MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Achievement Matters Most

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State Superintendent of Schools

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TO: Members of the State Board of Education

FROM: Bernard J. Sadusky, Ed.D.

DATE: June 26, 2012

SUBJECT: Local School Systems' Application of COMAR 13A.08.01.05, *Student Attendance Policy*, to Suspended Students

PURPOSE:

To provide information requested by the Board at its May 22, 2012 meeting on the application of regulations regarding attendance to students who are suspended out-of-school.

BACKGROUND:

The Code of Maryland Regulations 13A.08.01.05, *Student Attendance Policy*, requires that each local school system develop a student attendance policy with certain components (ATTACHMENT I). The regulations require a student attendance procedure which includes: (a) a record keeping format; (b) intervention strategies and procedures for dealing with absenteeism at the beginning stages of the problem as well as chronic absenteeism; and (c) a referral process to student services or other central office professionals for case management of chronic attendance cases 13A.08.01.05(6).

At the May Board meeting, staff was requested to find out if local school systems apply the requirements of this regulation to cases in which students have been suspended out-of-school. The Directors of Student Services in Maryland's twenty-four local school systems were posed with the following question and example:

"In terms of students who have been suspended and that is part of their absenteeism, what do you do in terms of (B)(6)? If a student has a three day suspension and he/she has been absent 2 additional days, do you put in place intervention strategies for that student? The numbers here don't matter; I am simply trying to find out if this regulation is applied in cases of suspension."

A compilation of the responses is found in ATTACHMENT II. Baltimore City and Somerset County provided detailed information on their attendance monitoring procedures. Those are contained in ATTACHMENTS III and IV.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

All twenty-four school systems have in place procedures to monitor attendance and intervene in cases where there is a pattern of chronic absences. In regards to the specific question about whether out-of-school suspensions which are excused absences figure into the count of days absent to trigger the interventions, responses varied. Fifteen school systems do count excused and unexcused absences in their chronicle of days absent and do put their intervention strategies and processes in play when a student accrues a number of absences. Nine school systems do not count out-of-school suspensions (excused absences) in order to implement their intervention strategies and processes. Thus, there is some variance in the application of COMAR 13A.08.01.05 across the State to students who are suspended.

This variance can be remedied by staff in the Division of Student, Family, and School Support through guidance and technical assistance if it is the Board's intent that this particular regulation applies to all student absences, both excused and unexcused.

ACTION:

For information and discussion.

BJS:CJB

Attachments (4)

(ATTACHMENT I)

COMAR 13A.08.01.05, *Student Attendance Policy*

.05 Student Attendance Policy.

Each local school system shall develop a student attendance policy which includes:

A. A general statement dealing with the local school system's purpose and rationale for promoting regular school attendance.

B. Rules, Definitions, and Procedures for Policy Implementation.

(1) Reasons for lawful and unlawful absences and tardiness include lawful/unlawful absence as defined in Regulations .03 and .04, of this chapter. Clarification of special situations for unlawful absence may also be identified.

(2) Standards for regular attendance include minimal requirements for student attendance in order to foster continuity of the instructional program. The standards for school attendance may identify a specific number of excessive or unlawful absences allowed within a marking period, semester, or school year.

(3) Procedure to verify absences/tardiness includes responsible persons, time limits, and methods of absent/tardy verification.

(4) Penalties for not meeting standards for regular attendance requirements include actions taken by school system staff when a student is unlawfully absent or accumulates an equivalent number of excessive or unlawful absences which exceeds the standard for regular school attendance. The penalties should be identified, and should reflect a continuum of excessive or unlawful absences.

(5) Make-up work requirements include classroom teacher and student responsibility, time limits, and grading policy for make-up work. Make-up work requirements may also involve a procedure for completing class work in advance of an absence wherever possible.

(6) Attendance-monitoring procedure includes:

(a) Record-keeping format to comply with State attendance reporting requirements;

(b) Intervention strategies and procedures for dealing with absenteeism at the beginning stages of the problem as well as chronic absenteeism; and

(c) A referral process to pupil services or other central office professionals for case management of chronic attendance cases.

