Utica Absent/Tardy Letters

MISD

Management Technology Helpdesk

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Contents

Utica Absent/Tardy Letters for PowerSchool

The absent and tardy letter programs interface to the Utica PowerSchool system. The new version prints attendance letters for both absentee and tardy reporting.

Future version changes in consideration, being researched include:

- Program startup from PowerSchool on the web, avoiding the setup program requirement.
- A standard PowerSchool working environment to simplify where files are stored and created.

Version Change History 1.1

- All excused and un-excused absent history only displays values when the period and condition are met or exceeded for the letter number printed.
- The excused absent check, with a subsequent un-excused absence, verifies that the quantities are met before printing the date in the letter.
- Suspended ("S") is changed to an un-excused absence in the reporting.
- Tardy over ten minutes ("Y") is changed from a tardy to an un-excused absence.

Version Change History 1.2

- Un-excused absent reporting is independent of the excused absent reporting when printing the letters. The program requires running for each school day. The un-excused absences are printed when the limit is reached for the school day reported, using the Date-To parameter.
- Excused absent reporting prints the date the limit was reached instead of printing the number of absences in the period.
- Excused absent reporting, letter history 3, 4, and 5 is still saved in the history file to verify the letters are not printed more than once.

Version Change History 1.3

- New screen to update the student letters sent file has been created. The update form allows the attendance clerk to make an attendance correction in PowerSchool, resetting the letter number sent back for a course period, allowing a new letter to be sent when the absent/tardy condition occurs again.

Version Change History 1.4 September 2010

- Correction to spelling in letter

Version Change History 1.5 November 2010

- Increased size of letter foot file to 1.5 inches by 7 inches, allowing for school principal signature lines. This should provide cost saving by not having the principal sign each letter. Improved documentation on letter number assignment history.

Version Change History 1.6a April 2011

- Removed absent code E from the list of valid absent codes to include in the absent history. Utica asked to put the E code value back.

Current Version 1.9

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Install and Go…

You need to create a file folder, preferably on the network, to house the letters you will create. Name the folder to identify the absent/tardy letters. Copy the files "hdrUtica.jpg" and "ftrUtica.jpg" from your jarUticalLetter file folder into the new folder. These are Utica memo header and footer graphics. The header and footer files can be changed to your requirements. The documentation is also found in the folder.

- For the Output file directory - Browse to the folder you created on the network to house your data
- Use the drop down to choose the school
- Select either Absent letters or Tardy letters
- Click on the Date from date button and a calendar will be displayed where you can select your date
- Do the same for the Date to information
- Make sure the date that appears on the letter is correct
- You must enter a phone number that appears in the letter
- When the information is complete select Next
- Choose your Absent letter options and select Print
- The Select an Option box appears displaying the number of letters the program created and asks if you want to save the changes.
- Before you run this report again on the same day, refer to the full documentation to see what will be overwritten.

Create a File Directory to Store Your Letters, Parameters, and History

The letter files are created in "PDF" format and are saved with the school number and date created. The PDF files can always be opened and re-printed. PDF files have the capability to search for a student name and re-print a selected letter (page).

Each school building has a parameter file, saving the last report input parameters.

History files are created by school number, recording the letters sent by period, for each student. The program uses the history file to determine if a letter has already been sent for a specific course period.

All the letter files must be backed up each day in-order to recover updating or deleting a history file inappropriately. A suggestion is to define one file folder on a common server to store the files. In Utica each user has a folder that is copied and backed up; therefore creating a separate folder for each user is an alternative.

A summary of the files maintained:

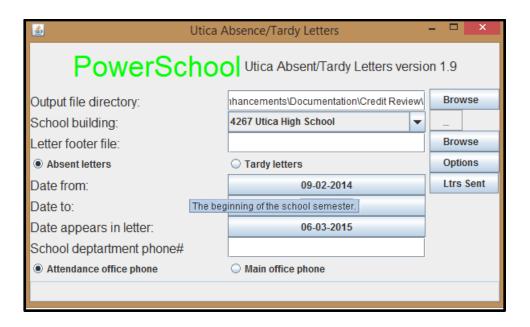| File name	Description
pdfAbsLetter<xxxx>on <yyyy- mm-dd>	Absent letter for building xxxx created on date yyyy-mm-dd
pdfTdyLetter<xxxx>on <yyyy- mm-dd>	Tardy letter for building xxxx created on date yyyy-mm-dd
parmFile<xxxx>.TXT	Saved report parameters for a school building
absHistory<xxxx>.TXT	The absent history file contains the student id with the letters sent by period
tdyHistory<xxxx>.TXT	The tardy history file contains the student id with the letters sent by period number.
hdrUtica.jpg	This is the Utica memo header that is inserted at the top of the letter. This file must be present in the directory identified.
ftrUtica.jpg	This is the Utica memo footer that is inserted at the footer of each letter. This file must be present in the directory identified.

Report Selection Screen One

- Identify the file directory where the absent and tardy letters are created. This directory should be used each time you run the program.
- Absent or Tardy letter reporting selection.
- Choose the school building the letters are created for.
- Enter the from date and to date for the school semester
- Enter the building phone number that appears in the absent/tardy report.

