy ■

Statutes provide a framework for truancy reduction efforts by requiring school districts to monitor attendance, notify parents of absences, and periodically review their truancy plans. School districts have implemented a variety of truancy reduction efforts within this statutory framework.

Statutory Requirements

Districts are statutorily required to designate an attendance officer, establish an attendance policy, and adopt a truancy plan.

Statutes require districts to take certain actions to improve attendance and reduce truancy. Specifically, ch. 118, Wis. Stats., requires school boards or district staff to:

- designate an attendance officer whose duties include determining on a daily basis which pupils enrolled in the district are absent from school and whether that absence is excused, notify parents or guardians when pupils are truant and direct them to return the pupil to school, and notify parents or guardians by registered or certified mail when their children initially become habitual truants;
- establish a written attendance policy, distributed to each pupil, specifying the reasons for which absence is permitted; and
- adopt a truancy plan, which must be reviewed by the school board at least every two years.

Most of the districts we contacted had designated a district-wide attendance officer.

Most school districts indicated they have one designated attendance officer, although some other models are employed. For example, in Kenosha Unified School District Number 1, a single attendance officer is assigned to kindergarten through eighth grade, and there is also an attendance officer assigned to each of the eight district high schools. In the School District of La Crosse, the Director of Pupil Services serves as the de facto district attendance officer, but middle school and high school staff also perform the statutory duties assigned to the attendance officer. At the time of our review, the Madison Metropolitan School District had not designated a single district-wide attendance officer, but a social worker was responsible for documenting truancies at each district high school.

All of the districts we contacted had a written attendance policy and a method for distributing it to pupils.

All the school districts we reviewed had adopted an attendance policy and some means of distributing it to pupils. Attendance policies generally permit excused absences for pupil illness, family emergency, medical and dental appointments, death or serious illness in the immediate family, religious holidays, and school-related functions such as field trips. Districts may also excuse absences for varied special circumstances, such as college visits or family vacations. Districts use a variety of means to distribute the policy to pupils, families, and guardians, including pupil handbooks, newsletters or newspapers, or with other materials distributed at the beginning of the school year. For example, the Madison Metropolitan School District includes the attendance policy in a calendar that is distributed to all high school pupils at the start of the school year. Most districts also post their attendance policy on their Web sites. We note that the School District of La Crosse requires pupils to sign an acknowledgment that they have read the pupil handbook, which contains the attendance policy, in order to attend school dances.

A district's truancy plan must be reviewed by its school board every two years.

At least once every two years, school boards are required by s. 118.162, Wis. Stats., to review and revise, as appropriate:

- procedures for notifying the parents or guardians of habitual truants of their children's unexcused absences, as well as procedures for meeting with the parents or guardians and methods to involve them in solving the truancy problem;

- plans and procedures for identifying truants of all ages and returning them to school, including identifying school personnel to whom truants shall be returned and the immediate response to be made by the school staff; and

- coordination with public and private agencies, including methods to increase and maintain public awareness of and involvement in the response to truancy, and the identification of the types of truancy cases to be referred to the District Attorney.

In addition, each district is to participate in a countywide review of school district truancy plans every four years. Section 118.162, Wis. Stats., also identifies the membership of the countywide review committee, which is to be convened by the administrator of the school district that contains the county seat.

In discussions with school district officials, we learned that most districts had adopted and recently reviewed their truancy plans, as required by statute. Eight of the 14 districts we reviewed had completed their school board review in the past two years, and 11 had participated in a countywide review in the past four years. However, we were unable to obtain complete information for all of the districts. Some districts, including the Racine Unified School District and the Green Bay Area Public School District, indicated that their county review committees meet every month.

A district's tardiness policy can affect the number of pupils identified as truant.

In the course of conducting reviews of truancy plans and associated reviews of district truancy data, some districts reported learning that their definition of tardiness significantly increased the number of pupils identified as truant. As noted, statutes define a truant as a pupil who has missed all or part of a school day without a parent or guardian's reporting of the legal cause of the absence; therefore, a pupil marked tardy to a class might also be recorded as truant. Officials in some districts indicated that pupils who are tardy may decide not to attend class at all, as they would be marked truant in either case. The School District of Beloit has considered modifying its tardiness policy to increase from 15 minutes to 30 minutes the allowable time during which a pupil can arrive in class without being considered truant. As we concluded our review, the district's policy had not been modified.

Districts also reported on the effectiveness of various methods of communicating with parents or guardians about attendance issues. While statutes require school districts to contact a parent or guardian by registered or certified mail when a pupil is habitually truant, some districts take other steps to communicate before a pupil becomes habitually truant. For example, the Fond du Lac School District requires the school attendance officer to personally contact a truant pupil's parent or guardian after the second truancy and to send a certified letter home after the third truancy. In the School District of Janesville, the principal, assistant principal, or school

social worker will contact—either by telephone or in person—the parent or guardian of a pupil who demonstrates a pattern of school absences. We note that while these practices may be effective, their feasibility depends on a district's size and available resources.

We found districts were aware of statutory requirements for truancy planning, the development and communication of truancy policies and procedures, and the implementation of attendance monitoring requirements affecting their schools. During the course of truancy plan reviews, districts identify issues of concern and consider possible policy and procedural changes. Print materials, including pupil handbooks and school newsletters, are established means of communicating with families. Web sites offer another means to provide attendance, truancy, and contact information to families.

☑ Best Practice

It is a best practice for school districts to regularly review their compliance with statutory requirements for attendance monitoring and truancy planning, as well as the extent to which they have implemented the statutorily required policies and plans at each district school.

Early Intervention

It is important to promote good attendance in the earlier grades.

District personnel reported that addressing attendance problems with younger pupils can help to prevent more serious, negative behavior as pupils age, including violence, substance abuse, and teen pregnancy. DPI and district officials generally agree that truancy peaks around the ninth grade. As shown in Table 4, statewide habitual truancy rates in the 2006-07 school year were lowest in the elementary grades. They increased both during the transition from elementary to middle school—from 4.6 percent for fifth graders to 6.0 percent for sixth graders—and again during the transition to high school—from 8.4 percent for eighth graders to 17.2 percent for ninth graders.

Table 4

Habitual Truancy by Grade Level[1]
2006-07 School Year

Grade	Habitual Truants	Enrollment	Habitual Truancy Rate
Kindergarten	3,766	60,407	6.2%
1	3,446	60,692	5.7
2	3,002	59,699	5.0
3	2,770	59,550	4.7
4	2,677	59,350	4.5
5	2,776	60,258	4.6
6	3,684	61,253	6.0
7	4,559	63,931	7.1
8	5,537	65,582	8.4
9	12,967	75,186	17.2
10	10,917	72,316	15.1
11	12,375	73,419	16.9
12	9,647	70,079	13.8

[1] Data from DPI. At the time of our review, corrected information was not available on a grade-level basis for the School District of Superior and the Webster School District.

A number of school districts have developed early-intervention strategies to prevent truancy in elementary school. For example, one elementary school in the West Allis-West Milwaukee School District has established the It's Time to Be On Time program, in which social workers identify pupils with a pattern of chronic tardiness and truancy and meet with them on a daily or weekly basis. Pupils are rewarded for coming to school on time and every day for a certain period of time, parents are contacted to reinforce attendance, and the school provides resources to help pupils arrive on time. Another elementary school in the district operates the Be Here to Be There Challenge, in which a class receives a sticker each day everyone in the class is in school and on time. The class with the most stickers for the month wins an after-lunch ice cream party in the pupil lounge.

Kenosha Unified School District Number 1 refers truants younger than 12 to an attendance officer who investigates referrals, provides support services to school staff, writes affidavits about truant pupils' behavior, refers pupils and families to area agencies, and possibly

makes referrals to the District Attorney's office or to juvenile court. During the 2006-07 school year, the attendance patterns of 151 pupils were monitored after intervention by this attendance officer. Of 125 pupils who remained actively enrolled in the district at the end of the school year, 93 demonstrated improved attendance. However, intervention by the attendance officer was most effective at the elementary level, particularly in grades one through four, where 43 of 48 pupils, or 89.6 percent, demonstrated improved attendance. In comparison, 46 of 71 pupils in grades five through eight, or 64.8 percent, demonstrated improved attendance.

☑ Best Practice

It is a best practice for school districts to:

- *monitor their habitual truancy rates at each grade level and identify pupils with emerging patterns of tardiness or truancy; and*

- *develop strategies to increase attendance and minimize truancy in the early grades.*

Alternative Programming

Alternative programming may improve attendance and increase community safety.

Because pupils who are truant can be performing poorly in classes or having difficulties with the traditional classroom setting, alternative programming, such as night school, general educational development (GED) programs, schools within schools, and programs to help truant pupils return to the classroom may be provided to help high school pupils earn diplomas. Officials in some districts indicated that in addition to improving attendance, alternative programming can increase community safety by keeping children off the streets.

Examples of alternative programming designed to reduce truancy include LaCrossroads, a school within a school program operated in the School District of La Crosse's two high schools. Pupils remain in the same classroom for a five-hour block of classes with various teachers, who come and go. Two support staff also remain in the classroom. Pupils eligible for this program are typically grade deficient and truant, and both they and their parents or guardians must agree to placement. Participating teachers volunteer for the program. During the 2006-07 school year, 83 pupils were enrolled, and the attendance rate reported on WINSS was 95.5 percent, which is comparable to the rates of 96.7 percent for Central High School and 97.7 percent for Logan High School in La Crosse.

The School District of La Crosse also contracts with the Family and Children's Center, a private organization, to run the Leadership School for pupils who are habitually truant or who are likely to drop out. Contracts between a parent, the agency, and the school define each pupil's choices of educational and other programming and identify consequences for failing to accomplish educational requirements. Programming is available between 8:30 a.m. and 8:30 p.m., and transportation is provided, including transportation to appointments with mental health or medical professionals. On average, 65 full-time pupils were enrolled each quarter during the 2006-07 school year, and 87.7 percent had no unexcused absences. Program staff estimate per pupil costs for this program were approximately $100 per day, or $17,000 annually. The district's regular per pupil costs for the same year, as reported on WINSS, were $12,716.

