

## SECTION 1 - REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION

The following basic documentation must be available at the local or intermediate school district in order to document and support the memberships counted. It is each district's responsibility to document the accuracy of memberships counted for state aid. This section indicates the basic information that is required to be part of the content of certain documents but does not prescribe the format to be used. It is recommended that each district designate an individual to be responsible for pupil accounting and to inform the intermediate district as to who that pupil accounting designee is for the district.

### **A. District Level Requirements**

1. **District or Building/Program Calendar** - The calendar provides information to verify the days that the district or a given building or program is scheduled. The district may operate using either a district wide calendar or building/program calendars for individual or clusters of buildings or programs. When a district wide calendar is used, all buildings and programs will have universal days of instruction (operation) within the district, including beginning and ending dates for the school year and vacation dates; however, the individual building or program *hours* of instruction could vary on the universal days of instruction. Alterations to the official, adopted calendar, such as canceled or changed hours of instruction, must be shown on the teacher's attendance records and provided to the pupil accounting auditor. The district's scheduled winter holiday break and scheduled spring break must coincide with that of the common calendar for all constituent districts (including public school academies within the boundaries of the intermediate school district and receive services from the intermediate school district). For additional information, see Section 2 - Hours of Pupil Instruction.
2. **Attendance Policy** - The school district's board of education should adopt attendance policies, including establishment of the criteria for allowing or denying excused absences. The school administration should develop attendance procedures that will provide direction for building administrators and instructional staff and criteria to determine whether the district is in compliance with its policies and procedures. (See Section B (4) Building/Program Level Requirements - Attendance Records.)
3. **Graduation Requirements** -The school district's board of education policy on graduation requirements is needed to determine the total number of credits required for graduation. Every pupil is required to successfully complete a course in Government/Civics for graduation. Beginning with the graduating class of 2011, every pupil is required to successfully complete 4 credits in English language arts, 4 credits in mathematics, 3 credits in science, 3 credits in social studies, 1 credit in health/physical education, 1 credit in visual, performing, or applied arts, and 1 credit of on-line learning experience. Beginning with the graduating class of 2016, every pupil is also required to have 2 credits of world language. (See MCL 380.1278a and 380.1278b for more detail.).
4. **List of Approved Classes** - Courses, which can be counted for credit in

determining the membership count for state aid, should be included on an approved list adopted by the school district board of education. The information is needed for the auditor to determine that the pupils' classes are eligible for state aid.

5. **Records Retention** - Every school district should have a records retention schedule to ensure that the records related to and supporting membership counts are maintained for a minimum of three years plus the current school year. Refer to the online "Schedule for the Retention and Disposal of Public School Records" at <http://www.michigan.gov/mde>. First select "Office" and then select "State Aid and School Finance."

## **B. Building/Program Level Requirements**

1. **Building/Program Schedules** - The district shall maintain a teacher class (master) schedule for each building that shall include the:
  - ✓ Teachers' names
  - ✓ Room locations
  - ✓ Course names and numbers
  - ✓ Scheduled days and times of classes
  
2. **Building/Program Alpha List** - An alphabetical list of memberships (by building), by grade level, is the basic document that the auditor will use to determine which pupils were counted for membership in the Single Record Student Database (SRSD). Only pupils eligible for membership are to be reported on the building/program alpha list. The building/grade alpha list MUST provide the following information for each pupil as of the count day:
  - ✓ Pupil's legal name (as it appears on the birth certificate except in instances where the baby was not named at the time of recording the child's birth i.e. "Baby Boy Jones" or "Baby Girl Smith")
  - ✓ Street address, city, state and zip code
  - ✓ District pupil identification number
  - ✓ Date of birth
  - ✓ Residency status (resident or nonresident) (A PSA must report pupils as residents of the PSA using code 14 in field 30 on the SRSD.)
  - ✓ Name and school code of resident district for nonresident pupils
  - ✓ Name and school code of educating district where resident pupil is educated under a cooperative agreement for some or all of the day in a district other than the district of residence and the resident district counts the pupil.
  - ✓ Pupil grade level or program classification.
  - ✓ Total FTE for each pupil including the breakdown between general and special education, if applicable. FTE may be rounded to the nearest tenth or hundredth, at the district's discretion, provided there is consistency throughout the district.
  - ✓ FTE total for the building/program-general education, special education, and grand total FTE.
  - ✓ Indication if pupil was absent in any class on the count day and returned within the 10/30-day period (may be on a separate list).

