

LEWISTON-PORTER CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

2025

7110

Students

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SUBJECT: COMPREHENSIVE STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICY

Statement of Overall Objectives

The District is an active partner with students and parents in the task of ensuring that all students meet or exceed the New York State Learning Standards. The District recognizes that consistent school attendance, academic success and school completion have a positive correlation, and therefore, the District has developed, and, if necessary, will revise a Comprehensive Student Attendance Policy to meet the following objectives:

- a) Increase school completion for all students;
- b) Raise student achievement and close gaps in student performance;
- c) Identify attendance patterns in order to design attendance improvement efforts;
- d) Know the whereabouts of every student for safety and other reasons;
- e) Verify that individual students are complying with education laws relating to compulsory attendance;
- f) Determine the District's average daily attendance for State aid purposes.

Responsibilities of Stakeholders

Responsibilities of School Personnel

All school personnel will encourage students to be in school every day and staff will maintain accurate attendance records. Attendance office personnel, working with school administration, are responsible for the maintenance of attendance records, notification to parent(s)/person(s) in parental relation of student absences, and the promotion of good student attendance.

Responsibilities of Parents / Persons in Parental Relation

Parent(s)/person(s) in parental relation of student are to notify the Attendance office when their child is absent or tardy.

Responsibilities of Students

Students must attend school each day. A student who is absent is to provide a valid written explanation for the absence from their parent(s)/person(s) of parental relation. This is to be given to the appropriate school personnel upon returning. It is the responsibility of the student, working with their teacher, to make up all class work missed. The responsibility lies with the student to contact the teachers to determine what assignments have been missed and when they are due. Failure to make up missed work may negatively impact a student's overall progress or achievement.

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Description of Strategies to Meet Objectives

The District will:

- a) 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.
- b) Develop a Comprehensive Student Attendance Policy based upon the recommendations of a multifaceted District Policy Development Team that includes representation from the Board, administrators, teachers, students, parents and the community. The District will hold at least one public hearing prior to the adoption of this collaboratively developed Comprehensive Student Attendance Policy.
- c) Maintain accurate recordkeeping via a Register of Attendance to record attendance, absence, tardiness or early departure of each student.
- d) Utilize data analysis systems for tracking individual student attendance and individual and group trends in student attendance problems.
- e) Develop early intervention strategies to improve school attendance for all students.

Determination of Excused and Unexcused Absences, Tardiness and Early Departures

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

- a) **Excused:** An absence, tardiness or early departure may be excused if due to personal illness, illness or death in the family, impassable roads due to inclement weather, religious observance, quarantine, required court appearances, attendance at health clinics, approved college visits, approved cooperative work programs, military obligations or other such reasons as may be approved by the Board. More than 5 days of consecutive absence will require a physician note.
- b) **Unexcused:** An absence, tardiness or early departure is considered unexcused if the reason for the lack of attendance does not fall into the above categories (e.g., family vacation, hunting, babysitting, haircut, obtaining learner's permit, road test, oversleeping, non-related school sport tournaments/events, non-school related dance/cheer events, (i.e. Irish dancing, dance/cheer competitions/recitals, hockey tournaments).

Student Attendance Recordkeeping/Data Collection

The record of each student's attendance (including when a student is present, absent, tardy, or dismissed early) shall be kept in a register of attendance in a manner consistent with Commissioner's Regulations. An absence, tardiness or early departure will be coded to record the reasoning.

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Attendance shall be taken and recorded in accordance with the following:

- a) For students in non-departmentalized kindergarten through grade eight (i.e., self-contained classrooms and supervised group movement to other scheduled school activities such as physical education in the gym, assembly, etc.), such student's presence or absence shall be recorded subject by subject. For purposes of APPR and Teacher-Student Data Linkages (TSDL), classroom attendance for all students K-12 must be recorded on a subject by subject basis for Teacher of Record Determinations.
- b) For students in grades 6 through 12 or in departmentalized schools at any grade level (i.e., students pass individually to different classes throughout the day), each student's presence or absence shall be recorded after the taking of attendance in each period of scheduled instruction.
- c) 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.
- d) In the event that a student at any instructional level from grades K through 12 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 cause 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).

