SUBJECT: COMPREHENSIVE STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICY

Statement of Local Objectives

The Board of Education, working with administrators, supervisors, and other staff members of the School District, shall encourage and motivate students to develop good attendance patterns while enrolled in the schools at Susquehanna Valley. Students of school age should have good attendance for the following reasons:

a) In order to receive all the advantages a quality school program offers and achieve State mandated education standards;

b) To maximize school aid funds that are available to school districts from the state of New York;

c) To comply with the laws of New York State that mandate that students of certain ages will be in regular attendance at school;

d) And to initiate appropriate responses to address issues of attendance.

Definitions

Whenever used within this attendance policy, the following terms shall mean:

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

b) Absent: The pupil is not present for scheduled instruction.

c) Tardy: The pupil arrives after the scheduled instruction is designated to begin.

d) Early departure: The pupil leaves prior to the end of the pupil's scheduled instruction, or prior to an approved instruction or supervised activity scheduled during the school day.

e) Excused: Any absence, tardiness, or early departure for which the pupil has a valid school-approved excuse. An excused "nonappearance" includes:

1. Personal illness/medical;

2. Attendance at health clinics or other medical visits;

3. Illness or death in the family;

4. Religious observance;

(Continued)

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

5. Impassible roads due to inclement weather;

6. Quarantine;

7. Required court appearance;

8. Approved college visits;

9. Military obligations;

10. School-approved music lessons.

f) Unexcused: Any absence, tardiness, or early departure for which the pupil has no valid school-approved excuse (see previous list).

g) Register of Attendance: Any written or electronic record maintained for the purpose of recording the attendance, absence, tardiness or early departure of a pupil.

Effective September 1, 2005, the following criteria shall be used in assessing Excellent and Perfect Attendance:

1. Perfect Attendance. Awarded for no absence, tardiness or early departures. Student is in attendance for one hundred percent (100%) of scheduled instructional time, or an approved instructional or supervised activity scheduled during the school day.

2. Excellent Attendance. Awarded only when students have excused tardies or early departures with no absences as defined by the previous list (see 'Excused' under subheading Definitions). The excused tardiness or early departure must be received in writing by the school within forty-eight (48) hours of the child's return to school.

*For purposes of student records and attendance award recognition, enrolled students as of June 30, 2005, may seek to apply the prior definitions of perfect and excellent attendance for their attendance performance prior to September 1, 2005. Such application must be made to the Superintendent or his/her designee no later than June 30, 2006.

Attendance Recording

For pupils in grades beginning Kindergarten, and Kindergarten through grade 5, such pupil's presence or absence shall be recorded once per day. For pupils in grades 6 through 12, such pupil's presence or absence shall be recorded in each period of scheduled instruction. Late arrivals and early departures will also be recorded.

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

Coding System

The following codes will be used in recording student attendance:

E = Excused
U = Unexcused

A = Absent
D = Early Departure
OS = Out of School Suspension
T = Tardy
TR = Truant

Attendance and Course Credit

Attendance will not be used as a measure of student learning. Course credit is recommended based on student performance related to learning outcomes.

Parent/Guardian Responsibilities

a) Parents/guardians are encouraged to contact the building in which the students attend in the event that their child is absent.

b) Parents/guardians of all students PK through 12 must submit a written excuse within forty-eight (48) hours of the child's return to school. This excuse must include a statement of the reason for the child's absence or tardiness and the date(s) of the absence or tardiness.

c) A written excuse, in and of itself, does not define "excused" or "unexcused" absences.

Incentives and Sanctions and Notification of Parents

a) The District will communicate with parents/guardians regarding student attendance and tardiness;

b) The District and buildings will develop incentives for exemplary attendance;

c) Progressive disciplinary consequences for unexcused tardiness or absence will be imposed. Parents will be notified of these consequences;

d) The District's Student Attendance Officer will collaborate with the administration to investigate attendance concerns;

e) Counseling will be made available to students with chronic attendance problems.

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

Review of Attendance Records

a) The Board of Education will designate a District employee to supervise the keeping of the register of attendance;

b) The entries in the register of attendance shall be verified by the oath or affirmation of the person(s) making the entries in the register of attendance;

c) Pupil attendance records shall be reviewed by the Principal of every school building for the purpose of initiating appropriate action to address unexcused pupil absence, tardiness, and early departure;

d) The Board of Education shall annually review the building level pupil attendance.

Distribution of the Policy

a) Summaries of the policy will be distributed to parents at the beginning of each school year.

b) Each teacher will receive copies of the policy annually.

c) Copies of the entire policy will be made available to community members upon request.

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: 6/15/11