The Racine Unified School District operates the School Engagement Program, which was established in the 2004-05 school year as a pilot project at Case High School, in part to address a shortage of qualified employees for local businesses. Initial funding was provided by Racine County's departments of Workforce Development and Human Services. For the 2006-07 school year, the district was awarded a federal truancy reduction grant from DPI, which allowed it to expand the program to two other high schools. In total, 114 habitually truant pupils—38 from each school—participated in the program during the 2006-07 school year, following referral by the school and/or by human services staff. Each participant is assigned to a social worker, who works with the pupil and parent or guardian to develop an attendance plan. There is frequent contact between social workers and pupils, who may be required to check in daily. Social workers make weekly phone contact with parents or guardians and meet face-to-face with them twice each month. We were unable to obtain data on the effectiveness of this project; however district staff indicated it has resulted in returning the pupils to class on a regular basis.

The Green Bay Area Public School District's Forward Bound program operates at each of its four high schools, four days per week between 3:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. It focuses on helping tenth and eleventh graders who have failed ninth-grade classes and are struggling in the school setting. Pupils are selected to participate by a consultation team, which includes administrators, guidance counselors, school social workers, and school psychologists. Participation is mandatory. Academic specialists, a school social worker, and a facilitator are present and provide participants with academic instruction and help with their social and emotional needs. About 30 pupils in each high school currently participate. Data on the program's effectiveness and cost were not readily available.

The Stevens Point Area Public School District operates the Stevens Point Area Senior High Turnaround Evening Program, which serves pupils who have fallen behind, often as a result of truancy. Approximately 15 pupils participate in the program each year, and its size is designed to allow individualized attention. The program operates from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, and pupils attend a different class each day. Pupils also attend classes for some or all of the regular school day, depending on their needs. District staff indicated that flexibility in scheduling is one of the program's strengths. Additionally, the program is located in the Stevens Point Area Senior High School, which allows pupils to remain in a familiar environment. The program is funded by the district, which estimates total annual costs of $10,000 to $12,000. The district was unable to provide data on the program's effectiveness; however, district officials reported that most participating pupils attend almost every day.

☑ Best Practice

It is a best practice for districts to identify alternative programming to help high school pupils who are truant and not performing well in the traditional classroom obtain diplomas.

Role of Parents and Guardians

As noted, statutes require districts to notify parents or guardians when their children are truant. While all of the districts in our review reported compliance with this requirement, some districts have taken additional steps to involve parents and guardians in improving school attendance. District officials cited a variety of strategies that reflect, in part, the varied reasons pupils may be truant.

Districts employ a variety of strategies to educate families about the importance of school attendance.

Districts take steps beyond publishing their attendance policies and procedures. For example, the Eau Claire Area School District developed a brochure that is distributed to all families at the beginning of each school year and provides tips to improve attendance. Strategies include making education a priority in the family, meeting with teachers, obtaining any needed help, and developing good study and work habits. In the Oshkosh Area School District, the principal telephones the family when an elementary or middle school pupil is out of school with an unexcused absence. District officials believe this call shows the family that school is important and that staff care enough to make a personal contact.

In other districts, we noted additional resources are directed to families to support good attendance. Staff of the School District of Beloit contact families of truants and instruct them about the requirement to provide an excuse for legitimate absences, as well as about the importance of ensuring their children are in school. To engage parents who consistently indicate their children are ill or in need of medical care, the School District of La Crosse has assigned one registered nurse to the elementary and middle schools and another to the two high schools. The nurses educate families about the need to be in school and the types of illnesses that constitute a legitimate absence. For those families who have little or no health coverage, the nurses will provide advice about resources in the community.

☑ Best Practice

It is a best practice for districts to involve parents and guardians in truancy-related matters.

Community Collaboration

Districts direct truants and their families to community programs and services.

To effectively address truancy, school staff need to identify the reasons for which pupils are truant and direct them and their families to the appropriate services. Truancy can result from family-related issues, such as being needed to care for younger siblings or to provide family income or not being required by parents to attend school regularly. It can also result from difficulties such as drug or alcohol use, juvenile delinquency, pregnancy, or social problems with classmates. Districts have implemented truancy reduction strategies that range from building community awareness through informational campaigns to one-on-one mentoring opportunities with college students and special programming with local law enforcement.

The Fond du Lac School District has raised the profile of truancy by broadcasting public service announcements and working with local television stations and the print media to address truancy and its ramifications. This approach was developed following discussions with the Sheriff, police, social services, circuit court staff, the District Attorney, and juvenile justice intake staff.

The Appleton Area School District utilizes the Truancy and Runaway Assessment Center program, which is available to the eight school districts in Outagamie County. The purpose of the program, which operates Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., is to increase academic success, reduce juvenile crime, and improve services coordination for at-risk youth. Pupils absent from

school without a valid excuse are taken into custody by local police officers and transported to the Boys and Girls Club of the Fox Valley, where they are received by an on-site Outagamie County Sheriff's Department deputy. Program counselors may also meet with pupils at the schools. Pupils complete an assessment survey, which includes questions regarding problem areas contributing to truant behavior, and develop an action plan with a program counselor and the pupil's parent or guardian. A plan identifies steps for the pupil to address the issues contributing to the truant behavior, as well as community resources such as school guidance counselors, teachers, social workers, therapists, physicians, tutoring services, and recreational activities that can help the pupil successfully implement the plan.

Program counselors monitor pupils relative to their individual plans. Monitoring is conducted for up to 90 days, including a review of attendance records every 30 days. The program served 335 pupils during the 2006-07 school year. In the 90 days after they received services, 52 percent reduced their truancy rates.

In 2000, pupils in the Oshkosh Area School District began receiving services through the Truancy Intervention Program. This program provides mentors from the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh to high school and middle school pupils who have received a truancy citation and typically have other behavioral problems. Participation is mandated by judicial order. Although funding was initially provided by both the district and Winnebago County, the county currently provides all program funding, which for calendar year 2007 totaled $57,700. District staff believe the program sends a message to pupils that the community is concerned with their behavior, reinforcing the importance of attending school.

In 2006-07, 60 pupils participated in the program, which trains mentors and pairs them with truant pupils. Mentors and pupils meet one to two times per week during a study hall period and work on skills such as developing good study habits, setting goals, and making decisions. Mentors may also help pupils prepare resumes and research careers, and they provide advice on getting into college. At the time we concluded our review, 29 participants during the 2006-07 school year had completed the program, and 31 were still enrolled. Of the 29 pupils who completed the program, 15 showed improved attendance.

In response to a high rate of habitual truancy, the School District of Janesville convened a locally focused committee that includes representatives of the district, the Janesville Police Department, child protective services, juvenile justice, juvenile probation, the District Attorney's office, and the circuit court. During a series of meetings in

the 2005-06 school year, the committee developed a plan to address truancy by focusing on revision of the district's tardiness policy, development of a district-wide medical excuse form, the feasibility of a truancy mediation program, and an incentive program to reward pupils for attendance that is perfect, good, or improved.

Additionally, for the 2006-07 school year, the School District of Janesville began collaborating with Big Brothers and Big Sisters on a mentoring program that currently operates at four district schools. During its first year, 20 pupils who missed 30 or more days of school were selected to participate in the program and were paired with adult mentors from the community. Of the 18 pupils participating at the end of the year, 16 showed improved attendance. In comparison, only 2 out of 15 pupils in a control group showed improved attendance. The program was initially funded with a $20,000 DPI-administered federal truancy reduction grant. For the 2007-08 school year, it was funded with a federal Safe and Drug Free Schools grant, as well as district funds.

☑ Best Practice

It is a best practice for districts to identify and collaborate with local agencies and service providers to develop programming to meet the varied needs of pupils who are habitually truant.

Sanctions

Truants and their parents or guardians can be prosecuted in municipal or circuit court.

In addition to providing incentives and resources to help pupils improve their attendance, schools use a variety of methods to sanction truant pupils. Detention time, additional assignments, and prohibitions on participation in extracurricular activities are typically used to address both occasional and habitual truancy. More severe sanctions include referral of truants or their parents or guardians for possible prosecution in municipal or circuit court, as well as criminal prosecution for failure to cause children to attend school.

In our August 2000 report on truancy reduction efforts, we suggested that municipalities consider ordinances against both truancy and habitual truancy. State statutes allow counties, cities, village, or towns to enact ordinances prohibiting individuals less than 18 years of age from being truant or habitually truant. Municipal ordinances allow for speedy enforcement against and greater community control over truancy. For example, local ordinances can allow truants to be picked up on the street during a school day and issued a citation by local law enforcement, providing an immediate action against truancy.

In contrast, preparing the documentation needed for referral to the county District Attorney and circuit court is specified in state law and does not provide the immediate punishment that a police-issued citation provides. For referral to circuit court under s. 938.13(6) and s. 118.16(5), Wis. Stats., a school is required by statute to take the following steps, which must be documented:

- meeting, or attempting to meet, with the pupil's parent or guardian to discuss the truancy;
- providing the pupil with an opportunity for educational counseling to determine whether a change in curriculum would resolve the truancy;
- evaluating the pupil to determine whether the truancy could be caused by a learning problem and, if necessary, taking the appropriate action to address the problem; and
- conducting an evaluation to determine whether the pupil's truancy could be caused by a social problem and, if necessary, making the appropriate action or referrals.

We found that 13 of the 14 school districts we contacted are located in municipalities with ordinances against both truancy and habitual truancy. Table 5 shows the dispositions available to the court based on the provisions of a municipal ordinance.

District officials had mixed opinions about the effectiveness of court-imposed sanctions.

We found the extent to which municipal truancy ordinances are used to sanction pupils varies. For example, in Kenosha Unified School District Number 1, pupils are cited only after they have recorded their fifth unexcused absence. On the other hand, in the School District of Janesville, pupils may be cited after their second unexcused absence. The extent to which districts refer pupils for potential prosecution in circuit court also varies, in part because obtaining the statutorily required documentation can be time-consuming and involves considerable district resources, and also because district officials had mixed opinions about the effectiveness of this method for reducing truancy.