(7) Reward process includes an identified motivational program to reward regular school attendance.

(8) Information dissemination includes methods for informing school staff, students, parents, and community members of attendance policy requirements.

(9) Appeals process includes specific due process procedures for appealing attendance violation decisions at the school and central office level.

(10) Legal foundation includes citations of legal authority for attendance policy development and implementation.

(ATTACMENT II)

Local School Systems' Application of COMAR 13A.08.01.05, Student Attendance Policy, to Suspended Students

LSS	Response
Allegany	In Allegany County, if a student has a 3 day suspension and then does not come back until day 6, days 4 and 5 are marked unexcused (unless a legitimate reason caused the absence). In any event, this would trigger our 5 day letter to the parent, which outlines intervention services available to address the attendance and potentially the behavioral issue(s). This would serve as the first step to our early intervention. If the student has had more lengthy attendance issues beyond these 5 days, then the absences would still be monitored and the earlier intervention would have already occurred. The days of absence would accumulate and trigger our other attendance interventions such as our 9 day letter, 12 day letter, parent conference, PPW home visit, referral to outside agencies, etc. Lastly, it should be noted that as with all absence, regardless of the number of cumulative absences, or reason, our school secretaries make phone calls to all parents when their child is absent. This occurs in the late morning or early afternoon of the absence.
Ann Arundel	We do all of #6 but not specifically related to suspension and return. We have a concise approach that addresses all parts of #6 but we are not necessarily linking this to suspension.
Baltimore City	**See Attachment III**
Baltimore	The three days related to the suspension would be excused coded 18 (suspension, excused, may make up the work) and the additional two days would be coded 21 (other unlawful). BCPS would expect schools to intervene with parents to set up reinstatement conferences to limit the number of days unexcused, which may include a referral to the PPW if the school is unable to contact parents. PPWs would do a home visit to assist school in getting the student reengaged with the school. Schools are showing greater flexibility with the use of telephone conferencing, PPWs conducting the reinstatement conference to expedite the reinstatement. Schools are very sensitive to attendance issues with the state standard of 94% and now the chronic truancy rates dropping down to 1% eventually. Finally, here is a link to our Attendance Manual used by administrators, PPWs, teachers, social workers, etc. http://www.bcps.org/offices/sss/pdf/Attendance-Manual.pdf

LSS	Response
Calvert	If a student is out longer than the suspension we would: 1.follow up with a PPW or counselor call 2.extended absences would be brought up at SST 3.student would meet with his/ her administrator 4. He/she would be given make-up work regardless of legal or illegal absence.
Caroline	We would see the two as separate - suspension days would be seen as a discipline issue, not an attendance issue, and interventions may be put into place to address behavior. We would look only at the two days when considering attendance interventions. Let me know if you need an additional explanation.
Carroll	When a student is suspended from school, the system codes the absence with an S18 suspension code. The student is only coded S18 for the actual days of suspension, ie: suspended 3 days, coded S18 for 3 days. If a student remains out of school beyond the days of suspension, the student is coded UNV, unverified, until such time the student returns to school and the reason for the absences beyond the days of suspension is known. Then the additional days are coded according to the reason for the absence. While serving a suspension, a student may complete the work provided by the school during the suspension. Each of our schools monitors student attendance regularly and we have countywide guidelines for addressing absenteeism. Each of our schools makes daily calls to the home for every absent student. Schools meet regularly to review absences and develop intervention plans for those students with excessive absences. An administrator, counselor, ppw, etc. sit on these teams. Our countywide guidelines start with the expectation of teacher contact to the home, followed by the counselor, school based administrator, then pupil personnel worker. The ppw becomes involved after all school based interventions have been tried, or becomes immediately involved in the case of a student who stops attending school all together. We use medical verification, attendance contracts, positive incentives, meetings with Juveniles Services, or the States Attorney, and Court to address chronic truancy. Absences due to suspension are monitored as part of a student's overall attendance. If a student refuses to return to school after suspension, the ppw may go to the home to meet with the family and develop a plan for the student's return to school.

