

POLICY

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Students

SUBJECT: COMPREHENSIVE STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICY

Statement of Local Objectives

The purpose of the West Canada Valley Comprehensive Attendance Policy is as follows:

- a) Determine the District's average daily attendance for state aid purposes;
- b) Verify compliance with compulsory education laws;
- c) Know the whereabouts of every student for safety and other reasons;
- d) Identify attendance patterns to design improvement efforts;
- e) Close gaps in student performance; and
- f) Increase school completion.

Description of Strategies to Meet Objectives

Daily Attendance - Middle/Senior High School

At 7:30 each morning, the first bell will ring - at that time, students are to be reporting to class by 7:35 where attendance is taken by the period one (1) teacher using attendance cards provided to the District from the Regional Information Center (RIC). Students who are absent will have their cards placed in the door, the cards will then be collected from the classes by the school nurse during period one (1). Students who are not in period one (1) by 7:35 will be expected to report to the office upon their arrival so they may be recorded as late. After these cards are turned into the attendance clerk in the office, each student absence is entered into the computer and an alphabetical list of absentees prepared for distribution via the daily notice. In the coding of absences, the attendance clerk will enter an "I" for unexcused; however, this "I" will be changed to "L" (excused) should the student bring in an excuse bearing a valid excusable reason for the absence. Also listed are students who may have arrived late but before the printing of the notice - in this case, the time of the student's arrival will be noted. Additionally, any student who needs to get out early for legitimate reasons will be so noted under early dismissal.

During the course of the day, teachers and staff will use this notice to verify that a student missing from class or study hall is so listed as absent. If a student is absent from a class or study hall but not listed as absent on the notice, the attendance clerk in the Main Office will be notified so that the whereabouts of the student may be determined.

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During the course of the day, the nurse will begin with middle school students and/or students known as chronic attendance problems and call parents/guardians to ascertain the reason for the absence. Also, the nurse will check on the validity of early dismissal notes and excuses as requested by the attendance clerk working in conjunction with the administration.

During the last period of the day, an updated notice showing any attendance corrections, times of arrivals for any students who reported late, and times of return for any students who left, will be distributed. Teachers and staff will use this notice to further verify the presence or absence of a particular student in a prior class for that day.

Daily Attendance - Elementary School

Daily attendance is taken by the homeroom teacher. Absences are marked on the attendance card and collected from each room (or in Morning Program) by a teacher aide. Absences are entered into the computer system by the elementary secretary. When students will be absent, parents are encouraged to telephone the office and notify the secretary. In the instances where notification has not been given, it is the duty of the elementary nurse to make parental contact. Students who report to school after 9 a.m. are considered tardy and marked as such. An alphabetized list of students who are tardy or absent is prepared and distributed to staff via the morning notice. In the coding of absences, the elementary secretary will enter "I" (unexcused) until the student submits a written note bearing a valid excusable reason for the absence.

Early releases are only allowed when a parent (or authorized designee) physically comes into the elementary building and signs his/her child out. The time of release is noted but does not generally impact attendance.

Period by Period Attendance - Middle/Senior High School

In accordance with NYS Education Department regulation, a departmentalized middle, junior high, or high school in which students pass individually to different classes throughout the day, needs to take attendance each period of the school day that pupils pass without supervision to a different period of instruction or supervised activity. In addition, a mechanism needs to be created for transferring period by period attendance data to the building level.

Each teacher of a credit bearing course will take attendance each period that the credit bearing course meets, recording absentees in the attendance register/plan book. The register/plan book attendance will be used for the purpose of determining eligibility for credit under the "Attendance and Course Credit" policy approved unanimously by the West Canada Valley Board of Education on 1/11/99 and will be used for transferring period by period attendance to the RIC class roster form (to begin Fall 2002). The RIC class roster form will be used to meet the requirement of the State

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Education regulation - "create a mechanism for transferring period by period attendance data to the building level." At the completion of each ten (10) week marking period, the RIC class roster form noting period by period attendance will be completed by the teacher. Reports will be generated as requested in order to provide data for building level improvement.

Each teacher of a non-credit bearing course (study halls, AIS, etc.) will take attendance each period that the non-credit bearing course meets and record this in the attendance register. The RIC class roster form (to begin Fall 2002) will be used to meet the requirements of the State Education regulation - "create a mechanism for transferring period by period attendance to the building level." At the completion of each ten (10) week marking period, the RIC class roster form noting period by period attendance will be completed by the teacher, teacher assistant, or monitor. Reports will be generated as requested in order to provide data for building level improvement.

Period by Period Attendance - Elementary School

Not applicable - pupils do not pass without supervision.

Description of Excused and Unexcused Absences

Excused Absence

An absence due to personal illness, illness or death in the family, impassable roads or weather, religious observances, quarantine, required court appearance, doctor's appointment, approved college visit, approved cooperative work program, military obligation, or school sponsored field trip or athletics.

Unexcused Absence

Any absence not listed above.

Excused Tardy

A tardy due to personal illness, illness or death in the family, impassable roads or weather, religious observances, quarantine, required court appearance, doctor's appointment, approved college visit, approved cooperative work program, military obligation, or school sponsored field trip or athletics.

Unexcused Tardy

A tardy not listed above.