While truants younger than 12 years of age do not receive citations in Kenosha Unified School District Number 1, habitual truancy citations are issued to older pupils. Often a citation is drafted by school personnel and then signed by a police officer, simplifying the job of the police. The pupil will have a municipal court appearance, and the judge will typically withhold the fine but require regular attendance over a designated time period. If attendance improves,

Table 5

Statutorily Established Municipal Court Actions for Truancy and Habitual Truancy[1]

Truancy	Habitual Truancy
An order for the pupil to attend school	An order for the pupil to attend school
An order to report to a youth center for participation in social, behavioral, academic, community service, and other programming	An order to report to a youth center for participation in social, behavioral, academic, community service, and other programming
A forfeiture of not more than $50 plus costs for a first violation, assessed against the pupil, the parent or guardian, or both	A forfeiture of not more than $500 plus costs, assessed against the pupil, the parent or guardian, or both
A forfeiture of not more than $100 plus costs for any second or subsequent violation committed within 12 months of a previous violation, assessed against the pupil, the parent or guardian, or both, subject to a maximum cumulative forfeiture amount of not more than $500 for all violations committed during a semester	An order for the pupil to be placed in a teen court program, which requires the pupil to be judged and sanctioned by a group or his or her peers
	An order for the parent or guardian to participate in counseling or to attend school with the pupil
	An order for the pupil to participate in an educational program suitable for placement of juveniles who have been adjudicated delinquent
	An order to participate in counseling, a supervised work program, or community service work
	An order placing the pupil under formal or informal supervision by a designated agency or individual for up to one year
	Home detention
	Suspension for between 30 days and one year of the pupil's license to drive
	Revocation of a work permit
	Any other reasonable conditions, including a curfew

[1] Section 118.163, Wis. Stats., allows for a municipal ordinance to contain all or some of these provisions.

the fine will be dismissed. If not, the fine is levied and the pupil's license to drive is suspended. Kenosha assesses a $500 fine plus court costs.

In Kenosha Unified School District Number 1, 79.0 percent of pupils who received truancy citations did not comply with the court order to attend school.

For the 2006-07 school year, 157 pupils in Kenosha Unified School District Number 1 received citations. Most citations were received by pupils in ninth, tenth, and eleventh grades. Of the 157 pupils who received citations, 124, or 79.0 percent, did not comply with the court order to attend school regularly. Thirty pupils complied with the court order, one enrolled in Gateway Technical College, one opted for home schooling, and one citation was dismissed. In light of the relatively low compliance rate, the district recommended a review of both the municipal truancy citation process and the effectiveness of municipal citations for reducing truancy.

There were 2,077 habitual truants in the Madison Metropolitan School District during the 2006-07 school year. According to municipal court appearance and sanction data provided by the district, 224 truants and 40 habitual truants were found guilty during the 2006-07 school year. Of these, 67, or 25.4 percent, complied with their court orders. A total of 197 of the truants and habitual truants did not comply with their court orders and received noncompliance sanctions. The municipal court judge with whom we spoke believes that issuing a truancy citation before a pupil becomes habitually truant is more effective than waiting until a fifth unexcused absence has been recorded.

In the Racine Unified School District, 55.0 percent of pupils who received truancy citations had fewer instances of truancy after being cited, and 41.0 percent had more instances.

Two full-time police officers, paid for by the City of Racine, were assigned as truancy officers to the Racine Unified School District beginning February 2006. The officers indicated that because they have the schedules of all pupils 12 years of age and older, as well as photographs of the pupils, more pupils now provide correct identification. Truants are transported back to their schools in handcuffs, and the officers believe that when the other pupils see truants in handcuffs, they "might think twice" about being truant. The district, with police input, developed a truancy citation narrative which facilitates the issuance of citations. Once the citation paperwork is completed, the pupil is released to school staff. If needed, the pupil can be released to a social worker or guidance counselor for further services. The district, the Assistant City Attorney, and the truancy officers believe the work of the officers is effective. In 2006, 55.0 percent of 174 pupils who received citations from the police had fewer truancies after being cited and appearing in municipal court, although 41.0 percent had more truancies.

Another program implemented by the Racine Unified School District and the City Attorney's Office involves pupils with 30 or more unexcused absences in one semester. A charging document, consisting of the summons and complaint with the absentee record attached, is served to the pupil at school. Parents or guardians are also mailed a copy, and a mandatory court date is indicated on the

form. The municipal court judge advises the pupil that the City Attorney has to establish only one violation of the truancy ordinance for the pupil to be guilty. Sanctions for truants may include:

- a forfeiture of up to $50, plus court costs;
- suspension of the pupil's license to drive for up to two years; and
- suspension of hunting and fishing licenses.

In 2006, 99 pupils were issued a summons and complaint and had a subsequent court appearance; 54 pupils, or 54.5 percent, had fewer truancies after the court date, while 38 pupils, or 38.4 percent, had more truancies.

☑ Best Practice

It is a best practice for districts to consider the full range of available sanctions for addressing truancy.

■ ■ ■ ■

Efforts in Milwaukee Public Schools ■

MPS is the largest school district in Wisconsin and has long had a high habitual truancy rate. MPS officials have undertaken a variety of efforts to improve attendance and reduce truancy, including collaborative efforts with community agencies, grant-funded efforts that focus on prevention and intervention, alternative programming, and sanctions. Programming strategies vary among schools within the district.

Truancy Rates

In the 2006-07 school year, the habitual truancy rate in MPS was 46.3 percent.

Although MPS had the second-highest habitual truancy rate in the state in 2006-07, the number of habitual truants declined by 16.2 percent over the six-year period shown in Table 6, from 45,659 in the 2001-02 school year to 38,277 in 2006-07.

MPS officials attribute the district's high rate of habitual truancy to poverty; high rates of pupil mobility and homelessness; child care issues, such as pupils staying home to care for younger siblings; high rates of teen pregnancy and parenthood; inadequate transportation; and violence in the schools and the community. They have noted that these factors are not unique to MPS, but because of its size MPS deals with them on a much larger scale. In addition, they have indicated that it is difficult to identify and address the underlying causes of each pupil's truancy, particularly when a combination of factors that can be addressed only through a comprehensive plan including the school, the pupil's family, and community-based programs and services is involved.

Table 6

Habitual Truancy Rates in the Milwaukee Public School District[1]

School Year	K-12 Enrollment	Habitual Truants	Percentage of Enrollment Classified as Habitual Truants
2001-02	90,894	45,659	50.2%
2002-03	90,262	41,586	46.1
2003-04	89,994	40,847	45.4
2004-05	86,822	40,715	46.9
2005-06	85,012	41,621	49.0
2006-07	82,658	38,277	46.3

[1] Data from DPI's WINSS database.

The Milwaukee County Truancy Committee convened in August 2007.

A single staff person serves as the designated attendance officer for MPS, although the principal of each school is responsible for ensuring the district's truancy plan is implemented. MPS mails attendance and truancy policies to all families at the beginning of each school year, includes them in pupil handbooks, and posts them on its Web site. MPS officials indicated to us that the school board reviewed the district's truancy plan in 2006, while the Milwaukee County Truancy Committee convened in August 2007 for the statutorily required countywide review.

The countywide committee reviewed truancy plans for all of the school districts in Milwaukee County, as well as the county's prior challenges and successes in combating truancy. It identified factors that contribute to truancy in Milwaukee County and developed a list of interventions that could be employed to return truant pupils to school and re-engage them in the school setting. In a report released in March 2008, it included 21 recommendations for school boards in Milwaukee County, including:

- increasing resources devoted to prevention and intervention in the elementary and middle school grade levels;
- creating alternative programs to help keep high school pupils interested in school; and
- adopting a common, countywide definition of excused absence.

Community Collaboration

MPS collaborates with the Milwaukee Police Department and the Boys and Girls Club to address truancy.

Since 1993, MPS has collaborated with the Milwaukee Police Department and the Boys and Girls Club of Greater Milwaukee to operate TABS, which aims to reduce truancy and deter truants from becoming involved in the criminal justice system. MPS is mandated by s. 119.55, Wis. Stats., to fund the salaries and fringe benefits of four full-time law enforcement officers and assumed funding responsibility in 1996 after initial federal funding expired. For the 2007-08 school year, the district budgeted $718,800 for TABS, including $219,700 to the Boys and Girls Club for program management costs such as salaries and benefits for three full-time employees as well as space, supplies and equipment, and $499,100 for the salaries and benefits of three full-time equivalent district staff and six Milwaukee police officers, including two officers who work on-site at the TABS centers.

The program operates according to the following procedures:

- Four Milwaukee police officers working in two-person teams stop and question juveniles seen away from school during regular school hours. Those believed to be truant are transported to one of two centers operated by the Boys and Girls Club, where counseling and other programming are provided.

- While at a center, juveniles are searched for weapons, drugs, and other illegal items and then evaluated by a counselor, who attempts to determine the underlying reason for the truancy. Counselors have access to online pupil records, which they obtain before individual meetings.

- Parents or guardians are asked to work with a counselor and their child to develop a plan to address the truancy and improve attendance. The counselor may also recommend longer-term counseling or refer the juvenile to services in the community. For example, community prosecutors from the Milwaukee County District Attorney's office sometimes accompany TABS program staff on home visits, educating the families about the seriousness of truancy and the importance of school attendance. Parents or guardians are responsible for returning their children to school and following up on the plan.

- If a parent or guardian cannot be reached, center staff will either require the juvenile to remain at the center until the end of the day or have a police officer return the juvenile to school.

In 2006-07, officers stopped 6,453 juveniles and center staff counseled 2,954, as shown in Table 7. The number of juveniles stopped by officers decreased by 6.8 percent from the 2002-03 school year to the 2006-07 school year, while the number of juveniles counseled by center staff decreased by 10.0 percent during the same period. MPS enrollment and the number of habitual truants declined by 8.4 percent and 8.0 percent, respectively, during this same period.

Table 7

Juveniles Stopped by TABS Officers and Counseled by Staff[1]

School Year	Stopped by TABS Officers	Counseled by Center Staff
2002-03	6,925	3,281
2003-04	8,530	3,240
2004-05	8,764	3,364
2005-06	8,441	3,519
2006-07	6,453	2,954

[1] Includes individuals who may have been stopped or counseled multiple times.

