

UNEXCUSED TARDINESS/EARLY CHECK-OUTS

Regulation Code:

4400-R1

School attendance is essential for student success and the habitual, chronic tardiness is a major factor in the loss of instructional time for students regardless of age. It is also one of the most valuable life skills a student can learn and can be easily transferred as a valuable asset for the future.

The Cumberland County School system is continuing its efforts of “Every Minute Counts” to ensure that students attend school for the entire school day unless excused. If a student is tardy, it is the parent/guardian’s responsibility to inform the school in writing the reason for tardiness.

Parents should make every attempt to make appointments outside of the school day so interruptions and missed school time are minimal.

PROCEDURE

- Cumberland County Schools will utilize a public relations campaign that focuses on improving student attendance, emphasizing arriving at school on time and remaining in school throughout the instructional day as an important element of supporting student learning.
- The loss of instructional time due to tardiness and early checkouts may affect a student’s grades, achievement, and overall success in school.
- All instances of tardiness are recorded, whether excused or unexcused, in the district data base (PowerSchool).
- A student is considered tardy after the start of the school day. “Bell to Bell” instruction is critical to optimize learning.
- A parent/guardian will be required to report to the school’s attendance office/desk to sign the student in when tardy (elementary/middle).
- Choice School students are not allowed flexibility from attendance expectations. Principals will inform the Student Assignment office when the Choice School student has six (6) unexcused tardies. Choice parents will be required to attend Parent Accountability classes after their sixth (6th) instance of unexcused tardiness. The Student Assignment office will then provide a warning of pending dismissal to the parent/guardian in writing. After 10 cumulative instances of tardiness or early checkouts a Choice School student may be returned to the home school.
- After 3 unexcused cumulative instances of tardiness or early checkouts, the school will notify the parent/guardian by using the Parent Link program with the principal’s pre-recorded message, reminding the parent/guardian of the time that school starts and of the Cumberland County Schools policy regulation on tardiness. The classroom teacher will make contact with the parent/guardian to discuss the importance of on-time behavior.
- The school will contact the parent when the student is tardy following the third (3rd), sixth (6th), and tenth (10th) unexcused tardy/early checkout by using the district form letters.

- After 6 unexcused cumulative instances of tardiness or early checkouts, the school social worker will notify the parent/guardian by letter that he or she may be in violation of the Cumberland County Schools Policy Regulation 4400-R1 Unexcused Tardiness/Early Checkouts and that he may be referred to take a series of Parent Accountability Classes. The school social worker will work with the child and the parent to develop a plan for addressing the chronic tardiness.
- After 10 cumulative instances of unexcused tardies or early checkouts, the school social worker will notify the parent/guardian by letter of the need for a meeting with the social worker and school administrator. In this meeting, the principal or the principal's designee will determine if the parent/guardian has made a good faith effort to comply with the regulation code. If the principal finds that the parent/guardian has not made a good faith effort, the social worker will notify the Student Support Services Office which will arrange for the parent/guardian to attend a series of mandatory Parent Accountability Classes to eliminate excessive tardies/early checkouts. Parents will be informed with a phone call and follow-up letter.
- After 25 cumulative instances of unexcused tardies or early checkouts, the Principal/Social Worker may refer a parent to Truancy Mediation Council (TMC).
- The school (Principal or Social Worker) may file an affidavit with the Cumberland County District Attorney's office concerning excessive tardies for loss of instructional time. The record of tardiness will be included in the filing as well as the student's cumulative file. The parent/guardian will be notified that the filing was made and of the possibility of prosecution.
- The Cumberland County Schools Policy Regulation 4400-R1 Unexcused Tardiness/Early Checkouts will be posted on each school's website, in its handbook and other information outlets along with the start time of the school day indicating that any student will be considered tardy after the instructional day begins.
- Each school communicates to parents/guardians and students on a regular basis the immediate consequences for tardiness.

Approved by the Superintendent: September 22, 2011

Revised: November 30, 2015