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| <b>Policy Number:</b> ERSEA<br>005      | <b>Title:</b> Attendance/Tardy   |
| <b>Performance Standard:</b><br>1302.16 | <b>Original Date:</b> 12/4/12<br><b>Reviewed Date:</b> 5/2020 DB, 10/2020 DB                     |
|   | <b>Policy Council Approval/Revision:</b><br>2/2018,5/2020<br><b>BOE Approval:</b> 2/2018, 5/2020 |

**POLICY:**

The USD 418 McPherson/Marion County Head Start & Early Childhood program will retain full enrollment by carefully tracking attendance, analyzing causes of absenteeism and studying the pattern of absences for each child, including the reasons for the absences as well as the number of absences, as stated by the Head Start Performance Standard 1302.16. The program will maintain an attendance rate of no less than 85% at all times.

The parent/guardian will notify staff when the child will not be in attendance or if the child must be tardy according to where their child attends and as described in the Preschool Parent Handbook. Family service staff will work with families experiencing difficulties in maintaining regular attendance as necessary and appropriate. If a child is absent for five consecutive days without contact from the parent and/or the family refuses to work with Family Service staff on a plan to ensure regular attendance, the enrollment slot may be opened up for another eligible applicant.

If the child has two consecutive unexplained absences the family advocate and/or teacher will conduct a home visit or make other direct contact with the child's parent.

**PROCEDURE:**

Preschool staff will regularly discuss the importance of regular attendance with the parents of enrolled children by providing information to parents and guardians. This can be done at home visits, on classroom facebook pages, and the Early Childhood website.

Daily attendance will be recorded by classroom staff on CACFP (federal meal reimbursement program) meal attendance sheets / childplus Attendance App, by parents/guardians on the sign-in sheets / Attendance App and on bus sign-in and attendance sheets as applicable. If the reason for the absence has not been communicated by the family at this time, classroom staff will communicate the names of absent children to the Family Advocate. Family Advocate will make contact with the family to determine the reason for the absence and to emphasize the benefits of regular attendance, while remaining sensitive to any special circumstances, which influence the child's attendance patterns. Staff will attempt to make contact within the 1st. hour if the child has not shown & parent has not called.

If a child has two consecutive unexcused absences or tardy without notifying the school on a regular basis, the family advocate will make contact with the family through a home visit or

other direct contact, and initiate family support procedures as appropriate. The Family Advocate will notify the supervisor of the situation and outcome of contact(s) with the family.

If a child misses nine or more days of school during a semester parents/guardians must work with family service staff to develop a plan, based on the resources available that will ensure regular attendance. All contacts with the child’s family will be documented in Child Plus.

Attendance will be tracked in Child Plus. Assistant Director for Family & Community Services will monitor the attendance for each individual child, looking for concerns, patterns, and low attendance. Family plans will be made by the family advocate and family to identify barriers and problem solve low attendance- which is defined as patterns of absence that puts them at risk of missing 10% of program days per year. Average monthly attendance for each site will be reported regularly to the Preschool Director, Early Childhood Leadership Team and Policy Council.

A child’s slot may be considered an enrollment vacancy when chronic absenteeism persists and the family cannot be located and/or the family fails to meet the attendance improvement plan. The program will send written notification to the family of the program’s intent to withdraw the child if there has been no contact from the family regarding absences. Notification will include the date set for exiting the child.

Excused and Unexcused absences may include, but are not limited to the following:

| EXCUSED ABSENCE   | UNEXCUSED ABSENCE  |
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| 1. Child is sick  | 1. Waking up late  |
| 2. Death in the immediate family  | 2. Poor weather conditions   |
| 3. Medical or resource appointment  | 3. Child doesn’t get ready on time   |
| 4. Family Problems:<br>a. Incarceration<br>b. Caregiver illness<br>c. Domestic abuse<br>d. SRS related concerns<br>e. Temporary transportation problem  | 4. No contact by parent/guardian   |
| 5. Vacation or visiting a relative; must be approved by the Assistant Director of Family & Community Services if over 5 days.<br>Families still need to notify advocates of vacation and visiting relatives even if it is less than 5 days. | 5. Vacation or visiting a relative for more than 5 consecutive school days without prior approval. |
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