

WEST CHESTER AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT  
Pupil Services Committees  
April 8, 2019  
6:30 p.m.  
Spellman Administration Building

REGULAR SESSION

AGENDA

- March 11, 2019 Pupil Services Committee Minutes Ms. Chester
- Revisions to Administrative Guideline 204 AG1-Attendance Dr. Ranieri
- Sweet Stevens Katz and Williams Pool Counsel Agreement Dr. Ranieri

**Committee Protocol for Responding to Comments from the Public-**

- 1. A community member will be called upon by the Committee Chair.**
- 2. If the comment can be answered quickly, or can be answered in order to clarify information, someone will respond.**
- 3. If a community member has a more detailed question about a topic, the committee chair may refer the person to the superintendent or appropriate administrator to make an appointment so the question can be answered in more detail.**

**Pupil Services Committee**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**March 11, 2019**

**Attended:**

**Committee Members:** Sue Tiernan, Randell Spackman, Chris Tabakin

**Other Board Members:** Karen Herrmann, Kate Shaw, Chris McCune, Brian Gallen

**Administration:** Tammi Florio, Robert Sokolowski, Sara Missett, Michael Wagman, Jim Scanlon

**Ms. Tiernan opened the meeting at 6:32 pm.**

**Items listed on the Pupil Services Committee Regular Agenda of March 11, 2019:**

1. February 25, 2019 Pupil Services Committee Minutes
2. Vaping Presentation

**A. Actions and Outcomes:**

Approval of February 25, 2019 Pupil Services Committee Minutes vote: 3-0

**B. Items to be placed on upcoming Board Agenda:**

None

**C. Items to be placed on the Consent Agenda:**

None

**D. Items to be discussed at a later date:**

None

**The meeting ended at 7:06 pm.**

**Next Meeting: Monday, April 8, 2019 – 6:30 pm**



Book	Policy Manual
Section	200 Pupils
Title	Attendance Guidelines
Code	204AG1
Status	Review
Adopted	August 1, 2015
Last Revised	November 1, 2018
Last Reviewed	May 22, 2017

### **Guidelines**

Parents/Guardians shall provide a written explanation for the absences of a student. These shall be required in advance for types of absence where advance notice is possible.

Excuse forms shall be completed and turned in to the school by the student within three (3) days after return from an absence. The absence of any student failing to comply with this time period will automatically become unlawful and the relevant school laws shall be applied.

#### Middle and Elementary School Guidelines

1. The parents/guardians of all students who miss ten (10) days may be notified in writing of the student's absence record.
2. A parent/guardian conference may be requested by the administration when a student has missed a total of fifteen (15) days or more.
3. After twenty (20) or more days of absence, an informal review of the student's record including days of absence, discipline, and academics may be made by the administration and recommendations, if any, shall be made in writing to the respective director regarding retention in grade.

#### High School Guidelines

1. Credit may be denied for those students who accrue more than twenty (20) cumulative absences in a year long course. Credit may also be denied for those students who accrue more than ten (10) cumulative absences in a semester course.
2. Unlawful class absences due to truancy or cutting of class may result in a "45" F grade for all class work missed that day.

#### High School Administrative Procedure

1. Whenever a student misses ~~seven (7)~~ **ten (10)** days (~~four (4)~~ **five (5)** for a semester course) of cumulative absence or has been habitually late to school and has missed the same class ~~seven (7)~~ **ten (10)** days (~~four (4)~~ **five (5)** for a semester course), the student's counselor and grade level administrator may meet with the student and review the attendance record. As a result of the meeting, the parent/guardian may be notified in writing of the student's absence record. Parents/Guardians may be notified that all absences beyond the ~~seventh~~ **tenth** absence will require a note from a licensed practitioner of the healing arts.

