

SUBJECT: SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AND RECORDS

Attendance Records

The system of recording attendance and the procedures to be used in keeping data, will be overseen by the Superintendent or his/her designee who will instruct administrative and instructional personnel of the District procedures for recording and maintaining attendance records.

Objectives

This Policy is intended to assure that students exercise their right and meet their responsibility to attend school. The Board believes that attendance and achievement are directly related and that student absence from the classroom hurts both student learning and the educational program. Therefore, this policy is designed to promote high levels of attendance, and to assure District compliance with Commissioner's Regulation 104.1 by requiring the maintenance of an accurate record of attendance, establishing procedures for addressing unexcused absences, and ensuring a process for continuing review and, where needed, improvement in District attendance procedures.

The District expects all parents and students to share its commitment to maximum responsible attendance and to make every effort to avoid unnecessary absence from school. District personnel will collaborate with parents and students to resolve issues that impede school attendance.

Procedural Components

Families must provide documentation to the school attendance officials stating the student's full name, date, days of absence and reason for the absence. The Code of Conduct will be utilized to deal with truancy and excessive illegal absences.

Classification of absences as excused or unexcused

Each student absence, tardiness, and early departure from scheduled instruction will be classified and recorded as "excused" or "unexcused." Excused absences may be for the following reasons:

- Personal illness or hospitalization
- Medical or dental appointments that cannot be scheduled outside school hours
- Death in the family
- Religious observance
- Legal obligation (e.g., required to be in court)
- Authorized school activities (e.g., field trip, music lesson, etc.)

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Classification of absences as excused or unexcused (Cont'd.)

- College visits
- Other reasons as may be approved by the principal and that are consistent with the intent of the policy

Absences for any reason other than those listed above are unexcused. Such absences include, but are not limited to:

- Family vacation
- Oversleeping
- Babysitting
- Problems related to transportation arrangements
- Truancy/class cut
- Working (not related to course curriculum)

Other reasons as may be approved by the principal and that are consistent with the intent of the policy.

It is understood that a student being home tutored for home/hospital extended absence or a student on suspension will be considered present unless the student fails to attend the instruction. The student's absence from tutoring may be excused or unexcused.

Record of Attendance

Pursuant to Section 104.1 of the Commissioner's Regulations, a record of attendance will be maintained for each building by a school employee designated by the principal. In addition, the principal (or another designee) will supervise the maintenance of the record.

For each student, the record will reflect the following information:

1. Name;
2. Date of birth;
3. Full names of parent(s) or person(s) in parental relation;
4. Address where the pupil resides;
5. Phone number(s) where the parent(s) or person(s) in parental relation may be contacted;
6. Date of the pupil's enrollment; and

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Record of Attendance (Cont'd.)

7. A record of the pupil's attendance on each day of scheduled instruction taken and recorded in accordance with the following:
 - For pupils in kindergarten through grade six, such pupil's presence or absence shall be recorded after the taking of attendance once per school day.
 - For pupils in grades seven through twelve, each such pupil's attendance will be recorded in each period of scheduled instruction.
 - Each student absence, tardiness or early departure from scheduled instruction will be coded to reflect whether the absence is excused or unexcused as well as the specific reason for the absence.
8. A record will 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 such other cause as may be found satisfactory to the Commissioner.

Notification Procedures

1. Each day a child is absent the designated attendance person in each school or an automated system, will call the parent or guardian either at home or at work to determine the reason for the absence. If a child has a serious illness that will necessitate several days of absence from school a daily call is not necessary.
2. Parents should be reminded to send a note to or email the school the reason for their child's absence upon the student's return to school. However, if there has been legitimate phone confirmation that a student was legally absent, the record needs to reflect a legal absence whether or not a written excuse has been presented.
3. Notification Process:

Elementary School (Grades K-6)

- **First Notification** sent to parents if the student accumulates **8 days** of absences:
 - Letter sent by Building Principal relaying the concern
 - Copy of letter filed in Student's Cumulative File
- **Second Notification** sent to parents if the student accumulates **15 days** of absences:
 - Letter sent by Building Principal relaying the concern
 - Copy of letter filed in Student's Cumulative File

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Notification Procedures (Cont'd.)

