

SOUTH SENECA HIGH SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

2011-2012



Purpose

The South Seneca Central School District recognizes that regular attendance is a major component of academic success. Daily attendance is essential for ensuring the academic progress of students. Students must not only be present in class but also must be actively involved and participate in the learning activities. The purpose of these procedures is to reduce the level of absences, tardiness and early departures (ATEAD's) as well as encourage full attendance by all students, maintain an adequate attendance record keeping system, identify patterns of student absences and develop effective intervention strategies to improve school attendance.

General Attendance Procedures

- A. All absences must be accounted for. It is the parent's/guardian's responsibility to promptly notify the attendance office and provide a written excuse from a parent/guardian within three (3) days of return or the absence will be classified as unexcused. After the three days, the student's unexcused absence will be considered truancy. In addition to disciplinary action as outlined in the "Student Code of Conduct," a student who is considered truant from class(es) may not be given the opportunity to make up the class and may receive a grade of zero (0).
- B. When a student is tardy to school, the parent/guardian must provide a written excuse upon the student's arrival to school. Students who are tardy to school for unexcused reasons will receive appropriate disciplinary consequences.
- C. Attendance will be taken each class period. At the conclusion of each class period all attendance information will be compiled and provided to the appropriate individual(s) for attendance.
- D. Each ATEAD will be recorded as excused or unexcused along with a code noting the specific reason. It is the student's responsibility to make up work for each class missed due to an excused absence.
- E. Attendance data will be analyzed to identify patterns or trends in student absences. This information will be provided to the Dean or Principal for any necessary investigation and appropriate action.

Attendance Procedures Notification

- F. To be successful, it is important that students, parents, teachers and staff are aware of these procedures and consequences for non-compliance. To ensure

that the school community is notified of and understands these procedures, the following will be implemented:

- i. These attendance procedures will be included in the student handbooks and will be reviewed with students at the start of the school year.
- ii. The district will distribute to all parents of school age children enrolled in the district a copy of these procedures.
- iii. School newsletters and/or publications will include periodic reminders of the components of these procedures.
- iv. These attendance procedures will be available on the South Seneca Central School District web page.
- v. The district will provide a copy of these procedures to all staff. New staff will receive a copy upon their employment.
- vi. Copies of these procedures will be made available to any community member, upon request.

Attendance and Course Credit

- G. Students are expected to attend all scheduled classes and study halls. Academic achievement can be adversely affected by poor student attendance associated with unexcused or excused absences, tardiness and/or early departures. Students who miss classes or portions thereof for excused reasons are expected to consult with their teachers regarding missed work upon returning to class.
- H. The South Seneca High School requires students in grades 9-12 to be in attendance 85% of the scheduled class of a course of study to be eligible for course credit. A student will not be eligible for course credit if they are absent **(excused and unexcused) and failing the class** according to the following:
- i. Fourteen (14) absences for a full-year course based on an AC or BD schedule ($90 \text{ days} \times 85\% = 76.5 \text{ days}$ students must be in attendance).
 - ii. Seven (7) absences for a semester course/half year ($45 \text{ days} \times 85\%$) or a course that meet on a single block schedule ($180/4 \times 85\% = 38.25 \text{ days}$ students must be in attendance) .
 - iii. Twenty (20) absences for a full year course based on an ABC, ABD, ACD, or BCD schedule ($135 \text{ days} \times 85\% = 114.75 \text{ days}$ students must be in attendance).
- I. **Students will be considered absent from a class if they are absent for more than 15 minutes of the scheduled class period (1/2 block class = 8 minutes)**
- J. The district reserves the right to withdraw students from the BOCES program when their absences exceed 27 days ($180 \text{ days} \times 85\% = 153 \text{ days}$ a student must be in attendance).

- K. Students must maintain 6 credit hours to be eligible for extra-curricular activities as well as honors or senior privileges.