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 District/building procedures. A petition to Family Court, or other prescribed intervention strategies may result if a student under 16 years of age continues a poor attendance pattern.

Student Attendance/Course Credit

The District 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 and prepared to work.

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The District expects that students attend all scheduled classes every day. Promotion to the next grade may be in jeopardy due to excessive absenteeism. Student absences, tardiness, and early departures may affect a student's grade, for the marking period. If a student identified as having a disabling condition by the Committee on Special Education does not meet the attendance requirements, they will be referred to the Committee on Special Education (CSE) before any other action is taken.

A student who is absent from school must provide a valid written explanation including date and a specific reason for the absence, signed by a parent/person in parental relation to the Attendance Office when they return (electronic notification as an alternative to parents signature). A student who is absent for an appointment is encouraged to be in attendance for as much of the day as possible. ***A student who misses twenty minutes or more of a class period (50% of class time) is considered absent from that class.***

For students in grades 6 – 12, any student with excessive absences in a course may be denied credit for the course. For any absence, it is the responsibility of the student and parent / person in parental relation, working with the classroom teacher, to make up all missed assignments, assessments and class work. Once a student has reached the maximum days of absence for a class, the teacher will cease to grade any papers from the student. If the teacher continues to collect and grade papers, the student may receive a grade for the course. The teacher should maintain a folder of collected work pending a possible review process. A student who violates the attendance policy must remain in class in order to receive instruction. Once a student in grades 6 – 12 has reached the maximum number of absences, that student must remain in class in order to qualify for admittance to summer school.

For summer school and courses meeting 1/2 year or 1/4 year, the same policy will apply and a calculation of the absences will be prorated accordingly.

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:

- a) Physically present in the classroom or working under the direction of the classroom teacher during the class scheduled meeting time; or

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- b) Working pursuant to an approved independent study program; or
- c) 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 student's teacher. Attendance at school sponsored events where instruction is substantially equivalent to the instruction which was missed shall be counted as the equivalent of regular attendance in class.

Upon returning to school following an absence, tardiness or early departure, it shall be the responsibility of the student to consult with their teacher(s) regarding arrangements to make up missed work, assignments and/or tests in accordance with the time schedule specified by the teacher.

Notice of Minimum Attendance Standard/Intervention Strategies Prior to the Denial of Course Credit

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

- a) Notification of the District's Comprehensive Student Attendance Policy will be mailed to parent(s)/person(s) in parental relation and provided to students at the beginning of each school year or at the time of enrollment in the District.
- b) School newsletters and publications will include periodic reminders of the components of the District's Comprehensive Student Attendance Policy. Copies of the Attendance Policy will also be included in parent/student handbooks.
- c) At periodic intervals, a designated staff member(s) will notify, parent(s)/person(s) in parental relation of the student's absence, tardiness, or early departure and explain the relationship of the student's attendance to their ability to receive course credit.
- d) A designated staff member will review the District's Attendance Policy with the parent(s)/person(s) in parental relation who has a student with excessive absences, tardiness or early departures. Further, appropriate student support services/personnel within the District, as well as the possible collaboration/referral to community support services and agencies, will be implemented prior to the denial of course credit for insufficient attendance by the student.

Notification Process

Procedures: Parent(s)/person(s) in parental relation will be notified when a student's attendance has exceeded the following schedule:

Grades K – 5: Notification will be given at 5, 10, 15 & 20 absences. Notification of possible retention will occur at 20 absences. With the progression of notification, meetings will be established between parent(s)/person(s) in parental relation and school personnel to discuss and implement strategies up to and including denial of grade level promotion.