**NOTE:** The building/program alpha list must be signed by the building

principal.

3. **Non-Traditional (Non-Conventional) Pupils** – Every building/program must have documentation in place on the pupil count day and the supplemental count day identifying each pupil who participates in a non-traditional program. These programs include, but are not limited to:
- ✓ Alternative Education
  - ✓ Cooperative Agreement Programs
  - ✓ Home Based
  - ✓ Homebound/Hospitalized
  - ✓ Nonpublic Part-Time and Home Schooled
  - ✓ Parent Paid Tuition (nonresident pupil with/without a resident district release - see section 4.)
  - ✓ Part-Time
  - ✓ Post-Secondary (Dual) Enrollment
  - ✓ Reduced Schedule
  - ✓ Schools of Choice (State School Aid Act Sections 105 and 105c)
  - ✓ Special Education Early Childhood
  - ✓ Special Education Transition Services
  - ✓ Split Schedule
  - ✓ Suspended and Expelled
  - ✓ Virtual Instruction and Independent Studies
  - ✓ Work-Based Learning

How these pupils are identified (either on separate lists or on the building alpha rosters) is a decision that should be made between the local school district and its intermediate school district. Each of these programs is explained in detail in Sections 4 and 5 of this manual. The pupil must be placed or enrolled in the non-conventional program, such as work-based learning, on or before the count day and documentation must be in place by the count date or the end of the count period, depending upon the program's requirements, to be eligible for membership purposes.

4. **Attendance Records** - Attendance records are necessary to determine and validate pupil eligibility during the membership count period. The teacher's original attendance record, which has been reviewed and signed by the teacher, is the official record. Attendance must be taken on a class-by-class basis for buildings/programs in which the pupils change classrooms (such as high school and middle school). Class-by-class attendance taking is not required for middle school pupils moving from class-to-class in a group as opposed to individually moving to various classes. Districts may use a computer-generated list or report that is signed in ink by the teacher to certify the accuracy of the attendance.

The following practices are strongly recommended for maintaining attendance records:

- a. Teachers, including substitute teachers, should maintain attendance records. Pupils may not take attendance. The records should be legible, accurate, and reliable.
- b. The district should develop, implement, and enforce a district wide standard

attendance system. The system should use a minimum of letters or symbols.

- c. Substitute teachers should be informed of the system in "b" above and should be instructed to follow the system.
- d. The first date of attendance for each pupil should be clearly indicated in the teachers' original attendance records.
- e. Drop and transfer dates should be clearly indicated in the teachers' attendance records.
- f. In original attendance records, teachers must not obliterate the names of pupils who are no longer in their classes.
- g. All teachers' attendance records must be collected at the end of the school year. Attendance records remain the property of the school district and must be retained for three years plus the current school year.
- h. A "dropped" pupil should continue to be marked as "absent" until such time that the individual has been officially dropped by the attendance office, especially when using computer attendance slips.
- i. Attendance markings should be easily readable. If possible, they should be entered on a separate line or on a separate page from grades, scores, and other markings.
- j. Non-scheduled days should be indicated on attendance records.
- k. Pupils on suspension, whether in-house or off-campus, should be marked absent in their regular classes and include a district-designated notation such as "IS" for "in-house" suspensions or "S" for off-campus suspension. The attendance office should have a list of those pupils assigned to an in-house suspension room, and the certificated teacher responsible for the "in-house" suspension room should record actual daily attendance.
- l. The Department strongly recommends that districts adopt a positive attendance procedure throughout the entire school year for classes that do not meet on a daily basis (such as Early Childhood special education programs or block schedules). Teacher attendance records (the source document) may be one of the following:
  - i. A teacher attendance book
  - ii. A pupil sign-in (time) and sign-out (time) daily record
  - iii. An automated "mark-sense" data collection form
  - iv. A daily teacher attendance slip
  - v. Any teacher source document that will definitely and clearly substantiate attendance, on a specific date and at a specific time, as applicable