LSS	Response
Cecil	Cecil County uses Powerschool to collect and report attendance data that complies with state reporting requirements. Each school develops its own strategies for dealing with absenteeism at the early stages. For example, middle schools have a homeroom for students with a history of poor attendance. The students within that homeroom are provided with incentives and rewards for achieving attendance related goals. Many elementary schools have contests to see which class has the best attendance for a month. Our high schools often assign students to a short term suspension and to Saturday school. The purpose of the Saturday school is to give the student a chance to make up missed work after the suspension with a teacher available to assist. In terms of chronic absences, CCPS refers students to the PPW if the child exceeds 5 unlawful absences in a marking period. In addition to the referral, the child will receive failing grades for the marking period. The earned grades will be reinstated if the child does not exceed 5 absences for the following marking period. If a child is absent for additional days beyond the suspension, those days will be coded as unlawful and will be captured in the strategies noted above. The suspension days are considered lawful absences, and the students are permitted to make up missed class work. Our procedures work well for unlawful absences, but don't always capture the child that is frequently out of school due to suspensions.
Charles	A student's suspension counts toward his/her absenteeism in Charles County Public Schools. The student and the parent are encouraged to obtain the work from the teachers since the student is allowed to make up any work during a suspension period. A student's absenteeism can be affected obviously by suspensions. When this occurs, school personnel follow the attendance process and will often request a review with the hearing officer to see what can be done to alleviate the problem. Students may be referred to the Student Support Team, participate in extended day programs (if they exist in that school), or other targeted individual interventions. Students with multiple suspensions may eventually be suspended to the Superintendent for a disciplinary concern which would target the behaviors, not just absenteeism. <u>Attendance Monitoring Procedures</u> -Students with attendance issues are monitored at the school level. -The PPW and administrator will meet to review the cases with ongoing concerns. -The student is called in to meet with the PPW and administrator and the parent is contacted to discuss the attendance issue. -The student's attendance is monitored closely and his/her attendance file is flagged. - The student handbook indicates that when a student misses 5, 10, or 15 days of school, contact is made with the family. If additional days are missed, the student is recommended for an attendance review to be held at the central

	office and discussed with the hearing officer, parent, student, PPW, and administrator. At this point, the goal is to try and analyze the situation and make recommendations as to what steps should be taken next. -If the student is under the age of 13, the parent is informed that if the situation does not improve, the case will be referred to the State's Attorney for Charles County with a recommendation to place the case on the monthly Truancy Docket. (after the review the only acceptable reasons for absences would be medical or court) -If the student is over the age of 16 and not performing well due to the absenteeism, the parent and student are informed that the student can return to the home school and not miss any additional days (with only medical/court notes being accepted) OR the student can be placed in an alternative program (e.g. evening high school) in order to obtain as many credits as possible. -Once the parent is referred to the State's Attorney, the designated Assistant State's Attorney meets with the parent and PPW where all of the attendance issues are reviewed. The State's Attorney explains that the child cannot have any unexcused absences and that only medical/court notes will be accepted for the remainder of the school year. -If the attendance improves, there is no further action on the case except monitoring. -If the student continues to be absent, the State's Attorney is notified and officially charges the parent and the case goes to open court on the next Truancy Docket. -The procedure for regular court cases is then followed once the parent is in front of the judge. While we have had only 2 parents incarcerated for "harboring a child under the age of 16", the judge has indicated to all of the parents on these cases that they could be incarcerated for this offense. -The attendance review process has improved the attendance of students who have been involved as the parent wishes to avoid court. -By the end of 2011/12, we will have only 2 "chronic" truancy cases that are still being addressed through the court system (these have been problematic cases for several years). <u>Record Keeping Format</u> Attendance record keeping is a school responsibility. The data in the computer system is utilized by school personnel to monitor the attendance and this enables us to meet state requirements. When we do find it necessary to go to Truancy Court, the data in the computer system is considered the "official attendance record". <u>Intervention Strategies and Procedures</u> As explained above, students who are chronically absent or tardy are targeted by the PPW and administrator. After five absences of any kind, the school notifies the parent through a letter or phone call. After 10 days, the parent is contacted and a meeting may be scheduled to discuss an attendance plan. After 15 days, the student is referred to the PPW. After 21 days, the student is generally scheduled for an attendance review. Continued absences may result in a referral to the State's Attorney. Students are referred to the Student Support Team and attendance and/or behavior plans may be developed and implemented concerning the attendance. Other interventions may include mentoring, Check In/Out and counseling.

