

Michigan Great Lakes Virtual Academy Attendance Policy

The law in Michigan governing compulsory attendance requires a parent, legal guardian, or other person having control or charge of a child age six to sixteen to send the child to school during the entire school year, except under the limited circumstances specified in subsection (3) of [MCL 380.1561](#).

Although the compulsory school attendance law does not apply to children under the age of six, a child who is at least five years of age by November 1 of the school year and is a resident of a school district which provides kindergarten work is entitled to enroll in kindergarten [[MCL380.1147](#)].

Attendance Responsibilities

- Attendance is logged **daily** in the Online School by parent/ Learning Coach.
- Schedules may be blocked or flexible; however, attendance in each course needs to be logged each week.
- Extended family travel, except during normal school vacation periods, requires written notification and vacation contract approval by the Head of School or designee. This should be completed at least one week prior to the extended absence.
- All families must attend a Parent Orientation and the new students will attend “Introduction to Online Learning” course via the online school.
- The family must maintain regular communication with the Michigan Great Lakes Virtual Academy teachers.
- Students and parents/learning coaches must check their kmail, email, and phone messages daily. Return response should be within 24 hours or on the next business day.
- Students must attend all required Blackboard Collaborate Live sessions for direct instruction as directed by their teachers.

Reporting Absences: Please kmail your teacher if your student will be absent and unable to attend ClassConnect sessions or log in to the OLS/LMS. Please state the reason for the absence in the kmail as well as the expected duration of the absence.

Excused Absences: The school recognizes student illness, death in the family, prior permission to leave school by parents and administrator, approved family vacations, approved college visitations, required court appearance, religious observations, family emergencies, counseling or administrative appointments to be excused. Remember that regardless of the absence reason students are expected to make up work in the OLS/LMS.

Unexcused Absences: An unexcused absence is an absence not recognized by state law or Michigan Great Lakes Virtual Academy. Unexcused absences may result in

loss of credit for assignments missed.

Habitual Truancy: A truant is defined as a student who is willfully absent from school without the knowledge and consent of the parent and school, or absent from school when there is an attempt to evade the Michigan Compulsory Attendance Law. A “habitual truant” is defined as a student who is truant three times during any semester. A truant absence is considered an unexcused absence.

Excessive Absences: Excessive absences adversely affect a student’s academic performance and relationship with the school. Students who amass excessive absences or have long periods of a lack of engagement will fall under the truancy policy and may be withdrawn from MGLVA. Anytime a student has missed five (5) consecutive days due to an illness, a doctor’s not will be required.

Instructional Time

Michigan requires all public schools to offer minimum number of hours for first through twelfth grades (including alternative education), as specified in Section 101 of the State School Aid Act is 1,098 hours of pupil instruction. Kindergarten pupils must be scheduled for the required 1098 hours as well.

Instructional time can occur at any time during the day and on any day of the week. Instructional time must directly relate to lesson objectives which are aligned to the Michigan Grade Level Content Expectations (GLCE).

The following criteria are counted toward instructional time:

- Pupil attended a live lesson from the teacher
- Pupil logged into a lesson or lesson activity and the login can be documented
- Pupil and teacher engaged in a subject-oriented telephone conversation
- There is documentation of an email (kmail) dialogue between the pupil and teacher
- There is documentation of activity/work between the learning coach and pupil

Process for Attendance Monitoring

Students are required to follow the school calendar. Instructional time can be entered on any day (e.g., weekends, holidays, etc.).

Students are expected to log into the OLS (K-8) LMS (9-12) each scheduled school calendar day.

Truancy: a student will be considered truant after 10 days of unexcused absences or lack of engagement.

The school employs several steps in dealing with non-attending/disengaged students, including:

- Calling the family and sending a kmail to families within 1-3

- days of no attendance
- Following up with kmails and phone calls to families between 3-4 days
- Referring a child to the MGLVA family support team and other resources at 4-5 days of no attendance
- Mailing and Kmailing warning letters to families at 5 days of no attendance
- Following up with phone calls and another warning letter to families at 7-8 days of no attendance
- Sending certified letters to families between 9-10 days of no attendance, requesting school attendance meeting or conference call with parents and signing of Action Plan/Attendance Agreement
- Conducting home visits to families at 10+ days of no attendance
- Informing the truancy officer for the ISD the student lives in (the truancy officer may or may not follow up with the family)
- Informing the family via certified mail that the student is considered withdrawn at 20-40 days of no attendance

When a family does not respond, given all of the abovementioned steps, it implies withdrawal.

