

TITLE 126
LEGISLATIVE RULE
WEST VIRGINIA BOARD OF EDUCATION

SERIES 81
COUNTY ATTENDANCE POLICY (4110)

§126-81-1. General.

1.1. Scope. -- These rules provide guidelines for the development of local county attendance policies.

1.2. Authority. -- W.Va. Code §18-8-1.

1.3. Filing Date. -- August 8, 1989.

1.4. Effective Date. -- September 20, 1989.

1.5. Repeal of Former Rule. -- None. This is a new policy.

§126-81-2. Rationale.

The West Virginia Board of Education believes that regular attendance is a requirement for the delivery of formal education to the West Virginia public education students. The basic intent of this attendance policy is to promote school attendance and meet the individual needs of students to help them reach their potential. Since programs of study are planned and learning outcomes taught so that each day's work builds on work previously completed, all students are expected to attend school regularly and to be on time for classes. A direct relationship exists between good attendance and student performance, graduation and good work habits in the marketplace.

§126-81-3. Responsibility.

3.1. The State Board has the responsibility to encourage student attendance, motivate daily attendance, and specify components used by the respective counties to develop their attendance policies.

3.2. Each county board of education has the responsibility to develop and implement an attendance policy which includes:

(a) appointment of a designated school attendance coordinator (principal, or designee) who collects classroom attendance data and makes appropriate referrals to the county attendance director.

(b) providing students and parents a copy of the policy.

(c) reporting all school dropouts each month to the Department of Education.

(d) the option to appoint a school based attendance committee.

(e) additional components determined by local needs.

§126-81-4. Guidelines.

Each county's attendance policy addresses the following components:

4.1. Philosophy: A philosophy declaring the board's intent to increase attendance.

(a) creating a positive climate conducive to learning and help students develop responsibility, self-discipline and good work habits.

(b) developing a system enlisting parental support for regular school attendance.

4.2. Principles of Operation:

(a) preventive and educative procedures including incentives to maintain and improve

attendance should be identified using the following definition for excused and unexcused absences:

EXCUSED ABSENCES

1. Illness or injury of the student requiring physician's verification.

2. Medical and or dental appointment which cannot be scheduled outside the school day when the absence is verified in writing by the physician or dentist.

3. Illness of student verified by parents/guardian not to exceed three (3) consecutive or five (5) total days per semester. Verification by a physician will be required if absences exceed three (3) consecutive days.

4. Illness or injury in family when student absence verified as essential by physician.

5. Calamity, such as fire in the home, flood, or family emergency upon approval by the school principal.

6. Death in the family, limit three (3) days for each occurrence except in extraordinary circumstances. "Family" defined as mother, father, brother, sister, grandmother, grandfather, aunt, uncle, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, brother's children, sister's children, student's child(ren), or any person living in the same household.

7. Leaves of educational value adhering to these stipulations:

· prior approval of school administrator

· prior submission and approval of educational plan detailing objectives and activities.

· leave not to exceed ten (10) days - verification of implementation of the education plan upon student's return

· leave to extend more than ten (10) days requires county board approval.

8. School approved curricular or extra-curricular activities.

9. Legal obligation with verification.

10. Failure of bus to run or extremely hazardous conditions.

11. Observance of religious holidays.

12. Handicapped students' absences should be addressed in accordance with Policy §2419 Regulations for the Education of Exceptional Students, Section 1.10 Home/Hospital Instruction.

UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

Any absence not meeting the above requirements shall be considered an unexcused absence.

(Parents have the right to appeal the application of this policy through the Appeals Procedure For Citizens (§7211) available through the county board of education.)

(c) within a given timeline students are responsible for all work missed during an absence. There may be no withholding of credit and/or grades unless the student after given an opportunity to make up the work fails to do so.

4.3. Maintenance of Records: accurate attendance records and related documentation should be maintained in each school including:

(a) an up-to-date register/record of attendance for every student in every class.

(b) procedures for 1) checking with parents about absences 2) checking recorded classroom absences, and 3) notification of county attendance director.

4.4. Corrective Measures: designed to meet the developmental needs of students should be included, such as:

(a) alternative plans and programs that are positive in nature and encourage improved school attendance.

(b) procedures for notification of parents/guardians of absences and procedures for securing parent involvement for improvement.

(c) procedures for providing adequate counseling for problems related to attendance.

(d) procedures for ensuring appropriate academic placement.

(e) procedures for ensuring that county social services and attendance workers comply with the regulations as outlined in the compulsory school attendance law, School Laws of West Virginia, §18-8-1 to §18-8-9.

§126-81-5. Policy Development.

5.1. Each county must seek the assistance of teachers, principals, attendance directors, parents and community leaders in developing the attendance policy.