2. An Attendance Review Team (ART), consisting of the grade level administrator, counselor and other staff deemed necessary by the administrator, may review the student's absence record when a student has missed a total of ten (10) days (five (5) for a semester course) of cumulative absence or has been habitually late to school and has missed the same class ten (10) times (five (5) for a semester course). The team may hold a parent/guardian conference with the student to discuss the absence record. The administrator shall make the request for the conference in writing if the parent/guardian does not respond to a phone call.
3. The team shall continue to monitor the student's absence record. When the student has missed a total of fifteen (15) days (eight (8) for a semester course) of cumulative absence or has been habitually late to school and has missed the same class fifteen (15) times, the team may review the record again and notify the parent/guardian in writing of the record and possible consequences.
4. When a student has missed a total of twenty (20) days (ten (10) for a semester course) of cumulative absence or has been habitually late to school and has missed the same class twenty (20) times, the ART may reconvene to review the student's absence record. The team shall determine if a RECOMMENDATION FOR NO COURSE CREDIT will be made to the principal.
5. The principal shall review the recommendation by the team and make a final determination for NO COURSE CREDIT. If the principal supports the recommendation, the parent/guardian shall be notified in writing of the consequence. The decision of the principal shall be final.

### Early Dismissals

Each school shall establish procedures to validate requests for early dismissal to assure that students are released only for proper reasons and into proper hands.

No student may be released on the basis of an unvalidated telephone call or email address.

Children of estranged parents may be released only upon the request of the parent who has actual or de facto custody. If there is a dispute concerning which parent has actual or de facto custody, the designated administrator should be contacted; if s/he is unavailable, then the district's solicitor may be contacted.

### Absences

Absences will generally be recognized as cumulative or noncumulative. **Cumulative absences** refer to days that contribute to the allotted number of days a student may be absent. **Noncumulative absences** are absences that do not contribute to the specified days students may be absent.

### Cumulative Absences

**Excused absences:** Those absences where any licensed practitioner of the healing arts or upon any other satisfactory evidence furnished, shows that a student is unable to attend school and/or classes, or is prevented from study because of illness or other urgent reasons including but not limited to the following:

1. A maximum of ~~seven (7)~~ **ten (10)** days absence for students verified by a parental note. All absences beyond the ~~seventh~~ **tenth** day of parental cumulative absences will require a note from a licensed practitioner of the healing arts.
2. Family vacation, preapproved by the principal, at his/her sole discretion, while school is in session, up to a maximum of five (5) days per school year. The following will be taken into consideration by the principal in granting permission for the trip:
  - a. The student's academic standing.
  - b. The student's attendance record.
  - c. The effect the absence will have on the student's educational welfare.
  - d. The exceptionality of the request.

3. **In lieu of family vacation days, parents may use the five (5) designated days as parent notes for illness or other urgent reasons previously listed. No more than fifteen (15) total days may be excused via a parental note.**

**Unlawful absences:** Any absence which does not meet the definition of an excused absence including but not limited to the following:

1. Any day for which a written excuse is not submitted within three (3) school days of a student's return from an absence, including notes from a licensed practitioner of the healing arts.
2. Any absence not excused by a note from a licensed practitioner of the healing arts after ~~seven (7)~~ **ten (10) or fifteen (15) total days of** absences verified by receipt of parental excuses.
3. Truancy – Frequent or prolonged absence without satisfactory reason, or willful violation of the compulsory attendance laws, which are subject to the penalties provided for in the school laws of Pennsylvania.
4. Class cut.
5. Unlawful tardies **and/or early dismissals** as set forth herein. A tardy is defined as a minimum of one minute of lateness to school. **An early dismissal is considered leaving prior to the end of the student day more than 60 minutes early.** Eight (8) tardies to school **and/or early dismissals** will be considered one (1) unlawful absence in grades K-8. Unlawful tardies **and cutting class** in grades 9-12 will be handled under discipline as a Level One offense.
6. Any absence due to a family vacation while school is in session after the fifth of the five (5) day maximum per school year.

For students who are 17 or older and not of compulsory age, unlawful absences shall be unexcused absences.