	Referral process to Student Services This is described above. Once the case is reviewed at the central office, the PPW/hearing officer continue to monitor the attendance in order to determine if further interventions or actions might need to be implemented.

LSS	Response
Dorchester	This case would be referred to our PPW for follow-up. The student would also be referred to the Student Success Team (SST) if he or she is not already being monitored by that group.
Frederick	Frederick County would not hold the student responsible for excessive absences if it was caused by suspensions provided by the school.
Garrett	Yes, we keep the attendance as for any student, and track and intervene accordingly. We provide make-up work for the days of suspension, and encourage students to make up the work missed on any other day. If there is an attendance problem we do intervene with phone calls, and if necessary a conference or home visit. Students with chronic attendance problems, as well as with other concerns, i.e. failing grades, discipline issues etc. are also discussed and reviewed for intervention at the Pupil Services teaming.
Harford	In the scenario you describe, the school would initiate **one or more** of the following actions: • Investigating absences through parental contact. • Conference with the parent, student and the principal/designee • Referral to the pupil personnel worker to conduct home visit contact • Using of guidance and other services to provide interventions/supports for the student.
Howard	Since absences due to suspension are excused absences, schools would not typically devise intervention strategies based on improving attendance if those absences are because of a suspension. The intervention strategies would be based on the reasons for the suspension. If there is excessive absenteeism above and beyond days attributable to suspensions, then interventions aimed at improving attendance would be implemented.

LSS	Response
Kent	In Kent County the following would occur with regard to (B)(6) of the Student Attendance Policy: A student would be marked suspended (an excused absence) for the number of days a suspension was assigned. Any absences beyond the suspension days assigned would then be marked unexcused. All students who are absent for an unexcused reason receive a telephone call each day they are out. Once the number of unexcused days reaches 3, we have an intervention timeline that would be activated. This involves a direct phone call from the school counselor, followed by a letter that is mailed home. Additional interventions occur that are progressive in nature if the absences continue to accumulate without reason from the parent. These interventions include, but are not limited to: parent conference with the school counselor and/or administrator, development of a contract, referral to SST, referral to our PPW, and referral to States Attorney.
Montgomery	The main question seems to be, "Do we consider suspension days when we are considering which students need interventions related to attendance?" I think our answer is yes. When we ask schools to address attendance issues, we provide multiple tools that allow them to do so: · Monthly reports of students unexcused absent 10% or more · Monthly reports of students with total absences 20% or more · Monthly suspension reports So when we look at attendance interventions, we look at students with both excused and unexcused absences. With those students, we provide a continuum of interventions: · Parent calls · Parent/student conferences · Attendance letters · Attendance contracts/Check-ins · PPW direct involvement · Home visits · *Attendance Matters* meetings (Steve Neff oversees this intervention program that is now system wide in MCPS) · TRB meetings
Prince George's	The student is initially marked as suspended. We put a code 18 in the attendance record in SchoolMax. This is an excused absence and the student is eligible for makeup work. If the student fails to return after the suspension we institute our attendance procedures and institute the steps in AP 5113. The teacher calls the home, the PPW calls, we begin fact finding for why the student is out of school. We continue to follow the truancy check list with a range of

