

## **STUDENT ATTENDANCE (Policy Revised June 2008)**

The Board of Education recognizes that regular school attendance is a critical component of academic success.

Through implementation of this policy, the Board will monitor the current level of Absences, Tardiness and Early Departures (hereinafter referred to as "ATED"), encourage full attendance by all students, maintain an adequate attendance recordkeeping system, identify patterns of student ATED and develop effective intervention strategies to improve school attendance.

### **NOTICE:**

To be successful in this endeavor, it is imperative that all members of the school community, students, parents, teachers, staff and administrators work collaboratively and understand this policy, its purpose, procedures and the consequences of non-compliance in order to provide for its successful implementation. To ensure that all constituents are notified of and understand this policy, the following procedures shall be implemented:

- Copies of this attendance policy will be made available to any community member, upon request and posted on the District's website.
- The District will provide a copy of this attendance policy and any amendments thereto to faculty and staff. New staff will receive a copy upon their employment.
- Parents/Guardians will receive a plain language summary of this policy by mail at the start of the school year, which explains and stresses the parents'/guardians' responsibility for ensuring their children's attendance. This attendance policy will be included in the student handbooks and will be reviewed with students at the start of the school year.
- When appropriate, school newsletters and publications will include periodic reminders of the components of this attendance policy.
- When a student is absent from school for an unexcused reason or when a student leaves school early without the appropriate excuse/permission, designated staff member(s) will notify the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) by phone of the specific ATED.

### **EXCUSED AND UNEXCUSED ABSENCES**

Excused ATEDs include, but are not limited to:

- Personal illness
- Illness or death in the family
- Impassable roads or weather making travel unsafe
- Religious observance
- Quarantine
- Required court appearance
- Attendance at a health clinic
- Approved college/school visit [up to four (4) pre-approved visits per year]
- Approved cooperative work program
- Military obligation
- Or other such reasons as may be approved by the Principal or the Principal's designee

Only those students with excused ATEDs will be given the opportunity to make up a test or other missed work and/or turn in late assignments for inclusion in their final grade. Make up opportunities must be completed by a date specified by the student's teacher for the class in question.

Unexcused ATEDs include, but are not limited to:

- Class cuts
- Extended vacations
- Undocumented absences
- Tardiness
- Unapproved early leaves from school

Teachers may provide students with unexcused absences make up work; however this work will not be factored into their grades and is only provided to assist students in maintaining their progress in class. Even though this make up work will not be factored into the student's grade, it is expected that the student will complete such work to remain on task in each class.

All ATEDs must be accounted for in the attendance record. It is the parent's/guardian's responsibility to phone the school (630-3117, or-3118) by 9:00 a.m. the day the student will be absent. *(This also pertains to students who will be leaving school early.)*

Parents/guardians must also provide a written excuse for the student within forty-eight (48) hours upon the student's return to school. Such excuse must contain the reason and date of the ATED. [An "Excuse Form" is available on the HHS website or in the attendance office.] If the school office does not receive a written excuse within the forty-eight (48) hour time frame, the ATED will be designated as unexcused in the student's attendance records.

After the sixth consecutive day of absence for medical reasons, a doctor's note will be required. If a student is absent or expected to be absent for 10 days or more for medical reasons, the parent should contact the attendance office to request home instruction for the student.

#### GENERAL PROCEDURES/DATA COLLECTION

- For students in grades kindergarten through grade five (5), attendance must be recorded within the first hour of the school day, at least once daily. If students are dismissed from school grounds during a lunch period, then attendance must be recorded a second time upon the student's scheduled return.
- For students in grades six (6) through twelve (12), attendance must be recorded during each period of instruction.
- At the conclusion of each class period or school day, all attendance information shall be compiled and provided to the designated staff member(s) responsible for attendance
- The nature of an ATED shall be coded on a student's record.
- Student ATED data shall be available to and should be reviewed by the designated school personnel in an expeditious manner.
- Where additional information is received that requires corrections to be made to a student's attendance records, such corrections will be made within a reasonable time frame. Notice of such a change will be sent to appropriate school personnel subject to applicable confidentiality rules.
- Attendance data will be analyzed periodically to identify patterns or trends in student absences.