The source document, regardless of the format, must be signed by the teacher. The document must include the name of the class, time period, and dates. If an automated data collection form is used, the document must be signed in ink by

the teacher (on a daily or weekly basis at a minimum). If the record is in pencil, then the daily attendance record must be totaled in ink by the teacher of record. The records must be printed and signed for the week prior to the count date, the count week and the 30 calendar days following the count date. The ISD auditor may ask that automated attendance records are printed and signed for the remainder of the year. Attendance must be taken and recorded every day of operation even if it is not printed for the remainder of the year. The district needs to provide the auditor with the district's written electronic attendance procedures.

m. A pupil enrolled in an independent study course, virtual learning course, or enrolled under a seat-time waiver must be in attendance on the appropriate pupil membership count dates or student participation must be confirmed by the online instructor(s) on the count dates; the method used to confirm student attendance must be documented and available to pupil accounting auditors for review.

**5. Excused Absence Documentation** - The documentation for count day absences should indicate:

- ✓ Printed name of the pupil
- ✓ Class name (and number, if appropriate)
- ✓ Absence date(s)
- ✓ Date(s) the excuse was recorded
- ✓ Reason for the absence
- ✓ Building and grade level or program classification
- ✓ Signature of the approving administrator and/or designated staff
- ✓ Name and relationship of person making contact

This documentation can be maintained for each individual pupil (preferred) and/or by maintaining a list of absent pupils for each scheduled and provided school calendar date. In addition, the intermediate school district may require a separate list indicating the pupils absent on the count day and the pupil's return date if the local district did not identify those pupils on the building alpha rosters.

**In the absence of a documented, excused absence record, it is assumed that the pupil was not excused.** (For more attendance information - see Section 3 - Pupil Membership Count Requirements.)

**NOTE:** A child whose parent or legal guardian is an active duty member of the uniformed services and has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or immediately returned from deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting, shall be granted additional excused absences at the discretion of the local education agency superintendent to visit with his or her parent or legal guardian relative to such leave or deployment of the parent or legal guardian (MCL 3.1041-3.1042).

**C. Individual Pupil Level Requirements**

**1. Enrollment Records** - The enrollment record should indicate:

- ✓ Pupil's legal name, address, and birth date
- ✓ Pupil's identification number

- ✓ School district of residence
- ✓ Current grade level
- ✓ The school of the pupil's last enrollment (including a copy of school record)
- ✓ Enrollment in another district (provide the name of the district)
- ✓ Parent's/guardian's name and address (if the pupil is less than 18 years of age)
- ✓ Pupil's signature (if the pupil is 18 years of age or older)
- ✓ Date of enrollment
- ✓ Immunization Records
- ✓ Proof of identity (when first enrolling)
- ✓ Indication that proof of residency was reviewed.

All items on the registration form should be either completed with the proper information or marked as "N/A" when the item is not applicable. The Michigan Missing Children's Act, MCL 380.1135 of the Revised School Code, requires that a person enrolling a pupil in school provide the local or intermediate school district with a certified copy of the pupil's birth certificate or other reliable proof of the pupil's identity. The pertinent part of the law states the following:

- (1) Upon enrollment of a student for the **first time** in a local or intermediate school district, the district/ISD shall notify in writing the person enrolling the student that within 30 days he or she shall provide to the local or intermediate school district **either of the following**:
  - (a) A certified copy of the student's birth certificate.
  - (b) Other reliable proof, as determined by the school district, of the student's identity and age, and an affidavit explaining the inability to produce a copy of the birth certificate.
- (2) If a person enrolling a student fails to comply with subsection (1), the local or intermediate school district shall notify the person enrolling the student in writing that, unless he or she complies within 30 days after the notification, the **case shall be referred to the local law enforcement agency for investigation**. If the person enrolling the student fails to comply within that 30-day period, the local or intermediate school district shall notify the local law enforcement agency.
- (3) The local or intermediate school district shall immediately report to the local law enforcement agency any affidavit received pursuant to this section that appears inaccurate or suspicious in form or content.

The school district has the authority to determine the type of "other reliable proof" that the district will accept to prove a pupil's identity or age when a copy of the pupil's birth certificate is not available. Examples of "other reliable proof" that may be accepted are: baptismal certificate indicating date and place of birth; court records; county, military, or immigration records; doctor or hospital records with sworn statements; certain family records; life insurance policy; or, a sworn statement from a parent or guardian which must be notarized. (A district should never deny enrollment or expel a pupil simply because the parent(s), or legal guardian, did not provide a birth certificate.)

