

SUBJECT: COMPREHENSIVE STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICY

Statement of Overall Objectives

School attendance is both a right and a responsibility. The School District is an active partner with students and parents in the task of ensuring that all students meet or exceed the New York State Learning Standards. Because the School District recognizes that consistent school attendance, academic success and school completion have a positive correlation, the School District has developed, and, if necessary, will revise a Comprehensive Student Attendance Policy to meet the following objectives:

- a) To increase school completion for all students;
- b) To maximize student achievement and close gaps in student performance;
- c) To identify attendance patterns in order to design attendance improvement efforts;
- d) To know the whereabouts of every student for safety and other reasons;
- e) To verify that individual students are complying with education laws relating to compulsory attendance;
- f) To determine the District's average daily attendance for State aid purposes.

Definitions

Whenever used with the Comprehensive Attendance Policy, the following terms shall mean:

- a) Scheduled Instruction: Every period that a pupil is scheduled to attend instructional or supervised study activities during the course of a school day during the school year.
- b) Absent: The pupil is not present for the entire period of the pupil's scheduled instruction.
- c) Tardy: The pupil arrives later than the starting time of the pupil's scheduled instruction.
- d) Early departure: The pupil leaves prior to the end of the pupil's scheduled instruction.
- e) Excused: Any absence, tardiness, late arrival, or early departure for which the pupil has a valid school approved excuse. Such excused non appearance shall include: personal illness, illness or death in the family or significant other person, religious observance, quarantine,

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required court appearances, attendance at health clinics or other medical visits, approved college visits, military obligations, absences approved in advance by the Principal, and other reasons as may be approved by the Commissioner of Education.

f) Unexcused: Any absence, tardiness or early departure of which the pupil has the knowledge and consent, stated or implied, of his parents for other than legal reasons. Such unexcused non-appearance shall include shopping trips to the local mall, family vacation, baby sitting younger siblings, and any other absence that is not excused.

g) Truancy: A student whose parents expect him/her to be in school and in class and who does not attend for other than lawful reasons.

Coding Systems

Excused Absence

S sickness
F sickness or death 1n family or significant other person
X Excused absence part of the day
impassable roads
religious absence
quarantine
required to be in court
attendance at health clinics and other medical visits
approved college visit
military obligation
emergency day
other as approved by the Principal

Unexcused Absence

O unlawful detention
truancy
SU suspension

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Student Attendance Recordkeeping/Data Collection

The record of each student's presence, absence, tardiness and early departure shall be kept in a register of attendance in a manner consistent with Commissioner's Regulations and school district practice. An absence, tardiness or early departure will be entered as "excused" or "unexcused" along with the District code for the reason.

In order to encourage student attendance, the following strategies and incentives shall apply:

1) Notices of Absences:

a) The pupil's parent(s) or person in parental relation shall be notified of a pupil's unexcused absence, tardiness or early departure according to the following:

(1) Where a pupil has not been marked as present for the first period of scheduled instruction and the school has not been previously notified of the absence, the district shall attempt to contact the pupil's parent(s) or person in parental relation to learn the nature of the pupil's absence and notify the parent that the pupil has not arrived at school.

(2) A designated staff member shall contact the parent(s) or persons in parental relation to a student who is absent, tardy or departs early without proper excuse. This notice will contain the dates, times and the nature of the student's unexcused nonpresence.

2) Disciplinary Procedures:

The pupil may be subject to disciplinary action for truancy, unexcused absence, tardiness or early departure as stated in the Code of Conduct.

Disciplinary Consequences

Unexcused absences, tardiness and early departures may result in disciplinary sanctions as described in the District's Code of Conduct. Consequences may include, but are not limited to, in-school suspension, detention and denial of participation in interscholastic and extracurricular activities. Parents/persons in parental relation will be notified by designated District personnel at periodic intervals to discuss their child's

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absences, tardiness or early departures and the importance of class attendance and appropriate interventions. Individual buildings/grade levels will address procedures to implement the notification process to the parent/person in parental relation.

3) Incentives

District teachers shall work with the Building Principal to create and implement classroom based incentive programs for excellent attendance, including but not limited to extra credit and additional privileges.

4) Intervention Strategy Development

The Building Principal shall receive attendance data and meet with other administrators and teachers as the Building Principal determines necessary to review student attendance records, address identified patterns of unexcused pupil absence, tardiness and early departure, and review current intervention methods. Where a District administrator determines that existing intervention policies or practices are insufficient, the District administrator shall notify the Board of Education prior to its annual review of the building's attendance records, of both insufficient practices and any proposed changes needing Board approval to implement.

5) Counseling

The District shall provide consistent counseling to students with chronic attendance problems.

Notice of Minimum Attendance Standard/Intervention Strategies Prior to the Denial of Course Credit

In order to ensure that parents/persons in parental relation and students are informed of the District's policy regarding minimum attendance and course credit, and the implementation of specific intervention strategies to be employed **prior to the denial of course credit to the student for insufficient attendance**, the following guideline shall be followed:

A plain language summary of the District's Comprehensive Student Attendance Policy will be provided to parents/persons in parental relation and students at the beginning of each school year or at the time of enrollment in the District.

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Appeal Process

A parent/person in parental relation may request a building level review of their child's attendance record.

Annual Review by the Board of Education

The Board of Education shall annually review the building level student attendance records and if such records show a decline in student attendance, the Board shall make any revisions to the Policy and plan deemed necessary to improve student attendance.

Community Awareness

The Board of Education shall promote necessary community awareness of the District's Comprehensive Student Attendance Policy by:

Providing each teacher, at the beginning of the school year or upon employment, with a copy of the policy; and

Providing copies of the policy to any other member of the community upon request.

Education Law Sections 3024, 3025, 3202, 3205, 3206, 3210, 3211 and 3213
8 New York Code of Rules and Regulations (NYCRR) Sections 104.1, 109.2 and 175.6

7.3-1 Creation of Attendance Office 10/26/71

7.3-2 School Attendance Areas 9/23/86

7.3-3 Attendance Reporting Periods 12/8/64

7.3-5 Student Withdrawal Follow-up 4/22/75

7.3-7 Annual School Census 5/23/89

7.3-8 Summer School Attendance 2/23/82

7.3-9 Absence for Religious Education 7/26/83

7.3-10 Class Attendance-Grades 7-12 2/26/85

Adopted 6/25/02

7123.1R.1 VSH BPT Class Attendance Regulations for 2004-2005 1/25/05

Adopted 8/23/11