

5100 STUDENT ATTENDANCE

The Board of Education recognizes that regular school attendance is a major component of academic success. Through implementation of this policy, the Board expects to reduce the current level of unexcused absences, tardiness, and early departures (referred to in this policy as "ATEDs"), encourage full attendance by all students, maintain an adequate attendance recordkeeping system, identify patterns of student ATEDs and develop effective intervention strategies to improve school attendance.

To be successful in this endeavor, it is imperative that all members of the school community are aware of this policy, its purpose, procedures and the consequences of non-compliance. To ensure that students, parents, teachers and administrators are notified of and understand this policy, the following procedures shall be implemented.

- The attendance policy will be mailed to the parents in the District calendar, made available via the District's electronic student management system and will be reviewed with students at the start of the school year.
- Parents will be able to retrieve a plain language summary of this policy via the District's electronic student management system, or by mail if the parent or guardian does not have Internet access.

When a student is absent, tardy to school, or leaves early from class or school without excuse, designated staff member(s) will attempt to notify the student's parents(s) by phone of the specific ATED.

A back-to-school event will be held at the beginning of each school year to explain this policy and stress the parent's responsibility for ensuring their children's attendance.

School newsletters, publications and/or electronic communications will include periodic reminders of the components of this policy.

- The district will provide a copy of the attendance policy and any amendments thereto to faculty and staff. New staff will receive a copy upon their employment.

All faculty and staff will meet at the beginning of each school year to review the attendance policy to clarify individual roles in its implementation.

- Copies of this policy will also be made available to any community member, upon request.

Exempt, Excused and Unexcused Absence

Elementary

Exempt absences are those that are defined as necessary by the school, i.e. school field trips, music section. Excused ATEDs are defined as absences, tardiness, and early departures from class or school due to personal illness, with accompanying parent's/guardian's note, death in the family, religious observance and verified court appearances. In school Excused ATEDs include absences excused by the Nurse. In school Exempt ATEDs include absences excused by teachers, school psychologists(s) or administrators and absences due to assignments to Alternate Educational Placements.

All other ATEDs are considered unexcused absences.

All ATEDs must be accounted for. It is the parent's/guardian's responsibility to call the school office the morning of the ATED and to provide written documentation upon the student's return to school.

Exempt, Excused and Unexcused Absence

Middle School Grades 6-7

Exempt absences are those that are defined as necessary by the school, i.e. school field trips, music section. Excused ATEDs are defined as absences, tardiness and early departures from class or school due to personal illness, with accompanying parent's/guardian's note, death in the family, religious observance and verified court appearances. If a student is absent three (3) or more consecutive days, a doctor's note will be required. In cases where a student has a recurring illness or medical condition, a parent or guardian may provide documentation to be kept on file and will not be required to provide a doctor's note for each occurrence. In school Excused ATEDs include absences excused by the Nurse. In school Exempt ATEDs include absences excused by teachers, school psychologist(s) or administrators and absences due to assignments to Alternate Educational Placements.

All other ATEDs are considered unexcused absences.

All ATEDs must be accounted for. It is the parent's/guardian's responsibility to call the school office the morning of the ATED and to provide written documentation upon the student's return to school.

Exempt, Excused and Unexcused Absence

Secondary 8-12

Exempt absences are those that are defined as necessary by the school, i.e. school field trips. Excused ATEDs are defined as absences, tardiness, and early departures from class or school due to personal illness, with accompanying doctor's note, death in the family, religious observance and verified court appearances. In school Excused ATEDs include absences excused by the Nurse. In school Exempt ATEDs include absences excused by a guidance counselor, teacher, school psychologist, or administrator and absences due to assignments to Alternate Educational Placements.

All other ATEDs are considered unexcused absences.

All ATEDs must be accounted for. It is the parent's responsibility to notify the school office, within at least 24 hours of the ATED, and to provide written documentation upon the student's return to school.

