

(X) Required  
(x) Local  
( ) Notice

## STUDENT ATTENDANCE

### Objective

The objective of this policy is to ensure sufficient pupil attendance at all periods of scheduled instruction or supervised study activities to permit pupils to succeed at meeting the State learning standards.

### Strategies

The strategies to be used in order to accomplish the objective are to: (1) maintain an accurate record of each pupil's attendance at all periods of scheduled instruction or supervised study activities; (2) to account to parents for the whereabouts of pupils throughout each school day; and (3) to provide effective incentives and sanctions to promote student attendance.

### Definitions

*Parent:* One or both parents or any person in parental relation.

*Pupil:* A student of compulsory school age enrolled in any program offered by BOCES. *Excluded* from this definition are students enrolled in programs which are taught or conducted by itinerant BOCES staff.

*Register of Attendance:* Any written or electronic record maintained for the purpose of *recording* attendance, absences, tardiness or early departures of pupils.

*Scheduled Instruction:* Every period that a pupil is scheduled to attend actual instruction or *supervised* study activities.

### Record Keeping

The register of attendance shall contain basic data for each pupil and a record of each pupil's attendance at scheduled instruction.

*Basic Data:* The basic data for each pupil shall include: (1) name, (2) date of birth, (3) full names of parent(s) or person(s) in parental relation, (4) address where the *pupil* resides, (5) telephone number(s) where the parent(s) or person(s) in parental relation may be contacted, (6) date of enrollment, and (7) date of withdrawal or being dropped from enrollment.

*Attendance Record:* Pupil attendance shall be taken and recorded once at the beginning of each school day for pupils in non-departmentalized classes, and once at the beginning of each period of scheduled instruction where instruction is *departmentalized*. Late arrival or early departure from scheduled instruction shall also be recorded. All such absences, late arrivals or early departures shall be recorded as excused or unexcused in accordance with the standards set out in this policy. The record shall also indicate days or portions of days of

scheduled instruction when school is closed because of extraordinary circumstances, i.e., adverse weather conditions.

*Excused Absences:* Absences, tardiness and early departures may be recorded as excused if the parent provides a written explanation for one of the following reasons:

- Personal illness/medical necessity
- Significant family matters
- Religious observance
- Legal and/or criminal matters directly involving the student
- School/BOCES sponsored activities for which the student has permission to participate

*Unexcused Absences:* Absences, including tardiness and early departures which are not specifically excused shall be considered unexcused.

*Register Entries:* All entries in the register of attendance shall be made by a teacher or by such other employee as may be designated by the District Superintendent and shall be verified by the oath or affirmation of the person making the entries. Each Principal and supervisor of special education shall supervise the keeping of the register of attendance for all pupils that they are responsible for.

*Corrections:* Where additional information is received that requires corrections to be made to a student's attendance records, such correction will be made immediately. Notice of such a change will be sent to appropriate school personnel subject to applicable confidentiality rules.

*Coding System:* The coding system used to record attendance, and excused or unexcused absences, tardiness, and early departures shall be clearly stated on the register of attendance. The coding system shall also identify the reason why an absence, tardiness, or early departure is excused.

#### Accounting to Parents:

The appropriate Principal or his or her designee, shall exercise due diligence to notify parents by telephone within one hour of any unauthorized absence, tardiness or early departure. Any explanation given by the parent for the pupil's absence, tardiness or early departure shall be noted in the register of attendance. Periodic reports to parents of a pupil's academic performance shall also contain a report of the pupil's excused and unexcused absences, times tardy, and early departures.

#### Incentives and Sanctions

Each Division within BOCES shall clearly identify procedures they will use in calculating student grades in light of attendance.

The appropriate Principal shall be responsible for a monthly review of all pupil attendance records and shall take appropriate action to address unexcused pupil absence, tardiness and early departure.

*Incentives:* Appropriate incentives that will promote consistent pupil attendance will be developed and implemented. Such incentives may include, but shall not be limited to, school recognition of perfect attendance.

*Sanctions:* Unexcused absences, tardiness and early departures will be subject to the penalties set out in the respective Disciplinary Codes of the Division of Career and Technical Education and the Special Education Division.

*Intervention:* The appropriate Principal or his/her designee, shall be responsible to contact the parent of each pupil who has unexcused absence, tardiness, or early departure in order to emphasize the need for consistent attendance, to review the consequences or unexcused absences, tardiness or early departures under the applicable disciplinary code, and to develop an appropriate plan to assure that further unexcused absences, tardiness or early departures do not occur. BOCES shall also make periodic reports to a pupil's home school district as to the pupil's attendance.

### Annual Review of the Records

The Board of Cooperative Educational Services shall annually review the building level pupil attendance records and if such records show a decline in pupil attendance, the Board of Cooperative Educational Services shall revise the comprehensive pupil attendance policy and make any revisions to the plan deemed necessary to improve pupil attendance.

### Distribution of the Policy

The BOCES shall promote necessary community awareness of the policy as follows:

*Pupils:* A plain language summary of the policy shall be given to pupils and explained to them at the beginning of each school year.

*Parents:* A plain language summary of the policy shall be sent to all parents at the beginning of each school year.

*Teachers:* A copy of the entire policy shall be distributed to all teachers as soon as practicable following initial adoption and any subsequent amendment of the policy. A copy of the policy shall be provided to all new teachers at the time of their employment.

*Community:* Copies of the policy shall be provided to any other member of the community upon request.

Cross ref: 4710, Grading Systems  
5300, Code of Conduct  
5460, Child Abuse in a Domestic Setting

Ref: Education Law §§1709; 3024; 3025; 3202; 3205-3213; 3225  
8 NYCRR §§104.1; 175.6  
Social Service Law §34-a

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