

POLICY

2017 7210
Students 1 of 7

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 helping 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 will annually review and, if necessary, revise the Comprehensive Student Attendance Policy to meet the following objectives:

- a) To increase school completion for all students;
- b) To raise 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.

Description of Strategies to Meet Objectives

The School District will:

- a) Create and maintain a positive school building culture by fostering a positive physical and psychological environment where the presence of strong adult role models encourages respectful and nurturing interactions between adults and students. This positive school culture is aimed at encouraging a high level of student bonding to the school, which in turn should lead to increased attendance.

(Continued)

POLICY

2017 7210
Students 2 of 7

SUBJECT: COMPREHENSIVE STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICY (Cont'd)

- b) Having developed a Comprehensive Student Attendance Policy based upon the recommendations of a multifaceted District Policy Development Team that included representation from the Board of Education, administrators, teachers, students, parents and the community. The district will annually review and revise this Policy as needed.
- c) Maintain accurate recordkeeping *via* a Register of Attendance to record attendance, absence, tardiness or early departure of each student.
- d) Utilize data analysis systems for tracking individual student attendance and individual and group needs in student attendance problems.
- e) Develop early intervention strategies to improve school attendance for all students.

Determination of Excused and Unexcused Absences, Tardiness and Early Departure

Based upon our Districts education and community needs, values and priorities, the School District has determined that absences, tardiness and early departures will be considered excused or unexcused according to the following standards:

- a) Excused: An absence, tardiness or early departure may be excused if due to personal illness, illness or death in the family, impassable roads due to inclement weather, religious observance, quarantine, required court appearances, attendance at health clinics, approved college visits, approved cooperative work programs, military obligations or other such reasons as may be approved by the Board of Education.
- b) Unexcused: An absence, tardiness or early departure is considered unexcused if the reason for the lack of attendance does not fall into the above categories including, but not limited to, family vacation, hunting, babysitting, oversleeping, haircut.

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. An absence, tardiness or early departure will be entered as "excused" or "unexcused" along with the District code for the reason.

(Continued)

POLICY

2017 7210
Students 3 of 7

SUBJECT: COMPREHENSIVE STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICY (Cont'd)

Attendance shall be taken and recorded in accordance with the following:

- a) For students in non-departmentalized kindergarten through grade eight (i.e., self-contained classrooms and supervised group movement to other scheduled school activities such as physical education in the gym, assembly, etc.), such student's presence or absence shall be recorded after the taking of attendance once per school day, provided that students are not dismissed from school grounds during a lunch period. Where students are dismissed for lunch, their presence or absence shall also be recorded after the taking of attendance a second time upon the student's return from lunch.
- b) For students in grades 9 through 12 or in departmentalized schools at any grade level (i.e., students pass individually to different classes throughout the day), each student's presence or absence shall be recorded after the taking of attendance in each period of scheduled instruction except that where students do not change classrooms for each period of scheduled instruction, attendance shall be taken in accordance with paragraph "a" above.
- c) Any absence for a school day or portion thereof shall be recorded as excused or unexcused in accordance with the standards articulated in this policy.
- d) In the event that a student at any instructional level from kindergarten through grade 12 arrives late for or departs early from scheduled instruction, such tardiness or early departure shall be recorded excused or unexcused in accordance with the standards articulated in this policy.

A record shall be kept of each scheduled day of instruction during which the school is closed for all or part of the day because of extraordinary circumstances including adverse weather conditions, impairment of heating facilities, insufficiency of water supply, shortage of fuel, destruction of or damage to a school building, or such other cause as may be found satisfactory to the Commissioner of Education.

(Continued)

POLICY

2017

7210

4 of 7

Students

SUBJECT: COMPREHENSIVE STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICY (Cont'd)

Attendance records shall also indicate the date when a student withdraws from enrollment or is dropped from enrollment in accordance with Education Law Section 3202 (1-a).

At the conclusion of each class period or school day, all attendance information shall be compiled and provided to the designated school personnel who are responsible for attendance. The nature of the absence, tardiness or early departure shall be coded on a student's record in accordance with the established District/building procedures.