	interventions from phone calls, letters, home visits, referral to SIT, in-school investigation etc. All of our students are entitled to educational services during the length of their suspension.
Queen Anne's	The first intervention strategies would be direct contact from the school level to communicate the attendance concern and discuss the importance of regular and on time attendance. This might take the form of a phone call home, conference with student and/or parents or a letter. However, to answer your question....I don't look at suspensions as an attendance issue as it was imposed by us. For example if by the end of September a student has been suspended 8 days and absent for one other day....I would probably not consider this student an attendance issue that requires intervention.
St. Mary's	The record keeping format complies with the State attendance reporting requirements. Students who are suspended are considered lawful. Parents/Legal Guardians of every absent student are contacted daily using an automated phone calling system. Students have at least five days to make up any assignments from absences. Excessive absences are investigated by school administrators and central office based/school assigned pupil personnel workers. Letters regarding absences are sent home as the first level intervention. Ongoing conferences are held with students and their parents/legal guardians. A referral process to student services is established for case management of chronic attendance cases. Month meetings are held at school sites to review excessive absences and determine needed interventions. The central office pupil personnel workers are assigned to schools to attend the monthly attendance meetings and assist with proving the interventions, including home visits and coordination of services with county agencies as needed. Major attendance cases are brought to the school system Interagency Committee for School Attendance. Meetings are held monthly. Parents/legal guardians are invited to the meeting. School administrators, pupil personnel workers, and community agencies are part of the team. Community agencies include Social Services, Juvenile Services, Health Department, In Home Intervention Services, and State's Attorney's Office. The director of student services chairs conferences.
Somerset	**See Attachment IV**
Talbot	We do not count suspension days towards our interventions strategies for attendance. We move towards a SST plan for students who have suspension difficulties.
Washington	Out of school suspension days are coded as excused absences and students are given school work to be completed, returned, and graded while the student is suspended.

	Secondly, **all** absences, excused or unexcused, are considered when determining interventions that may be necessary. After a student accumulates six absences, various interventions may be triggered including: -phone call(s) from school staff -letter from the school principal -letter from the Pupil Personnel Worker (PPW) -direct contact with parent/guardian/student from the PPW -invitation to school-based Student Support Team (SST) meeting to develop improvement plan - home visit from the PPW -home visit from PPW with school administrator and/or school resource officer Schools may also implement attendance contracts and impose consequences such as Saturday School, in an attempt to try to improve attendance. Occasionally, in severe cases of chronic truancy (involving **unexcused** absence), a principal may enter into a contract involving credit denial or retention. WCPS also actively pursues the parents of students with severe chronic truancy with court action for failure to comply with the Compulsory Attendance law.
Wicomico	As our attendance policy is currently written there are no interventions mentioned in the policy. With that being said, Student and family Services provide an excellent continuum of interventions as a result of the truancy reduction pilot program. The problem that we have is institutionalizing the interventions and ensuring that school based interventions happen. We are currently revising our student attendance policy. I shared your question with my revision committee and it has provided us with a great frame of reference.
Worcester	While suspension days are considered legal absence or excused absence, they still count in the total number of absences. Suspension days drive up the totals and can impact AYP. All of our schools are proactive by monitoring daily student attendance for pattern s or signs of chronic or excessive tardiness, absence or truant situations. Since we are on the 4 period Block Schedule for high schools with 90 minute classes, each day of absence is like missing two days of class work. Therefore, daily attendance is even more important. A more comprehensive plan to address attendance is found in the Worcester County Public Schools' Master Plan. 6) Attendance-monitoring procedure includes: All schools record daily student attendance using the PowerSchool computerized data collection system. All schools monitor their daily attendance data and address problems as appropriate.

