Minerva Central School
Comprehensive Attendance Policy

COMPREHENSIVE STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICY (Appendix A)

The Minerva Board of Education recognizes that student attendance is an important component of student success. Student interaction with teachers and other students in class helps to enhance the academic learning experience and provides a basis by which students can demonstrate mastery of subject matter.

Therefore, the Board, in pursuant to Section 104.1 of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education, adopts this comprehensive attendance policy. State Education Law requires that each minor regularly attend school full-time from the first day of session in September of the school year in which such minor becomes six years of age through the last day of the school year in which such minor has completed a four-year high school course of study. He/she may attend a school other than a public school or receive home instruction, provided the instruction is equivalent to that given in the public school.

Objectives

Through the implementation of this policy the Board expects:

a. To increase student attendance;
b. To accurately track the attendance, absence, tardiness and early releases of students to and from school;
c. To encourage regular attendance of classes so that pupils may achieve the State mandate education standards,
d. To track student location for safety reasons and to account to parents regarding the location of children during school hours;
e. To provide consistent procedures for dealing with attendance problems

Attendance Officer

The Board shall designate a person as the Attendance Officer. The Attendance Officer shall be responsible for maintaining the register of attendance. The Attendance Officer is responsible for reviewing pupil attendance records and initiating appropriate action to address unexcused pupil absence, tardiness and early departure consistent with the Comprehensive Attendance Policy. The Attendance Officer will report absences; tardiness concerns directly to the Principal.

The Attendance Officer will also be responsible for documenting absences and tardiness in eSchooData on a daily basis.

Principal

The Principal will be charged with reviewing pupil attendance records periodically for the purpose of initiating appropriate action in conjunction with the attendance officer and in accordance with the Comprehensive Attendance Policy.

Attendance Review Team

An Attendance Review Team will be formed. The Principal will head the team. If available, a parent of a school student will be included on the Review Team. This parent may not be an employee of the Minerva Central School District. The main function of the team will be to discuss appropriate intervention strategies and review cases of either excessive unexcused absences or excused absences where classwork was not completed.

Register of Attendance

Minerva Central School is required to take attendance and record each pupil's presence, absence, tardiness or early departure and whether such absence is excused or unexcused in the following manner:

a. In non-departmentalized grades; attendance must be taken once a day;
b. In all other cases attendance must be taken each period and reported to the Attendance Officer within five (5) minutes of the start of class;
c. Additionally, after attendance is taken, an individual student's late arrival or early departure must be recorded.

Definitions

Whenever used within the Comprehensive Attendance Policy, the following terms shall mean:

a. Scheduled Instruction: Every period that a pupil is scheduled to attend instructional or supervised study activities during the course of a school day during the school year or mandatory summer school classes.
b. Absent: The pupil is not present for the entire period of the pupil's scheduled instruction.
c. Tardy: The pupil arrives later than the starting time of the pupil's scheduled instruction
d. Early Release: The pupil leaves prior to the end of the pupil's scheduled instruction
e. e) Excused: Any absence, tardiness, or early departure for which the pupil has a valid approved excuse. Parents must provide written notification prior to or immediately after the absence. Such excused absences shall include: personal illness, illness or death in family, religious observance, quarantine, required court appearances, attendance at health clinics or other medical visits, approved college visits, military obligations, absences approved in advance by the Superintendent and or Principal (ex. college visits) and other reasons as may be approved by the Commissioner of Education.
f. f) Unexcused: Any absence, tardiness or early departure for which the pupil has no valid school approved excuse. Such Unexcused absences shall include shopping trips, haircuts appointments, driving test appointments, family vacation, oversleeping, skipping class and any other absences that are not excused.

Coding System

The following coding system shall be used to indicate the nature and reason for a pupil's missing all or part of scheduled instruction:

E	Excused	U	Unexcused
R	Return	DIF	Death in Family
D	Earl Departure	F	Family
SUS	External Suspension	S	Sick
ISS	Internal Suspension	O	Illegal
FT	Field Trip	M	Medical
P	Personal	TU	Tardy Unexcused
TE	Tardy Excused	AT	Absent Tardy

In order to encourage better attendance, the District will take the following steps

a. Parents will be notified every time their child is not in school.
b. For every five absences, tardiness, early departure, or any combination thereof, the pupil's parent/guardian shall receive a written notice from the Attendance Officer.
c. Teachers will provide make-up work upon request to students who have excused absences to allow them the opportunity to earn credit for the course.
d. Students who are ill for a prolonged period of time and cannot attend school will be tutored at home or at appropriate medical facilities according to State regulations.
e. At teacher or administrator request, when attendance becomes a concern, a letter will be sent home informing the parent of the number of absences and a conference will be required with the attendance review Team. Appropriate intervention strategies will be discussed

For Students in grades 7-12 the following attendance guidelines will be followed:

a. A student shall not be counted as present for a class if the student misses more than 10 minutes of class, whether through tardiness or early departure. (Note: This does not apply to music lessons or educational excused class trips.)
b. Students of compulsory attendance age suspended from school instruction may not be marked as absent unless they fail to attend scheduled alternative education on that day.

c. If, a student with excessive excused absences has not completed assigned make-up work, the principal shall be responsible for determining make-up opportunities with teachers. The Principal will also determine deadlines and consequences which may result if the work is not completed within the deadline.

