SUBJECT: COMPREHENSIVE STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICY

Introduction To SCCS Attendance Policy

Regular school attendance is an essential part of a solid public school education. The interaction between student and teacher, and between the students themselves is not only irreplaceable but is a major component within the New York State Learning Standards.

Absence from the classroom reduces the quality of instruction by interrupting the teacher student learning process and by limiting the educational interaction by all parties.

The Silver Creek Central School District's Attendance Policy is designed to encourage student attendance and provide procedures to deal with cases of excessive absences.

Under authority granted to all local school Board of Education by the NY State Education Department, the Silver Creek Central School Board of Education adopts the following "Silver Creek Central School District's Attendance Policy." This Attendance Policy is consistent with the District's Mission and Vision and is written to promote learning.

The Overall Goals and Objectives of the Silver Creek Attendance Policy

Overall goals of pupil attendance:

a) To increase school completion for all students.

b) To ensure sufficient pupil attendance at all scheduled periods of actual instruction in order to help pupils to succeed at meeting the New York State Learning Standards.

c) To provide data to develop interventions to help close the gap in student performance, given the high correlation between attendance and achievement.

d) To ensure the maintenance of an adequate record verifying the attendance of all children at instruction in accordance with Education Law, Section 3205.

e) To know the whereabouts of every student for safety and school management reasons.

f) To confirm that students are meeting compulsory attendance requirements.

g) To identify individual and group attendance patterns to design improvement efforts.

h) To determine the District's average daily attendance for State Aid purposes.

(Continued)
Description of Strategies to Meet Objectives of the S.C.C.S Attendance Policy

a) Create and maintain a positive school building culture by fostering a positive physical and psychological environment where the presence of strong adult role models encourages respectful and nurturing interactions between adults and students. This positive school culture is aimed at encouraging a high level of student bonding to the school, which in turn should lead to increased attendance.

b) Utilize data analysis systems for tracking individual student attendance along with individual and group trends of student attendance problems.

c) Maintain accurate record keeping via a Register of Attendance to record attendance, absence, tardiness or early departure of each student.

d) Develop early intervention strategies to improve school attendance for all students.

Notices

Notice to Students:

a) All students will receive a formal written copy of the Attendance Policy the first day of the school year. Students that enter school after the first day will receive a copy upon their enrollment.

b) A copy of the Policy will be placed in the student's handbook. Middle and high school students will receive a student handbook the first day of school or the first day of their official enrollment into SCCS.

c) A student orientation session will be held the first week of school. The principal or the dean of students during this orientation will conduct a verbal presentation of the policy.

d) If a student is absent without an excuse for an entire educational day, the attendance officer will review the policy with that student. If a student cuts a class or several classes without an excuse, the dean of students will review the attendance policy with that student.
SUBJECT:  COMPREHENSIVE STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICY (Cont'd.)

Notice to Parents:

a) Parents will be notified of the Attendance Policy each school year in early September. This policy will be provided in its entirety in the September issue of the District publication "The Silver Liner".

Parents will receive written and verbal notification of this policy at the 6th grade student/parent orientation and the 8th grade student/parent curriculum meeting.

b) A copy of the policy will be placed in the high school and elementary offices, the Anderson Lee Library, the high school library, and the District office.

c) Names of school administration and their telephone numbers will be provided in the attendance policy so parents/guardians and students may call to ask questions or state concerns.

d) An attendance policy "reminder notice" will be included in the February issue of the school District's publication The Insider.

Notice to Faculty and Staff:

a) The District will provide a copy of the Attendance Policy to all faculty and staff in a summer mailing. This summer mailing will be for the first year of the policy only. For all concurrent years, a copy of the policy will be included in the faculty/staff handbook.

b) The Attendance Policy will be discussed at the opening day faculty meeting in September of each school year and during the new teacher orientation in August.

c) The District will provide copies of the policy in the faculty room, school library, high school office, and in the District office.