- **Third Notification** is a referral to the School Counselor who personally contacts the parents, sets up a mandatory parent meeting with the Assistant Principal, and makes them aware of an accumulation of **20 days** or more instances of absences:
 - Referral Notice sent by Building Principal referring the student to the School Counselor
 - Attendance Telephone Log completed by School Counselor and filed in the Student's Cumulative File
- **Fourth Notification** is referral to Child Protection Agency and completion of a FACT petition for an Elementary student who has accumulated **30 days** of absences without medical clearance:
 - Referral to Child Protection Agency: Educational Neglect for students 16 years or younger
 - Complete a FACT petition for students 16 years or younger

Secondary School (Grades 7-12)

- **First Notification** sent to parents if the student has accumulated 50 instances (class periods of unexcused attendance: illegal absence, illegal tardy, illegal early dismissal):
 - Letter sent by Building Principal relaying the concern
 - Copy of letter filed in Student's Cumulative File
- **Second Notification** sent to parents if the student has accumulated 100 instances (class periods of unexcused attendance: illegal absence, illegal tardy, illegal early dismissal):
 - Letter sent by Building Principal relaying the concern
 - Copy of letter filed in Student's Cumulative File
- **Third Notification** is a referral to the School Counselor who personally contacts the parents, sets up a mandatory parent meeting with the Assistant Principal, and makes them aware of an accumulation of 150 or more instances (class periods of unexcused attendance: illegal absence, illegal tardy, illegal early dismissal):
 - Referral Notice sent by Building Principal referring the student to the School Counselor
 - Attendance Telephone Log completed by School Counselor and filed in the Student's Cumulative File
 - Mandatory parent meeting with the School Counselor, Assistant Principal, and the student
 - Referral Notice sent by Building Principal offering support by the School Counselor
 - Attendance Telephone Log completed by School Counselor and filed in the Student's Cumulative File

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Notification Procedures (Cont'd.)

- **Fourth Notification** is a referral to the Superintendent for a hearing for a student in grades 7-12 who has accumulated 200 or more instances (class periods of unexcused attendance: illegal absence, illegal tardy, illegal early dismissal) without medical clearance:
 - Referral to Superintendent Hearing: Insubordination for students in 7-12 Grade
 - Referral to Child Protection Agency: Educational Neglect for students 17 years or younger
 - Complete a FACT petition for students 17 years or younger

Disciplinary Consequences

Unexcused absences, illegal tardiness, and illegal early departures will result in disciplinary sanctions as described in the District's Code of Conduct. Parents/persons in parental relation will be notified by designated District personnel at periodic intervals to discuss their child's absence, illegal tardiness, or illegal 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.

Annual Review of Building Attendance Data

Each building principal will review pupil attendance records for the purpose of initiating appropriate action as necessary to address unexcused pupil absence, illegal tardiness, or illegal early departure. In addition, the principal may designate another building staff person who, in collaboration with the principal, will also review attendance data and, as needed, initiate action to reduce unexcused absence.

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 concerns.

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

Intervention Strategy Process

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

- Identify absence patterns (e.g., grade level, building, timeframe, type of unexcused absences, illegal tardiness, or illegal early departures);

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Intervention Strategy Process (Cont'd.)

- Contact the District staff most closely associated with absence patterns. In specific cases where the pattern involves an individual student, the student and parent or person in parental relation will be contacted;
- Discuss strategies to directly intervene with specific element;
- Recommend intervention to Superintendent or his/her designee if it relates to change in District policy of procedure;
- Implement changes, as approved by appropriate administration;
- Utilize appropriate District and/or community resources to address and help remediate student unexcused absences, illegal tardiness, or illegal early departures;
- Monitor short and long term effects of intervention through Response to Intervention (RtI) and the Students in Jeopardy process

Appeal Process

A parent/person in parental relation may request a building level review of their child's attendance record.

Community Awareness

In order to sustain and promote a culture throughout the Churchville-Chili school community that reflects a shared commitment to high, productive school attendance, the District will communicate the value and seriousness of school attendance broadly through such materials as school newsletters, school handbooks, letters and other communications sent home to parents. Staff members are expected to promote the District's position on attendance in discussions and individual conversations with students and parents.

Plain Language Summary

- Provide a plain language summary of the District's attendance policy and procedures to all parents at the beginning of each school year and take such other steps as deemed necessary to assure that students and parents understand the policy and procedures
- Make copies of the policy and regulation available to any staff, parent or community resident upon request.

Education Law §§ 101, 207, 305, 3024, 3025, 3205, 3210, and 3211
8 NYCRR §104.1