

Attendance Policy

Statement of Overall Objectives

School attendance is both a right and a responsibility. CVES is an active partner with component districts, students, and parents in the task of ensuring that all students will become successful, contributing members of society. Regular attendance is critical to the development of theoretical knowledge, career skill, and personal growth. Because CVES recognizes that consistent school attendance, academic success and school completion have a positive correlation, CVES will develop, review and, if necessary, revise a Comprehensive Student Attendance Policy to meet the following objectives:

- To increase school completion for all students;
- To raise student achievement and close gaps in student performance;
- To identify attendance patterns in order to design attendance improvement efforts;
- To know the whereabouts of every student for safety and other reasons;
- To verify that individual students are complying with education laws relating to compulsory attendance.

Description of Strategies to Meet Objectives

CVES will:

1. Create and maintain a positive school building culture by fostering a positive physical and psychological environment where the presence of strong adult role models encourages respectful and nurturing interactions between adults and students. This positive school culture is aimed at encouraging a high level of student bonding to the school, which in turn should lead to increased attendance.
2. Maintain accurate record keeping via a Register of Attendance to record attendance, absence, tardiness or early departure of each student.
3. Utilize data analysis systems for tracking individual student attendance and individual and group trends in student attendance problems.
4. Develop early intervention strategies to improve school attendance for all students.

Definitions:

Pupil- A child enrolled in any public or private school.

Register of Attendance - Any written or electronic record maintained for the purpose of recording attendance, absence, tardiness or early departure during the course of a school day.

Schedule of Instruction - Every period that a pupil is scheduled to attend actual instructional or supervised study during a course of a school day during the school year.

CLINTON-ESSEX-WARREN-WASHINGTON BOCES

Teacher - Member of the teaching or supervisory staff of the school.

Employee other than a teacher – A person other than a teacher employed in a position appropriate for the maintenance of pupil records.

Determination of Excused and Unexcused Absences, Tardiness and Early Departures

Based upon our Component School Districts' education and community needs, values, and priorities, CVES has determined that absences, tardiness and early departures will be considered excused or unexcused according to the following standards.

Excused: (Illustrative List)

1. Personal illness with written parental excuse.
2. Illness or death in the family with written parental verification.
3. Medical appointments with written verification on health provider's letterhead etc.
4. Administrative approved educational trips.
5. Impassable roads due to inclement weather.
6. Religious observance.
7. School related activities.
8. Legal appointments with written verification on legal provider's letterhead/stationery.
9. Administrative approved college visits.
10. Administrative approved cooperative work programs or internship experience.
11. Military obligations previously approved.
12. Other reasons approved by the Board of Education and/or Component School Districts which pupils attend.

Unexcused: (Illustrative List)

1. Any reason for lack of attendance if it does not fall into the excused categories.
2. Examples would include, but are not limited to, truancy, "cutting" a class, refusing to come to school, family vacation, hunting or fishing, babysitting, hair cut, obtaining a learner's permit, road test, oversleeping. Truancy means any student absence from CVES that is unexcused or unauthorized.
3. An absence will be considered unexcused if after three days of returning to school after an absence, no written excuse from the parent/guardian is provided; medical/legal appointments will be considered unexcused unless written verification is provided on a health/legal

CLINTON-ESSEX-WARREN-WASHINGTON BOCES

provider's letterhead/stationery as to the appointment.

Student Attendance Record Keeping/Data Collection

The record of each student's presence, absence, tardiness and early departure shall be kept in a register of attendance in a manner consistent with Commissioner's Regulations. An absence, tardiness or early departure will be entered as "excused" or "unexcused" along with the CVES code for the reason.

The register of attendance shall set forth the following for each pupil:

1. Name.
2. Date of Birth.
3. Full name(s) of parent(s) or person(s) in parental relation.
4. Address where pupil resides.
5. Date of pupil's enrollment.
6. A record of the pupil's attendance on each day of scheduled instruction.
7. Phone numbers of parent(s) or person(s) in parental relation (home and work).
8. Home School District.
9. Designation of CVES / CV-TEC Division.