	(a) Record-keeping format to comply with State attendance reporting requirements; As required by MSDE, our attendance data is formatted as days belongings, days not belonging and days absent. Also, we have the ability to extract data in other formats as needed. (b) Intervention strategies and procedures for dealing with absenteeism at the beginning stages of the problem as well as chronic absenteeism; and Our intervention process includes daily monitoring at the school level and at the Board of Education office. When it is determined that a student is experiencing an attendance problem, the school will provide intervention /services as appropriate that include but not limited to, phone calls, parent conferences, counseling and agency referrals. (c) A referral process to pupil services or other central office professionals for case management of chronic attendance cases. When school based efforts have not been fruitful, the school can contact their local PPW for additional services and assistance. If the issue persists, the PPW may refer the student to our Truancy Reduction Program also known as Truancy Court Program.

BALTIMORE CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

All Baltimore City public schools are expected to follow the following procedures for students with

Consecutive Absences

District Office and School Staff to Repeat Previous Efforts and Follow Through at Each Level

LEVEL 1
1 day absent

District Office:
- Send out Global Connect phone calls about student absences to parents daily.

School Staff:
- Call parent/guardian to inquire about absence. If barriers to attendance exist, offer support.
- Upon student's return to school, ensure he or she is caught up on academic work.

LEVEL 2
2 – 5 days absent

Attendance Monitor/Team:
- *Daily:* Call parent/guardian to ascertain reason for absence, identify barrier to attendance, offer support and encourage family to make school attendance a priority.
- *Daily:* Provide student-level attendance data to team members.
- *Day 2:* If identified as an extended absence, arrange for student to receive academic work.
- *Day 3:* If parent/guardian cannot be reached by phone, mail letter home asking parent to contact school.
- *Day 4:* If contact with family still has not been made, place student on "watch list" for attendance.

Teacher (pre-k to 6) or Guidance Counselor (6 to 12):
- *Upon return to school:* Meet with student to inquire about high number of absences and develop a strategy plan or attendance contract with student. Make every effort to connect family to resources.

LEVEL 3
6 – 9 days absent

Attendance Monitor/Team:
- *Day 6:* If parent/guardian contact has not been made, send a letter home with a certificate of mailing, asking parent/guardian to contact school.
- *Day 6:* Initiate home visit, when appropriate, to determine why student has been absent and offer support.
- *Day 6:* Determine follow-up actions specific to student's history of absenteeism, such as discussion with school nurse to investigate any physical reasons that may be barriers, referral for counseling/conflict resolution with the school social worker or psychologist or referral to SST or, for students with disabilities, to IEP team.
- *Day 6:* If student has an IEP, notify IEP chair about absences. If student continues to be absent, IEP team should revisit strategies to evaluate effectiveness and adjust as needed.
- *Day 7:* Contact family (phone or in person) to remind them that good attendance means fewer than 10 absences in a school year. Work with family on acquiring a doctor's note for absences due to illness over 6 days.

Teacher (pre-k to 6) or Guidance Counselor (6 to 12):
- *Day 8:* Meet with student to inquire about high number of absences. Make every effort to connect family to resources. Develop a strategy plan or attendance contract with student.

Community Partners/Family Preservation Specialist:
- *Day 6:* Meet with attendance team to identify resources for families to help break through barriers to attendance.
- *Day 7-9:* Connect with family preservation specialist to identify referrals for assistance with utilities, food, food stamps, clothing and transportation or interventions such as grief counseling, parenting skills classes, drug/alcohol treatment, services for low income families, legal services, and mental health services.

LEVEL 4
10 days absent

District office, attendance team, attendance monitors, teachers, guidance counselors, SST, IEP team, and community partners should continue implementing all intervention strategies listed in levels 1-3 as well as exploring additional strategies that have not been pursued.

City Schools assumes that any student who has been absent for two consecutive weeks has been contacted, the reason for absences has been documented, needed supports have been introduced and all necessary referrals have been made.

BALTIMORE CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

All Baltimore City public schools are expected to follow the following procedures for students with

Sporadic Absences

District Office and School Staff to Repeat Previous Efforts and Follow Through at Each Level

LEVEL 1
1 absence

District Office:
- Send out Global Connect phone calls about student absences to parents daily.

School Staff:
- Call parent/guardian to inquire about absence. If barriers to attendance exist, offer support.
- Upon student's return to school, ensure he or she is caught up on academic work.

LEVEL 2
2 – 5 absences

Attendance Monitor/Team:
- *Daily:* Call parent/guardian to find out reason for absence, identify barriers to attendance, offer support and encourage family to make school attendance a priority.
- *Daily:* Provide student-level attendance data to team members.
- *Day 3:* If parent/guardian contact is not made, send a letter home asking the parent to contact the school.

Teacher (pre-k to 6) or Guidance Counselor (6 to 8):
- *Upon return to school:* Meet with student to inquire about high number of absences. Make every effort to connect family to resources, as needed.

LEVEL 3
6 – 9 absences

Attendance Monitor/Team:
- *Day 6:* If parent/guardian contact has not been made, send a letter home with a certification of mailing, asking the parent/guardian to contact school.
- *Day 6:* Determine follow-up actions specific to student's history of absenteeism.
- *Day 7:* Contact family (by phone or in person), to remind them that good attendance means fewer than 10 absences in a school year and pointing out correlation betwen strong attendance and academic success.

Teacher (pre-K to 6) or Guidance Counselor (6 to 8):
- *Upon return to school:* Meet with student to inquire about high number of absences. Make every effort to connect family to resources. Develop a strategy plan or attendance contract with student.

LEVEL 4
10 absences

Attendance Monitor/Team:
- *Day 10:* Mail a 10 day absent letter home to family. A sample letter is available at the Office of Attendance and Truancy. Include a copy of the attendance policy and ask families to return a statement indicating they have read and understood the policy.
- *Day 10:* Encourage family attendance at school-level attendance meetings for families and students to review why regular school attendance is so important.
- *Day 10:* Connect with family preservation specialist to coordinate home visits as necessary.

Teacher (pre-K to 6) or Guidance Counselor (6 to 8):
- *Day 10:* Meet with student to review attendance contract, identify additional barriers, review attendance policy and reinforce school's expectations for excellent attendance, making connection between strong attendance and academic success.
- *Day 10:* Contact parent/guardian, reinforcing connection between attendance and academic success as well as reminding them of their responsiblity to get their child to school every day.

LEVEL 5
11 – 19 absences

Attendance Monitor/Team:
- *Ongoing*: Connect with family preservation specialist, SST and IEP team for outreach strategies.
- *15 days*: If absences have been unexcused, complete Court Referral Form.

LEVEL 6
20 absences (chronically absent)

Attendance Monitor/Team:
- *Day 20:* Mail unique 20 day absent letter to student's home. A sample letter is available at the Office of Attendance and Truancy.
- *Day 20:* Coordinate home visits with family preservation specialist.
- *Day 20:* Include student on "summer alert list" for interventions and targeted re-engagement strategies.

LEVEL 7
21+ days absent

Attendance Monitor/Team:
- *Daily:* Schedule additional home visits with family preservation specialists.
- *Day 21and over:* Flag for SST or IEP team, as appropriate, for review of interventions and goals.

Somerset County Public Schools
Attendance Guidelines

A. Attendance Interventions

School Level	Number of unlawful days per year	Action taken by school
Elementary/Intermediate	3 days	▪ School counselor will meet with student and follow-up with a telephone call to the parents/guardians.
	5 days	▪ Principal or designee will mail 1st attendance letter to the parents/guardians. ▪ School counselor will meet with student and follow-up with a telephone call to the parents/guardians.
	8 days	▪ Principal or designee will call the parents/guardians and follow-up with a 2nd attendance letter that will warn of failure on the 10th day of unexcused absence. ▪ Counselor will refer student to the learning support team
	10 days	▪ Failure letter will be sent to the parent/guardian with the appeal process described. ▪ Principal or designee will call the parent/guardian.
	12 days	▪ Counselor will complete an attendance referral with appropriate documentation and forward it to the Student Services department. ▪ Student Services personnel will make referral to the State's Attorney Office/Truancy Court.

School Level	Number of unlawful class periods per semester to include year long courses	Action taken by school
Academy/High School	2 periods per class	▪ Principal or designee will mail attendance letter to parents/guardians. ▪ School counselor will meet with student and follow-up with a phone call to the parents/guardians.
	4 periods per class	▪ Principal or designee will call the parents/guardians and follow-up with a 2nd attendance letter ▪ Counselor will refer student to the learning support team.
	5 periods per class	▪ Principal or designee will send 3rd attendance letter certified informing the parents/guardians that the student will receive a failing grade for the course. Letter will include appeal process.
	60 total class periods	▪ Counselor will complete an attendance referral with appropriate documentation and forward it to the Student Services department. ▪ Student Services personnel will make referral to the State's Attorney Office/Truancy Court if the student is under 16.

Attendance Recordkeeping

The recording of attendance data shall follow the procedures outlined in the Attendance Procedures Manual for Somerset County Public Schools.

SOMERSET COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Trip Approval Request

This form is to be completed and returned to the school principal at least ten (10) days prior to departure. It is strongly recommended that families plan trips around days when schools are not in session to minimize days lost from regular classroom instruction.

School:_____ Date of Request:_____

Student:_____ Grade:_____

Adult Responsible:_____ Telephone Number: _____

Destination:_____

Dates of Trip:_____ No. of School Days Absent:_____

Educational Objectives:_____

_____

Daily schedule of activities that will accomplish the objectives:

_____

Student: This form must be signed by all persons listed below. Please return to the office as soon as all teachers involved have signed.

Signatures (verifying notice of request - - not approval)

1st _____ 5th _____

2nd _____ 6th _____

3rd _____ 7th _____

4th _____

Signature of Adult Responsible:_____

Approved/Disapproved

Principal=s Signature_____ Date_____

SOMERSET COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

NOTICE OF STUDENT TARDINESS

Date: _____

Today,_____, was late in arriving at school and did not have a note stating the reason for the tardiness. This was your child's _____offense.

The following action was taken:

_____Written warning

_____Parent contact (telephone)

_____Detention and Parent Conference

_____Suspension from School

Should your child be late in arriving at school again the following action will be taken:

_____Parent contact (telephone)

_____Detention and Parent Conference

_____Suspension from school

Thank you for your cooperation in this matter. Please do not hesitate in contacting our school if we can be of any assistance.

Sincerely,

Principal

Somerset County Public Schools

Dr. Karen-Lee N. Brofee
Superintendent of Schools
Douglas A. Bloodsworth, Jr.
Assistant Superintendent

7982A Tawes Campus Drive
Westover, MD 21871
www.somerset.k12.md.us
Telephone: 410.651.1616
Instructional Fax: 410.651.2931
Administrative Fax: 410.651.3566

Board Members
Jack A. Willing, Jr.
Chairperson
Vice Chairperson
William M. Miles
Stan Pruitt
Dr. H. DeWayne Whittington
General Warner Sumpter

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

Date:

Today, _____ was late arriving at school and did not have a note excusing the tardiness. The only excused reasons for tardiness are illness of the student, death in the family, hazardous weather conditions, court summons, or doctor=s appointment. No note, or a note acceptable from home that does not contain one of these excused reasons, is not acceptable. Including today, this was your child's _____ unexcused tardy since the beginning of the semester.

The following action will be taken:

	Behavioral Sequence	Y
First Offense	Verbal Warning	
Second Offense	Detention/Parent Contact	
Third Offense	Informal Suspension/Parent Conference Required	
Fourth Offense	In-School Suspension/Parent Contact	
Fifth Offense	Suspension	

Thank you for your cooperation in this matter. Please feel free to contact our school if we can be of any assistance.

Sincerely,

Principal