

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

The Centennial School District recognizes its obligation to require the regular attendance of all students to ensure continuity of instruction and compliance with state attendance regulations.

The Superintendent is responsible for the implementation of this policy.

Policy: 3.26
Adopted: 03/24/81
Amended: 10/10/89
 06/09/93
 03/12/96
 02/12/02
 12/14/04
 03/13/07

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

I. Definitions

- A. Compulsory school age refers to the period of a child's life from the time the child enters school as a beginner, which may be no later than eight years of age, until the age of seventeen or graduation from high school, whichever comes first.
- B. Lawful absences include illness, family emergency, death of a family member, legal medical or dental appointments, authorized school activities, and educational travel with prior approval.
- C. An absence is excused when a student is prevented from attendance for mental, physical, or other reasons, and an acceptable written excuse is provided within 3 calendar days.
- D. All absences shall be treated as unlawful, unless the school receives a written excuse from a parent/guardian explaining the reason(s) for an absence within 3 calendar days of the absence.
- E. A permanent unlawful absence shall be recorded if the school does not receive a written excuse within 3 calendar days of the absence.

II. Reporting of Absence

- A. Teachers shall report student absence electronically on a daily basis.
- B. The principal or designee shall attempt to notify the parent/guardian unless prior notification has taken place.
- C. The principal shall report to the Assistant Superintendent or Director of Secondary Education:
 - 1. high percentage of absenteeism (in excess of 10% of the student enrollment at that building)
 - 2. high incidents of childhood disease/illness
 - 3. other unusual patterns of absenteeism.
- D. The principal shall notify the assigned school social worker/home and school visitor of any absent student:
 - 1. who is suspected of being truant
 - 2. whose parent/guardian cannot be contacted to report a student absence after three attempts
 - 3. who has an unusual pattern of absenteeism.

III. Follow-up of Student Absence/Lateness

- A. Principal or designee shall:
 - 1. collect an excuse written by the student's parent/guardian for each absence
 - 2. remind the student that the absence excuse is required within 3 calendar days
 - 3. maintain and/or forward all excuses for absences for the school year.
- B. The principal shall implement a system for calling the parent/guardian to determine the reason for the student's absence in cases involving three consecutive days.
- C. The school social worker/home and school visitor shall:
 - 1. obtain information regarding student absence reported in II.C.
 - 2. communicate this information to the principal or designee within three (3) school days.
- D. The principal or designee shall make a decision regarding lawful/unlawful absence based upon information received from available sources.
- E. The principal or designee shall send appropriate reminders to parents when students are late five times unlawful. (Examples of unlawful lateness include oversleeping, transportation issues, etc.).

IV. Procedures for Addressing Permanent Unlawful Absences

- A. The principal or designee shall:
 - 1. record the unlawful absence and notify the parent/guardian.
 - 2. send a written notice to the parent/guardian and a copy to Pupil Services when a compulsory age student accumulates three days of unlawful absences in the school year. A Truancy Elimination Plan (TEP) may be developed with the family.
 - 3. upon further unlawful absences, request in writing that the school social worker/home and school visitor issue a citation to the parents/guardians of the student and file that citation with the Magisterial District Judge for each incident of unlawful absence.
- B. For students of compulsory school age the principal or designee and the school social worker/home and school visitor shall attend citation hearings as scheduled by the District Justice.

V. Chronic Cases of Unlawful Absenteeism-Compulsory School Age Students

- A. If, after the first citation and District Justice action, additional unlawful absences occur, the principal or designee shall notify the school social worker/home and school visitor.
- B. The school social worker/home and school visitor may make a truancy referral to the Bucks County Office of Children and Youth.
- C. The school social worker/home and school visitor may issue additional citations to the District Justice.
- D. The school social worker/home and school visitor shall report the status of cases to the principal or designee on an on-going basis.
- E. A maximum of ten days of cumulative lawful absences verified by parental notification may be permitted during the school year. Additional absences require an excuse from a physician.
- F. Students who miss ten consecutive school days shall be dropped from the active membership roll, unless the school is provided with evidence the excuse is legal or school is pursuing compulsory attendance prosecution.

Administrative Procedures: 3.26

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