

CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish procedures for the tracking and reporting of chronic absenteeism among students enrolled with the District pursuant to the requirements of the Every Student Succeeds Act (the “ESSA”).

Rules for Determining Chronic Absenteeism

The following rules shall apply to determinations by District employees regarding whether a student is considered chronically absent for purposes of this policy:

- A. A student will be considered chronically absent if he or she meets both of the following criteria:
 1. The student was absent from school on at least ten percent (10%) of the days during the current school year on which school was in session at his or her school site and the student was included in the District’s average daily membership, and;
 2. The student enrolled with the District within the first twenty (20) instructional days of the current school year and has not experienced an enrollment gap of ten (10) or more instructional days during the course of the school year.
- B. Except as provided in this policy, all student absences, whether such absence is excused or unexcused pursuant to law and/or District policy, shall count towards a student’s total absences during the year for purposes of determining whether the student is chronically absent.
- C. A student on an Individualized Education Program (“IEP”) or Section 504 plan shall not to be deemed absent for purposes of determining whether the student is chronically absent on days when the student is receiving services outlined in the student’s IEP or Section 504 plan in an offsite location.
- D. A student is not deemed to be absent for purposes of determining whether the student is chronically absent on days when that student is receiving homebound educational services from the District.

Procedures for Tracking and Reporting Chronic Absenteeism

The following policies and procedures apply to the tracking and reporting of chronic absenteeism within the District:

- A. The attendance secretary at each school site in the District is responsible for reviewing relevant student attendance records on a monthly basis in order to identify those students who meet the criteria to be deemed chronically absent. The attendance secretary shall prepare and submit to the site principal on a monthly basis documentation reflecting the names of students who are chronically absent and the dates on which those students were absent.
- B. The site principal of each school site is responsible for ensuring that data regarding the number of students enrolled at that school site who are deemed chronically absent in a given school year is made available to the District employee(s) responsible for preparing and submitting Annual Statistical Reports to the Oklahoma State Board of Education within seven (7) days of the last instructional day of that school year.

OPTIONAL PARAGRAPH

Medical Exemptions

The following procedures apply to determinations regarding medical exemptions under the District's chronic absenteeism policy:

- A. Student absences which are due to a significant medical condition of the student, as hereinafter defined, shall not be included in the student's number of absences for purposes of determining whether the student is chronically absent.
- B. A "significant medical condition" is defined as a severe, chronic, or life-threatening physical or mental illness, infection, injury, disease, or emotional trauma.
- C. Determinations regarding the eligibility of student absences for exemption from inclusion in school sites' chronic absenteeism calculations shall be made by a medical exemption review committee. The members of the medical exemption review committee shall be appointed by the Superintendent or his or her designee.
- D. No later than June 1 of each school year, the medical exemption review committee shall request from the parent/guardian of all students who otherwise meet the criteria for being designated chronically absent (1) appropriate medical documentation regarding any medical condition which affected the student's attendance during the school year, and (2) documentation reflecting which, if any, of the student's absences were due to the student's medical condition, prior to making a determination regarding the student's qualification for a medical exemption from the chronic absenteeism indicator. In the event that a student's parent or guardian refuses or fails to provide such documentation, none of the student's absences shall be excluded from the calculation of whether that student is chronically absent.
- E. No later than June 15 of each school year, the medical exemption review committee shall make a decision by majority vote regarding which absences, if

any, by each student whose parent/guardian submitted documentation to the committee were due to a significant medical condition affecting the student.

- F. The medical exemption review committee shall then provide the site principal at each school site within the District with documentation reflecting which students enrolled at that site were deemed eligible for a medical exemption and which specific absences by those students were deemed to be exempt absences.
- G. When school attendance data is reported to the Oklahoma State Board of Education in an Annual Statistical Report, such data shall include information regarding the number of student absences which were not included in the calculation of the school site's number of chronically absent students because the absence was due to a significant medical condition.
- H. The District shall retain all documentation reviewed by the medical exemption review committee for a period of five (5) years. The District will make such documentation available upon request to regional accreditation officers for auditing purposes, but shall otherwise refrain from disclosing the records or information contained therein to any party except as may be required by applicable law.

Effect of Declared Emergencies

In the event of an emergency declared by a federal or state government entity that impacts the operations of the District or an action taken by the Oklahoma State Board of Education declaring such an emergency, the following rules shall apply:

- A. Student absences related to a state of emergency shall not be included in the calculation of a school site's chronic absenteeism indicator.
- B. In the event that the Oklahoma State Board of Education and/or Oklahoma State Department of Education takes action that has the effect of modifying applicable rules or regulations regarding chronic absenteeism, to the extent such rules or regulations are inconsistent with the provisions of this policy, those rules shall take precedence over the provisions of this policy.

Reference: OAC § 210-10-13-25.