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Description of Coding System for Absences

Excused Absence..... L
Unexcused Absence..... I
Excused Tardy T-W, T-P, or T-V (written, phone, verbal)
Unexcused Tardy..... T

Description of School Policy Regarding Attendance and Course Credits

Attendance and Course Credit (Grades 7 through 12)

Attendance policies are based on the principle that regular school attendance maximizes the student's interaction with his/her teachers and peers and is a major component of academic success. In accordance with state guidelines, absences are not differentiated between excused and unexcused. However, also in accordance with state guidelines, makeup opportunities will only be provided to students whose absences are deemed legitimate.

- a) Any student with absences (excused and unexcused) of thirty (30) days or more (for a full year course), fifteen (15) days or more (for a half year course), and eight (8) days or more (for a ten (10) week course), will not receive credit for that course. After these numbers are reached and credit denied the parent/guardian will be notified. Should the parent/guardian desire, the Attendance Committee will be convened to review the student's complete attendance record (excused and unexcused absences) and to make a decision on allowing course credit via makeup work.
- b) Each faculty member will complete class attendance forms to be sent home to parent/guardians via the office as follows:
 1. full year course - 10, 20, 25
 2. half year course - 8, 12
 3. ten (10) week course - 3, 6

This notification will serve to alert the parent/guardian that should attendance not improve, credit may be denied based on the specified number of absences. Should notification not be made to the parent/guardian at the appropriate intervals, the student will not be penalized.

At the 30th absence for a full year course, 15th absence for a half year course, and 8th absence for a ten (10) week course, the teacher will notify the office so that the parent/guardian may be notified that course credit will be denied. However, the student will remain in the course as a full participant until the Attendance Appeals Committee meets and renders a decision.

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Each teacher will maintain an attendance register documenting daily attendance on a class by class basis.

- c) Students who exceed the number of absences and are denied course credit will be allowed to remain in the course should they desire, however, they will no longer take tests, finals, state exams, etc. They will receive no grades and no credit. Should the student be a problem while remaining in the class, he/she will be removed to study hall for the duration of the course. Students who choose to remain in the class after being denied credit may be allowed to take the course in summer school if they complete the course to the satisfaction of the teacher.

Attendance And Course Credit for Alternative Education

- a) Any student with absences of thirty (30) days or more will be removed from the Alternative Education Program. If the student is of mandatory school age, the student will resume attendance at West Canada Valley Central School. When a student meets the thirty (30) day absence criteria, and is removed from the Alternative Education Program, the parent(s)/guardian will be notified by West Canada Valley Central School. Upon request of the parent(s)/guardian, the West Canada Valley Central School Attendance Committee will convene (the BOCES program administrator/designee will also be invited) to review the student's entire attendance record (excused and unexcused absences) to render a decision on possible student reinstatement in the Alternative Education Program.
- b) West Canada Valley Central School Guidance Department will, upon notification from BOCES, send attendance notifications to the parent(s)/guardian advising them of the student's attendance thresholds. The parent(s)/guardian notifications will serve as an alert that the student's (excused and unexcused) attendance, if not improved, will result in removal of the student from the Alternative Education Program based on the thirty (30) day absence policy.

Description of Incentives/Sanctions to be Used**Incentives**

- a) Students with perfect attendance are recognized at end of year with certificate of honors.
- b) Individual teacher discretion - students with good attendance receive extra credit for their participation in class discussion.
- c) Attendance records held on students for review by future employers.

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SUBJECT: COMPREHENSIVE STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICY (Cont'd.)**Sanctions**

- a) Students who are not in attendance during the day are not allowed to participate in curricular, extracurricular, or school events held that evening.
- b) Attendance records held on students for review by future employers illustrate lack of attendance.
- c) Unexcused absences and unexcused tardies without permission of parent/guardian may result in disciplinary action.
- d) Possible denial of course credit (see Attendance Policy - *Description of School Policy Regarding Attendance and Course Credits*).

Description of Notification to Parents/Guardian

- a) Report cards sent to parents/guardians list number of absences - excused and unexcused as well as tardies - these totals are listed on a monthly basis.
- b) Attendance policy - notification to parents/guardians at predetermined intervals (See Attendance Policy - *Description of School Policy Regarding Attendance and Course Credits*).
- c) Letter sent on as needed basis to parents/guardians.
- d) Phone calls made by nurse to check students whereabouts.
- e) Possible teacher meeting - grades 7 and 8 - should students' attendance become an issue.

Description of the Development Process for Intervention Strategies

On a daily basis, school nurse will contact parent/guardian of those students who are absent. Students who are absent or tardy are expected to bring in a note upon return or arrival stating the reason why tardy or late; students who do not do so will have their absence recorded as unexcused or tardy reported as unexcused.

Students who develop a pattern of poor attendance and/or consistent late arrival will receive a letter home on a periodic basis notifying the parent/guardian of the same.

Intervention strategies will be determined by various staff including, but not limited to, the School Nurse, Guidance Counselor, Principal, teachers of the student, etc.

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Identification of the Person to Review Attendance Records and to Initiate Action

The register of attendance will be reviewed by the office attendance clerk with overall records of pupil attendance to be reviewed by the Principal. In case of period by period attendance in credit bearing courses, the teacher will initiate appropriate action by completing the appropriate attendance form at the designated intervals. In case of daily attendance, the attendance clerk will initiate periodic attention by working in conjunction with the Principal to identify students with chronic attendance/tardy problems.

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: 11/14/05
Revised: