

ATTENDANCE

INTRODUCTION

School attendance is one of the key building blocks necessary for a student to achieve academic success. Without consistent attendance, students cannot receive the full benefit of the educational process being provided by the Sharon Springs Central School District. The intent of the Board of Education in establishing this policy is to clearly articulate its desire to maximize student attendance, reduce unexcused absences, establish appropriate record keeping processes, establish procedures for intervening with students who are experiencing attendance problems including parental involvement and notification, and to establish processes to annually monitor building level attendance and where appropriate modify this policy based on that data.

RECORDKEEPING AND REPORTING

The Superintendent is charged with developing and maintaining an appropriate record keeping process in compliance with Commissioner's Regulations, Sec. 104.1 and related reporting processes. These processes shall include:

- The designation of a person who will be responsible for the maintenance of a register of attendance including the required demographic information for each student and the record of each student's attendance using the definitions of excused and unexcused tardiness, absences and/or early departure contained in this policy.
- Procedures whereby all teachers identify and submit the tardiness, absences or early departure of all students in their respective classes. Attendance in all elementary grades shall be taken once each day. In grades 6-12, attendance will be taken during each class period.
- Procedures to ensure that at the beginning of each school day or the beginning of each class period, dependent on the level, the teachers shall promptly submit the attendance data on each student in their classes to the person designated to maintain the register of attendance.

ATTENDANCE DEFINITIONS

Excused tardiness, absences or early departure may only be recorded for the following reasons:

- Personal Illness
- Family Illness or Death
- Religious Observance
- Legal and/or criminal matters directly involving the student
- School sponsored activities for which the student has permission to participate
- Others which the Building Principal believes, after consultation with the Superintendent, to be excusable.

All other tardiness, absences or early departures shall be considered unexcused absences. All instances of tardiness, absence, or departing early must be substantiated. Parents are responsible for providing the District with a written explanation upon the student's return to school.

INCENTIVES

The district at the close of each year will present, at the awards ceremony, a certificate and an award to each student whose attendance is:

- Perfect - No missed minutes for any reason other than school sponsored field trips or college visits.
- Outstanding – No Absences, all tardies or dismissals are for medical or dental appointments.
- Commendable – No more than 1 – 3 tardies or absences, regardless of reason.

INTERVENTION

Students who have unexcused tardiness, absences and/or early departures shall be subject to the disciplinary consequences outlined in the District's Code of Conduct. The Principal or his/her designee shall contact the student's parents to review the provisions of this policy including the consequences under the Code of Conduct. The Principal or his/her designee will work with the parents to develop an appropriate plan to assure that further unexcused tardiness, absences and/or early departures do not occur. Where an ongoing, consistent pattern of unexcused tardiness, absence or early departure emerges, the student and family may be referred to appropriate counseling services within the District or the community.

ATTENDANCE AND GRADES

The Board of Education believes that attendance is one factor which teachers may use in calculating a student's grade in combination with class work, tests, homework and other assignments. It is the expectation of the Board of Education that students will be in attendance in all classes of the courses in which they are enrolled. As such, unexcused tardiness, absences and/or early departures may affect a student's grade for the marking period in which the unexcused tardiness, absences and/or early departures occurred.

High School students (Grades 7-12) must attend school at least 85% of the days they are enrolled in school to obtain course credit. Students who have exceeded the unexcused attendance limits will **not** have the opportunity to make-up work or tests. Only those students who have excused tardiness, absences and/or early departures will be afforded the opportunity to make-up class assignments, homework or other projects and/or tests. The students are responsible for meeting with the teacher(s) upon their return to school to establish a plan for these make-ups, which will include a reasonable timeframe for the make-ups to be completed, as set by the teacher. The Principal or his/her designee will be responsible for informing parents at appropriate intervals both by phone and mail of the potential consequences of course credit **not being awarded** if the students exceed the above excused limits.

ANALYSIS OF ATTENDANCE DATA

The Building Principal is responsible on an ongoing basis for monitoring the overall attendance patterns within his/her school and to work with the teaching staff to develop strategies which will address any trends of poor attendance in the building. The Superintendent shall, on an annual basis at a monthly meeting of the Board of Education, present the Board with an analysis of the attendance data in each of the buildings, along with the plans developed by the Principal, in collaboration with the staff to address any patterns of poor attendance, as well as any recommendations for changes in this policy.

DISTRIBUTION OF THE POLICY

To assure that students, parents, staff and the community at large have an understanding of the elements of this policy, the Board of Education charges the Superintendent with assuring that the following activities are carried out:

- A plain language summary of this policy shall be written and placed in the student handbook and reviewed with students on an annual basis.
- A plain language summary of this policy shall be written and communicated to all parents on an annual basis.
- All teachers will receive a copy of the policy as soon as practical after adoption by the Board and all new teachers will receive a copy of the policy at the time of employment by the District.
- Copies of the policy will be available for the community at large through the Principal and through the office of the Superintendent.