

It is the belief of the BOCES that opportunities for students to achieve their fullest potential are maximized by regular school attendance that allows a student to take advantage of full interaction with his or her teachers and peers. The BOCES also believes that class attendance is a major component of academic success, and that improved student achievement will ultimately reduce the dropout rate. Therefore, it is the goal of BOCES to provide for the early identification of attendance problems and to establish effective methods to address such problems. Successful implementation of this policy will require cooperation among all members of the school community, including parents, students, teachers, administrators and support staff.

Commencing July 1, 2003, each student's presence or absence shall be recorded (in writing or electronically) in a register of attendance during each period of scheduled instruction. In non-departmentalized K-8 grades, school personnel must record each pupil's presence, absence, tardiness and early departure once per school day. Scheduled instruction shall include actual instruction or supervised study activities. Any absence from the school day or portion of the day shall be recorded in the register as excused or unexcused. In addition, any student's arrival late or departure early from scheduled instruction will be recorded as excused or unexcused.

The register of attendance should include the following for each student:

1. Name,
2. Date of birth,
3. Full names of parent(s) or person(s) in parental relations (guardian),
4. Address of student's residence,
5. Phone number(s) where parent(s) or guardian(s) may be contacted,
6. Date of student's enrollment,
7. Record of the student's attendance on each day of scheduled instruction,
8. Record each scheduled day of instruction during which the school is closed for all or part of the day because of extraordinary circumstances (weather, facilities problem, etc.), and
9. Record the date when a pupil withdraws from enrollment or is dropped from enrollment in accordance with Ed. Law § 3202(1-a).

A teacher or any other BOCES' designated employee shall be responsible for all entries in the register of attendance. If a BOCES' designated employee makes the entries in the registry, a teacher or other District employee shall supervise maintenance of the register of attendance. Each register entry must be verified by the oath or affirmation of the person making the entries.

The following list of reasons are considered excused absences. (Next to the reason is the letter code that shall be recorded in the reason section of the attendance register):

1. illness, (I)
2. illness in the family, (IF)
3. death in the family, (DF)
4. unsafe travel conditions, (UTC)
5. doctor appointments, (DA)
6. quarantine, (Q)

7. required court appearances, (RCA)
8. approved college visits, (ACV)
9. approved cooperative work programs, (ACWP)
10. religious observance, (RO)
11. attendance at health clinic, (AHC)
12. military obligation, (MO)
13. disciplinary detention of an incarcerated youth, (DDIY)
14. religious education/instruction, (REI)
15. school suspension (with alternative instruction requirements met), (SS)
16. driver's test, (DT) and
17. school approved events (SAE).

It is the intent of the Board not to penalize students for absenteeism over which they have no control, i.e., home school closures, early dismissals, conference days, etc. These shall be considered excused absences. Any other reason than the ones above shall be considered unexcused absences. The following nonexclusive list includes possible examples of unexcused absences:

1. senior skip day
2. family vacations
3. traveling
4. shopping/hair appointments
5. baby sitting
6. missing the bus
7. working
8. hunting/fishing
9. private lessons/activities
10. cold weather
11. needed at home

The register of attendance shall be reviewed by the BOCES' principal/supervisor in charge of each school building/program and by a BOCES' designee. The designee shall be responsible for addressing students' unexcused absences, tardiness and early departures from scheduled instruction. The designee will notify parents or guardians of any unexcused absences, tardiness or unexcused early departure and remind them of the attendance policy.

Students who have an unexcused absence, late arrival or early departure from scheduled instruction will be subject to a series of incremental interventions including counseling, loss of privileges, warnings, suspension and any other disciplinary penalties available under the Code of Conduct.

BOCES believes that there is an important relationship between class attendance and student performance. Students will receive at least weekly grades that reflect achievement in subject area knowledge, demonstration of skills, attitude, work habits, classroom assignments, etc. Course grades, attendance, and other documents will be reported to home schools.

Students will be given the opportunity to make-up work. The student will arrange with his or her teacher for an assignment to make up the missed work. Make-up opportunities must be completed by a date

Student Attendance

5215

specified by the teacher or program. Make-up work may include appropriate paper and pencil assignments, performance tasks, or the equivalent. Only upon the completion of the assigned make-up work, will the student be deemed to have attended the class(es) missed.

If and when a student is in jeopardy of failing the course due to their poor attendance record and classroom performance, the teacher or designated attendance employee shall notify the parents or person(s) in parental relations.

Administrators and staff will create incentives and rewards for pupil attendance, i.e., students with perfect attendance for one full school month may be awarded an attendance certificate and later recognized at a school-wide assembly program.

BOCES shall annually review this attendance policy and make any revisions necessary in order to improve student attendance. This review shall include an examination of current intervention strategies, as well as the development of new and effective intervention strategies to improve school attendance, thereby improving students' performance.

BOCES will provide each teacher, student and his/her parent or guardian with a copy of the attendance policy at the beginning of each school year and shall make copies available to any other member of the community upon request in the school office.

Legal Ref: Education Law §101, §207, §305, §3024, §3205, §3210, §3211
8 NYCRR §104.1, §104.2

Approved: June 18, 2003