Our August 2000 review noted that, in general, truancy abatement centers have a relatively small effect on attendance but a somewhat larger effect on crime rates. The TABS program annual report for the 2006-07 school year provides some information on program services and attendance by pupils served. For example, 294 truants received case management services beyond initial counseling, and 78 reportedly improved their attendance by an average of 10 percentage points. In addition, program staff made 1,071 referrals to outside agencies or programs and conducted 432 home visits.

Other examples of collaboration in Milwaukee include:

- Wraparound Milwaukee, a managed care program for children having mental health crises that is operated by the Milwaukee County Behavioral Health Division. Five to six members of a mobile urgent treatment team provide on-site assessments and link MPS pupils with the appropriate mental health services.

- Mentoring programs, tutoring, and credit recovery classes provided by community organizations such as Running Rebels and the Latino Community Center. These organizations also promote alternatives to gangs and substance abuse by offering after school and evening programs and providing positive adult role models.

- A truancy abatement and burglary suppression project operated by the Boys and Girls Club of Greater Milwaukee. OJA awarded $44,984 in federal funds for a grant period beginning October 1, 2006, and ending June 30, 2008. Grant documents maintained by OJA indicate that case management and mentoring services would be provided to 30 habitual truants and their families in order to remove barriers to school attendance, ensure engagement in school, increase school performance, and decrease contact with the juvenile court system. The stated objective was to increase individual pupil attendance by 15 percent. The grant reports received by OJA indicated that 51 percent of the youth receiving case management services increased their attendance; in the 2006-07 school year, the average reported increase was eight percentage points, and in the 2007-08 school year it was four and one-half.

Federal Truancy Reduction Grants

For the 2007-08 school year, MPS received a DPI-administered federal truancy reduction grant of $510,000.

Since the 2004-05 school year, MPS has been eligible for DPI-administered federal truancy reduction grants as part of No Child Left Behind. As was shown in Table 3, funding has ranged from $125,000 in the 2004-05 school year to $510,000 in 2007-08. Various MPS schools have received these funds.

For the 2007-08 school year, six high schools and two middle schools received DPI-administered federal truancy reduction grants, which have been used to hire additional social workers who select a group of pupils to receive services, develop and implement truancy prevention and intervention strategies, monitor attendance, and follow up with pupils as necessary. The schools are given latitude to develop and implement strategies consistent with the needs of their pupils.

Habitual truancy rates increased at three of the six schools that received DPI-administered federal truancy reduction grants in the 2006-07 school year.

To assess whether MPS's use of DPI-administered federal truancy reduction grants has been effective, we reviewed habitual truancy data for six schools that received a total of $375,000 in funding in the 2006-07 school year. As shown in Table 8, habitual truancy rates at three of the six schools— Edison Middle School, John Muir Middle School, and Pulaski High School—increased from 2005-06 to 2006-07.

Table 8

Habitual Truancy Rates for MPS Schools that Received DPI-Administered Federal Truancy Reduction Grants in 2006-07

School	2005-06 Habitual Truancy Rate	2006-07 Habitual Truancy Rate
Bradley Tech High School	75.3%	71.9%
Custer High School	98.5	98.3
Edison Middle School	75.0	88.1
John Muir Middle School	52.2	60.9
Pulaski High School	76.9	81.2
Vincent High School	80.9	69.1

Source: DPI

Reports from participating schools noted that significant numbers of pupils did not complete the programs, which makes it difficult to assess their effectiveness. In order to better determine the effectiveness of the schools' truancy reduction efforts, MPS has developed more detailed reporting requirements, including a requirement that each school submit a mid-year report that will be used by the district to determine whether program modifications are needed at the school level.

Current programs have had mixed results. For example, approximately 100 incoming and second-year ninth-grade pupils at Bradley Tech High School with attendance rates below 75.0 percent are selected each year to receive case management, peer mentoring, and attendance incentives. Participants are interviewed by a social worker, who also contacts their parents or guardians, and are asked to set individual goals for attendance and school achievement. They are also paired with mentors from the upper grades, who provide academic support, encouragement, and advice. Improved attendance and other positive achievements are rewarded with

tickets, which participants may use to enter raffles for prizes donated by local organizations.

Milwaukee Vincent High School offers several alternative programs.

At Milwaukee Vincent High School, truancy programs include:

- a night school program with classes from 4:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. and additional credits for working during the day. The program provides participants with bus passes and collaborates with the Private Industry Council to provide information about employment opportunities and skills for obtaining meaningful employment.

- a GED program from 4:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. for pupils who are credit deficient due to truancy and failing grades, able to read at a ninth-grade level, and maintain attendance at least 90 percent of the time. Participants study with a teacher for the GED test, which is administered in collaboration with Milwaukee Area Technical College. Those who pass receive a high school diploma.

- the Outpost School, also known as the Vincent Satellite Academy, which provides individualized attention to 30 to 60 pupils who complete independent projects in order to earn the credits necessary for graduation. The school day is shorter than the traditional school day.

Custer High School's Attendance Initiative program targets approximately 100 ninth grade pupils whose records show a pattern of habitual truancy and develops case management plans specific to each pupil's needs. Data from the 2006-07 school year indicate that 87 pupils were selected to participate in the program in September 2006, but only 31 continued to participate in June 2007, and attendance rates for 77.4 percent of these pupils decreased. Attendance rates increased for only five participants, and information for two participants was not available.

New Programming Initiatives

Several new programs were implemented by MPS for the 2007-08 school year. For example, the Milwaukee Education Center implemented Race to School! Attendance Challenge, a program that uses early intervention and incentives to increase attendance and reduce truancy. The program provides case management to sixth-grade pupils identified as having attendance problems and includes

an incentive system under which classrooms compete for the best attendance record. Prizes are awarded to the winning class as well as to individual pupils.

At Burroughs Middle School, which was selected to receive federal truancy reduction funds beginning in the 2007-08 school year, pupils who have had two or more unexcused absences in one month or who are known to have had attendance problems in the past participate in the WhyTry program. It is a series of ten lessons, taught in a small-group setting, on topics such as peer pressure, decision-making, problem-solving, and anger management. Pupils whose attendance improves are recognized at special events and are eligible for prizes. In addition, parents are invited to attend monthly meetings with other parents and with staff who can advise them about their child's progress.

In the 2007-08 school year, MPS also started Creative Option Seat. This program places high school pupils from traditional schools in alternative programs. Pupils' preferences are considered during the placement process. After spending a year in the alternative program, participants are expected to return to a traditional school, based on consultation with the school administrator. In its first year, 154 pupils participated in the program.

Transition High School is an alternative school developed by the MPS Department of School Innovation and is designed to serve pupils returning from incarceration, expulsion, or a significant period of truancy. The curriculum includes a combination of experiential and online learning. Pupils can start classes anytime during the school year. Initial funding for the school, which opened during the second semester of the 2007-08 school year, came from a federal grant provided by the Department of Labor. Initial enrollment consisted of 40 pupils. Additional pupils may be added as space and school capacity allow.

New truancy reduction programs at both Bay View and Hamilton high schools target ninth graders who are truant and struggling academically. At each school, 100 pupils are provided with individual and small group counseling based on an assessment of their attitudes about school, self-esteem, lifestyle, and family and peer relationships. They are also given a reading assessment to determine if they need a class or a referral to an after school reading program. In addition, there is a schoolwide program in which teachers and pupils serve as mentors to truants.

Finally, MPS conducted an "attendance marathon" in August 2008, during which volunteers from the district and the community visited homes to provide information on the district's attendance

policies and the importance of school attendance. The goal is to reach as many families as possible, especially those who may not be accessible by telephone or mail. The district hopes that by meeting with families before the school year begins, the marathon will be an effective prevention tool. MPS officials indicated that attendance marathons have been successful in other states.

Sanctions

Prosecution for truancy in municipal or circuit court is relatively infrequent.

MPS officials note that municipal ordinances addressing both truancy and habitual truancy, as well as referrals for potential prosecution in circuit court, are used relatively infrequently. During the 2006-07 school year, 732 pupils were cited with violating Milwaukee's truancy ordinance, which is a decline of 49.3 percent from the 2002-03 school year, when 1,445 pupils were cited. Referrals to the District Attorney occurred even less often and totaled 267 in the 2006-07 school year. Of those, 95 resulted in charges filed in circuit court, including 82, or 86.3 percent, involving elementary school pupils. The district's reported practice of referring the parents or guardians of habitually truant elementary school pupils to the District Attorney is reflected in those statistics.

Complete data on the extent to which municipal and circuit court sanctions affected MPS attendance rates were not readily available. However, TABS program staff reviewed school attendance for a sample of 265 pupils who received truancy citations during the 2006-07 school year. Of these, 88 pupils, or 33.2 percent, increased their attendance while 162 pupils, or 61.1 percent, decreased their attendance. Attendance for 15 pupils stayed the same. Program staff also reviewed attendance for a sample of 48 pupils whose parents received citations for contributing to truancy. Of these, 23 pupils, or 47.9 percent, increased their attendance while 18 pupils, or 37.5 percent, decreased their attendance. Attendance for 7 pupils stayed the same.

MPS officials indicated that the effectiveness of truancy sanctions is generally limited to only a small percentage of pupils, in part because many truants and their families are not able to pay fines, which range from $73.00 to $160.00.

■ ■ ■ ■

Assessing Effectiveness and Sharing Program Results ■

Districts' truancy reduction efforts are consistent with national best practices.

Many of the truancy reduction efforts undertaken by school districts are consistent with national research on best practices for truancy reduction, including collaboration, family involvement, and the use of incentives and sanctions. Fiscal pressures for these programming efforts, whether they are the result of declining state and local revenues, anticipated reductions in federal funds, or limited resources available from community programming partners, increase the importance of informed decision-making by districts seeking to improve their truancy reduction programs. Better assessment of programming efforts by each district and broader dissemination of those assessments by DPI could potentially improve the ability of districts to allocate their limited resources effectively.

