

SENECA VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT

SECTION: PUPILS

TITLE: ATTENDANCE

ADOPTED: March 10, 2003

REVISED: May 12, 2008

204. ATTENDANCE	
<p>1. Purpose SC 1301, 1326, 1327 Title 22 Sec. 11.11, 11.12, 11.41, 12.1 Pol. 113, 234, 251</p> <p>SC 1327, 1329 Title 22 Sec. 12.1</p> <p>SC 1302 Pol. 234</p>	<p>All persons residing in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania between the ages of six (6) and twenty-one (21) years are entitled to a free and full education in the Commonwealth's public schools. This right extends to migratory children and pregnant or married students. Special needs children are also entitled to a public sponsored program of education and training appropriate to their learning disabilities.</p> <p>Parents/Guardians of all children between the ages of eight (8) and seventeen (17) are required by the compulsory attendance law to ensure that their children attend an approved educational institution, unless legally excused.</p> <p>Students may not be asked to leave school merely because they have reached seventeen (17) years of age if they are fulfilling their responsibilities as students, as defined hereafter. A student may not be excluded from the public schools or from extracurricular activities because of being married or pregnant.</p>
<p>2. Definition</p>	<p>Absence is defined as nonattendance in school, an individual class or a combination of both situations.</p>
<p>3. Authority SC 1327, 1329 Title 22 Sec. 11.23, 11.25, 11.41</p>	<p>Each student's attendance record at school is very important. To develop a responsible approach to work habits which carry over to adult life and to achieve one's best in the classrooms, regular school attendance is necessary. School attendance and prompt arrival to school are the responsibilities of the students and their parents/guardians. When a personal illness or obligation of the student's family necessitates absence from class(es), the Board requires the student to follow these steps when returning to school and before being admitted to classes.</p>

<p>SC 1329, 1330 Title 22 Sec. 11.25</p>	<p>Before being admitted to classes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Have a parent/guardian write an excuse giving the name, date, days of absence and specific reason for absence. Upon returning to school, students are required to submit an excuse to the proper authority or attendance secretary as directed by the procedures established for students in their particular building. 2. Failure on the parents’/guardians’ part to provide a written explanation or the student to present such an excuse within five (5) days of the student’s return to school will result in the absence being marked unexcused. The fact that a parent/guardian provides a written explanation for the student’s absence does not in itself qualify the absence as excused. The absence must be for a legal reason. 3. Upon returning to school, students should immediately make plans with their teachers to make up all work missed during the absence. This is the student's responsibility (grades 7-12).
<p>Title 22 Sec. 11.25</p>	<p>The following reasons for absences are valid:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Illness/Injury, be specific, verified by a medical doctor's excuse or parental note indicating the nature of the illness or injury. A written excuse from a parent/guardian will be accepted to excuse up to five (5) consecutive and/or twenty percent (20%) of the total days in session. After this time, the district will send notification to require parents/guardians to verify any future illness/injury with a specific written excuse from a medical doctor. Note: After ten (10) parent/guardian notes have been presented to verify chronic illness/injuries, the parent/guardian may be required to verify each future illness/injury with a specific written excuse from a medical doctor. An excuse/letter may be provided by the student’s doctor that states s/he may miss school due to a specific illness and parent/guardian must refer to that specified illness when writing an excuse for each subsequent absence. These absences will then be excused. A new excuse/letter from their doctor must be provided every ninety (90) days. 2. Serious illness or death in the immediate family verified by a written excuse from a parent/guardian. 3. Quarantine.
<p>Title 22 Sec. 11.23</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Emergency medical or dental attention. Obtaining professional health care or therapy service if the following requirements are met: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The health care or therapeutic services are rendered by Commonwealth licensed practitioners.