**NOTE:** A special power of attorney executed under applicable law which places a child in the care of a non-custodial parent or other person standing in loco parentis while the custodial parent or legal guardian has been assigned to active duty shall be sufficient for the purpose of enrollment and all other actions requiring parental participation and consent. The local education agency is prohibited from charging tuition to a transitioning military child who lives in a jurisdiction other than that of the custodial parent. The transitioning military child may continue to attend the school in which he/she was enrolled while residing with the custodial parent prior to the active duty assignment (MCL 3.1041-3.1042). (See Section 4 for additional information.)

2. **Class Schedules** - The individual pupil's class schedule in effect on the count day is used to determine the FTE membership count. The schedule should indicate:
- ✓ Pupil's legal name
  - ✓ Pupil's identification number
  - ✓ Course names and numbers
  - ✓ Instructors' names
  - ✓ Scheduled days and times of the classes

**NOTE:** If a district which operates on trimesters and has a pupil with an excused absence on the supplemental count day, may count that pupil if the pupil returns within the 30 calendar days following the supplemental count day to a different class schedule in the third trimester and meets the class-by-class attendance requirement for that third trimester.

#### **D. Regulatory References**

Revised School Code Sections:

380.1134 - 380.1137  
380.1146 - 380.1148a  
380.1166  
380.1277 - 380.1284b  
380.1309 - 380.1311a  
380.1401 - 380.1416  
380.1561 - 380.1599

State School Aid Act Sections:

388.1603(7)  
388.1606(4)  
388.1606(6)

Michigan Compiled Laws

MCL 3.1041-3.1402

#### **Attendance sheets signed by the teacher of record requirement:**

Q #1: The district has the teachers report attendance to the office via the computer. However, the front office is where changes/edits will occur - late arrivals, excusing or not excusing the absence, etc. The office has the only access to edit the records. Is this acceptable?

A #1: The Department has consistently advised that it is fine that a district keep attendance by computer **if** the teacher **signs** an attendance sheet weekly. The front office does not replace the requirement for teacher attendance. Although the front office is the only place for editing the pupil's records, the teacher must also verify the accuracy of each day's record. The central office is more than likely where the phone calls and the determination

for "excused" and "unexcused" absences will be made. However, the central office, for example, cannot change an "absent" to "present" for first period just because the student arrived for second period. The teacher of record would know if the student was tardy or arrived in the middle of the class period.

Q #2: The district read, in the Pupil Accounting Manual, that pupil attendance is required for one week prior to the count period, during the count week, and for thirty calendar days following the count date. The pupil accounting auditor is requesting that pupil attendance be kept for the entire year. Is the district required to keep attendance for six weeks or for the entire year?

A #2: The district must keep attendance each day of operation for the entire fiscal year. Pupil attendance is necessary to determine that the 75% pupil attendance requirement has been met by the district each day of operation. If the district does not keep individual teacher attendance books, then the district may want to print a weekly report as a backup to ensure availability of record documentation when attendance records are requested. The pupil accounting auditor may require that automated records are printed and signed for the entire year.

#### **Proof of Identity and Enrollment:**

Q #3: A resident of the district wants to enroll a pupil but has no proof of relationship to the child. The man claims that he is the biological father but his name is not on the child's birth certificate. What does the father need to present as proof of his parental rights in order to enroll this child?

A # 3: The Michigan Missing Children's Act, MCL 380.1135 of the Revised School Code, requires that a person enrolling a pupil in school for the first time provide the local or intermediate school district with a certified copy of the pupil's birth certificate or other reliable proof of the pupil's identity. If the mother of this child cannot enroll the pupil as a resident of the district, then the father must show some sort of proof that he is the child's parent or legal guardian. The father should be notified that proof of parentage or guardianship must be provided within 30 days. If proof is not provided, the authorities should be notified.

Q #4: A parent enrolling their child refuses to leave the child's birth certificate with the district. What does the district need to use to enroll this child?

A #4: The parents' responsibility to "provide" a certified copy of the child's birth certificate upon enrollment for the first time does not entitle the school district to keep the child's birth certificate. The district should have a sheet to check-off such things as having seen the child's certified copy of the birth certificate. The district may photo copy the birth certificate; however, keep in mind that the newer birth certificates have the parent(s) social security number on them.

