ATTENDANCE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The Board of Education requires all students enrolled in the schools of this District to attend school regularly in accordance with the laws of the State. In order for students to benefit from the primary goal of the White Pigeon's programs, to have students learn job-specific skills and academics, it is essential that each student maintain regular and punctual daily attendance in all classes. Attendance is necessary and essential for learning and academic achievement, as well as for developing the habits and responsibilities of punctuality, dependability and self- discipline. The purpose of the attendance policy is to help students develop these characteristics and to maintain academic standards for earning credit. **Attendance is the responsibility of the student and parent.**

Attendance Regulations

Regular attendance enables a student to hear and participate in class instruction, and exposes students to group interactions with their teacher and fellow students. Such experiences cannot be developed when absent or tardy.

Reporting Absences

Parents are expected to call the school between 7:30 a.m. and 8:30 a.m. to report the absence and reason. If a call is not made by this time, you will receive a robo call stating your child is unexcused. If a telephone call is not possible, the student upon his/her return to school may present a note. The note should document the date of the absence and the reason for the absence. If students are leaving or returning to school from a professional appointment then a note or form on letterhead from the appointment is required.

VERIFICATION OF ABSENCES:

Verification must be done by a parent calling on the day of the absence to the attendance office at 269-483-7107.

Definition of Excused Absences

Excused absences are absences that are verified by a phone call or note from a parent or legal guardian to the office **within 2 school days following the day of the students return to class**. Excused absences may include illness, hospitalization, family emergencies, funerals, and professional appointments, etc. If the absence is not excused within 2 school days it will remain an unexcused absence. A written excuse or phone call for absence from school may be approved for an appealed mark for one (1) or more of the following reasons or conditions:

A. Personal Illness
   The principal may require a doctor's confirmation if s/he deems it advisable.
B. Illness in the Immediate Family
C. Quarantine of the Home
   This is limited to the length of the quarantine as fixed by the proper health officials.
D. Death of a Relative
E. Observance of Religious Holidays
   Any student shall be excused for the purpose of observing a religious holiday consistent with his/her creed or belief.
F. Absence During the School Day for Professional Appointments
   Parents are encouraged to schedule medical, dental, legal, and other necessary appointments outside of the school day. Since this is not always possible, the following should occur when a student is to be absent for part of the day:

It is the parent's responsibility to maintain awareness of their student's absences and credit status. This information is available on Powerschool at the White Pigeon website. Pre-arranged absences

(including religious obligations, family vacations, etc.) are considered appealed absences provided the school is contacted at least 2 days prior to the absence when possible. Students are responsible to request work from their teachers and submit all requested work upon the first day they return to school.

Definitions of Unexcused Absences

An **unexcused** absence is any absence for which the school **has not received a phone call or note from the parent or legal guardian, within 2 school days following the day of the return to class**.

Truancy

1. Absences in excess of 5 days/semester or 10% without a valid excuse is an alert to examine the youth's attendance for possible truancy issues, especially if other warning signs exist: repeated patterns of truancy in the previous semester or past school year, suspensions for criminal behavior, failing grades, behavioral write ups, drug or alcohol use.

2. If a problem exists, the Truancy personnel shall send letter #1 (form attached) to the parent or guardian of the child indicating there is an attendance problem and a meeting has been scheduled to discuss the absences. It may be sent via certified mail, return receipt requested, delivered to addressee only, as well as by regular mail. It may also be personally served on the parent or guardian. Each parent or guardian must receive their own copy of the letter if they do not live in the same house. For single family households, address the letter to both parents.

3. Additional strategies are included in the addendum as interventions that may be used.

4. The school meeting must include the child, the child's parent or guardian, Truancy personnel and other appropriate school officials. An agreement should be reached regarding attendance and must include the requirement that the youth will resume regular and consecutive school attendance. The agreement must be signed. Consequences should be discussed in the event truancy remains a problem. Educational and referral services will be offered as well as services provided through the Youth Intervention Specialist. If the parent/guardian or student refuses to attend or sign the agreement then note their refusal on the form and keep with the file for future processing if behavior continues.

5. The Truancy personnel will give all of the child's teachers and school principal a copy of the letter sent to the parents and the attendance agreement so attendance can be monitored and reported to the Truancy personnel .

6. If the child misses school two times in the next 30 calendar days or 3 more times in the next three months, the Truancy personnel may request a Truancy Conference with the Court. The school will send letter #2 to parents at this time and contact the Court Services Coordinator. The Court will send a letter to the family and schedule the Truancy Conference. The Court Services Coordinator, Local School Representative with knowledge of the student, Youth Intervention Specialist (optional) and the Truancy Officer (mandatory) will meet with the parent or guardian and the child. A parent/guardian and the child must attend the meeting.

Appealed Absences:

A. Verified hospital confinement and immediate convalescence and/or infectious illness and diseases will not count toward the student's accumulation of five (5) days. Verification must be made via a doctor's note.

B. A verified absence for attending a funeral will not be counted toward the student's accumulation of five (5) days.

C. An absence due to a subpoenaed court appearance will not be counted toward the student's accumulation of five (5) days.

D. Participation in school activities of the school program, provided that arrangement for the absence and the completion of assigned school work have been made in advance and approved by the Principal will not be counted toward the student's accumulation of five (5) days. Pre-arranged college visitations will be limited to two (2) in the senior year only.

E. In-school and out-of-school suspensions are not considered excused or unexcused absences. Students are responsible for work missed due to suspension and credit may be lost because of the inability to recreate all classroom experiences (i.e. field trips, guest speakers, hands-on labs, etc.).

F. Testing positive for a contagious Disease.

Extended Absence:

Students must complete an extended absence form if they are planning to miss more than two consecutive days of school. Extended absence forms may be picked up in the office. The form must be signed by all teachers, parent/guardian, and principal. The teacher's signature indicates knowledge of the extended absence. This form must be turned in to the office a minimum of one day prior to the absence. These absences still count toward the maximum of 9 absences during the marking period unless extenuating circumstances are approved by the administration.

STUDENTS LEAVING AND ENTERING THE BUILDING:

No student is to leave school during the day without prior approval from the parent/guardian. Students will not be allowed to call home to ask permission to take another student home during the school day.

The following procedure is to be followed for students leaving for appointments or illnesses:

A parent or guardian will sign out in the attendance office before leaving and sign back in when you return to school and provide documentation from the appointment.

Any student who becomes ill at school must report to the office. All attempts will be made to notify parents if the illness is serious enough to warrant going home. No student is allowed to leave school without securing permission of the parent, guardian or emergency contact. If a student leaves without following appropriate check-out procedures, this absence will be unexcused.

Students entering the school building after the beginning of the school day MUST REPORT WITH A PARENT/GUARDIAN to the office to sign in.