After entering the report parameters, the program will save your input for the next time you run the program.

Always use the same absent and tardy letter option, by school building, each time you run the program.

Always verify the parameters selected are correct before printing the reports and saving your history file.

Special note: Due to Utica's special reporting requirements, the attendance letter program must be run for each school day during the week, properly recording the date tardy is recorded.

Click on the "Browse" button to select and choose the output file directory where your data is stored. There should be a copy of your special sign-in file here also.

Click on the date buttons to change the date. A pop-up calendar will appear to make a selection.

Report Selection Screen Two

Depending on the absent/tardy selection the proper reporting parameters are displayed.
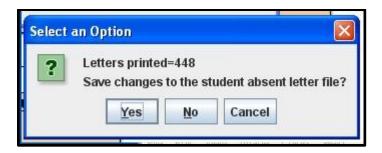
- Choose your school reporting option
- Click on the Print button

Save Your Letter Creation History

You have the option to save the history of the letters created. If the number of letters created is reasonable then save the file.

Another option is to not save the file on the first run, reviewing the output PDF file created. If the letters created are correct then run the program with the same parameters, saving the letter creation history. Once the letter history file is saved, the system does not allow a letter to be re- created for the same student and course period.   This avoids sending duplicate letters to the parents that were created on a prior letter creation. The PDF file is used to re-print a selected letter.

Beginning of Semester Maintenance

The letter history file is saved for the current school semester. At the beginning of a new school semester, delete the "absHistory" and "tdyHistory" files. Deleting the files removes any letters sent to the student from the prior school semester. This procedure may be maintained by your technical support staff.
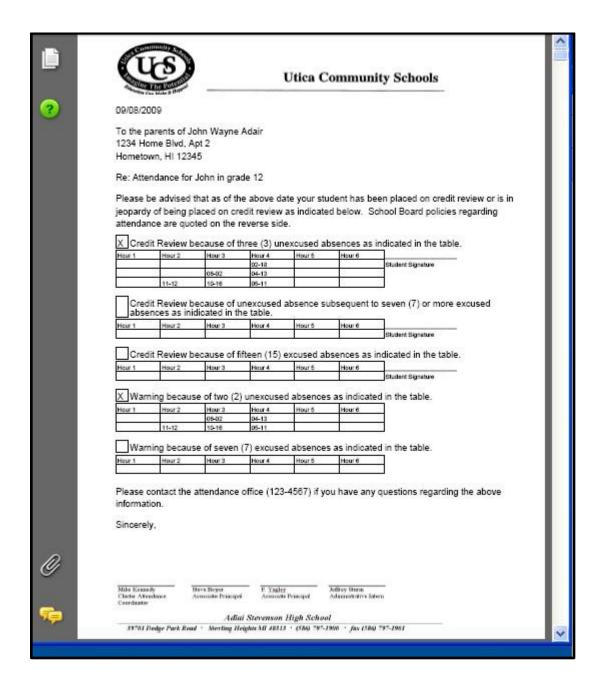
Several options were considered to avoid the beginning of semester requirement, but at the current moment this appears to be one of the safer solutions. Improvements to avoid performing this requirement will be included in a later version.
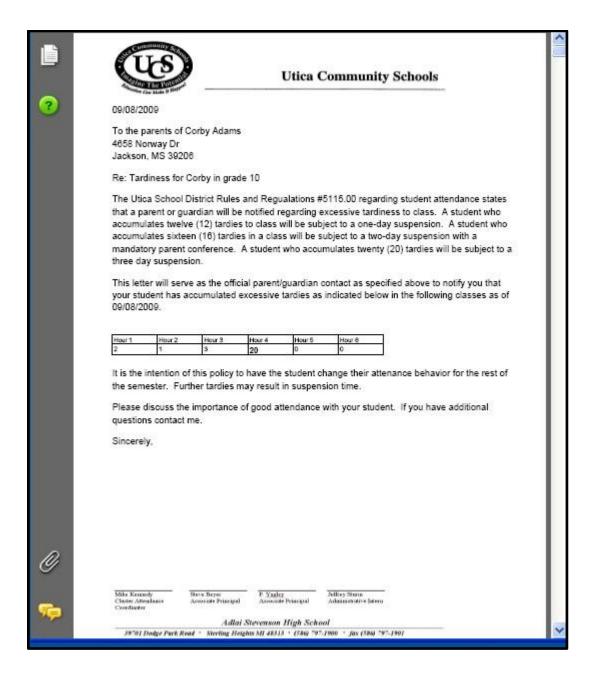
Absent/Tardy Codes and Calculations

All absent/tardy codes must be defined in PowerSchool for each school building and are reported in the following manner.

Cod	Description	Category
A	Unexcused	Un-excused
C	Court	Excused absent
E	Early dismissal	Excused absent
F	Funeral	Excused absent
H	Hospital	Excused absent
I	Illness	Excused absent
O	Other	Excused absent
R	In school	Excused absent
S	Suspended	Un-Excused absent
U	Unexcused	Un-excused
V	Vacation	Excused absent
X	Excused	Excused absent
===	=========	========
Q	Excused tardy	Excused tardy
T	Tardy	Un-excused
Y	10-minute tardy	Un-excused absent

Sample Absent Letter

Sample Tardy Letter

Absence/Tardy Letter Number Sent Corrections

The attendance clerk can update the letter history file (letters sent), correcting a letter sent for a course period, allowing the attendance letter be sent a second time during the school semester. Corrections to the letters sent are made when student attendance is removed or changed in PowerSchool. The letter sent history file is updated, reflecting the correction(s) made for a student.

Letter Number Assignment

Letter numbers are assigned according to the levels reached in the warning or credit review letter.

Letter number	Limitation
1	Warning because of XX unexcused absences
2	Credit Review because of XX unexcused absences
3	Warning because of XX excused absences
4	Credit review because of unexcused absence subsequent to XX or more excused absences.
5	Credit review because of XX excused absences

Letter Number Relationship to Warnings and Credit Review

Letter Sent Maintenance

Click on the letter sent maintenance button.

Maintenance Caution

Letters for unexcused absences (letter 1 and 2) are not dependent upon a letter being printed for excused absences (letters 3, 4, and 5). Letters 1 and 2 are printed on the day that they occur; therefore, the attendance/tardy program does not save a letter number for occurrences number 1 and 2.

If you search for a student to who only has unexcused absences (letter 1 and 2), then you may not find the student because no history was saved. Make absent corrections to PowerSchool. The letter program will adjust for letter sent condition 1 and letter sent condition 2.
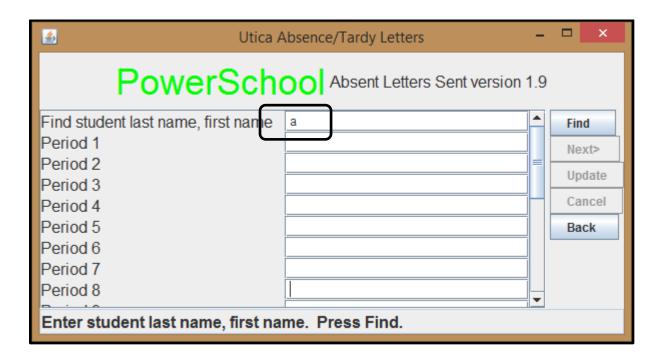
Students with letter numbers three (3) and above are saved in the history file and available for correction, allowing a letter to be re-printed.

Find the student by last name, first name

The system selects student names with the matching number of characters entered. For example:
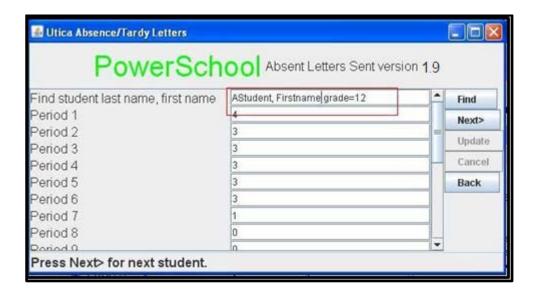
- "A" will list all the students with last name beginning with A.
- "Smith" will list all the students with a last name beginning with Smith only.

Enter the last name, first name to search for and press the Find button. The system only displays students with records in the letter history file.
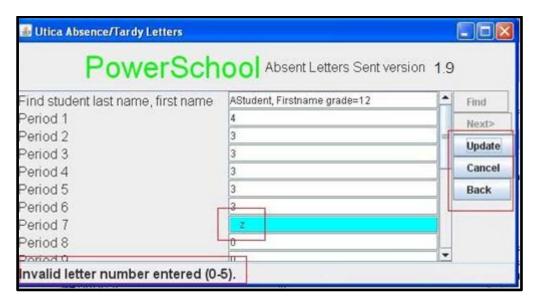
Press the Next> button to display student names

Student names are displayed in ascending order.

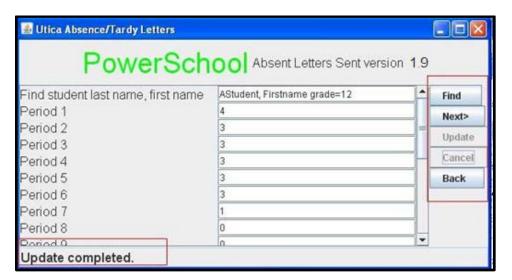# Make Changes to the Student Letter Number for the Course Period

Enter the correct letter number for the course period. Valid letter numbers are 0-5. The system does not maintain the letter number 1 and 2 for the un-excused absent reporting. Press the Update button to make the changes. The Cancel button will ignore the changes and refresh the form with the data in the history file.

If a value is incorrect an error message will appear in the bottom line of the form. The field in error is highlighted.

- **Press the Update Button to Record Your Changes**

The form is refreshed with the data entered from the update.

- **Press the Back Button to Return to the Absent/Tardy Letter Menu**

At the very end you have the option to save all the updates made, similar to running the absent/tardy print letters.