Commencing July 1, 2003, attendance shall be taken and recorded in accordance with the following:

1. For students in non-departmentalized kindergarten through grade twelve (i.e., self-contained classrooms and supervised group movement to other scheduled school activities such as physical education in the gym, assembly, etc.), such students' presence or absence shall be recorded after the taking of attendance once per school day, provided that students are not dismissed from school grounds during a lunch period.
2. Any absence for a school day or portion thereof shall be recorded as excused or unexcused in accordance with the standards articulated in this policy.
3. In the event that a student at any instructional level from kindergarten through grade twelve arrives late for or departs early from scheduled instruction, such tardiness or early departure shall be recorded as excused or unexcused in accordance with the standards articulated in this policy.

A record shall be kept of each scheduled day of instruction during which the school is closed for all or part of the day because of extraordinary circumstances including adverse weather conditions, impairment of heating facilities, insufficiency of water supply, shortage of fuel, destruction of or damage to a school building, or such other causes as may be found satisfactory to the Commissioner of Education.

Attendance records shall also indicate the date when a student withdraws from enrollment or is dropped from enrollment in accordance with Education Law Section 3202(1-a).

CLINTON-ESSEX-WARREN-WASHINGTON BOCES

At the conclusion of each class period or school day, all attendance information shall be compiled and provided to the designated school personnel who are responsible for attendance. The nature of the absence, tardiness, or early departure shall be coded on a student's record in accordance with the established CVES building procedures.

To maintain data support on attendance for excused and unexcused absence, tardiness or early departure, the following coding system will be implemented.

- PI Personal Illness
- FI/D Family Illness/Death
- MA Medical Appointment
- ET Educational Trip
- SC School Closures; Superintendent's Day/Weather Conditions, etc.
- SNT School Not Transporting
- RO Religious Observance
- SRA School Related Activities
- LA Legal Appointment
- CV College Visit
- C/WP Cooperative/Work Program/Work Study
- Mil Military Obligation
- BA Board Approved Reasons
- EC Extenuating Circumstances
- ISS In School Suspension
- SU School Suspension
- RE Regent Exam
- MA/R Medical Admission/Recovery
- RTS Return to School
- TR Truancy

Student Attendance/Course Credit Recommendations

CVES believes that classroom participation is related to and affects a student's performance and grasp of the subject matter and, as such, is properly reflected in a student's final grade. For purposes of this policy, classroom participation means that a student is in class, prepared to work, and is productive during class. Consequently, for each marking period a certain percentage of a student's final grade will be based on classroom participation as well as the student's performance on homework, tests, papers, projects, etc. as determined by the classroom teacher. However, it is CVES policy that students with properly excused absences, tardiness and early departures for which the student has performed any assigned make-up work, assignments and/or tests shall not be counted as an absence for the purpose of determining the student's ability for course credit. CVES procedures, in collaboration with component school districts, will specify how student tardiness and early departures will be calculated and factored into the minimum attendance standard. Tardiness and early departures will be tracked and converted into excused or unexcused days absent and reflected on the student's record. Component School Districts will communicate, via fax or e-mail, to CVES a record of each day of instruction during which the component school district is closed for all or part of the day for extraordinary circumstances.

CLINTON-ESSEX-WARREN-WASHINGTON BOCES

Transfer students and students re-enrolling after having dropped out will be expected to attend a prorated minimum number of the scheduled class meetings during their time of enrollment.

Students will be considered in attendance if the student is:

- Physically present in the classroom or working under the direction of the classroom teacher during the class scheduled meeting time; or
- Working pursuant to an approved internship program; or
- Receiving approved alternative instruction.

Students who are absent from class due to their participation in a school-sponsored activity are to arrange with their teachers to make up any work missed in a timely manner as determined by the students' teacher. Attendance at school-sponsored events where instruction is substantially equivalent to the instruction that was missed shall be counted as the equivalent of regular attendance in class.

Upon returning to school following a properly excused absence, tardiness or early departure, it shall be the responsibility of the student to consult with his/her teacher(s) regarding arrangements to make up missed work, assignments, and/or tests to receive credit for time/work missed. A student will have five (5) calendar days to turn in assigned make-up work to their teacher.