Notification of Potential Denial of Credit

- L. The attendance office calls the parent/guardian of students who are absent daily.
- M. To ensure that parents and students are aware of the implications of this minimum attendance requirement, the teacher and other school personnel will counsel the student and contact the parent by telephone and mail at appropriate levels as defined as follows:
 - i. For full year courses based on an AC or BD schedule
 1. Teachers are expected to continue to confer with students and their parents/guardians concerning academic and attendance issues.
 2. On the fourth (4) absence, and when the student's grade drops below a 75 average, the classroom teacher calls the parent/guardian and notifies the student, the guidance counselor and the administrator of the problem. This phone call is documented by the completion of a Notification of Concern of Absence form that is placed in the student's file in the guidance office.
 3. After seven (7) absences. and when the student's grade drops below a 75 average, the classroom teacher again calls the parent/guardian and notifies the student, the guidance counselor and the administrator of the problem. This phone call is documented by the completion of a Notification of Concern of Absence form that is sent home.
 4. At ten (10) absences a parent/student/school conference is required if the student's grade is below a 65 average. This conference notifies the parents that the continued absences beyond 13 will result in the student being removed from the class. A following up certified letter confirming this information will be sent home. If the student's grade is below a 75 average a copy of the Notification of Concern of Absence form is sent home.
 5. At fourteen (14) absences the student will meet with the building principal or his/her designee to be notified of

ineligibility for course credit. Parents/guardians will be notified by certified letter.

6. Any student who is ineligible for course credit due to excessive absenteeism that wishes to attend summer school must audit the remainder of the course. Students who are auditing the class are responsible for all assignments given and must attend class on a regular punctual basis. The student will NOT be allowed to take the final exam. Upon reaching twenty-four (24) absences, the student will no longer be eligible for summer school. Students that are removed from the course will receive another placement.

ii. For courses bases on a 3 day schedule (ABC, ABD, ACD, or BCD schedule):

1. Teachers are expected to continue to confer with students and their parents/guardians concerning academic and attendance issues.
2. On the fifth (5) absence and when the student's grade drops below a 75 average, the classroom teacher calls the parent/guardian and notifies the student, the guidance counselor and the administrator of the problem. This phone call is documented by the completion of a Notification of Concern of Absence form that is placed in the student's file in the guidance office.
3. On the tenth (10) absence and when the student's grade drops below a 75 average, the classroom teacher again calls the parent/guardian and notifies the student, the guidance counselor and the administrator of the problem. This phone call is documented by the completion of a Notification of Concern of Absence form that sent home.
4. At fifteen (15) absences, a parent/student/school conference is required if the student's grade is below a 65 average. This conference notifies the parents that the continued absences beyond 19 will result in the student being removed from the class. A following up certified letter confirming this information will be sent home. If the student's grade is below a 75 average a copy of the Notification of Concern of Absence form is sent home.
5. At twenty (20) absences, the student will meet with the building principal or his/her designee to be notified of

ineligibility for course credit. Parents/guardians will be notified by certified letter.

6. Any student who is ineligible for course credit due to excessive absenteeism that wishes to attend summer school must audit the remainder of the course. Students who are auditing the class are responsible for all assignments given and must attend class on a regular punctual basis. The student will NOT be allowed to take the final exam. Upon reaching thirty (30) absences, the student will no longer be eligible for summer school. Students that are removed from the course will receive another placement.

iii. For half year courses or courses that meet on a single block schedule:

