

## ATTENDANCE OF STUDENTS

### *Headnote*

This policy is to be implemented immediately to the extent possible at each school, with full implementation at each school by July 1, 2003.

The Peru Central School District Board of Education recognizes that providing clear, concise policy guidance to Principals, teachers, students and interested others in regard to attendance is necessary, in accordance with state law, and appropriate, in regard to district-wide consistency with attendance among the district's schools.

The goal of having all students who attend our schools receive a sound basic public school education that will enable them to enjoy life as productive citizens is best achieved by consistent student attendance and active participation by student in their classes.

Parents and families have the obligation to insure the consistent and punctual attendance of the children in their family who are enrolled in our district's schools and classes. Students themselves share in this obligation for consistent, punctual attendance and active student participation in classes. Principals and teachers have an obligation to encourage consistent and punctual attendance by students.

### *Strategies*

The basic strategy of this policy is to recognize and promote the positive connections among active student participation in class activities, student achievement throughout the disciplines, timely completion of graduation requirement for earning a high school diploma and consistent, punctual student attendance. Consistent and punctual student attendance helps to create an environment that fosters subject competency, continuity of learning, productive habits of work and mind, and enhanced student responsibility.

Students are expected to consistently attend and actively participate in class, and to arrive at class prepared to be actively engaged with class activities and assigned projects. Students within state-prescribed age limits are required to attend school each day when school is in session unless they have a legal excuse.

Failure of students to consistently attend class is in conflict with the overall goal of having our students receive a sound basic public school education that will enable them to enjoy life as productive citizens. Compensating or corrective actions are to be considered and implemented, upon careful consideration of valid data and the fact patterns associated with a particular student who has an emerging pattern or chronic pattern of unexcused absences.

### *Charge to Principals*

Consequently, Principals are charged with specific responsibility to see that class attendance is recorded in a manner consistent with state requirements, and a summary report of each individual student's attendance record is to be reported to parents/legal guardians at the end of each marking quarter or more frequently if so required by the school's code of conduct or if that student's Principal or Principal's designee[s] determines more frequent notification to be necessary.

Principals are to see that a summary of this policy is to be included in each school's code of conduct for students, and the code of conduct is to be distributed to students and their parent/legal guardians at the start of classes each academic year.

Principals are to meet at the start of each academic year with faculty and support staff directly involved with generating and reporting attendance data to review this policy and to clarify individual and team roles associated with implementation. The Principal is to see that those who are charged with tracking attendance and/or electronic reporting of attendance data for that school receive training in proper procedures and protocols.

Students are to be given opportunity to make up work that was missed due to one or more excused absences.

Secondary grades Principals are charged with submitting to the Superintendent of Schools before the end of each academic school year's first marking quarter the specific guidelines and processes that will be used by the Principal and others in the event there is consideration given later that school year to deny a student course credit or to respond appropriately to a student's appeal subsequent to such action.

The Superintendent will notify the Principal if the guidelines or processes submitted are identified as needing refinement to meet state regulations or to satisfy the Peru Central School District expectations established via this policy.

#### *Excused Absences and Tardiness*

Student absence or tardiness is to be excused for the following reasons:

- o Personal illness or injury;
- o Serious illness, emergency illness or death in the student's immediate family;
- o Obligatory religious observance;
- o Court-required appearance;
- o Dental or other medical appointment;
- o School-sponsored or activity or event;
- o School-approved college visit or interview;
- o Principal-approved career awareness or occupational education program;
- o Driver's license road test [however not a driver permit test];
- o Delayed arrival of the student's school bus to the campus;
- o Inclement weather or impassable roads that make travel unsafe;
- o School music lesson;
- o Other reasons authorized by the Principal or Superintendent of Schools.

Absence or tardiness for any other reason is considered to be unexcused.

#### *Attendance of Students Reporting System Codification*

Principals, in consultation with the district's information technology coordinator and other individuals identified by the Principals as appropriate, are to establish a consistent district-wide attendance reporting system codification method.

#### *Timely Notice to Parents/Legal Guardians*

Principals are charged to submit annually to the Superintendent of Schools by the last week in May the set of specific planned procedures and protocols to be followed that next school year when a student has a persistent and/or severe attendance problem.

The Superintendent will notify the Principal if the planned procedures and protocols are identified as needing refinement to meet state regulations or satisfy the Peru Central School District expectations established via this policy.

Course credit awarded by our high school for Peru Central School District students attending the CVES career and technical center is to be determined by the very same set of local standards established at Peru Central for awarding course credit.

In the event that there is a difference or gap in expectation between the specific procedures and protocols for attendance or for awarding credit at Peru Central and the specific procedures and protocols used at CVES, Peru's procedures and protocols will take precedence in regard to determining if credit is to be awarded toward a Peru Central School District diploma.

#### *Annual Review*

Once adopted, this policy is to be reviewed annually at the regular May meeting along with the district's code of conduct.

First Reading: June 11, 2002  
Second Reading: August 13, 2002  
Third Reading: September 10, 2002  
Adoption: September 10, 2002

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*Footnote*

Some portions of this policy are based substantially on, and used with chief school officer permission from, the Niskayuna Central School District and the Capital Region BOCES. Those two organizations shared their policy drafts during a New York State Council of School Superintendents workshop at Niskayuna's District Office on May 31, 2002. Their generous sharing of several early policy drafts intended to reflect updated state guidelines is appreciated and noted.

A copy of Peru Central School District's policy draft and final updated policy on attendance of students will be shared with those two organizations and with the Champlain Valley BOCES, in the spirit of assisting other organizations with continuous review and refinement of attendance policies.