Grading

The nature of education is such that classroom lab participation component is an integral part of the learning process for students. Thus it is the case that when students miss class time, they lose a piece of learning that may not be possible to recoup. Make-up assignments are, in general, written in nature and therefore are not a substitute for the hands-on experience. Written and/or Theory make-up work, if done correctly and turned in on time, will be applied towards the day(s) missed. We will do our utmost to give students an opportunity to make up lab time, but these opportunities are few. Missed lab work will be assessed accordingly. We cannot emphasize enough the need for students to be in classes and engaged in the experiential nature of education. This grading policy is a reflection of this need.

Notice of Minimum Attendance Standard/Intervention Strategies prior to Recommendation for Denial of Course Credit

In order to ensure that parents/persons in parental relation and students are informed of CVES policy regarding minimum attendance and course credit, and the implementation of specific intervention strategies to be employed prior to the recommendation for denial of course credit /promotion to the student for insufficient attendance, the following guidelines shall be followed.

1. Copies of the CVES Comprehensive Student Attendance Policy will be mailed to parents/persons in parental relation and provided to students at the beginning of each school year or at the time of enrollment in CVES as part of the student Code of Conduct.
2. Copies of the Attendance Policy will also be included in parent/student handbooks.

CLINTON-ESSEX-WARREN-WASHINGTON BOCES

3. At periodic intervals, a designated staff member(s) will notify the component school district, the parent/person in parental relation of the student's absence, tardiness, or early departure and explain the relationship of the student's attendance to his/her ability to receive course credit. If the parent/person in parental relation cannot be reached by telephone, an absence intervention form and letter shall be sent detailing this information.
4. A designated staff member/team will review CVES Attendance Policy with students who have excessive and/or unexcused absences, tardiness, or early departures. Further, appropriate student support services/personnel within the CVES as well as the possible collaboration/referral to community support services, agencies, and component schools, will be implemented prior to the recommendation for denial of course credit for insufficient attendance by the student.
5. An attendance meeting will be established to review all such cases to ensure that extenuating circumstances and/or compelling factors pertinent to the situation are presented and evaluated before a decision is rendered.

Students who are not present due to absence:Each student's extended absences will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis to determine interventions other than the following:

1. 5 days – Teacher/student/counselor (Instructional Team) will conference and an absent intervention form will be completed, copied, and sent to district, with a phone call by the teacher/counselor to the parent/person in parental relation. If a phone contact cannot be established, the absent intervention form will be sent home along with a letter detailing the information. (a record of contact is to be maintained in teacher/counselor attendance record book).
2. 10 days – Student will have a conference with the Instructional Team. Students will receive an absent intervention form, which will include the statement: "No credit will be given if you exceed the allowable absence established by your home school district to receive course credit". If a phone contact cannot be established to the parent/person in parental relation, an absent intervention form will be sent home detailing this information. Home district will be sent a copy.
3. At 15 days or when a student appears to be approaching the absentee rate established for the denial of course credit, the student will have a conference with the Instructional Team. The student will receive an absent intervention form, (in compliance with home district attendance policy) and a recommendation for an attendance conference to be held at the home district. At this conference a contract with the student will be formulated and put into place. CVES will assist in this contract development if requested.
4. Subsequent to home district attendance conference – Attendance will be monitored and intervention & notification will occur in compliance with the home district policy and/or agreed upon that is listed in the attendance contract.

CLINTON-ESSEX-WARREN-WASHINGTON BOCES

Incentives

CVES will initiate as many incentives to meet and improve attendance standards as deemed possible.

Some of these incentives may include but are not limited to:

1. Quarterly Awards;
 - Students will be recognized for outstanding attendance.
 - Bulletin board to show photos of students who have perfect attendance
 - Special trip, for good attendance each quarter, (bowling, skating, sledding)
 - Pizza party for class with the best attendance each quarter
 - 5 Star Breakfast
 - Names printed in newsletter for recognition
 - Awarding of T-Shirts to be used with appropriate decals
 - Ice cream party
 - Coupon for "No Homework"
 - Student receives a certificate and reward (Perfect Attendance)

Drawing Tickets

Students earn tickets for outstanding or perfect attendance. Classroom Acknowledgement and reinforcement of the importance of good attendance. At the start of each new quarter students will be eligible for Attendance Awards. At the end of each week, any student with full attendance gets a coupon to put in for a drawing to be held. Winner(s) will receive a predetermined award. This could be done in groups: primary, intermediate, middle, high school and careers.