Notices of Absences

The student's parent(s)/guardian shall be notified of pupil's absences, tardiness or early departure according to the following:

a. Where a pupil has not been marked as present for the first period of scheduled instruction and the school has not been previously notified of the absence, the Attendance Officer shall attempt to contact the student's parent(s)/guardian to learn the nature of the pupil's absence and notify them that the student has not arrived at school.
b. When a student is absent, tardy, or leaves early from class or school without excuse; the Attendance Officer will notify the student's parent(s)/guardian by phone of the specific absence, and remind them of the attendance policy and review the intervention procedures with them

Attendance Standards

Students who meet the following attendance *I* tardiness *1* early departure standards will be eligible for incentives. Students who exceed the attendance *1* tardiness 1 early departure standards will not be eligible for incentives.

Once exceeded; students may opt to earn back time by staying after school for homework hall in order to become eligible for incentives.

- 1 homework hall = 1 tardy or early departure of 40 minutes or less.
- 6 homework halls = 1 absence

Week	Attendance (max)	Tardy / Early Departure (max)		Week	Attendance (max)	Tardy / Early Departure (max)
4	4	2		22	9	5
6	4	2		24	9	5
8	4	2		26	10	5
10	4	2		28	10	5
12	6	3		30	11	6
14	6	3		32	11	6
16	7	4		34	12	6
18	8	4		36	12	6
20	8	4		38	14	7
				40	14	7

Incentives

The District will implement systems to acknowledge a student's efforts to mainta~no r Improve school attendance. Such incentives can be:

a. An awards assembly to honor students who have high attendance rates.
b. Award certificates for perfect attendance at the end of the school year ceremony.
c. Classroom teachers will be encouraged to create their own incentives to encourage attendance.

d. Positive contact with parents: (Either by phone or written.)
e. Prekindergarten -Grade 6: Students who have met the Attendance Requirements will be invited to attend a once per quarter Irish Pride Event, Ice Cream Party, or Open Gym event
f. Grades 7-12: Students who have met the Attendance Requirements will be eligible to:
    i. Eat Lunch Outside
    ii. Access free-choice time during Activity Period
    iii. Participate in a Field Trip - Once a Quarter
    iv. Enter Raffle
g. Grades 9-10: Hot Chocolate/Coffee in Health Office
h. Grades 11-12: Senior Lounge during lunch and/or Activity Period

Consequences

The District will implement consequences for those not meeting attendance guidelines in an effort to maintain or improve school attendance. Such consequences shall include:

a. Loss of Incentives
b. Parent Letter
c. Parent Phone Call
d. Parent Meeting, including the development of Attendance Success Plan
e. Home Visit and/or Meeting with Social Worker
f. Home Visit and/or Meeting with SRO

In addition, for students missing 50% or more above the established attendance standard, such consequences may include:

a. g) In-School Suspension
b. h) Loss of field trips
    i) Student PINS (Person in Need of Supervision) Petition filed with Essex County
c. j) Parent referral to Essex County Child Protective Services for educational neglect
d. k) Successful completion of required make-up seat time or face denial of course credit

Appeal Process

A parent/guardian may request a review of his/her child's attendance record. Students' attendance records will be reviewed on a case by case basis.

Intervention Strategy Development

The Principal shall meet each marking period with the Attendance Officer and/or any teacher the Principal determines necessary to review student records, to address identified patterns of unexcused pupil absence, tardiness, and early departure and review the current intervention methods.

If it is determined that the existing invention policies or practices are insufficient, the Superintendent shall notify the Board of Education prior to its annual review of the building's attendance records of both insufficient practices and any proposed changes needing Board approval to implement.

TO BE SUCCESSFUL in this endeavor, it is imperative that all members of the school community are aware of this policy; its purpose, procedures and the consequences of non-compliance. To ensure that students, parents, teachers, and administrators are notified of and understand this policy, the following procedures shall be implemented:

a. The attendance policy will be included in student handbooks and will be reviewed with students at the start of the school year.
b. Parents will receive a plain-language summary of this policy by mail at the start of the school year
c. School newsletters will include periodic reminders of the components of the policy
d. The District will provide a copy of the attendance policy and any amendments to the faculty and staff.
e. New staff will receive a copy upon their employment.
f. All faculty and staff will meet at the beginning of each school year to review the attendance policy to clarify individual roles in its implementation.
g. Copies of this policy will also be made available to any community member, upon request

Annual Review

The Superintendent will review with the Board of Education student attendance percentages. If such records show a decline in student attendance, the Board shall have the right to revise this comprehensive attendance policy and make any revisions to the plan it deems necessary to improve student attendance.

Education Law Sections 3024, 3025, 3202, 3205, 3206, 3210, 321 1 and 3213

8 NYCRR Sections 104.1, 109.2 and 175 6 Adopted: 8/8/19