Student Attendance/Course Credit

It is District policy that students with properly excused absences, tardiness and early departures for which the student has performed any assigned make-up work, assignments and/or tests shall not be counted as an absence. District procedures will specify how student tardiness and early departures will be calculated.

However, where a student earns a passing grade, credit will not be denied for the course(s).

For summer school and courses meeting 1/2 year or 1/4 year, the same policy will apply and a calculation of the absences will be prorated accordingly.

Transfer students and students re-enrolling after having dropped out will be expected to attend a prorated minimum number of the scheduled class meetings during their time of enrollment.

Students will be considered in attendance if the student is:

- a) Physically present in the classroom or working under the direction of the classroom teacher during the class scheduled meeting time; or
- b) Working pursuant to an approved independent study program; or
- c) Receiving approved alternative instruction.

(Continued)

POLICY

2017

7210

5 of 7

Students

SUBJECT: COMPREHENSIVE STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICY (Cont'd)

Students who are absent from class due to their participation in a school-sponsored activity are to arrange with their teachers to make up any work missed in a timely manner as determined by the student's teacher. Attendance at school-sponsored events where instruction is substantially equivalent to the instruction which was missed shall be counted as the equivalent of regular attendance in class.

Upon returning to school following a properly excused absence, tardiness or early departure, it shall be the responsibility of the student to consult with his/her teacher(s) regarding management to make up missed work, assignments and/or tests in accordance with the time schedule specified by the teacher.

Attendance Incentives

In order to encourage student attendance, the District will develop and implement grade appropriate/building-level strategies and programs including but not limited to:

- a) Perfect attendance certificates are awarded at year-end ceremony
- b) Special events (e.g., assemblies, guest speakers, field days) scheduled on days that historically have high absenteeism (e.g., Mondays, Fridays, day before vacation).
- c) Classroom acknowledgement of the importance of good attendance
- d) Participation in extra-curricular activities is linked to school attendance

Disciplinary Consequences

Unexcused absences, tardiness and early departures will result in disciplinary sanctions including, but are not limited to in-school suspension, detention and denial of participation in interscholastic and extracurricular activities. Continued excessive absences may result in referrals to probation, family court, and/or child protective services.

Intervention Strategy Process

In order to effectively intervene when an identified pattern of unexcused absences, tardiness or early departures occur, designated District personnel will pursue the following:

- a) Identify specific element(s) of the pattern (e.g., grade level, building, time frame, type of unexcused absences, tardiness or early departures);

(Continued)

POLICY

2017

7210

6 of 7

Students

SUBJECT: COMPREHENSIVE STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICY (Cont'd)

- b) Contact the District staff most closely associated with the element. In specific cases where the pattern involves an individual student, the student and parent/person in parental relation will be contacted
- c) Discuss strategies to directly intervene with specific element;
- d) Recommend intervention to Superintendent or his/her designee if it relates to change in District policy or procedure;
- e) Implement changes, as approved by appropriate administration;
- f) Utilize appropriate District and/or community resources to address and help remediate student unexcused absences, tardiness or early departures;
- g) Monitor and report short and long-term effects of intervention.

Appeal Process

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

Building Review of Attendance Records

Commencing with the 2003-2004 school year, the Building Principal will work in conjunction with the building attendance clerk and other designated staff in reviewing attendance records at the end of each term. This review is conducted to identify individual and group attendance patterns and to initiate appropriate action to address the problem of unexcused absences, tardiness and early departures.

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.

(Continued)

POLICY

2017 7210
Students 7 of 7

SUBJECT: COMPREHENSIVE STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICY (Cont'd)

Community Awareness

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

- a) Providing a plain language summary of the policy to parents or persons in parental relation to students at the beginning of each school year and promoting the understanding of such a policy to students and their parents/person in parental relation;
- b) Providing each teacher, at the beginning of the school year or upon employment, with a copy of the policy; and
- c) Providing copies of the policy to any other member of the community upon request.

Note: Commissioner's Regulations require Boards to annually review the building level student attendance records. If such records show a decline in student attendance, the Board must review the Comprehensive Student Attendance Policy and make any revisions to the plan deemed necessary to improve student attendance.

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.

Adopted: 2003
Revised: 4/6/09, 2/27/17