2. Make-up days are given for attendance on days when component school is not in session but CVES Center is open.
3. End of year, ½-day field day for those who have had less than 5 unexcused absences.
4. Level system used to reward appropriate attendance - A student, on the level system, can move up a level for perfect attendance for a month.
3. Attendance listed on the report card/progress reports.

Disciplinary Consequences

Unexcused absences, tardiness, and early departures will result in disciplinary sanctions as described in the CVES Code of Conduct. On a case-by-case basis disciplinary actions will be enacted that may constitute the following, but are not limited to, in-school suspension, detention, community service, and denial of participation in extracurricular activities. Designated CVES personnel will notify parents/persons in parental relation at predetermined intervals. Such notification will discuss child's absences, tardiness, early departures and the importance of class attendance and appropriate interventions. Individual buildings/grade levels will address procedures to implement the notification process to the parent/person in parental relation.

CLINTON-ESSEX-WARREN-WASHINGTON BOCES

Intervention Strategy Process

When an identified pattern of unexcused absences, tardiness, or early departures occur, designated CVES personnel will pursue the following:

- Phone contacts with parents;
- Identify specific element(s) of the pattern (i.e., grade level, building, timeframe, type of unexcused absences, tardiness, or early departures);
- Contact the component school staff most closely associated with the element (CSE Chairperson/Principal). In specific cases where the pattern involves an individual student, the student and parent/person in parental relation will be contacted via phone, letters, etc.;
- Discuss strategies to directly intervene with specific element. Team meeting with involved staff and agency providers ;
- Implement changes, as approved by appropriate administration and developed intervention contracts;
- Utilize appropriate school and/or community resources to address and help remediate students' unexcused absences, tardiness, or early departures; warning of suspensions of jobsites/worksites;
- Monitor and report short- and long-term effects of intervention; counselors meet with students to review handbook/contracts;
- PSAF, a Social Services intervention that could be used before PINS referral;
- PINS referral Hotline attendance concerns to Social Services;
- Initiate the PINS process for students who have 10 or more days of unexcused absences;
- Peer evaluation of "legal" absences;
- School nurse to call home on the first day of absence making parents aware of the need for a note from the appointment provider;
- Note is needed for every absence or tardiness. After 5 consecutive days of illness, a medical note is required. Periodic reminders of policy in newsletter. A review of attendance at ten-week marking periods;
- Provide attendance record for student/parent for Annual Reviews so CSE can look at to determine attendance for summer session;
- Suspension of home district sports affiliations.

Appeal Process

A parent/person in parental relation may request a building level review of their child's attendance record. This request must be made in writing to the Attendance Personnel or Building Administrator.

Building Review of Attendance

The Building Administrator will work in conjunction with the Building Attendance Clerk or other designated staff in reviewing attendance records at the end of each term or when needed. This review is conducted to identify individual and group attendance patterns and to initiate appropriate action to address the problem of unexcused absences, tardiness, and early departures.

CLINTON-ESSEX-WARREN-WASHINGTON BOCES

Annual Review by the Board of Education

The Board of Education shall annually review the building level student attendance records and if such records show a decline in student attendance, the Board shall make any revisions to the Policy and plan deemed necessary to improve student attendance.

Community Awareness

The Board of Education shall promote necessary community awareness of the CVES Comprehensive Student Attendance Policy by:

- Providing a plain language summary of the policy to parents/persons in parental relation to students at the beginning of each school year and promoting the understanding of such a policy to students and their parents/persons in parental relation;
- Providing each teacher, at the beginning of the school year or upon employment, copy of the policy; and
- Providing copies of the policy to any other member of the community upon request.

Adopted 10/14/04