



Book	Medina CSD Policy Manual
Section	Section 7000: Students
Title	Comprehensive Student Attendance Policy
Code	7110
Status	Active
Adopted	September 11, 2012
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Last Reviewed	July 5, 2023

## **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 will develop, review 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 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 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.
- b. Develop a Comprehensive Student Attendance Policy based upon the recommendations of a multifaceted District Policy Development Team that includes representation from the Board of Education, administrators, teachers, students, parents and the community. The District will hold at least one public hearing prior to the adoption of this collaboratively developed Comprehensive Student Attendance Policy.
- 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 trends 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 Departures**

Based upon our District's 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 approved school field trips, 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, job interviews, job training, "Take Your Child To Work" day, documented religious activities, driver's test, 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 (e.g., family vacation, hunting, babysitting, haircut, driving friends to appointments, oversleeping).

A written excuse, signed by a parent or person in parental relation should be presented by the student when returning to school following each absence.

### **Student Attendance Recordkeeping/Data Collection**

The record of each student's presence, absence, tardiness and early departure will 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.

*Commencing July 1, 2003, Attendance shall be taken and recorded in accordance with the following:*

- a. For students in non-departmentalized kindergarten through grade eight (8) (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 will also be recorded after the taking of attendance a second time upon the student's return from lunch. For purposes of APPR and Teacher-Student Data Linkages (TSDL), classroom attendance for all students in grades K through 12 must be recorded on a subject by subject basis for Teacher of Record Determinations.
- 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 will 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 will 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, the tardiness or early departure will be recorded as 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 other cause as may be found satisfactory to the Commissioner of Education.

Attendance records will 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 and Course Credit**

The District believes that classroom participation is related to, and affects, a student's performance and grasp of the subject matter and, as such, is properly reflected in a student's final grade. For purposes of this policy, classroom participation means that a student is in class and prepared to work.

Consequently, for each marking period a certain percentage of a student's final grade will be based on classroom participation as well as the student's performance on homework, tests, papers, projects, etc., as determined by the building administrator and/or classroom teacher.

Students are expected to attend all scheduled classes. Consistent with the importance of classroom participation, unexcused student absences, tardiness, and early departures will affect a student's grade, including credit for classroom participation, for the marking period. The District is not obligated to allow a student to make up work missed due to unexcused absences.

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.

Students who are absent from class due to their participation in a school-sponsored activity must 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 will be counted as the equivalent of regular attendance in class.

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

## **Notice of Minimum Attendance Standard/Intervention Strategies Prior to Academic Consequences**

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, the following guidelines shall be followed:

- a. Copies of the District's Comprehensive Student Attendance Policy will be mailed in summer as part of the school newsletter to parents/persons in parental relation and provided to students at the beginning of each school year or at the time of enrollment in the District.
- b. School newsletters and publications will include periodic reminders of the components of the District's Comprehensive Student Attendance Policy. Copies of the Attendance Policy will also be included in parent/student handbooks or posted on the District website.
- c. At periodic intervals, a staff member(s) will notify, the parent/person in parental relation of the student's absence, tardiness, or early departure and explain the relationship of the student's attendance to academic consequences.
- d. A designated staff member will review the District's Attendance Policy with students who have excessive and/or unexcused absences, tardiness or early departures. Further, appropriate student support services/personnel within the District, as well as the possible collaboration/referral to community support services and agencies, will be implemented prior to academic consequences.

## **Notice of Students who are Absent, Tardy or Depart Early Without Proper Excuse**

A staff member shall notify the parent/person in parental relation to a student who is absent, tardy or departs early without proper excuse. The District's Attendance Policy will be mailed to the parent/person in parental relation to promote awareness and help ensure compliance with the policy.

If deemed necessary by appropriate school officials, or if requested by the parent/person in parental relation, a school conference will be scheduled between the parent/person in parental relation and appropriate staff members in order to address the student's attendance. The student may also be requested to attend this conference in order to address appropriate intervention strategies that best meet the needs of the student.

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### **Chronic Absenteeism**

Chronic absenteeism is defined as missing at least 10% of enrolled school days in a year for any reason, excused or unexcused. Chronic absenteeism differs from truancy because it emphasizes missed instructional time rather than unexcused absences. Missed instructional time can increase a student's risk for disengagement, low achievement, and dropping out, among other things.

Students who miss at least 5% of enrolled school day in a year are at risk of becoming chronically absent. In light of this, the District will implement intervention strategies for students who miss 5% or more of the enrolled school days in a year.

### **Disciplinary Consequences**

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

### **Intervention Strategy Process**

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

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

### **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 2003-04 school year, the Building Principal will work in conjunction with District personnel 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 will annually review the building level student attendance records and if such records show a significant 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 will 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 the each school year and promoting the understanding of this policy to students and their parents/persons in parental relation;
- b. Informing each teacher, at the beginning of the school year or upon employment, to familiarize themselves with the policy; and
- c. Providing copies of the policy to any other member of the community upon request, or directing them to the school website.

Education Law Sections 3024, 3025, 3202, 3205, 3206, 3210, 3211, and 3213  
8 NYCRR Sections 104.1, 109.2 and 175.6

Adopted: 9/11/12  
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