

<b>Policy Number:</b> ERSEA 003	<b>Title:</b> Attendance/Tardy
<b>Performance Standard:</b> 1302.16	<b>Original Date:</b> 12/4/12 <b>Reviewed Date:</b> 5/2020 DB
	<b>Policy Council Approval/Revision:</b> 2/2018,5/2020, 5/2024 <b>BOE Approval:</b> 2/2018, 5/2020, 5/2024

**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.

A parent/guardian will notify the attending schools office 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 Parent Handbook. School 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. Daily attendance will be recorded by classroom staff in Childplus or by parents/guardians on the sign-in sheets. If a student is absent for the day parents are to communicate the student's absence within the first 30 minutes to the school office personnel. If the reason for the absence has not been communicated by the family within the first hour of the school day school personnel will attempt to make contact with the family.

If a child has two consecutive unexcused absences or tardies 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 your child’s attendance is a concern (missing 10% of school days), school staff and administration will contact parents or request parents come to school to discuss attendance. An attendance plan may be developed at this time. Previous attendance records may be considered and discussed when attendance concerns are addressed. Starting with the 6th absence-parents may receive notification regarding attendance concerns. Upon the 12th absence-parent notification of all subsequent absences must be verified by:

1. Doctors note
2. A funeral brochure
3. Other verification approved by administration

Department of Child and Families (DCF) or the County Attorney may be notified if unexcused absences reach the following thresholds at any point in the school year:

- Three in a row
- Five in a semester
- Seven in a year

All contacts regarding attendance concerns will be documented in Child Plus.

Attendance will be tracked in Child Plus. The Coordinator of 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 Head Start Director, Board of Education 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
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: a. Incarceration b. Caregiver illness c. Domestic abuse	4. No contact by parent/guardian

d. SRS related concerns	
e. Temporary transportation problem	