Appointment of the Attendance Officer:

Each year at the annual reorganizational meeting of the Silver Creek Central School District Board of Education, the Board of Education will officially appoint an attendance officer for the current school year. (annual appointment). The attendance officer must also take an oath to uphold the integrity of the position.

The attendance officer will oversee the recordkeeping of the district's attendance and file all necessary registers of attendance each year. The attendance officer will verify and sign the annual district's official register each year and submit all necessary paperwork on attendance.

(Continued)
Student Attendance Recordkeeping/Data Collection

The record of each student's presence, absence, tardiness, and early departure shall be kept in a register of attendance in a manner consistent with Commissioner's Regulations. An absence, tardiness or early departure will be entered as "excused" or "unexcused" along with the District code for the reason.

Commencing July 1, 2003, attendance shall be taken and recorded in accordance with the following:

a) For students in non-departmentalized kindergarten through grade 5 (i.e. self-contained classrooms and supervised group movement to other scheduled school activities such as physical education in the gym, assembly, etc.) such student's presence or absence shall be recorded after the taking of attendance once per school day.

b) For students in grades six through twelve (i.e. students pass individually to different classes throughout the day), each student's presence or absence shall be recorded after the taking of attendance in each period of scheduled instruction except that where students do not change classrooms for each period of scheduled instruction, attendance shall be taken in accordance with paragraph "a" above.

c) Any absence for a school day or portion thereof shall be recorded as excused or unexcused in accordance with the standards articulated in this policy.

d) In the event that a student at any instructional level from kindergarten through grade twelve arrives late for or departs early from scheduled instruction, such tardiness or early departure shall be recorded as excused or unexcused in accordance with the standards articulated in this policy.

A record shall 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 of Education.

Attendance records shall also indicate the date when a student withdraws from enrollment or is dropped from enrollment in accordance with Education Law Section 3202(1-a).

At the conclusion of each class period or school day, all attendance information shall be compiled and provided to the designated school personnel who are responsible for attendance. The nature of the absence, tardiness or early departure shall be coded on a student's record in accordance with the established District/building procedures.

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

Official Register Period-by-Period Attendance Recording and Reporting of Attendance Procedures of Operations

There will be two types of absences:

1. Excused
2. Unexcused/without makeup

a) All teachers, study hall monitors, teacher tutors, substitute teachers, and any other adults assigned to supervise or instruct students in grades 6-12 must record student's attendance each and every period.

b) Attendance of all 6-12 students will be placed on the student's report card (4 times each year) next to the subject for whom the attendance is addressing. K-5 students will receive attendance reports 3 times a year with report cards.

c) Any student absent from school, tardy to school, or receiving an early dismissal from class or school must bring in a valid written excuse from their parents explaining the reason for the absence, tardy, or early release. This written excuse will go to the attendance officer. The teacher, after receiving official notification from the attendance officer, will then record the proper excuse/unexcused code in their attendance book.

The Attendance Officer will post on the "6th – 12th instructional staff e-mail" the status of the absence, i.e., excused or unexcused.

For students that are truant, cut class or have an unauthorized early departure from school, the Dean of Students will within two school days post the determination of the absence on the 6th - 12th instructional "e-mail" site, and will also share that information with the Attendance Officer. The student and parents/guardians will be informed in writing of such action.

d) Any absence that is not supported by a written parent verification will automatically turn into an unexcused absence within two (2) school days.

e) For an excused absence, the students will be given the same number of periods to make up any missed assignment. In no cases shall these make-up days/periods exceed 5 school days/periods.

Teachers may request "an exception waiver" from the principal to extend the number of days/periods (5) a student can make up the "missed assignments."

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

A student/parent may request in writing "an exception waiver" to the Attendance Committee in order to obtain a longer period of time to complete missed assignments.

Students that draw an unexcused absence will be denied the opportunity to complete past due assignments or tests they may have missed. (Several unexcused absences will be very detrimental to a student's overall course grade)

f) Students that are receiving homebound instruction or receiving instruction from a hospital, group home, or other such placements will not be considered absent since instruction will take place at that location (Alternative Instructional Site).

g) Cutting or skipping a class, truancy, or leaving school without permission will be registered as an unexcused absence. No make-up assignments or tests will be permitted.