#### Noncumulative Absences

1. Suspensions from school.
2. Illness verified by a note from a licensed practitioner of the healing arts submitted within three (3) days of a student's return.
3. Death in the family, when accompanied by a note within three (3) days of a student's return. Up to 5 days will be approved for an immediate family member. If services are occurring outside of the country, any additional days will need to be approved by the building administrator.
4. Religious holidays, when accompanied by a note within three (3) days of a student's return.
5. Preapproved college visits, when College Visit Permission/Verification Form 204AG2 is submitted.
6. Court hearings involving Children, Youth & Families or Juvenile Probation Officer.
7. A student can be excused from school to participate in a musical performance in conjunction with a national veterans' organization or incorporated unit for an event or funeral. The organization or unit must provide the student with a signed excuse detailing the date, location and time of the event or funeral. The student must furnish the excuse to the school district prior to being excused.

#### Additional Guidelines

1. **Up to 12 15 days of consecutive absences:** Parents can use 5 vacation days and 7 **10** parent notes. Notes from a licensed practitioner of the healing arts will be required for all future absences or they will be considered unlawful for students of compulsory age and unexcused for students over the age of 17. If a student does not return on the ~~13<sup>th</sup>~~ **16th** day, the district will follow the compulsory attendance guidelines. Unless the district has been provided with evidence that the absence may be legally excused or the district is pursuing compulsory attendance prosecution, the student will be dropped from the district's active attendance roll after 10 days of absence. If the student is in the US, the absence will be coded as withdrawn-dropped. If the student is out of the country, the absence will be coded as withdrawn-moved. If the student returns, the parent will need to reenroll the student.

Removal from the district's active attendance roll does not remove the parent/guardian's compulsory attendance obligations for the student and the district may pursue citations and/or referral to Children, Youth & Families.

2. **Short-Term Withdraw:** This encompasses absences that are between ~~13~~ **16**-45 day duration or one marking period. The principal will work with the respective Director and Assistant Superintendent to develop a reentry plan. No plan can be implemented without prior approval from the Assistant Superintendent. Unless the district has been provided with evidence that the absence may be legally excused or the district is pursuing compulsory attendance prosecution, the student will be dropped from the district's active attendance roll. If the student is in the US, the absence will be coded as withdrawn-dropped. If the student is out of the country, the absence will be coded as withdrawn-moved. If the student returns, the parent will need to reenroll the student. No other absence codes are used in this type of absence. Removal from the district's active attendance roll does not remove the parent/guardian's compulsory attendance obligations for the student and the district may pursue citations and/or referral to Children, Youth & Families. Families with special circumstances should contact the district regarding their circumstances.
3. **A single absence more than 5 consecutive days in length:** A licensed practitioner of the healing arts note is required by the 6<sup>th</sup> day of absence, even if parent notes have not been exhausted.
4. **15 or more days of absences, excused by a licensed practitioner of the healing arts:** The school nurse will call the licensed practitioner of the healing arts to seek more information regarding the absences to insure that the appropriate supports can be put in place for the students.
5. **Notifications/Student Attendance Improvement Plan (SAIP):** Parents/guardians will be contacted via mail and/or phone call regarding their child's fourth unlawful absence with a request to complete a Student Attendance Improvement Plan (SAIP). The SAIP conference can include the student, family, school team, and outside supports. At the sixth unlawful absence a referral to Children, Youth and Families or an attendance improvement program will be completed and citations can be issued to a District Magistrate.
6. **A College Visit Permission/Verification form (204AG2)** must be completed and is required for each college visit. The student must submit the form to the building principal or designee in advance of the college visit for approval. The building principal or designee may approve the college visit in his or her sole discretion. If approved, the form must be signed by a representative of the college and then submitted to the attendance secretary within 3 days of returning from the visit. If the form is not preapproved by the building principal or designee, signed by a representative of the college or isn't timely submitted, it will be considered an unlawful absence.
7. **Charter Schools:** Where the district is required by law to prosecute a habitually truant charter school student upon notification by the charter school, the district shall utilize the charter school's attendance policy to determine unlawful absences.

Last Modified by Linda Cherashore on April 3, 2019