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Grades 6 -12: **For Full-Year courses**, notification will be given at 5, 10, 15 & 20 absences. Written notification of loss of credit will occur at 20 absences by certified mail. **For Half-Year (Semester) courses**, notification will be given at 5 & 10 absences. Written notification of loss of credit will occur at 14 absences by certified mail. **For Thirteen Week courses**, notification will be given at 5 & 10 absences. Written notification of loss of credit will occur at 10 absences by certified mail.

Notice of Students who are Absent, Tardy or Depart Early

The parent(s)/person(s) in parental relation to a student who is absent, tardy or departs early will be notified.

If deemed necessary by appropriate school officials, or if requested by the parent/person in parental relation, a school conference shall be scheduled between the parent(s)/person(s) in parental relation and appropriate staff members in order to address the student's attendance. The student may also be requested to attend this conference in order to address appropriate intervention strategies that best meet the needs of the student.

Chronic Absenteeism

Chronic absenteeism is defined as missing at least 10% of enrolled school days in a year for any reason, excused or unexcused. Chronic absenteeism differs from truancy because it emphasizes missed instructional time rather than unexcused absences. Missed instructional time can increase a student's risk for disengagement, low achievement, and dropping out, among other negative side effects.

Students who miss at least 5% of enrolled school days in a year are at risk of becoming chronically absent. In light of this, the District will implement intervention strategies for students who are at risk for being chronically absent.

Attendance Programs

In order to encourage student attendance, the District may develop and implement grade-appropriate/building-level strategies and programs. Building Leadership Teams will devise grade-level and classroom incentives at each school location, to support better attendance.

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Accountability

Excessive absences, tardiness and early departures will result in accountabilities as described in the District's Code of Conduct. Parent(s)/person(s) in parental relation will be notified by designated District personnel at periodic intervals to discuss their child's absences, tardiness or 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.

Intervention Strategy Process

In order to effectively intervene when an identified pattern of absences, tardiness or early departures occur, designated District personnel will pursue the following:

- a) Identify specific element(s) of the pattern (e.g., grade level, building, time frame, type of excused absences, unexcused absences, tardiness or early departures);
- b) Contact the District staff most closely associated with the element. In specific cases where the pattern involves an individual student, the student and parent(s)/person(s) in parental relation will be contacted;
- c) Discuss strategies to directly intervene with specific element;
- d) Recommend intervention to Superintendent/designee if it relates to change in District policy or procedure;
- e) Implement changes, as approved by appropriate administration;
- f) Utilize appropriate District and/or community resources to address and help remediate student unexcused absences, tardiness or early departures;
- g) Monitor and report short and long term effects of intervention.

Appeal Process

A parent(s)/person(s) in parental relation may request a building level review of their child's attendance record.

A Parent(s)/person(s) in parental relation of a student who is in jeopardy of grade level promotion or has been denied course credit, may file for a case review with an administrator within 5 days of notification of possible retention or loss of credit. Students in grades 9 – 12, in certain instances, may file an appeal on their own behalf. Parent(s)/person(s) in parental relation and/or students presenting appeals should be prepared with proper documentation.

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Building Review of Attendance Records

The Building Principal will work in conjunction with the building attendance clerk and other designated staff in reviewing attendance records at the end of each term. 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.

Review by the District

The District may annually review attendance records and if such records show a decline in student attendance, the District may make revisions to the policy and plan deemed necessary to improve student attendance.

Community Awareness

The District shall promote necessary community awareness of the District's Comprehensive Student Attendance Policy by:

- a) Providing a plain language summary of the policy to parents or 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 parent(s)/person(s) in parental relation;
- b) Providing each teacher, at the beginning of the school year or upon employment, with a copy of the policy; and
- c) Providing copies of the policy to any other member of the community upon request.

Education Law Sections 3024, 3025, 3202, 3205, 3206, 3210, 3211 and 3213
8 NYCRR Sections 104.1, 109.2 and 175.6

Adoption Date: 09/08/2025
11/25/2024
10/25/2021

SUBJECT: USE OF INTERNET-ENABLED DEVICES DURING THE SCHOOL DAY

The District consulted with local stakeholders including employee organizations representing each bargaining unit, parents, and students to develop this policy to prohibit the use of Internet-enabled devices by students during the school day on school grounds. This policy aims to ensure that students remain focused on their academic responsibilities throughout the school day, which includes all instructional and non-instructional periods such as homeroom, lunch, recess, study halls, and passing time.