General Procedures/Data Collection

- Attendance will be taken during each class period in grades 6-12. In Grades K-5 attendance will be taken on a daily basis.
- At the conclusion of each class period or school day, all attendance information shall be compiled and provided to the building principal or the person designated by the building principal to be responsible for attendance.
- The nature of an ATED shall be coded on a student's record and indicate whether the ATED is Excused, Unexcused, or Exempt consistent with the following descriptions of Excused, Unexcused and Exempt absences.

<u>CODE TYPE</u>	<u>TITLE</u>	<u>ABSENCE</u>
ABC	Absent Court	Excused
MD	Absent Doctor's Appointment/Note	Excused
ABD	Absent due to death in family	Excused
ABR	Absent for religious reasons	Excused
ABP	Absent with Parent Note (Grades K-7)	Excused
NRS	Nurse's Office	Excused
HN	Sent home by School Nurse	Excused
EDR	Early Dismissal Religious	Excused Tardy
LE	Late Excused	Excused Tardy
AAD	Absent All Day	Unexcused
ABF	Absent for personal family reasons	Unexcused
ABI	Absent Illegal	Unexcused
CUT	Absent Illegal (Secondary)	Unexcused
ABS	Absent Sick	Unexcused
ABT	Absent Truant	Unexcused
ED	Early Dismissal	Unexcused
LSG	Left School Grounds	Unexcused
LU	Late Unexcused (Secondary)	Unexcused
LN	Late with Note from Parent/Guardian (Secondary)	Unexcused
LF	Late for personal family reasons	Unexcused Tardy
LO	Late other	Unexcused Tardy
LS	Late – Sick	Unexcused Tardy
APL	Absent due to alternate educational placement	Exempt
ASC	Alternate Student Center	Exempt
CNS	Counselor's Office	Exempt
XAD	Excused by Administrator	Exempt

XT	Excused by Teacher	Exempt
MDH	Medical – Home Instruction	Exempt
MUS	Music Section	Exempt
OSS	Out of School Suspension	Exempt
FAM	School Field Trip AM	Exempt
FPM	School Field Trip PM	Exempt
FT	School Field Trip	Exempt
SWP	Social Worker/Psychologist	Exempt
SPC	Speech	Exempt
TST	Testing	Exempt
A	Absent Unverified	Unknown

*See policy for specific information on these absences or lateness categories.

- Student ATED data shall be available to and should be reviewed by the building principal or the person designated by the building principal to be responsible for attendance in an expeditious manner.
- 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 change will be sent to appropriate school personnel subject to applicable confidentiality rules.
- Continuous monitoring will be conducted to identify students who are absent, tardy, or leave class or school early.

Attendance Interventions/Strategies

The Intervention Strategies were developed in conjunction with building administration and staff. All building principals met with their teams and staff to generate effective strategies. Recommendations were then discussed by the School District attendance committee. The committee’s recommendations were reviewed by the School District’s central administration. Upon consensus of all groups, the strategies were recommended for inclusion within the policy.

Prior to the denial of course credit the School District will implement intervention strategies to address identified patterns of student absence, tardiness, early departure, and/or attendance problems. For example:

- Monthly Infinite Campus Attendance Reports by grade level reviewed by Administrator and Guidance Counselor
- Student meetings with Teacher/Coordinator/Administrative Assistant/Guidance Counselor
- Parent meeting with Guidance Counselor and Administrative Assistant
- On-line monitoring with real-time attendance available to parents via the Parent Portal
- Child Study Referral
- Attendance/Behavioral Intervention process (detention/ASC)
- Close monitoring of attendance and lateness; teacher phone contact for a specific class; attendance secretary phone contact to follow-up late arrival to school
- Follow-up of attendance/lateness patterns by Administrators, Counselors, and/or Nurse. Follow-up includes:
 - Meetings with Students;
 - Additional phone contact with parents;
 - Letters to parents;
 - Parent meetings, if necessary.