In 2005, the National Center for School Engagement, an educational research group that focuses on school attendance and achievement, identified six best practices associated with positive outcomes for children and families in truancy reduction programs:

- collaboration among community service providers;
- family involvement;
- approaching social and academic needs comprehensively;
- using meaningful incentives and sanctions;

- working within a supportive infrastructure, which includes relevant laws and policies; and

- evaluation of program outcomes.

DPI is responsible for collecting and reporting data on attendance and habitual truancy rates at both district and school levels, but under the current system these data are not sufficient to assess the effectiveness of specific programs or efforts.

Districts would likely benefit from pupil- and program-level evaluations of their truancy reduction efforts.

Research conducted by the National Center for School Engagement in 2005 identified evaluation as a key component of successful truancy reduction efforts. While there are a number of outcome measures and techniques districts could use to better evaluate their efforts, districts may want to consider:

- comparing attendance and truancy rates for individuals or groups of pupils both before and after truancy reduction services, to determine whether and by how much the rates changed;

- comparing attendance and truancy rates for groups of pupils who receive services and those who do not, to determine whether and by how much the rates vary across the two groups;

- analyzing attendance and truancy rates for individuals or groups of pupils after they have completed a truancy reduction program, to assess the long-term effectiveness of program services; and

- tracking and using cost and outcome information, to determine whether and to what extent specific interventions are cost-effective.

To the extent possible, districts that have not already done so would likely benefit from developing methods to monitor and assess the effectiveness of their truancy reduction efforts. In addition, districts able to demonstrate the effectiveness of their programs may be better positioned to seek the limited grant funds available for truancy reduction efforts.

Some districts have established outcome measures, and others have modified their truancy reduction programming. For example:

- The Appleton Area School District has provided funding to support a truancy and runaway assessment center. The center's outcome measures have included serving at least 20 percent of habitual truants annually and expecting at least 50 percent of the pupils served by its truancy reduction program to improve their attendance rates by 30 percent in a 30-day period and by 15 percent in a 90-day period.

- In response to continued increases in its habitual truancy rate, the Green Bay Area Public School District closed its truancy abatement center and chose to use the funds to hire attendance intervention specialists who work in the schools.

In addition to reporting attendance and habitual truancy data, DPI has consulted with districts regarding their truancy reduction programs and facilitated truancy meetings for districts and other key stakeholders. These efforts have been focused on a relatively small number of districts, primarily those that receive DPI-administered federal truancy reduction grants or participate in the Peer Consultation Network or are able to send staff to attend conferences. By expanding its efforts to include a larger number of districts, DPI could increase dialogue among districts about the results of their assessments of strategies for boosting attendance and reducing truancy.

Districts may benefit from increased opportunities to learn about effective truancy reduction efforts in other districts.

As noted, statutes provide districts latitude to develop strategies and efforts that meet their needs, and districts have developed varied measures to address truancy. Given the variety of attendance improvement and truancy reduction strategies in place, districts may benefit from the opportunity to share their strategies and learn from the experiences of other districts. In a period of constrained fiscal resources, programming decisions could be informed by discussion of questions such as:

- What are the factors that most affect truancy among elementary school pupils?

- How do district attendance policies, including the definition of tardiness, affect truancy rates?

- What efforts to improve attendance and reduce truancy among high school pupils are most successful?

- What resources can community partners bring to truancy reduction efforts?

- Where are external funding sources available?

The benefits of information sharing could be further increased if districts have supporting outcome and program evaluation data to document the effectiveness of their efforts.

While truancy meetings, conferences, and the DPI Web site are potential means for sharing such information, DPI could determine which avenues would be most appropriate given its available resources, and which methods could reach the largest number of districts and school-level staff. One option that has been discussed by the Peer Consultation Network is the implementation of an electronic bulletin board, which districts could use to share information, ask questions, or raise concerns. Similarly, a statewide truancy reduction Web site could feature the varied strategies that districts have employed, provide contact information for district and school-level staff involved in truancy reduction efforts, highlight grant results, and illustrate methods for evaluating the outcomes and results of truancy programs.

☑ Best Practice

It is a best practice for school districts to develop measures to assess the effectiveness of their truancy reduction efforts, evaluate their efforts on a regular basis, and modify their efforts as necessary.

☑ Best Practice

It is a best practice for the Department of Public Instruction to facilitate information sharing among school districts with regard to truancy reduction efforts through varied cost-effective means, such as conferences, Web sites, and electronic bulletin boards.

■ ■ ■ ■

Appendix 1

Best Practices Local Government Advisory Council

Edward Huck, Executive Director
Wisconsin Alliance of Cities

Craig Knutson, County Administrator
Rock County

Adam Payne, County Administrator
Sheboygan County

Anthony Roach, City Administrator
City of Fitchburg

Donna Vogel, Clerk/Treasurer
Town of Pleasant Springs

Appendix 2

Selected Attendance and Truancy Statutes

s. 118.16(1)(a), Wis. Stats.
(a) "Habitual truant" means a pupil who is absent from school without an acceptable excuse under sub. (4) and s. 118.15 for part or all of 5 or more days on which school is held during a school semester.

s. 118.16(1)(c), Wis. Stats.
(c) "Truancy"" means any absence of part or all of one or more days from school during which the school attendance officer, principal or teacher has not been notified of the legal cause of such absence by the parent or guardian of the absent pupil, and also means intermittent attendance carried on for the purpose of defeating the intent of s. 118.15.

s. 118.16(4)(a), Wis. Stats.
(a) The school board shall establish a written attendance policy specifying the reasons for which pupils may be permitted to be absent from a public school under s. 118.15 and shall require the teachers employed in the school district to submit to the school attendance officer daily attendance reports on all pupils under their charge.

Appendix 3

School Districts Contacted

Appleton Area School District

School District of Beloit

Eau Claire Area School District

Fond du Lac School District

Green Bay Area Public School District

School District of Janesville

Kenosha Unified School District Number 1

School District of La Crosse

Madison Metropolitan School District

Milwaukee Public Schools

Oshkosh Area School District

Racine Unified School District

Stevens Point Area Public School District

West Allis-West Milwaukee School District

Appendix 4

Habitual Truancy Rates in Wisconsin School Districts

2005-06 and 2006-07 School Years[1,2]

District	2005-06 School Year			2006-07 School Year			Percentage Point Change
	Total Enrollment	Habitual Truants	Habitual Truancy Rate	Total Enrollment	Habitual Truants	Habitual Truancy Rate	
Abbotsford	622	4	0.6%	604	6	1.0%	0.4
Adams-Friendship Area	1,842	7	0.4	1,834	38	2.1	1.7
Albany	400	6	1.5	397	21	5.3	3.8
Algoma	574	41	7.1	575	48	8.3	1.2
Alma	307	24	7.8	290	18	6.2	(1.6)
Alma Center	588	15	2.6	589	9	1.5	(1.0)
Almond-Bancroft	491	39	7.9	472	54	11.4	3.5
Altoona	1,429	22	1.5	1,433	16	1.1	(0.4)
Amery	1,677	38	2.3	1,666	36	2.2	(0.1)
Antigo	2,678	272	10.2	2,631	194	7.4	(2.8)
Appleton Area	14,955	699	4.7	14,966	777	5.2	0.5
Arcadia	908	17	1.9	933	8	0.9	(1.0)
Argyle	341	2	0.6	328	7	2.1	1.5
Arrowhead UHS	2,382	12	0.5	2,344	11	0.5	(0.0)
Ashland	2,216	377	17.0	2,208	309	14.0	(3.0)
Ashwaubenon	3,098	87	2.8	3,005	60	2.0	(0.8)
Athens	509	7	1.4	497	6	1.2	(0.2)
Auburndale	808	2	0.2	824	16	1.9	1.7
Augusta	566	110	19.4	551	11	2.0	(17.4)
Baldwin-Woodville Area	1,455	93	6.4	1,488	112	7.5	1.1
Bangor	635	2	0.3	611	8	1.3	1.0
Baraboo	2,941	101	3.4	2,998	96	3.2	(0.2)
Barneveld	408	11	2.7	392	2	0.5	(2.2)
Barron Area	1,239	143	11.5	1,219	145	11.9	0.4
Bayfield	451	50	11.1	416	55	13.2	2.1
Beaver Dam	3,338	107	3.2	3,265	94	2.9	(0.3)
Beecher-Dunbar-Pembine	239	11	4.6	266	6	2.3	(2.3)
Belleville	915	58	6.3	919	22	2.4	(3.9)
Belmont Community	300	1	0.3	316	5	1.6	1.2
Beloit	6,899	2,097	30.4	6,862	2,303	33.6	3.2
Beloit Turner	1,239	71	5.7	1,288	59	4.6	(1.1)
Benton	261	13	5.0	247	42	17.0	12.0
Berlin Area	1,665	61	3.7	1,678	36	2.1	(1.5)