For purposes of this policy, the following definitions apply:

- a) "Internet-enabled devices" means and includes any smartphone, tablet, smartwatch, or other device capable of connecting to the Internet and enabling the user to access content on the Internet, including social media applications;

"Internet-enabled devices" does not include:
 - 1. Non-Internet-enabled devices such as cellular phones or other communication devices not capable of connecting to the Internet or enabling the user to access content on the Internet; or
 - 2. Internet-enabled devices supplied by the District, charter school, or Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) that are used for an educational purpose.
- b) "School day" means the entirety of every instructional day as required by subdivision 7 of the Education Law Section 3604 during all instructional time and non-instructional time, including but not limited to homeroom periods, lunch, recess, study halls, and passing time.
- c) "School grounds" means in or on or within any building, structure, athletic playing field, playground, or land contained within the real property boundary line of a district elementary, intermediate, junior high, vocational, or high school, a charter school, or a BOCES facility.

Students are generally prohibited from using Internet-enabled devices during the school day anywhere on school grounds.

However, students may be authorized to use an Internet-enabled device during the school day on school grounds:

- a) If authorized by a teacher, principal, or the District for a specific educational purpose;
- b) Where necessary for the management of a student's health care;
- c) In the event of an emergency;
- d) For translation services;

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- e) On a case-by-case basis, upon review and determination by a school psychologist, school social worker, or school counselor for a student caregiver who is routinely responsible for the care and well-being of a family member; or
- f) Where required by law.

Students must be permitted to use an Internet-enabled device where the use is included in the student's:

- a) Individualized Education Program (IEP); or
- b) Section 504 Plan.

On-Site Storage of Internet-Enabled Devices Including Cell Phones

Students must store their Internet-enabled devices in designated on-site storage areas during the school day. On-site storage areas may include, but are not limited to, student lockers, designated storage bins in classrooms, or secure storage areas in the school's main office. The designated on-site storage areas must be easily accessible to students and provide adequate security to ensure the safekeeping of the student's devices. The District will communicate the procedures for storing and retrieving devices, ensuring that students understand their responsibilities in using the on-site storage facilities provided.

Methods for Parents to Contact Students During the School Day

To accommodate necessary communication, parents or persons in parental relation may use the following methods to contact their student during school hours while adhering to this policy:

- a) School Office Phone: Parents or persons in parental relation may call the school's main office, and the office staff can relay messages to the student or call the student to the office to speak with their parent or person in parental relation.
- b) Designated Contact Email: Schools may provide a designated email address for parents and persons in parental relation to send messages. These emails may be monitored by school staff who can then pass the messages on to the students.
- c) Classroom Intercom System: In case of an emergency, the school's main office can use the classroom intercom system to notify students directly or ask them to come to the office.
- d) School Messaging Application: Schools may use a secure messaging application or platform where parents or persons in parental relation can send messages to their student. The messages can be monitored and delivered by school staff.

Parents and persons in parental relation will be notified in writing of the methods that are available for contacting their student during school hours upon enrollment and at the beginning of each school year.

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Student Discipline for Accessing Internet-Enabled Devices During the School Day

The District will follow a system of progressive discipline for violations of the policy in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

Posting of Policy

The District will post this policy in a clearly visible and accessible location on its website.

Reporting and Mitigation Action Plan

Beginning September 1, 2026 and annually thereafter, the District will publish an annual report on its website detailing enforcement of this policy within the District in the prior school year. This report will include non-identifiable demographic data of students who have faced disciplinary action for non-compliance and analysis of any demographic disparities in enforcement of this policy. If a statistically significant disparate enforcement impact is identified, the report will include a mitigation action plan.

Education Law Section 2803

Adoption Date: 09/08/2025
07/28/2025