Attendance Incentives

The School District will design and implement systems to acknowledge a student’s efforts to maintain or improve school attendance. For example:

- At the classroom levels, teachers are encouraged to assign special responsibilities (distribute and collect materials, lead groups, assist the teacher, etc.) to students who may need extra motivation to come to school
- Report Card comment for quarterly perfect attendance
- Comments for perfect attendance/no tardiness added to report card for each class or for all classes
- Public recognition (posted listing as with Honor Roll) in January and June for perfect attendance and no tardiness

- Congratulatory letter for obtaining perfect attendance

Disciplinary Consequences

Secondary 8-12

Unexcused ATEDs will result in disciplinary action consistent with the School District's code of conduct. Those penalties may include, for example, detention or in-school suspensions. Student's may also be denied the privilege of participating in or attending extracurricular activities, including athletics or co-curricular events.

In addition, designated staff member(s) will contact the student's parents and the student's guidance counselor. Such staff member(s) shall remind parents of the attendance policy, explain the ramifications of unexcused ATEDs, stress the importance of class attendance and discuss appropriate intervention strategies to correct the situation.

Appeal Process

A written appeal may be made to challenge the accuracy of the record of the student's attendance in a particular course or on the basis of extenuating circumstances. The written appeal together with any supporting documentation must be filed no later than ten (10) school days from the date of the initial denial of course credit with the Superintendent of Schools, provided, however, that the Superintendent may designate another administrator to review and decide the appeal. The decision on appeal shall be issued within five (5) school days of filing. The decision of the Superintendent of Schools or his/her designee shall be final and appealable only to the New York State Commissioner of Education pursuant to [§310 of the Education Law](#).

Attendance/Grade Policy

Secondary 6-12

The Board of Education recognizes an important relationship between class attendance and student performance. Consequently, within each marking period, a student's final grade may be based on classroom participation as well as his or her performance on homework, tests, papers and projects.

Students are expected to attend all scheduled classes. Consistent with the importance of classroom participation, all absences will affect a student's class participation grade for the marking period.

At the middle and high school level, any student who is absent from a course for more than seven (7) times in a marking period or more than four (4) times for a course meeting on alternating days may receive a grade of "I" (incomplete) . For the purposes of quarterly grades these absences are not cumulative from one marking period to another.

Assigned activities will be provided to students in order to alleviate class participation deficiencies. A student will be given up to ten (10) school days from the official end of the marking period to successfully complete the make up assignment. Completion of the assigned activity means the excused absence will not be counted against the student for purposes of determining the student's eligibility for course credit.

Attendance/Awarding of Credit

Secondary – All Credit Bearing Courses

When a secondary student (grades 8 through 12) exceeds a cumulative total of twelve (12) unexcused absences in a credit bearing course he/she will not receive credit for a full year course. Students exceeding a cumulative total of six (6) unexcused absences will not receive credit for a half-year course or an alternate day course.

Properly excused student absences shall not be counted as an absence for the purpose of determining the student's eligibility for course credit. Unexcused lateness or early departures will count as unexcused absences.

Information will be available for parents by electronic communication or by mail regarding their child's cumulative absences. This attendance notice will report the student's absences period by period. If a student exceeds a cumulative total of twelve (12) unexcused absences for a full year course, or six (6) unexcused absences for a half year or alternating day course, the guidance counselor will meet with the student to make any necessary adjustments to the student's schedule.

Summer School Attendance

Students are expected to attend all scheduled classes. When a student in a credit-bearing summer school course exceeds a cumulative total of three (3) absences he/she will not receive credit for that course. An absence is defined as missing more than 15 minutes of a class and one-half (1/2) absence is defined as missing up to 15 minutes of a class.

Annual Review

The Board of Education shall provide for the annual review of the building-level student attendance records. The Board of

Education shall annually review this comprehensive attendance policy and make any revisions to the plan it deems necessary.

Adoption Date: September 20, 2010

Syosset Central School District
