COMPREHENSIVE ATTENDANCE POLICY

A. Objectives

The objectives of the Comprehensive Attendance Policy are:

1. to accurately track the attendance, absence, tardiness and early departure of students to and from the school;

2. to ensure sufficient pupil attendance of classes so that pupils may achieve State mandated education standards;

3. to track student location for safety reasons and to account to parents regarding the location of children during school hours.

B. Definitions

Whenever used within the Comprehensive Attendance Policy, the following terms shall mean:

1. Scheduled instruction: Every period that a pupil is scheduled to attend instructional or supervised study activities during the course of a school day during the school year.

2. Absent: The pupil is not present for the entire period of the pupil's scheduled instruction.

3. Tardy: The pupil arrives later than the starting time of the pupil's scheduled instruction...

4. Early departure: The pupil leaves prior to the end of the pupil's scheduled instruction.

5. Excused: Any absence, tardiness, or early departure for which the pupil has a valid school approved excuse. Such excused non appearance shall include: personal illness, illness or death in the family, religious observance, quarantine, required court appearances, attendance at health clinics or other medical visits, approved college visits, military obligations, absences approved in advance by the Principal, and other reasons as may be approved by the Commissioner of Education.

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6. Unexcused: Any absence, tardiness or early departure for which the pupil has no valid school approved excuse. Such unexcused non appearance shall include shopping trips to the local mall, family vacation, oversleeping, skipping class, and any other absence that is not excused.

C. Coding System

The following coding system shall be used to indicate the nature and reason for a pupil's missing all or part of scheduled instruction:

ATR	=	Absences/Truant	AE	=	Absence Excused
AU	=	Absence Unexcused	DE	=	Dismissal Excused
DU	=	Dismissal Unexcused	FT	=	Field Trip
TE	=	Tardy Excused	TU	=	Tardy Unexcused
SE	=	Suspension External	SI	=	Suspension Internal

The time that the pupil arrived or departed will be recorded next to the entry code describing the nature and reason for the student missing all or part of scheduled instruction.

For example, if a student left at 11:30 a.m. for a doctor's appointment, the code would read: E/D/M: 11:30 a.m.

D. In order to encourage student attendance, the following strategies and incentives shall apply:

1. Minimum Attendance for High School Course Credit

   a. A student must be noted as present at *85%* of a course's scheduled classes in order to earn credit for the course. Any excused absence, for which the student has completed assigned make-up work, will not be counted as an absence for the purposes of determining whether the student has attended sufficient classes to receive course credit under this provision.

      i. For purposes of minimum attendance requirements, a student shall not be counted as present for a class if the student misses more than 10 minutes of class, whether through tardiness or early departure.

ii. Students *of* compulsory attendance age suspended from school instruction may not be marked as absent unless they fail to attend scheduled alternative education on that day.

iii. Students *over* the compulsory attendance age suspended from school instruction will be marked absent unless they have been assigned alternative education. If alternative education has been assigned, only failure to attend scheduled alternative education shall count as an absence.

b. In order to prevent loss of credit for failure to attend, the district will take the following steps:

i. when a student has been marked as absent for *15%* of a course's classes, the district shall notify the student and his parent(s) or persons in parental relation that the student is approaching the limit of absences for losing course credit for failure to attend class. The notice will include the school's attendance for credit policy, the actual number of classes the student may miss before forfeiting the right to earn credit, and the actual number of classes missed to date;

ii. a student and his parent(s) or persons in parental relation will be advised one month before the completion of the course if the student is in jeopardy of losing credit for failure to attend. The notice will include the school's attendance for credit policy, the actual number of classes the student may miss before forfeiting the right to earn credit, and the actual number of classes missed to date;

iii. teachers will provide makeup work upon request so that students who are in jeopardy of forfeiting class credits due to excused absences have the opportunity to earn credit for the course;

iv. where a student is in jeopardy of losing credit for excessive absences, the Building Principal shall be responsible for reviewing attendance records, determining eligibility for makeup work for excused absences, and arranging student makeup opportunities with teachers, including deadlines.

2. Notice of Absences

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The pupil's parent(s) or person in parental relation shall be notified of a pupil's unexcused or excused absence, tardiness or early departure according to the following:

a. where a pupil has not been marked as present for the first period of scheduled instruction and the school has not been previously notified of the absence, the district shall attempt to contact the pupil's parent(s) or person in parental relation to learn the nature of the pupil's absence and notify the parent that the pupil has not arrived at school;

b. for every 5 unexcused or excused absences, tardies, early departures, or any combination thereof, the pupil's parent(s) or persons in parental relation shall receive a notice containing the dates, times, and the nature of the pupil's nonpresence.

3. Disciplinary Procedures

The pupil may be subject to disciplinary procedures for unexcused absence, tardiness, or early departure, including verbal and written warnings, detentions, in- school suspensions, and loss of extra-curricular privileges, as described in the Code of Conduct.

4. Incentives

District teachers shall work with the Building Principals/Attendance Officers to create and implement classroom/school based incentive programs for excellent attendance.

5. Intervention Strategy Development

The Building Principal shall meet each marking period with other administrators, nurses and teachers as the Principal determines necessary to review student attendance records, address identified patterns of unexcused pupil absence, tardiness and early departure, and review current intervention methods. Where the Principal determines that existing intervention policies or practices are insufficient, the Principal shall notify the Superintendent of both insufficient practices and any proposed changes needing Board approval to implement.