Tardies

a) A tardy to school is any time a student enters the school after the late bell. (Each year that time will be posted in all classrooms and printed in the student handbook.)

A tardy to class is any time a student enters the class after the bell has sounded.

b) A student that is more than 10 minutes late for a class without prior notice to that teacher will be considered absent for the entire period. There will be no detention assigned for students that are more than 10 minutes late to a class since the time of 10 minutes will become an unexcused absence. Students may still draw after school detention for tardies of lesser than 10 minutes.

Early Departure

Early departure is when a student leaves class or school prior to the end of 8th period or the end of the last instructional period of the school day.

Missing an entire period will count towards (1) absence. Missing less than 20 minutes of a period will not be counted as a period absence.

All requests for early departure must be in writing and presented to the school nurse prior to the departure. "Early Departure" will be posted on the teacher's "e-mail" as soon as possible but no later than 1 day after the early dismissal.

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

Excused Or Unexcused Absences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Excused</th>
<th>Verification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal illness</td>
<td>Doctor or parent excuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counseling Appt.</td>
<td>Agency Excuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctor or Dentist Appt.</td>
<td>Doctor or parent excuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illness or death in family</td>
<td>Parent excuse or supporting document</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roads due to inclement weather</td>
<td>Administrative excuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious observation</td>
<td>Parent excuse - supporting document</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Court appearance</td>
<td>Parent excuse with supporting document</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISS or internal at SCCS</td>
<td>District document</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Code of Conduct Removal</td>
<td>District document</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCCS Extra-Curricular Activities</td>
<td>District document</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation in Sports or athletic events</td>
<td>District document</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students late to class</td>
<td>Faculty or staff excuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College visit</td>
<td>Parent excuse with supporting document</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OSS Students under 16 yrs.</td>
<td>District document</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperative work programs</td>
<td>District document</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military obligations</td>
<td>Military document</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quarantine</td>
<td>Medical notice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Trips</td>
<td>With Parent's Written Excuse in Advance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

Unexcused/without makeup of Assignments or Tests:

Out of school suspension for students 16 yrs. and older

Family trips **without advanced notification**

School truancy (parents not giving permission for their child to miss school or classes)

Cutting or skipping class or classes

**Student Attendance/Course Credit and Denial of Credit**

The District believes that classroom participation is related to and affects a student's performance with the understanding of subject matter. For purposes of this policy, classroom participation means that a student is in class and is prepared for instruction.

Consequently, for each marking period a certain percentage of a student's final grade will be based on classroom participation as well as the student's performance on homework, tests, papers, projects, etc. as determined by the building administrator and/or classroom teacher.

Students are expected to attend all scheduled classes. Consistent with the importance of classroom participation, unexcused student absences, tardiness, and early departures will affect a student's grade, including credit for classroom participation, for the marking period.

Taking into account that an absence is an absence and the standard is set at **28 absences** for a full year course and **10 absences** for semester course, see the following:

a) No credit shall be granted for any course of study for which a student has not met the minimum attendance standards. **Class attendance is required for credit.**

b) All school or class absences, excused or unexcused will be counted as **absences** in the attendance policy.

c) When a student has accumulated **28 absences** in a full year course, or **15 absences** in a semester course, **course credit will be denied.**

d) Notices in writing will be sent to parents when their child has accumulated **19 absences** in a full year course and **10 absences** in a semester course. Parent/student/administrative conferences will be scheduled for all student absences that reach the number **20** for a full year course and **10** for a semester course.

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

e) **Formal Appeals:** An Attendance Review Committee will be assembled to address all special circumstances and formal appeals. Parents may appeal the denial of credit. This appeal needs to be addressed in writing and received within 2 days of the denial of credit.

Attendance Review Committee will be made up of: The attendance officer, Dean of Students, school nurse, social worker, principal, guidance counselor, classroom teacher, and one community member (selected each year by the principal).

f) Students that are denied course credit should continue to improve their attendance, and maintain the highest possible grade point average for that class in order to be permitted to attend summer school. If a student attends and completes summer school with a 5th marking period grade high enough to be awarded a passing average of 65%, course credit will be awarded in August.

