

7.0 STUDENTS

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7.1 ATTENDANCE

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The North Warren Central District recognizes the importance of regular daily attendance in the academic progress and success of all students. Having a clearly defined and enforceable policy is essential to ensure that student motivation to attend each day becomes a lifestyle decision. It is hoped that this will become a habit that enters into their post-secondary plans and future employment.

The student attendance process and procedures will include the following components:

- A description of the method for taking and recording student attendance daily for all students and also period-by-period for students in grades seven through twelve. Attendance by minutes will be taken in grades K-12.
- A definition of excused and unexcused absences.
- A description of the attendance requirements for receiving course credit and/or attending summer school.
- A description of the allowable instances and process by which students may make up absences to obtain course credit and attend summer school.
- A description of incentives available to encourage regular student attendance.
- A description of consequences to be applied for tardiness or failure to attend school or class.
- A description of the process by which parent/guardians will be notified of a student's tardiness, failure to attend school, or failure to attend class.
- A description of intervention strategies to be implemented in addressing attendance problems.
- A description of the responsibilities and organizational structure for monitoring, recording, reviewing, and addressing attendance concerns.

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The North Warren Central School District Board of Education recognizes that regular school attendance is a major component of academic success. Through implementation of this policy the Board expects to reduce the current level of unexcused absences, tardiness, and early departures; encourage full attendance by all students; maintain an adequate attendance record keeping system; identify patterns of student unexcused absences, tardiness and early departures; and develop effective intervention strategies to improve school attendance.

NOTICE

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 have access to a plain language summary of this policy via the North Warren website at the start of the school year. Parents will be asked to sign and return a statement indicating that they have read and understand the policy. Paper copies of the policy will be made available upon request only.
- c. When a student is absent, tardy, or leaves early from class or school without excuse, designated staff members(s) will notify the student's parent(s) by phone and mail at defined intervals of the specific violation, remind them of the attendance policy, and review Attendance Intervention Procedures with them.
- d. School newsletters and publications will include periodic reminders of the components of this policy.
- e. The district will provide a copy of the attendance policy and any amendments thereto to faculty and staff. 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.

Excused and Unexcused Absences

Excused absences, tardiness, and early departures from class or school are defined as absences, tardiness, and early departures from class or school due to: illness, illness or death in the family; impassable roads or weather; religious observance; quarantine; required court appearances; attendance at health clinics; approved college visits; approved cooperative work programs ; approved educational programs; military obligations ; catastrophic disaster, or such other reasons as may be approved.

Students who are absent due to illness for more than five consecutive days must provide an excuse signed by a licensed physician.

All other absences, tardiness, and early departures are considered unexcused absences. Examples of unexcused absences are: oversleeping, missing a bus, hunting, babysitting, haircut, visiting relatives, family vacations, skipping school, driving arriving late/early departure, etc.

All absences, tardiness and early departures must be accounted for. It is the parent's responsibility to notify the school office within at least 3 school days of the absence, tardiness or early departure and to provide a written excuse upon the student's return to school. If a note is not provided within 3 schooldays, the absence, tardiness or early departure will be considered unexcused.

Absence Codes

- UE- Unexcused
- EX – Excused
- FT – Field Trip
- EA – Extra-curricular
- SA – School Activity
- HT – Home Tutoring
- TR – Truancy
- IS – In School Suspension
- OS – Out of School Suspension
- ST – Suspended with tutoring
- PU – Program Unavailable

ATTENDANCE GUIDE POLICY

At the 9-12 grade level, any student with more than 20 total absences in a course may not receive credit for the course. (For a one-semester courses a student may not have more than 10 absences.) If a student is absent 20 or more days from any course, student removal will result and a "W/A" (withdraw/absence) notation will be entered on the student's academic transcript.

At the 7-8 grade level, any student with more than 20 total absences in a course may be required to repeat the course the following year, and a W/A (withdraw/absence) notation will be entered on the students report card. .

At the K-6 grade level any student with more than 20 total absences in a course will remain with their class, but will be at risk of potential retention in grade.

School-sponsored activities, school appointments and school suspension will not be counted as absences.

A total of 5 tardies in a given class (of greater than 20 minutes) will be considered an absence.

Attendance Incentives

The district will design and implement systems to acknowledge a student's efforts to maintain or improve school attendance.

At the classroom levels, teachers are encouraged to assign special responsibilities (distribute and collect materials, lead groups, assist the teacher, etc.) to students who may need extra motivation to come to school.

Intervention Procedures

Intervention procedures will be implemented at all levels in order to correct or assist any and all attendance issues. Intervention procedures may include, but not be limited to: letters sent home to parents, counseling, home visits by school personnel, social services or law enforcement officials, attendance committee review of student records, agency referrals (CPS, PINS, etc.), meeting with Principal, Superintendent Hearing, recommendations for retention or summer school.

Disciplinary Consequences

Unexcused absences, tardiness, early departures will result in disciplinary action consistent with the district's code of conduct. Those penalties may include, for example, detention or in-school suspension. Students may also be denied the privilege of participating in or attending extra-curricular events.

In addition, principals and/or guidance counselors will contact the student's parents to remind them of the attendance policy, explain the ramifications of unexcused absences, tardiness, or early departures, stress the importance of class attendance and discuss appropriate intervention strategies to correct the situation.

Student Responsibilities

1. A student who misses a class for any reason must make arrangements with their teacher(s) to obtain class notes and homework assignments the first day they return to school. (Note: in response to unexcused absence, teacher may choose not to allow make-up option for credit.)
2. A student who misses a class for any reason must perform all make-up assignments as directed by the student's teacher.
3. A student who has an unexcused absence due to cutting a class will be subject to the Cougar Code of Conduct.

Only those students with excused absences, tardiness or early departures will be given the opportunity to make up a test or other missed work and/or turn in a late assignment for inclusion in their final grade. Make up opportunities must be completed by a date specified by the student's teacher for the class in question. It is the student's responsibility for getting class work. If a test was given a teacher may give an alternative form of the test.

Process

The school will notify the parent/guardian of a student who is absent 10 days or more in writing about the concern regarding attendance. (5 days for a one-semester course).

At 15 days absent, another letter will be sent, requesting a school conference to discuss the student's progress and intervention strategies.

Administration will file a PINS petition for any student with more than 18 unexcused absences. (to be used for students 16 or under)

A student with excessive absences, tardiness or early departures may lose their eligibility to play sports or participate in other extra-curricular activities.

A student with excessive absences, tardiness or early departures may be subject to such other consequences deemed appropriate in order to prevent further absences, tardiness or early departures.

At 20 days, the student will be removed from the class academically and a "W/F" notation will be made on the transcript.

APPEAL PROCESS

A parent or guardian may request a building level review of their student's attendance record. The Committee will make a final determination within 5 school days, during which time, the student may remain in the course(s).

Committee Members:

1. Grade appropriate School Counselor
2. Administrator
3. One of student's academic teachers
4. Attendance Officer

Annual Review

The Board shall annually review building level student attendance records and, if such records show a decline in student attendance, the Board shall revise this comprehensive attendance policy and make any revisions to the plan it deems necessary to improve student attendance.