Q #5: District A has enrolled a new resident pupil. District A requested the pupil's records from the previous school district. The previous district refuses to send a copy of the pupil's birth certificate stating that sending copies of birth certificates is against their policy. What recourse does District A have?

A #5: The Missing Children's Act requires that the parent(s) or legal guardian provide a

certified copy of the pupil's birth certificate upon enrollment in the district for the first time. "Provide" simply means that the person enrolling the child shows the certified copy of the birth certificate to the administrator who is completing the enrollment process. It does not mean that the district keeps the birth certificate or even copies the birth certificate. A simple check-off sheet stating that someone saw the certified birth certificate would suffice. Therefore, it is possible that the district may not even have a copy of the birth certificate. Furthermore, the enrolling district cannot guarantee that the person enrolling the child is the same person who enrolled the child at the previous district.

**Q #6:** The district had two resident families that enrolled their children in another school district. Now that it is after the pupil membership count day, the families would like to return to the resident district. Must the district enroll these pupils?

**A # 6:** Yes, Michigan Compiled Law, MCL 380.1147, and the supreme court case *Snyder v Charlotte* guarantees that all pupils who reside in a given district who are at least five years of age on December 1 of the school year of enrollment have the right to attend school in the resident district. Unless there is some extenuating circumstance (such as having been mandatorily expelled from all public schools), the resident district would be required to enroll these pupils.

### **Immunization Records:**

**Q #7:** A 19 year-old pupil is enrolled in the alternative education program. This pupil did not have a copy of his immunizations records and was not certain where or how to obtain a copy of those records. We heard that it was not necessary for a 19 year-old to provide these records. Is this true?

**A #7:** Yes. The Department of Health requires information regarding immunizations for pupils between the ages of 5 and 18. The Department of Health has informed us that 19 year-olds are of legal age and cannot be required to respond to the immunizations questions. Thus, 19 year-olds are not part of the 90%-95% measurement to avoid a penalty.

### **Proof of Residency:**

**Q #8:** A mother tries enrolling her children in District A but cannot prove residency. The mother insists that she is residing with the child's grandmother. The district knows the mother frequents a house in District B and believes that is her true residence. The mother insists that that is her sister's residence. The mother has no utility bills, rent payments, etc. in her name. The district believes a driver's license can be falsified. What does the district use as proof of residency?

**A #8:** The grandmother probably has a well established home with mortgage/rent and utilities all established in her name. Nothing in the law states that the grandmother has to charge her daughter and grandchildren rent to reside with her. If the grandmother and mother sign a notarized statement that the family resides with the grandmother for the purpose of a suitable home, that is acceptable. The children are considered residents of District A.

**Q #9:** Child's parents are divorced and the child resides with his mother in District A. The

child attends District B where his father resides (as is allowed under Section 24b, of the State School Aid Act). The father is remarrying and no longer wants the child to attend District B. Must District B deny the child the right to attend?

A #9: No, Michigan Compiled Laws, MCL 380.1148a and 388.1624b grant the child the right to attend school in either district. If the child has been attending District B all along and District B has on record that the child's father resides in District B and knows that the father continues to reside in District B, then the child may continue to attend District B without the father's approval. However, should the father move out of District B, the child would then need a release from District A to continue attending District B.

Q #10: A high school pupil moved from our district during the summer and enrolled in his new resident district. Our district wants to withhold the pupil's records as he owes for several lost books. We have been told that we cannot legally withhold this pupil's records. Is this true?

A #10: Yes, Attorney General Opinion 6064, from April 1982, states: "A school district must furnish the records of a student upon request of another school district in which the student is enrolled as an incident to the operation of free and public elementary and secondary schools required by the Constitution of 1963 article 8 section 2, and is precluded from withholding the records because the student or his or her parents are indebted to the school district possessing the records for fees or other charges."

### **Senior in high school**

Q #11: Pupil has attended District A for several years up through his junior year. The family moved out of the district during the summer. The pupil would like to attend District A and graduate with his class. What documentation is required so this pupil may continue his senior year at District A?

A #11: If District A is not schools of choice, the pupil must obtain a release from the new resident district.