Students must, therefore, continue to attend the class and attempt to obtain the highest grade possible in order to calculate a 5th marking period passing average.

Students who are absent from class due to their participation in a school academic sponsored activity (fieldtrips, music competitions, AP exams, Regents Exams, etc.) are to arrange with their teachers to make up any work missed in a timely manner as determined by the student's teacher. Attendance at school sponsored events where instruction is substantially equivalent to the instruction which was missed shall be counted as the equivalent of regular attendance in class and will not be counted as an absence.

Upon returning to school following a properly excused absence, tardiness or early departure, it shall be the responsibility of the student to consult with his/her teacher(s) regarding arrangements to make up missed work, assignments and/or tests in accordance with the time schedule specified by the teacher and this policy.

g) Students in grades 6, 7, and 8 do not receive course credit but need to obtain units of study. Students in grades 6, 7, and 8 that exceed 28 absences in a full year course or 15 absences in a semester course, may be denied advancement to the next grade level based on the number of absences.

A Student Retention Committee will assemble to study each case individually. The same parent notices will be in place for the 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students as in place for the 9th - 12th grade attendance.

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

h) Attendance for students in the elementary school will be reviewed periodically. Parent/guardian shall be warned in writing of the negative educational consequences of non-attendance whenever the student's rate of attendance falls below 85%. The child study team will meet to address the best course of action for each child in question. The denial of advancement to the next grade level could be an educational option whenever absenteeism exceeds 15%.

Interventions

One of the purposes for recording attendance is to identify individual and group absence patterns in order to provide programs and services that will assist each student to be successful in meeting academic standards. The following is a list of interventions, programs, and services that will be available to students and parents.

Utilization of School Counselors: School Social Workers, Native American Social Worker, Title 9 Program Coordinator, School Resource Officer, and Guidance Counselors.

- Once a student has been absent 10 days, the school attendance officer will contact a school counselor. The school counselor will:
  a) Meet with the student
  b) Contact parent
  c) Attempt to determine the reason for the absences
  d) Proceed accordingly

Other options that may be employed

- Person In Need of Supervision: (PINS) to be filed by school or parent:
  a) The school can file PINS after the student has missed 3 days of school (confirmed truancy).
  b) The parent can file PINS after 3 incidents (specific behaviors such as: missing curfew, skipping school, etc.)
  c) Once the PINS are in place, a probation officer will monitor the student's attendance.
  d) Students that are identified as persons in need of supervision must be under the age of 16.

- Hotline Reports:
  a) If it is determined that the parent is not doing their part in getting the student to school, the situation must be reported to the Child Protection Hotline.
  b) Social Services will follow up accordingly in conjunction with counselor.
SUBJECT: COMPREHENSIVE STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICY (Cont'd.)

Incentives to Encourage Student's Attendance

It is our sincere hope that every student becomes self motivated to obtain a quality education by regular attendance. However, we do know from past experience that some students are motivated by various outside incentives.

The SCCS District's administrators will assign the development of incentives to the respective student council each school year. By having the students design such incentives, it is our goal to have our students address their own motivational needs and therefore increase the attendance in the elementary school, middle school, and the high school.

Sanctions

The SCCS attendance policy focuses on the right to a quality education. With this focus in mind, few sanctions are necessary.

a) The denial of course credit for students in grades 9th - 12th and the possible denial of grade level advancement for students in the middle school.

b) Unexcused absences, tardiness, and early departure will result in disciplinary sanctions as described in the District's Code of Conduct. Consequences are listed in this Code and are printed in the student handbook.

Pupil Attendance of Recordkeeping Coding System

The school's attendance office will design a coding system that is in compliance with Education Law Section 3205. These codes will address the following areas:

- Absences from school (K-1 2)
- Absences from classes (middle/high school)
- Tardiness to school or class
- Early departure
- Excused absences
- Unexcused

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: 8/11/04