

# **Akron Middle School Attendance Policy**

- 1) Introduction, Overall Objectives
- 2) New York State Attendance Regulations
- 3) Description of Strategies to Meet Objectives
- 4) Determination of Excused and Unexcused Absences, Tardy, and Early Dismissals
- 5) Student Attendance, Record Keeping/Data Collection
- 6) Students Attendance, Process to Address Excessive Absences
- 7) Notification of Students who are Absent, Tardy, or Early Dismissal without Proper Excuse
- 8) Disciplinary Consequences

## Appendix:

- Possible letter for excessive tardiness: Intervention level 1-at 10% of school days
- Possible letter for excessive absences: Intervention level 1-at 5% of school days
- Possible letter for excessive tardiness: Intervention level 2-at 15% of school days
- Possible letter for excessive absences: Intervention level 2-at 10% of school days
- Possible CPS/PINS call for excessive tardiness: Intervention level 3-at 20% of school days
- Possible CPS/PINS call for excessive absences: Intervention level 3-at 15% of school days
- Parent Fast Facts
- Compulsory Education Laws

## **1) Introduction and Overall Objectives**

Regular school attendance is both a right and a responsibility of the students at Akron and their parent(s)/guardian(s). There is a strong positive correlation between regular school attendance, academic success, and school completion. Regular attendance helps to foster respectful and nurturing student/teacher relationships, which in turn encourages regular attendance and academic success. The Akron Central School District, and specifically, Akron Middle School, is an active partner with students and families to promote consistent school attendance, remediate attendance issues, and ensure that all students meet or exceed the New York State Learning Standards. Therefore, Akron Middle School has developed a Comprehensive Attendance Policy to meet the following objectives:

- 1) To ensure the safety of every student;
- 2) To verify that individual students are complying with education laws relating to compulsory attendance;
- 3) To increase school completion for all students;
- 4) To raise student achievement and close gaps in student performance;
- 5) To identify attendance patterns in order to design attendance improvement efforts;

## **2) New York State Attendance Regulations**

At the October, 2001 meeting, the Board of Regents amended Commissioner's Regulation 104.1 concerning pupil attendance. The revised regulation affects three general areas:

- Contents and responsibility for the record of pupil attendance.
- Review of attendance data by school building administrators for the purpose of identifying pupil attendance problems and initiating appropriate action to improve pupil attendance.
- Development of Comprehensive Attendance Policy by each school district.

### **3) Description of Strategies to Meet Objectives**

1) Promote the following Mission Statement:

#### **AKRON CENTRAL SCHOOLS MISSION STATEMENT:**

The mission of the Akron Central School District, a learning centered community dedicated to our students, is to ensure that each student realizes his or her unique potential and contributes positively to society, through a system characterized by:

- Valuing the unique gifts and dreams of each person
  - Developing all dimensions of each human being
  - Advancing the knowledge, skills and wisdom of each human being
  - Cooperatively working to continuously create new realities
- 2) Create and maintain a positive school culture. In this environment student safety will be encouraged to reach their fullest potential.
  - 3) Maintain accurate record keeping for attendance, absence, tardiness, and/or early departure of each student.
  - 4) Utilize data analysis systems for tracking individual student attendance and trends in student attendance patterns.
  - 5) Address excessive absences/tardiness with tri-level intervention.

#### **4) Determination of Excused and Unexcused Absences, Tardiness, and Early Departures**

##### **Definitions:**

**Absent** – A student is not in the school building for the entire day.

**Tardy** – A student enters the building after the designated arrival time.

**Sign Out** – A student leaves the building prior to the designated dismissal time.

**Based upon the Akron Central School District’s education and community needs, values and priorities, the School District has determined that absences, tardiness, and sign outs will be considered excused or unexcused according to the following standards.**

**Excused:** An absence, tardiness, or early departure may be excused if due to personal illness or death in the family, religious observance, quarantine, required court appearances, attendance at health clinics, approved college visits, approved cooperative work programs, military obligations, lack of expected transportation by local school district, school-sanctioned field trips, obtaining learner’s permit, road test, or other such reasons as may be approved by the District Superintendent.

**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, fishing, job interview, employment, prom fittings, hair appointments, babysitting, oversleeping, “personal”).

## **5) 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 the NYS Commissioner's Regulations. The Administrator shall designate either a Teacher or other staff member to supervise the keeping of the register of attendance. At the conclusion of each class period, block of periods, school day or school week, all attendance information shall be compiled and provided to the school personnel who are responsible for attendance.

## **6) Students Attendance, Process to Address Excessive Absences**

The person responsible for recording attendance records will regularly generate a report. A student who reaches 7 absences during the first marking period will be flagged as a possible attendance concern and the first intervention will be implemented. Thereafter, a student will be flagged for the first intervention if the attendance rate falls below 85%. After a student is flagged, the Middle School Attendance Committee will monitor the student's attendance and appropriate interventions will be taken.

1. **First Intervention**—The first intervention is a letter sent to the parent/guardian requesting more information about the student's absences. The letter will state the student's current rate of attendance, and encourage the parent/guardian to promote regular school attendance. Additionally, a parent fact sheet including New York State Attendance Regulations and the school attendance policy will accompany the letter. The parent will be required to acknowledge receipt of the letter by contacting the School Counselor. The School Counselor will meet with the student to assess the attendance situation and review the importance of attending school. If necessary, a referral to the Instructional Support Team (IST) will be made to develop strategies for improving attendance.
2. **Second Intervention**— After the first intervention has been implemented, the student will be monitored weekly. If the attendance patterns do not show improvement, the Main Office will send a letter to the parent/guardian to schedule a conference with the Administration. The conference will outline a plan of action for improving attendance. This plan may include one or more of the following: 1) referral to the School Psychologist for a psycho educational evaluation 2) referral to IST 3) student required to bring in a doctor's excuse for all future absences 4) consultation with School Nurse 5) referral to School Resource Officer 6) a visit to the student's home 7) referral to the Principal.
3. **Third Intervention**—When a family has received two interventions and the student's attendance has not shown improvement, the school may pursue formal sanctions such as referral to Child Protective Services, or the Department of Probation for PINS Diversion.

**7) Notification of Students who are Absent, Tardy, or Early Dismissal  
without Proper Excuse**

Power Announcement shall notify by telephone a parent/guardian of the student who is absent.

A written excuse from a parent/guardian of the student, stating the reason for each absence, tardiness, or sign out shall be provided to the school upon the students return or departure.



## **9) Disciplinary Consequences**

Unexcused absences, tardiness and sign outs will result in disciplinary consequences as described in the District's Code of Conduct and/or at the discretion of the Administration.