

ATTENDANCE PATTERNS

The board of education believes that the regular presence of assigned personnel is vital to the success of the district's educational program. Consistent absenteeism or tardiness is unacceptable and subject to disciplinary action.

The chief school administrator shall develop and the board shall adopt a plan to encourage all staff to strive for excellent attendance and punctuality records. These procedures should include a requirement that the staff member personally report all illnesses and request all leave at the earliest possible time. Procedures shall be in accordance with New Jersey statutes and district negotiated contracts.

The chief school administrator shall report on staff attendance and punctuality at every regular monthly board meeting.

Provisions shall be made for public acknowledgment of outstanding staff attendance records.

It is the expectation and goal of the board of education that all school district personnel shall report on time to their assigned duties whenever scheduled to work. Time lost due to absenteeism and/or lateness and tardiness seriously disrupts the education program of the district's pupils, as well as work schedules of employees.

A prerequisite for the efficient performance of a staff person's assigned duties is regular and punctual attendance. In order to achieve optimum attendance, the board shall diligently exercise its right to monitor the performance of its personnel by taking the necessary steps to verify that all leave time is used for its intended purpose.

In order to achieve the above-stated goals, the board of education has authorized the chief school administrator and/or his/her designee(s) to implement its staff attendance policy in the following manner. Further, the board of education authorizes the chief school administrator to formulate any additional administrative procedures and guidelines which are needed to effectuate the policy.

- A. All leave time benefits provided by the various negotiated agreements remain available to eligible employees for the specific purpose for which they are designated. Contractual leave time may only be taken if the employee satisfies all contractual and/or policy prerequisites for the use of such leave.
- B. Administrators have an obligation to emphasize to their staff the importance and necessity of being at work every day so that students can benefit from the uninterrupted delivery of educational services.
- C. Administrators shall be responsible for the monitoring of the daily attendance of all employees who report to them. As part of this monitoring process, they shall maintain a comprehensive employee attendance report on-site which shall include date of absence and type of absence. Tardiness shall also be noted.

### **Attendance Patterns Procedures**

When possible, the employee should notify the office in advance of his/her absence. When an employee becomes ill during the night and no advance notice is possible, they are to call the school secretary at home no later than 11:00 p.m. or between 6:00 a.m. and 7:00 a.m. The employee is to notify the school secretary at this time if they have any duty that day. A teacher may request a specific substitute.

A teacher who is absent should call the office prior to 3:00 p.m. on the day of the absence to notify the office whether he/she will return to work or be absent the next school day.

Immediately upon return from an absence, an employee shall fill out a "Faculty & Staff Absence Form" and give it to the chief school administrator.

Teaching staff should leave adequate plans for a substitute. In anticipation of any absence, teachers are responsible for keeping their substitute folder up-to-date and available for the substitute and chief school administrator.

### **Evaluative Criteria: Employee Attendance**

The factors to be considered in determining an employee's attendance record are:

- A. Frequency and pattern of occurrence;
- B. Total days of absence;
- C. Cause of absence;
- D. Accumulated sick leave.

### **Review of Attendance Data**

A record shall be kept of the attendance of each employee. Any absence, for part or all of a school day, shall be recorded along with the reason for the absence. The record will distinguish sick leave, workman's compensation, personal, death, leave of absence, professional days, jury duty, vacation days and/or extended leaves of absence. The employee's attendance record will include verification of an absence where such is required. The employee's rate of absenteeism shall be calculated annually and entered on his/her attendance record. The attendance record shall be part of the employee's personnel file. At the end of each school year, a cumulative attendance record shall be assembled for the school.

### **Supervisory Action**

- A. Monitoring of employee attendance to determine frequency and pattern of occurrence, total days of absence and cause of absence must occur as a first step. The chief school administrator shall also pay specific attention to the accumulated sick leave of the individual and the severity of the illness (extended leaves) in making this determination. The chief school administrator shall proceed to the first discussion when an employee reaches three short term (one or two day absences) within a single school year without documentation indicating an illness and this is a re-occurring pattern based on the four factors listed. The chief school administrator must take into consideration the factors under Evaluative Criteria: Employee Attendance for the previous years in his/her determination for a first discussion.