District	2005-06 School Year Total Enrollment	Habitual Truants	Habitual Truancy Rate	2006-07 School Year Total Enrollment	Habitual Truants	Habitual Truancy Rate	Percentage Point Change
Big Foot UHS	589	13	2.2%	592	23	3.9%	1.7
Birchwood	284	0	0.0	282	0	0.0	0.0
Black Hawk	475	9	1.9	444	3	0.7	(1.2)
Black River Falls	1,841	347	18.8	1,789	261	14.6	(4.3)
Blair-Taylor	652	7	1.1	662	10	1.5	0.4
Bloomer	1,065	14	1.3	1,034	40	3.9	2.6
Bonduel	883	12	1.4	870	27	3.1	1.7
Boscobel Area	911	9	1.0	908	12	1.3	0.3
Boulder Junction J1[3]	177	0	0.0	–	–	–	–
Bowler	429	45	10.5	397	44	11.1	0.6
Boyceville Community	821	49	6.0	798	45	5.6	(0.3)
Brighton #1	203	0	0.0	197	0	0.0	0.0
Brillion	870	6	0.7	861	15	1.7	1.1
Bristol #1	576	0	0.0	616	0	0.0	0.0
Brodhead	1,193	9	0.8	1,137	2	0.2	(0.6)
Brown Deer	1,801	36	2.0	1,810	26	1.4	(0.6)
Bruce	566	48	8.5	551	5	0.9	(7.6)
Burlington Area	3,623	242	6.7	3,562	219	6.1	(0.5)
Butternut	172	0	0.0	169	9	5.3	5.3
Cadott Community	842	2	0.2	847	0	0.0	(0.2)
Cambria-Friesland	442	2	0.5	371	1	0.3	(0.2)
Cambridge	943	9	1.0	929	2	0.2	(0.7)
Cameron	837	3	0.4	838	6	0.7	0.4
Campbellsport	1,443	18	1.2	1,445	7	0.5	(0.8)
Cashton	501	1	0.2	476	0	0.0	(0.2)
Cassville	267	0	0.0	257	0	0.0	0.0
Cedar Grove-Belgium Area	976	6	0.6	993	10	1.0	0.4
Cedarburg	3,085	10	0.3	3,070	4	0.1	(0.2)
Central/Westosha UHS	1,243	89	7.2	1,250	137	11.0	3.8
Chetek	953	52	5.5	941	52	5.5	0.1
Chilton	1,150	26	2.3	1,179	8	0.7	(1.6)
Chippewa Falls Area	4,600	259	5.6	4,605	183	4.0	(1.7)
Clayton	403	12	3.0	401	2	0.5	(2.5)
Clear Lake	612	0	0.0	626	9	1.4	1.4
Clinton Community	1,163	9	0.8	1,199	19	1.6	0.8
Clintonville	1,515	46	3.0	1,513	107	7.1	4.0
Cochrane-Fountain City	654	46	7.0	643	26	4.0	(3.0)

District	2005-06 School Year Total Enrollment	Habitual Truants	Habitual Truancy Rate	2006-07 School Year Total Enrollment	Habitual Truants	Habitual Truancy Rate	Percentage Point Change
Colby	1,009	17	1.7%	968	18	1.9%	0.2
Coleman	688	6	0.9	712	5	0.7	(0.2)
Colfax	779	1	0.1	799	2	0.3	0.1
Columbus	1,131	59	5.2	1,102	42	3.8	(1.4)
Cornell	483	2	0.4	469	0	0.0	(0.4)
Crandon	916	280	30.6	881	258	29.3	(1.3)
Crivitz	740	14	1.9	693	10	1.4	(0.4)
Cuba City	637	18	2.8	612	24	3.9	1.1
Cudahy	2,729	64	2.3	2,642	145	5.5	3.1
Cumberland	1,123	39	3.5	1,074	31	2.9	(0.6)
D.C. Everest Area	5,347	65	1.2	5,557	101	1.8	0.6
Darlington Community	799	25	3.1	795	27	3.4	0.3
De Forest Area	3,183	31	1.0	3,228	69	2.1	1.2
De Pere	3,528	417	11.8	3,591	421	11.7	(0.1)
De Soto Area	550	22	4.0	546	79	14.5	10.5
Deerfield Community	722	2	0.3	733	4	0.5	0.3
Delavan-Darien	2,572	371	14.4	2,560	359	14.0	(0.4)
Denmark	1,520	27	1.8	1,529	24	1.6	(0.2)
Dodgeland	731	106	14.5	761	33	4.3	(10.2)
Dodgeville	1,210	14	1.2	1,229	43	3.5	2.3
Dover Number 1	98	0	0.0	108	3	2.8	2.8
Drummond Area	489	33	6.7	477	39	8.2	1.4
Durand	1,022	9	0.9	1,003	2	0.2	(0.7)
East Troy Community	1,648	7	0.4	1,685	18	1.1	0.6
Eau Claire Area	10,279	1,050	10.2	10,239	1,104	10.8	0.6
Edgar	584	2	0.3	613	1	0.2	(0.2)
Edgerton	1,774	121	6.8	1,773	65	3.7	(3.2)
Elcho	373	20	5.4	351	15	4.3	(1.1)
Eleva-Strum	623	19	3.1	614	0	0.0	(3.1)
Elk Mound Area	935	5	0.5	952	7	0.7	0.2
Elkhart Lake-Glenbeulah	527	12	2.3	487	13	2.7	0.4
Elkhorn Area	2,897	8	0.3	2,953	125	4.2	4.0
Ellsworth Community	1,668	37	2.2	1,656	31	1.9	(0.3)
Elmbrook	7,579	130	1.7	7,559	109	1.4	(0.3)
Elmwood	353	12	3.4	351	2	0.6	(2.8)
Erin	344	0	0.0	337	0	0.0	0.0
Evansville Community	1,710	25	1.5	1,804	30	1.7	0.2

District	2005-06 School Year Total Enrollment	Habitual Truants	Habitual Truancy Rate	2006-07 School Year Total Enrollment	Habitual Truants	Habitual Truancy Rate	Percentage Point Change
Fall Creek	883	18	2.0%	885	23	2.6%	0.6
Fall River	444	0	0.0	445	1	0.2	0.2
Fennimore Community	717	1	0.1	732	7	1.0	0.8
Flambeau	614	10	1.6	628	18	2.9	1.2
Florence	563	20	3.6	536	27	5.0	1.5
Fond du Lac	7,134	299	4.2	7,000	337	4.8	0.6
Fontana J8	274	1	0.4	272	1	0.4	0.0
Fort Atkinson	2,677	60	2.2	2,647	37	1.4	(0.8)
Fox Point J2	876	0	0.0	863	0	0.0	0.0
Franklin Public	4,047	78	1.9	4,157	97	2.3	0.4
Frederic	522	16	3.1	510	7	1.4	(1.7)
Freedom Area	1,477	6	0.4	1,485	7	0.5	0.1
Friess Lake	317	0	0.0	304	0	0.0	0.0
Galesville-Ettrick-Trempealeau	1,346	66	4.9	1,358	62	4.6	(0.3)
Geneva J4	116	0	0.0	127	0	0.0	0.0
Genoa City J2	646	0	0.0	644	2	0.3	0.3
Germantown	3,793	52	1.4	3,873	53	1.4	(0.0)
Gibraltar Area	606	13	2.1	575	7	1.2	(0.9)
Gillett	749	4	0.5	730	30	4.1	3.6
Gilman	466	2	0.4	419	22	5.3	4.8
Gilmanton	209	7	3.3	205	4	2.0	(1.4)
Glendale-River Hills	906	7	0.8	948	17	1.8	1.0
Glenwood City	743	21	2.8	709	42	5.9	3.1
Glidden	212	3	1.4	187	3	1.6	0.2
Goodman-Armstrong	171	1	0.6	169	3	1.8	1.2
Grafton	2,007	22	1.1	2,044	26	1.3	0.2
Granton Area	263	0	0.0	259	0	0.0	0.0
Grantsburg	939	20	2.1	948	20	2.1	(0.0)
Green Bay Area	19,788	3,585	18.1	19,618	1,800	9.2	(8.9)
Green Lake	348	3	0.9	336	5	1.5	0.6
Greendale	2,419	5	0.2	2,423	116	4.8	4.6
Greenfield	3,173	76	2.4	3,130	115	3.7	1.3
Greenwood	428	0	0.0	404	2	0.5	0.5
Hamilton	3,972	138	3.5	4,089	136	3.3	(0.1)
Hartford J1	1,595	4	0.3	1,587	42	2.6	2.4
Hartford UHS	1,714	93	5.4	1,694	82	4.8	(0.6)
Hartland-Lakeside J3	1,310	9	0.7	1,317	3	0.2	(0.5)

District	2005-06 School Year Total Enrollment	Habitual Truants	Habitual Truancy Rate	2006-07 School Year Total Enrollment	Habitual Truants	Habitual Truancy Rate	Percentage Point Change
Hayward Community	1,942	192	9.9%	1,976	152	7.7%	(2.2)
Herman #22	84	0	0.0	86	0	0.0	0.0
Highland	280	0	0.0	273	0	0.0	0.0
Hilbert	475	8	1.7	490	7	1.4	(0.3)
Hillsboro	568	3	0.5	564	3	0.5	0.0
Holmen	3,233	166	5.1	3,366	189	5.6	0.5
Horicon	919	32	3.5	919	29	3.2	(0.3)
Hortonville	3,177	57	1.8	3,274	75	2.3	0.5
Howards Grove	975	4	0.4	947	14	1.5	1.1
Howard-Suamico	4,990	320	6.4	5,071	172	3.4	(3.0)
Hudson	4,902	125	2.6	5,211	150	2.9	0.3
Hurley	658	140	21.3	621	103	16.6	(4.7)
Hustisford	363	1	0.3	359	1	0.3	0.0
Independence	307	1	0.3	322	0	0.0	(0.3)
Iola-Scandinavia	767	2	0.3	755	2	0.3	0.0
Iowa-Grant	822	4	0.5	771	4	0.5	0.0
Ithaca	356	2	0.6	358	1	0.3	(0.3)
Janesville	10,365	1,902	18.4	10,375	2,052	19.8	1.4
Jefferson	1,749	15	0.9	1,783	5	0.3	(0.6)
Johnson Creek	592	11	1.9	588	15	2.6	0.7
Juda	280	1	0.4	271	0	0.0	(0.4)
Kaukauna Area	3,635	183	5.0	3,688	149	4.0	(1.0)
Kenosha Unified	21,291	3,563	16.7	21,686	4,116	19.0	2.2
Kettle Moraine	4,352	36	0.8	4,366	32	0.7	(0.1)
Kewaskum	1,790	14	0.8	1,799	17	0.9	0.2
Kewaunee	1,019	45	4.4	981	34	3.5	(1.0)
Kickapoo Area	448	0	0.0	435	9	2.1	2.1
Kiel Area	1,349	10	0.7	1,383	19	1.4	0.6
Kimberly Area	3,752	47	1.3	3,887	47	1.2	(0.0)
Kohler	538	1	0.2	559	0	0.0	(0.2)
La Crosse	6,923	607	8.8	6,799	720	10.6	1.8
La Farge	236	3	1.3	231	5	2.2	0.9
Lac du Flambeau Number 1	411	4	1.0	406	19	4.7	3.7
Ladysmith-Hawkins	912	18	2.0	894	8	0.9	(1.1)
Lake Country	492	1	0.2	514	1	0.2	(0.0)
Lake Geneva J1	1,844	26	1.4	1,866	34	1.8	0.4
Lake Geneva-Genoa City UHS	1,440	49	3.4	1,403	52	3.7	0.2