<p>Title 22 Sec. 11.26</p> <p>SC 1546 Title 22 Sec. 11.21</p>	<p>b. It is not practical or possible for the student to receive the services outside of school hours.</p> <p>c. The time of necessary absence from school involves a minimum of interference with the student's regular program of studies. Such services must be verified in writing from the parent/guardian. The administration may ask for additional verification from the service provider.</p> <p>5. Absence approved in advance by the principal, such as, college visitations, military recruiting, required court attendance, preplanned educational trips and tours, etc.</p> <p>6. Authorized religious holidays. Religious instruction for up to a total of thirty-six (36) hours per school year. This shall require submission of a written request from the parents/guardians of the student, prior to release of the student to attend and/or participate in religious instructional programs. Such written request shall include the dates and hours for which instruction is requested.</p> <p>7. Impassable roads as determined by the Director of Transportation.</p> <p>8. Inclement weather.</p> <p>The following reasons are illegal in accordance with the Pennsylvania State Attendance Laws and Seneca Valley School District policies:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Truancy. 2. Oversleeping or missing the school bus. 3. Trips not approved in advance by the building principal will be designated as illegal. Trips that have been disapproved by the building principal will be designated as unexcused. 4. Shopping. 5. Hunting, fishing, attending ball games or sporting events. 6. Birthday or other celebrations. 7. Employment. 8. Inefficient private transportation or automobile breakdowns.
---	--

<p>SC 1329</p> <p>SC 1327</p> <p>SC 1330</p> <p>SC 1330 Title 22 Sec. 11.28</p> <p>SC 1327 Title 22 Sec. 11.22 Pol. 116</p> <p>Title 22 Sec. 11.34</p> <p>4. Guidelines</p>	<p>9. Any other reasons not listed in the legal excuse grouping presented in the Pennsylvania School Code of 1949 or Seneca Valley School District policies.</p> <p>The Board shall excuse the following students from the requirements of regular attendance at the schools of this district:</p> <p>1. On certification by a physician or submission of other satisfactory evidence and on approval of the Department of Education, children who are unable to attend school or apply themselves to study for mental, physical or other reasons so urgent as to preclude regular attendance.</p> <p>2. Students fifteen (15) or sixteen (16) years of age whose enrollment in a private trade or business school have been approved.</p> <p>3. Children fifteen (15) years of age, and fourteen (14) years of age who have completed sixth grade, who are engaged in farm work or private domestic service under duly issued permits.</p> <p>4. Children sixteen (16) years of age or more regularly employed during the school session and holding a lawfully issued employment certificate.</p> <p>5. Students receiving tutorial instruction in a field not offered in the District's curricula from a properly-qualified tutor approved by the Superintendent, when the excusal does not interfere with the student's regular program of studies.</p> <p>6. Homebound children unable to attend a school on the recommendation of the school physician and the school psychologist or a psychiatrist and approval of the Secretary of Education.</p> <p>Irregular school attendance results in lowering the level of a student's academic achievement in addition to placing a burden on teachers who attempt to help absentees keep abreast of classwork and meet the needs of the other students. Patterns of regular and faithful attendance that carry over into adult life and post high school responsibilities must be strongly encouraged. All teachers and principals shall assume responsibility for enforcing compulsory attendance laws in conformity with the School Laws of Pennsylvania, the regulations of the State Board of Education, and the regulations of the Seneca Valley School District. A student shall not be granted credit for any semester course if absences from that course total more than ten (10) periods per semester or for any full year courses that total more than twenty (20) periods for the year. Class period absences may include but not be limited to illness, truancy, vacations, parent/guardian sponsored educational</p>
---	--

	<p>At the review hearing the following procedure will take place:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The student is responsible to produce formal documentation at the hearing in order to overturn the decision and regain graduation credit.2. The parent/guardian may accompany the student at the hearing.3. The hearing committee reaches a decision by majority vote; the student will receive the decision at the same meeting. The decision of the hearing committee will be final.
Pol. 216	<p><u>Attendance Records And Reports</u></p> <p>All attendance records and data related to them shall be maintained in the respective building offices as directed by the Superintendent.</p> <p><u>Doctor's Certificate Following Communicable Disease</u></p> <p>A medical doctor's certificate is required for a student upon return to school after suffering a communicable disease or sickness.</p>
Pol. 121, 122, 123	<p><u>School-Sanctioned Activities</u></p> <p>Students may be released from school for approved participation in school-sponsored field trips, performances and co-curricular and extracurricular activities. The student is responsible for making up the work, quizzes and/or tests during the released time. Students who, with approval, are participating in school-sponsored activities are considered present. A principal may deny requests to attend school sanctioned activities where the principal, with the input of professional staff, determines that the student's grades and/or attendance record indicate that the request to miss class for the activity should not be granted.</p> <p><u>Releasing Students During School Hours</u></p> <p>Students shall be released from school only to their parents/guardians or to persons authorized by their parents/guardians. Office personnel will check carefully to make certain that the person claiming to represent the parent/guardian is so authorized.</p>
Pol. 225	<p>Students shall be released to police officers only if a warrant is issued.</p> <p>In cases of family dissension, requests to prohibit one party of the conflict from taking the child from school shall be honored only if written legal status is established. In relation to those students whose parents/guardians are parties to</p>