#### ATTENDANCE INCENTIVES

The District will create and implement systems to acknowledge a student's efforts to maintain or improve school attendance. Some of these incentives may include, but are not limited to the following:

- At the elementary level and at LMK, a perfect attendance award will be distributed to students with perfect attendance after each semester and at the end of the school year.

- At the Louis M. Klein Middle School's Moving-Up Ceremony an attendance award will be presented to those students who have had perfect attendance for at least two (2) years.
- At the Harrison High School awards ceremonies an attendance award will be presented to those students who have had perfect attendance throughout their entire four (4) years at Harrison High School.

#### **DISCIPLINARY CONSEQUENCES**

Unexcused ATEDs will result in disciplinary action consistent with the District's Code of Conduct and student handbooks. Those penalties may include detention or in-school suspension.

Student with unexcused ATEDs may also be denied the privilege of:

- Parking on campus,
- Participation in extracurricular activities, athletics and clubs,
- School sponsored events and field trips, and/or
- Leaving campus during free period(s) and/or during a lunch period.

LMK students and parent(s)/guardian(s) must be aware that in order to participate in a school sponsored event or activity, including athletics, the student must be in attendance at school by 11:30 a.m. on the day the activity/event is to take place.

Harrison High School students and parent(s)/guardian(s) must be aware that in order to participate in a school sponsored event or activity, including athletics, the student must be in attendance at school for at least five (5) academic credit bearing periods on the day the activity/event is to take place. The Principal or his/her designee has the sole discretion to make any exception to this rule on a case by case basis.

#### **ACADEMIC CONSEQUENCES**

The Board of Education recognizes an important relationship between class attendance and student performance. Consequently, each marking period a student's final grade may be based on, but not limited to, classroom participation as well as the student's performance on homework, tests, papers, projects etc.

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

At Harrison High School and for students enrolled in credit bearing high school level classes at Louis M. Klein Middle School, any student with eight (8) or more unexcused accumulated absences for a full year course (1 credit) will not receive credit for that course. Additionally, any student with four (4) or more unexcused accumulated absences for a half-year course (1/2 credit)--or two (2) or more unexcused absences for a physical education course or any 1/4 credit course--will not receive credit for that class.

At the conclusion of each quarter, those students who have accumulated two (2) unexcused absences for that quarter will receive written notification from the District indicating the number of unexcused absences the student has accumulated. A copy of this letter will be placed in the student's file and a copy will be forwarded to the Principal or the Principal's designee.

#### **ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENT FOR PARTICIPATION IN SUMMER SCHOOL**

In order to be eligible to participate in summer school, a student must have been in attendance for at least seventy-five percent (75%) of the days in which school was in session. In addition, in order to be eligible to participate in summer school for a particular class, that student must maintain enrollment in such class for the entire school year.

#### **APPEALS PROCESS**

Any parent/guardian may appeal in writing the number of unexcused days a student has accumulated or may appeal the denial of class credit due to excessive unexcused absences.

Any written appeal must be first made to the Principal or his/her designee within ten (10) days of receipt of notification from the District of the number of unexcused absences a student has or notification of the denial of class credit.

The Principal or his/her designee will make a written determination after reviewing the facts of the case within fifteen (15) days of receipt of the written appeal.

**Within five (5) days from the receipt of the written determination from the Principal or his/her designee, the parent/guardian may make a written appeal to the Superintendent of Schools and the Board of Education.**

**ANNUAL REVIEW**

**The Board shall annually review building-level student attendance records and shall revise this comprehensive attendance policy and make any revision to the plan it deems necessary to improve student attendance.**

**References: N.Y. Educ. Law §§ 1709; 3024; 3025- 3213  
8 NYCRR §§ 104.1; 175.6**