District	2005-06 School Year Total Enrollment	Habitual Truants	Habitual Truancy Rate	2006-07 School Year Total Enrollment	Habitual Truants	Habitual Truancy Rate	Percentage Point Change
Lake Holcombe	422	3	0.7%	407	0	0.0%	(0.7)
Lake Mills Area	1,202	10	0.8	1,242	4	0.3	(0.5)
Lakeland UHS	945	98	10.4	955	115	12.0	1.7
Lancaster Community	936	0	0.0	895	2	0.2	0.2
Laona	265	5	1.9	246	3	1.2	(0.7)
Lena	402	4	1.0	401	10	2.5	1.5
Linn J4	124	0	0.0	101	0	0.0	0.0
Linn J6	109	0	0.0	120	1	0.8	0.8
Little Chute Area	1,430	19	1.3	1,418	31	2.2	0.9
Lodi	1,674	37	2.2	1,673	49	2.9	0.7
Lomira	1,085	1	0.1	1,077	0	0.0	(0.1)
Loyal	554	2	0.4	550	8	1.5	1.1
Luck	592	2	0.3	572	50	8.7	8.4
Luxemburg-Casco	1,932	18	0.9	1,942	19	1.0	0.0
Madison Metropolitan	24,185	1,775	7.3	24,519	2,077	8.5	1.1
Manawa	801	2	0.3	784	10	1.3	1.0
Manitowoc	5,320	190	3.6	5,299	205	3.9	0.3
Maple	1,402	44	3.1	1,439	41	2.8	(0.3)
Maple Dale-Indian Hill	450	0	0.0	416	0	0.0	0.0
Marathon City	640	1	0.2	648	0	0.0	(0.2)
Marinette	2,270	296	13.0	2,195	317	14.4	1.4
Marion	592	0	0.0	563	1	0.2	0.2
Markesan	796	10	1.3	759	0	0.0	(1.3)
Marshall	894	30	3.4	1,149	51	4.4	1.1
Marshfield	3,857	35	0.9	3,850	31	0.8	(0.1)
Mauston	1,540	175	11.4	1,515	222	14.7	3.3
Mayville	1,121	13	1.2	1,131	14	1.2	0.1
McFarland	1,986	70	3.5	1,987	46	2.3	(1.2)
Medford Area	2,081	43	2.1	2,023	33	1.6	(0.4)
Mellen	294	0	0.0	293	2	0.7	0.7
Melrose-Mindoro	688	6	0.9	689	5	0.7	(0.1)
Menasha	3,475	144	4.1	3,498	194	5.5	1.4
Menominee Indian	904	495	54.8	861	501	58.2	3.4
Menomonee Falls	4,488	75	1.7	4,552	376	8.3	6.6
Menomonie Area	3,118	232	7.4	3,094	200	6.5	(1.0)
Mequon-Thiensville	3,994	164	4.1	3,898	88	2.3	(1.8)
Mercer	177	0	0.0	162	1	0.6	0.6

District	2005-06 School Year Total Enrollment	Habitual Truants	Habitual Truancy Rate	2006-07 School Year Total Enrollment	Habitual Truants	Habitual Truancy Rate	Percentage Point Change
Merrill Area	3,106	88	2.8%	3,019	95	3.1%	0.3
Merton Community	863	0	0.0	891	0	0.0	0.0
Middleton-Cross Plains	5,571	221	4.0	5,599	156	2.8	(1.2)
Milton	3,100	168	5.4	3,188	168	5.3	(0.1)
Milwaukee Public Schools	85,012	41,621	49.0	82,658	38,277	46.3	(2.7)
Mineral Point	736	1	0.1	748	4	0.5	0.4
Minocqua J1	571	11	1.9	545	14	2.6	0.6
Mishicot	1,023	21	2.1	975	20	2.1	(0.0)
Mondovi	1,010	47	4.7	1,035	30	2.9	(1.8)
Monona Grove	2,865	113	3.9	2,838	114	4.0	0.1
Monroe	2,616	139	5.3	2,712	134	4.9	(0.4)
Montello	752	54	7.2	743	51	6.9	(0.3)
Monticello	396	10	2.5	379	5	1.3	(1.2)
Mosinee	2,023	118	5.8	1,999	49	2.5	(3.4)
Mount Horeb Area	2,159	52	2.4	2,146	18	0.8	(1.6)
Mukwonago	5,044	29	0.6	5,015	26	0.5	(0.1)
Muskego-Norway	4,837	58	1.2	4,828	69	1.4	0.2
Necedah Area	754	39	5.2	785	73	9.3	4.1
Neenah	6,280	302	4.8	6,261	216	3.4	(1.4)
Neillsville	1,088	15	1.4	1,068	1	0.1	(1.3)
Nekoosa	1,394	22	1.6	1,372	35	2.6	1.0
Neosho J3	182	0	0.0	186	0	0.0	0.0
New Auburn	317	0	0.0	309	0	0.0	0.0
New Berlin	4,530	31	0.7	4,617	29	0.6	(0.1)
New Glarus	797	17	2.1	791	12	1.5	(0.6)
New Holstein	1,133	25	2.2	1,112	10	0.9	(1.3)
New Lisbon	638	12	1.9	613	6	1.0	(0.9)
New London	2,479	115	4.6	2,476	130	5.3	0.6
New Richmond	2,613	60	2.3	2,699	81	3.0	0.7
Niagara	509	37	7.3	505	31	6.1	(1.1)
Nicolet UHS	1,310	59	4.5	1,328	52	3.9	(0.6)
Norris	67	6	9.0	78	5	6.4	(2.5)
North Cape	202	0	0.0	214	0	0.0	0.0
North Crawford	476	63	13.2	450	17	3.8	(9.5)
North Fond du Lac	1,181	30	2.5	1,166	19	1.6	(0.9)
North Lake	342	0	0.0	334	0	0.0	0.0
North Lakeland[4]	–	–	–	185	0	0.0	–

District	2005-06 School Year Total Enrollment	Habitual Truants	Habitual Truancy Rate	2006-07 School Year Total Enrollment	Habitual Truants	Habitual Truancy Rate	Percentage Point Change
Northern Ozaukee	1,544	0	0.0%	1,545	15	1.0%	1.0
Northland Pines	1,395	28	2.0	1,402	21	1.5	(0.5)
Northwood	439	9	2.1	428	10	2.3	0.3
Norwalk-Ontario-Wilton	635	14	2.2	653	3	0.5	(1.7)
Norway J7	115	0	0.0	97	0	0.0	0.0
Oak Creek-Franklin	5,372	366	6.8	5,590	274	4.9	(1.9)
Oakfield	576	1	0.2	564	6	1.1	0.9
Oconomowoc Area	4,035	94	2.3	4,200	109	2.6	0.3
Oconto	1,167	119	10.2	1,166	26	2.2	(8.0)
Oconto Falls	1,843	55	3.0	1,825	49	2.7	(0.3)
Omro	1,300	26	2.0	1,272	19	1.5	(0.5)
Onalaska	2,782	32	1.2	2,766	58	2.1	0.9
Oostburg	950	9	0.9	969	3	0.3	(0.6)
Oregon	3,507	65	1.9	3,543	93	2.6	0.8
Osceola	1,811	18	1.0	1,818	12	0.7	(0.3)
Oshkosh Area	10,059	344	3.4	10,047	270	2.7	(0.7)
Osseo-Fairchild	964	11	1.1	971	33	3.4	2.3
Owen-Withee	595	19	3.2	593	24	4.0	0.9
Palmyra-Eagle Area	1,132	27	2.4	1,110	11	1.0	(1.4)
Pardeeville Area	871	27	3.1	873	31	3.6	0.5
Paris J1	210	0	0.0	221	6	2.7	2.7
Park Falls	733	38	5.2	716	39	5.4	0.3
Parkview	1,051	110	10.5	1,046	109	10.4	(0.1)
Pecatonica Area	457	0	0.0	450	0	0.0	0.0
Pepin Area	293	1	0.3	277	0	0.0	(0.3)
Peshtigo	1,188	28	2.4	1,175	19	1.6	(0.7)
Pewaukee	2,179	8	0.4	2,167	1	0.0	(0.3)
Phelps	176	0	0.0	169	1	0.6	0.6
Phillips	988	10	1.0	912	2	0.2	(0.8)
Pittsville	686	5	0.7	650	2	0.3	(0.4)
Platteville	1,383	13	0.9	1,349	11	0.8	(0.1)
Plum City	329	0	0.0	339	0	0.0	0.0
Plymouth	2,329	48	2.1	2,284	50	2.2	0.1
Port Edwards	495	17	3.4	465	6	1.3	(2.1)
Port Washington-Saukville	2,591	41	1.6	2,599	38	1.5	(0.1)
Portage Community	2,477	79	3.2	2,500	90	3.6	0.4
Potosi	361	0	0.0	351	0	0.0	0.0