	<p>divorce or custody proceedings, a student will be released from school only to the parent/guardian having primary legal custody of the student during the school week and during school hours. It is the responsibility of the parents/guardians to furnish the building principal with the most recent and currently effective custody order. Requests from the nonprimary custodial parent/guardian to remove the student from school will be honored only where the primary custodial parent/guardian has furnished in advance written authorization permitting the release of the child on the day and at the time in question and the building principal has verified the authenticity of the authorization. The primary custodial parent/guardian is the parent/guardian who has custody of the child for the majority of time during the school week.</p>
<p>Pol. 907</p>	<p>Teachers shall not admit otherwise unauthorized visitors to the classroom without the approval of the building administrator.</p>
<p>Title 22 Sec. 11.23, 11.25</p>	<p>Requests for released time for dental and medical appointments shall be honored. Parents/Guardians should be urged to make appointments for out-of-school hours and nonschool days. For those unable to comply with these guidelines, a note from home is required requesting a dismissal time. The student's name will then be placed on the daily bulletin under "Early Dismissals" as a notification for the classroom teacher. Signed notification of the appointment by the doctor or dentist will be required.</p>
	<p>Requests for released time for other needs will be decided by the administration on an individual basis and may be denied because of prior attendance problems, frequency of requests, poor academic progress, or conflicts in the academic calendar.</p>
<p>Title 22 Sec. 11.21</p>	<p><u>Religious Holidays</u></p> <p>A student may be excused from school for observance of bona fide religious holidays by particular religious groups provided the parent/guardian of the child informs the school by written excuse that the absence will be for that purpose. These written requests must be presented to the building administration prior to the time of the observance.</p> <p>Such excuse should be received by the building administration within a reasonable time prior to the student's absence.</p> <p>The student is to have a reasonable time to complete any work missed or to take any test administered during the time of the absence.</p>

<p>Title 22 Sec. 11.21</p>	<p>The student's absence from school for bona fide religious holidays should be recorded as an excused absence. There shall be no penalty attached to such an absence.</p>
<p>Title 22 Sec. 4.4, 11.7</p>	<p><u>Excuse Of Students From Classes For Religious Belief</u></p> <p>It has been ruled by the State Secretary of Education that a school district has authority to excuse students from those portions of science and health courses which conflict with their religious beliefs.</p> <p>It shall therefore be the responsibility of teachers of health and biology and the building principal to excuse students from portions of those courses which conflict with their religious beliefs. The excuses shall be granted only upon the following conditions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. A letter must be on file from the parents/guardians of such excused children explaining in specific detail what parts of the course are objectionable. This letter shall be approved by the principal and a copy filed in the child's permanent record and with the teacher of the subject.2. Students shall not be excused from the course, but shall be excused from the class only when such material as is specified in the approved letter is presented. When excused, the student will report to an assigned supervised area with some other research assignment in the course to be submitted in substitution for the work missed. <p><u>Exclusion From School</u></p> <p>If a student is sent home from school for any reason, the person in charge must contact the parents/guardians before allowing the student to leave school. If parents/guardians are not home, satisfactory arrangements must be made before permitting the student to leave the school. If unable to locate parents/guardians, the child must remain in school unless there are known provisions for the care of the child in such an emergency by a friend or relative as indicated in the student's emergency information. In this case, these persons should be contacted before allowing the child to leave school. If the child must remain in school following an illness or emergency, s/he should be properly treated or transported to an emergency facility or hospital at the parent/guardian's expense.</p> <p>Note: Teachers and/or nurses may not release students without the principal's approval.</p>