1. Teachers are expected to confer with students concerning academic and attendance issues.
2. On the 2nd (2) absence and when the student's grade drops below a 75 average, the classroom teacher calls the parent/guardian and notifies the student, the guidance counselor and the administrator of the problem. This phone call is documented by the completion of a Notification of Concern of Absence form that is placed in the student's file in the guidance office.
3. At four (4) absences a parent/student/school conference is required if the student's grade is below a 65 average. This conference notifies the parents that the continued absences beyond 6 will result in the student being removed from the class. A following up certified letter confirming this information will be sent home. If the student's grade is below a 75 average a copy of the Notification of Concern of Absence form is sent home.
4. At seven (7) absences, the student will meet with the building principal or his/her designee to be notified of ineligibility for course credit. Parents/guardians will be notified by certified letter.
5. Any student who is ineligible for course credit due to excessive absenteeism that wishes to attend summer school must audit the remainder of the course. Students who are auditing the class are responsible for all assignments given and must attend class on a regular punctual basis. The student will NOT be allowed to take the final exam. Upon reaching twelve (12) absences, the student will no longer be eligible for summer school. Students

that are removed from the course will receive another placement.

- N. Students who transfer from one class to another during the school year will have their class attendance transfer to the new class.
- O. New students to the high school will be subject to the 85% attendance rate based on a pro-rated schedule.
- P. For extenuating circumstances **only**, a parent/guardian may file a written appeal for review by the High School Attendance Committee. The written appeal, including all supporting documentation, must be received by the building principal no later than five (5) school days after the receipt of the loss of the credit notification. The committee may grant any or all days to be credited to the student. The response to the appeal will be completed within 10 school days of the receipt of the written appeal and all supporting documentation and sent by certified mail to the parent/guardian. A copy will be provided to the teacher.

Absences, Tardiness and Early Departures (ATEAD)

- Q. Absences, tardiness and early departures can be excused for the following reasons:
 - i. Personal illness
 - ii. Illness or death in the family
 - iii. Practicing religious observance
 - iv. Required court appearances
 - v. Attendance at health clinics for health reasons
 - vi. Approved college visits, approved cooperative work programs
 - vii. Military obligations
 - viii. Impassable roads or weather making travel unsafe
 - ix. Quarantine
 - x. Other absences that may have been approved by the Commissioner of Education.
- R. The above absences are excused absences and students may make up work upon consultation with their teacher. **However, they apply to the total number of days absent from each course. All absences will be recorded as unexcused until a written note from the parent is received within 3 days of the student's absence.**
- S. School-sponsored events which the student participates in will not be counted towards class absences. These include field trips, school-sponsored competitions, scheduled music lessons, school sponsored college visits, athletic competitions, physical exams, testing, at-home tutoring and conferences with school personnel. **The student will also not be considered absent when**

receiving home instruction, sent to an alternative location such as the AC room, or placed in in-school suspension (ISS).

- T. A student who is absent for more than five (5) days due to illness must present a written explanation from their doctor. All absences will be considered unexcused until the doctor's note is received by the attendance office.
- U. Class truancies will be considered unexcused absences from class and will be so noted on all attendance records. Sanctions for unexcused absences may include:
 - i. Detention
 - ii. Parent conference
 - iii. Loss of privileges and/or honor pass privileges
 - iv. Placement on the restriction list
 - v. Loss of the right to participate in extracurricular activities or attend after school functions
 - vi. In School Suspension
 - vii. Out of School Suspension
- V. A student who becomes ill during the school day should report to the nurse who will, if necessary, telephone the parent.
- W. Students who are to be dismissed from school must present a written statement to the nurse's office which clearly states the time and reason **in advance of being excused**. Students will not be dismissed without a written note from a parent/guardian in advance of their departure. Verbal and/or e-mail requests cannot be accepted due to legal issues.
- X. Students who are dismissed must sign out of school in the Nurse's office. If the student returns to school that day s/he **MUST** sign back in to school and be issued a pass to class.
- Y. A student who leaves school without permission will be considered as having cut those classes and will receive disciplinary action. All students who have excused departures must sign out.
- Z. Family vacations are considered unexcused absences. Students going on a family vacation must have a written note to the nurse's office prior to leaving in order to not receive disciplinary consequences for the absence.

Attendance Incentives

Attendance awards will be given to those students who maintain good attendance.