Doctor/Medical Excuses: students must present doctors' notes when they are absent from school for three or more days consecutively due to illness. Parent should send doctors' notes to the assigned teacher through k-mail.

Excuse Notes for Absence: in order for an absence to be registered as excused, a parent or guardian must submit a written explanation to the teacher. Excuse notes or kmails must state the student's name, the date of the absence, and the reason for the absence. The parent or guardian has three calendar days from the date of absence to submit the excuse through k- mail.

Educational Leave: Pupils may be excused for educational trips not sponsored by the school according to the Michigan School Code. Please understand that it shall be the family's responsibility to contact the teacher(s) to determine what obligations must be met as a result of this proposed absence. Further understand that:

- No more than ten (10) days of absence will result.
- No absence will occur in the last ten (10) days of the school year.
- Experiences such as "Long Weekends" and "Vacations" will not justify any request
- Request must be submitted and approved 24 hours prior to the trip
- Requests will not be approved for time off during the state testing window.

No Internet Access or Power Outage: students who are unable to log into school or have a power outage must have an alternative plan to go to a public library/public location with computer access to do their school work. If the student does not have a back-up plan and cannot go to the library, the student must notify his or her teacher

in order to legitimize the reason for the absence.

Testing Attendance Policy

Michigan Great Lakes Virtual Academy, a Michigan public school, must follow the laws set by the Michigan Department of Education. According to MDE, all students in grades 3-8 and 11 are **required** to participate in state testing. Being a part of Michigan Great Lakes Virtual Academy means that some travel will be required for testing. Travel includes going to and from testing locations.

In June 2014, the Michigan Legislature required the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) to develop a new test for spring 2015, creating a need to reduce a normal three-year test development process to nine months. We have been working hard to accomplish this and are excited to announce our new assessment system called the Michigan Student Test of Educational Progress, or M-STEP.

The M-STEP includes summative assessments designed to measure student growth effectively for today's students. English language arts and mathematics are assessed in grades 3–8, science in grades 4 and 7, and social studies in grades 5 and 8. It also includes the Michigan Merit Examination in 11th grade, which consists of a college entrance exam, work skills assessment, and M-STEP summative assessments in English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies.

Standardized Testing Attendance

Testing will be conducted at a variety of sites around the state. Efforts will be made to locate a testing site within an hour of your home. In certain cases it may be necessary to travel longer than an hour. These tests are given over a multi-day period depending on a student's grade level.

Specific testing dates and locations will be published no later than two weeks prior to the testing window. The school cannot guarantee that the student's assigned teacher will be the test proctor. The school does attempt to assign teachers to testing sites where many of their students will be participating.

Attendance FAQs

Q: When can I log attendance?

A: You are able to log attendance from your first day of school until the last day of school

Q: Where do I need to log my child's attendance and how often?

A: Student attendance hours are logged in the attendance screen on the parent's OLS and must be entered daily.

Q: Why should I log attendance?

A: In addition to meeting the legal attendance requirements for Michigan Great Lakes Virtual Academy and the Michigan School Code, logging attendance provides you and your child with a log of the work accomplished.

Q: What are supplemental hours?

A: Provided that the child first completes the K12 coursework, attendance time may be logged

if the child engaged in activities related to the course objectives. Contact your teacher before entering supplemental attendance time to ensure the additional activity you wish to include satisfies course objectives.

Q: What should I do if I forgot to log my child's supplemental hours?

A: You can go back to add hours after initially entering attendance. If you have already entered hours for the specified day and clicked the "submit" button, your teacher must add the hours for you. Contact your teacher for assistance in entering your supplemental hours.

Q: How many hours should my child log if he or she enrolled after the start of school?

A: Hours are prorated based on a student's start date. Students who start after the first day of school should follow the daily or weekly attendance guidelines outlined in the Instructional Time section of this handbook. Your teacher will also provide you with a prorated schedule.

Q: Do I log attendance for the actual time the lesson took or just the default time that comes up on the OLS?

A: You must log the actual amount of time it took for the student to complete the lesson(s)

each day. If you consistently observe your student completing lessons before he or she accumulates the required amount of time, you may benefit from setting a time limit to each subject, rather than just expecting one lesson per day.