B. First discussion with the employee:

1. The purpose is to help an employee achieve and maintain a good attendance record.
2. The dates and length of employee absence and tardiness are entered on an attendance form and are periodically reviewed.
3. The employee is made to understand that the record of absence/tardiness will be considered in the annual evaluation.
4. The employee is considered a satisfactory employee only if he/she can be counted on to report to work when scheduled. The employee should be made aware of his/her responsibility to monitor all absences and should maintain a good attendance record to meet this requirement.
5. The employee is to be given written notice that payment for future sick leave, paid under Title 18A, could require written documentation. The notice will be considered part of an anecdotal record and must contain a record of the absences discussed, the reasons, and the dates of the discussion.

C. Second discussion with the employee:

1. If the employee continues to show frequency and pattern of occurrences, total days and non-documented absence, the chief school administrator shall conduct a second discussion, review the step of B-5 (above) and notify the employee of disciplinary action as stated below.

D. Disciplinary action:

The chief school administrator will notify the employee by letter of reprimand to be placed in the employee's file. The letter will include:

1. Full disclosure of the absence/tardiness record;
2. A record of the first and second discussions with appropriate written communications;
3. A recommendation that the information gathered could warrant disciplinary action.

Employee may be subject to further disciplinary action including, but not limited to, withholding of increment for violation of attendance policy, following a thorough review by the board of the relevant facts and circumstances in any particular case.

**Attendance Improvement Plan**

A. Planning:

The chief school administrator shall review the attendance summary. The summary shall be analyzed for excessive absences and for patterns of absences, such as high absenteeism, by certain individuals, among certain groups of employees, on certain days of the week, month, or year, or for specific causes. Strategies for reducing the absence rate shall be developed, if deemed necessary.

B. Implementation:

The chief school administrator shall be responsible for implementing the district's plan for the improvement of employee attendance. He/she shall encourage the

regular attendance of the staff. An employee's attendance record shall be incorporated in his/her evaluation, and a list of the number of days absent and the types of absences shall be recorded.

- C. In-service Training:  
The chief school administrator shall meet with the staff at the beginning of each school year to inform them of board policy and district regulations on attendance; to familiarize employees with absence reporting procedures; to review the value of accumulated sick leave; and to acquaint employees with the degree to which attendance will affect evaluation reports.

**Date:**

**Review and Adoption: May 17, 1989**

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**Review Date: December 29, 2010 – No Changes**

**Legal References:**

N.J.S.A. 18A:11-1	General mandatory powers and duties
N.J.S.A. 18A:27-4	Power of boards of education to make rules governing employment of teacher, etc.; employment thereunder
N.J.S.A. 18A:29-14	Withholding increments; causes; notice of appeals
N.J.S.A. 18A:30-1 et seq.	Sick Leave
N.J.S.A. 18A:54-20	Powers of board (county vocational schools)
N.J.A.C. 6A:30-1.1 et seq.	Evaluation of the Performance of School Districts
N.J.A.C. 6A:32-2.1	Definitions

Montville Education Ass'n v. Montville Bd. of Ed., 1984 S.L.D. 550, rev'd St. Bd. 1984 S.L.D. 559, rev'd App. Div., unreported decision (docket no. A-1178-84T7, decided December 6, 1985) 1985 S.L.D. 1972, decision on remand, St. Bd., 1986 S.L.D. 3113

Burlington Educational Ass'n v. Burlington Bd. of Ed., 1985 S.L.D. 889, aff'd St. Bd. 1985 S.L.D. 912

Scotch Plains-Fanwood Board of Education v. Scotch Plains-Fanwood Education Association, 270 NJ Super 444 (App. Div. 1994); rev'd. 139 NJ 141 (1995)

**Possible**

**Cross References:**

4150	Leaves
4151.1	Personal illness and injury/health and hardship
4151.6	Religious observance
4151.7	Emergency/personal
4251	Attendance patterns

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