District	2005-06 School Year Total Enrollment	Habitual Truants	Habitual Truancy Rate	2006-07 School Year Total Enrollment	Habitual Truants	Habitual Truancy Rate	Percentage Point Change
Poynette	1,132	15	1.3%	1,096	22	2.0%	0.7
Prairie du Chien Area	1,184	68	5.7	1,154	41	3.6	(2.2)
Prairie Farm	344	0	0.0	339	0	0.0	0.0
Prentice	472	4	0.8	486	3	0.6	(0.2)
Prescott	1,099	50	4.6	1,112	24	2.2	(2.4)
Princeton	415	5	1.2	379	4	1.1	(0.1)
Pulaski Community	3,585	108	3.0	3,610	65	1.8	(1.2)
Racine Unified	20,542	1,789	8.7	20,459	1,744	8.5	(0.2)
Randall J1	748	0	0.0	755	0	0.0	0.0
Randolph	499	13	2.6	489	18	3.7	1.1
Random Lake	916	26	2.8	915	30	3.3	0.4
Raymond #14	421	9	2.1	410	1	0.2	(1.9)
Reedsburg	2,510	46	1.8	2,553	69	2.7	0.9
Reedsville	685	45	6.6	676	18	2.7	(3.9)
Rhinelander	2,901	224	7.7	2,819	193	6.8	(0.9)
Rib Lake	533	1	0.2	480	0	0.0	(0.2)
Rice Lake Area	2,373	81	3.4	2,338	107	4.6	1.2
Richfield J1	373	0	0.0	365	0	0.0	0.0
Richland	1,375	26	1.9	1,357	33	2.4	0.5
Richmond	425	1	0.2	414	0	0.0	(0.2)
Rio Community	470	1	0.2	464	3	0.6	0.4
Ripon	1,745	72	4.1	1,741	48	2.8	(1.4)
River Falls	3,037	45	1.5	3,021	86	2.8	1.4
River Ridge	509	1	0.2	514	1	0.2	(0.0)
River Valley	1,389	35	2.5	1,430	24	1.7	(0.8)
Riverdale	743	20	2.7	722	14	1.9	(0.8)
Rosendale-Brandon	966	5	0.5	958	7	0.7	0.2
Rosholt	649	16	2.5	625	25	4.0	1.5
Royall	560	12	2.1	533	6	1.1	(1.0)
Rubicon J6	149	1	0.7	148	0	0.0	(0.7)
Saint Croix Central	1,209	11	0.9	1,263	12	1.0	0.0
Saint Croix Falls	1,063	13	1.2	1,080	5	0.5	(0.8)
Saint Francis	1,318	136	10.3	1,304	248	19.0	8.7
Salem	1,118	0	0.0	1,058	2	0.2	0.2
Sauk Prairie	2,605	40	1.5	2,594	109	4.2	2.7
Seneca	295	2	0.7	287	1	0.3	(0.3)
Sevastopol	586	14	2.4	571	1	0.2	(2.2)

District	2005-06 School Year Total Enrollment	Habitual Truants	Habitual Truancy Rate	2006-07 School Year Total Enrollment	Habitual Truants	Habitual Truancy Rate	Percentage Point Change
Seymour Community	2,414	17	0.7%	2,466	21	0.9%	0.1
Sharon J11	289	0	0.0	288	0	0.0	0.0
Shawano-Gresham	2,759	139	5.0	2,779	149	5.4	0.3
Sheboygan Area	9,619	363	3.8	9,570	453	4.7	1.0
Sheboygan Falls	1,696	28	1.7	1,725	20	1.2	(0.5)
Shell Lake	539	0	0.0	555	8	1.4	1.4
Shiocton	786	10	1.3	775	5	0.6	(0.6)
Shorewood	1,916	21	1.1	1,912	17	0.9	(0.2)
Shullsburg	341	2	0.6	365	4	1.1	0.5
Silver Lake J1	596	0	0.0	587	1	0.2	0.2
Siren	489	45	9.2	490	112	22.9	13.7
Slinger	2,712	20	0.7	2,723	10	0.4	(0.4)
Solon Springs	330	11	3.3	333	20	6.0	2.7
Somerset	1,400	39	2.8	1,412	6	0.4	(2.4)
South Milwaukee	3,304	287	8.7	3,302	309	9.4	0.7
South Shore	186	10	5.4	183	8	4.4	(1.0)
Southern Door County	1,215	3	0.2	1,189	5	0.4	0.2
Southwestern Wisconsin	538	1	0.2	526	2	0.4	0.2
Sparta Area	2,490	139	5.6	2,480	136	5.5	(0.1)
Spencer	714	12	1.7	721	12	1.7	(0.0)
Spooner Area	1,384	54	3.9	1,323	44	3.3	(0.6)
Spring Valley	716	10	1.4	684	3	0.4	(1.0)
Stanley-Boyd Area	918	36	3.9	920	60	6.5	2.6
Stevens Point Area	7,152	169	2.4	7,209	192	2.7	0.3
Stockbridge	250	8	3.2	214	7	3.3	0.1
Stone Bank	351	2	0.6	330	0	0.0	(0.6)
Stoughton Area	3,431	43	1.3	3,395	101	3.0	1.7
Stratford	715	2	0.3	729	1	0.1	(0.1)
Sturgeon Bay	1,202	31	2.6	1,194	33	2.8	0.2
Sun Prairie Area	5,609	445	7.9	5,882	432	7.3	(0.6)
Superior	4,725	780	16.5	–	–	–	–
Suring	542	57	10.5	502	37	7.4	(3.1)
Swallow	444	0	0.0	502	0	0.0	0.0
Thorp	581	6	1.0	554	8	1.4	0.4
Three Lakes	662	52	7.9	630	14	2.2	(5.6)
Tigerton	335	24	7.2	330	21	6.4	(0.8)
Tomah Area	3,000	466	15.5	3,031	497	16.4	0.9

District	2005-06 School Year Total Enrollment	Habitual Truants	Habitual Truancy Rate	2006-07 School Year Total Enrollment	Habitual Truants	Habitual Truancy Rate	Percentage Point Change
Tomahawk	1,527	12	0.8%	1,503	10	0.7%	(0.1)
Tomorrow River	901	3	0.3	903	11	1.2	0.9
Trevor Grade School[3]	373	1	0.3	–	–	–	–
Trevor-Wilmot Consolidated[4]	–	–	–	524	0	0.0	–
Tri-County Area	761	20	2.6	708	27	3.8	1.2
Turtle Lake	484	8	1.7	475	6	1.3	(0.4)
Twin Lakes Number 4	405	17	4.2	417	15	3.6	(0.6)
Two Rivers	1,964	37	1.9	1,931	30	1.6	(0.3)
Union Grove J1	642	2	0.3	685	1	0.1	(0.2)
Union Grove UHS	762	138	18.1	782	147	18.8	0.7
Unity	1,049	12	1.1	1,025	5	0.5	(0.7)
Valders Area	1,113	11	1.0	1,112	10	0.9	(0.1)
Verona Area	4,381	102	2.3	4,506	94	2.1	(0.2)
Viroqua Area	1,062	7	0.7	1,077	1	0.1	(0.6)
Wabeno Area	576	51	8.9	526	52	9.9	1.0
Walworth J1	520	7	1.3	517	4	0.8	(0.6)
Washburn	644	2	0.3	604	3	0.5	0.2
Washington	98	0	0.0	89	0	0.0	0.0
Washington-Caldwell	219	0	0.0	202	0	0.0	0.0
Waterford Graded J1	1,544	3	0.2	1,585	1	0.1	(0.1)
Waterford UHS	1,103	7	0.6	1,068	10	0.9	0.3
Waterloo	859	28	3.3	846	15	1.8	(1.5)
Watertown	3,495	198	5.7	3,560	278	7.8	2.1
Waukesha	13,354	145	1.1	13,323	119	0.9	(0.2)
Waunakee Community	3,119	83	2.7	3,278	106	3.2	0.6
Waupaca	2,404	314	13.1	2,388	185	7.7	(5.3)
Waupun	2,155	63	2.9	2,104	29	1.4	(1.5)
Wausau	8,263	360	4.4	8,332	341	4.1	(0.3)
Wausaukee	606	3	0.5	573	9	1.6	1.1
Wautoma Area	1,486	44	3.0	1,440	89	6.2	3.2
Wauwatosa	6,317	207	3.3	6,295	264	4.2	0.9
Wauzeka-Steuben	270	2	0.7	309	12	3.9	3.1
Webster	742	29	3.9	–	–	–	–
West Allis-West Milwaukee	8,292	242	2.9	8,348	530	6.3	3.4
West Bend	6,704	194	2.9	6,788	253	3.7	0.8
West De Pere	2,192	33	1.5	2,309	37	1.6	0.1
West Salem	1,646	17	1.0	1,644	11	0.7	(0.4)

District	2005-06 School Year Total Enrollment	Habitual Truants	Habitual Truancy Rate	2006-07 School Year Total Enrollment	Habitual Truants	Habitual Truancy Rate	Percentage Point Change
Westby Area	1,122	2	0.2	1,092	1	0.1	(0.1)
Westfield	1,268	88	6.9	1,230	32	2.6	(4.3)
Weston	352	0	0.0	322	6	1.9	1.9
Weyauwega-Fremont	1,010	52	5.1	954	23	2.4	(2.7)
Weyerhaeuser Area	186	5	2.7	171	1	0.6	(2.1)
Wheatland J1	414	22	5.3	410	15	3.7	(1.7)
White Lake	249	19	7.6	247	3	1.2	(6.4)
Whitefish Bay	2,546	18	0.7	2,753	37	1.3	0.6
Whitehall	721	20	2.8	739	29	3.9	1.2
Whitewater	1,934	37	1.9	1,965	57	2.9	1.0
Whitnall	2,425	52	2.1	2,381	20	0.8	(1.3)
Wild Rose	689	18	2.6	707	23	3.3	0.6
Williams Bay	525	9	1.7	500	3	0.6	(1.1)
Wilmot Grade[3]	138	0	0.0	–	–	–	–
Wilmot UHS	1,071	67	6.3	1,081	45	4.2	(2.1)
Winneconne Community	1,547	21	1.4	1,526	14	0.9	(0.4)
Winter	358	34	9.5	341	31	9.1	(0.4)
Wisconsin Dells	1,695	175	10.3	1,659	184	11.1	0.8
Wisconsin Heights	953	11	1.2	905	20	2.2	1.1
Wisconsin Rapids	5,559	245	4.4	5,539	240	4.3	(0.1)
Wittenberg-Birnamwood	1,327	62	4.7	1,347	61	4.5	(0.1)
Wonewoc-Union Center	370	6	1.6	334	9	2.7	1.1
Woodruff J1	530	11	2.1	529	2	0.4	(1.7)
Wrightstown Community	1,056	43	4.1	1,181	3	0.3	(3.8)
Yorkville J2	402	0	0.0	391	1	0.3	0.3

[1] Excludes the districts of Superior and Webster for the 2006-07 school year because of errors in the data reported on the Wisconsin Information Network for Successful Schools database.

[2] Data are excluded by DPI in some cases to prevent the identification of students.

[3] District ceased to exist after the 2005-06 school year.

[4] District was created after the 2005-06 school year.