MADEIRA BEACH FUNDAMENTAL SCHOOL

TO: Madeira Beach Fundamental K-8 Families
FROM: Chris Ateek, Principal
RE: Pinellas County School's New Attendance Policy 5500.05 - CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT - STUDENT ATTENDANCE

II. ABSENCES

A. ABSENCE DEFINED

A student who is not present in class at least one half of the class period shall be counted absent from that class. To be counted present for the school day, **a student must be in attendance for at least one half of the class periods during the school day.**

B. EXCUSED ABSENCES

Students must be in school unless the absence has been permitted or excused for one of the reasons listed in paragraph V below.

C. **UNEXCUSED ABSENCES**

Any absence which does not meet the criteria of an excused absence is an unexcused absence. The following are examples of unexcused absences:

1. **out-of-school suspensions**
2. **family vacations**
3. **Students without a completed Certificate of Immunization** indicating compliance with the current required schedule of immunizations will not be allowed to attend classes until this document is provided or a waiver is obtained. Absences due to non-compliance with immunization requirements shall be considered unexcused. However, students transferring into Pinellas County, including foster care students, or homeless students, a temporary 30-day waiver of both health examination documents and certificates of immunization will be granted. (F.S. 1003.22(1) (5) (e))

III. TARDIES

A student is tardy when the student is not in his or her assigned seat or station when the bell rings.

A. **EXCUSED TARDY**

A tardy is excused only if the student is late for one of the reasons described in section V.

B. **UNEXCUSED TARDY**

A tardy is not excused unless it is caused by reasons set forth in section V. **Examples of unexcused tardies include:**

1. **oversleeping**
2. **missing the school bus**
3. **shopping trips**
4. **pleasure trips**
5. **car problems (ex: flat tire, no gas, car won't start, student getting a parking decal)**
6. **heavy traffic**
7. **returned for forgotten items**

IV. EARLY SIGN OUT

Once students arrive on campus, **they may not leave without permission from an administrator**. Students who must leave school during school hours must have their parent request this release by phone or in person to the office in order to obtain pre-approval.

A. EXCUSED EARLY SIGN OUT

The same criteria used to determine an excused absence and an excused tardy will be used to determine whether an early sign out is excused

B. AN UNEXCUSED EARLY SIGN OUT INCLUDES:

The same criteria used to determine an unexcused absence and an unexcused tardy will be used to determine whether an early sign out is unexcused.

Numerous incidents of early release are unacceptable and unfair to the other students whose instruction is interrupted each time a student leaves early. Every three (3) unexcused early sign outs within a grading period will count as one unexcused absence.

V. REASONS WHY AN ABSENCE, A TARDY OR AN EARLY SIGN OUT WILL BE EXCUSED

An absence, a tardy or early sign out will be excused if caused by one of the following reasons:

A. **The student is ill or injured.**

B. **There is a major Illness in the student's immediate family (this means parents, brothers, sisters, grandparents, or others living in the home).**

C. **There is a death in the immediate family.**

D. **The student attends religious instruction or there is a religious holiday in the student's own faith.**

E. **The student is required by summons, subpoena or court order to appear in court. A copy of the subpoena or court order must be given to the principal.**

F. **Special event. Examples of special events include important public functions, conferences, state/national competitions, as well as exceptional cases of family need. The student must get permission from the principal at least five days prior to the absence.**

G. **The student has a scheduled medical or dental appointment.**

H. **Students having, or suspected of having, a communicable disease or infestation** which can be transmitted are to be excluded

from school and are not allowed to return to school until they no longer present a health hazard (F.S. 1003.22). Examples of communicable diseases and infestations include, but are not limited to, fleas, head lice, ringworm, impetigo and scabies. Students are allowed a maximum of five excused days for each infestation of head lice. Students on field trips and students who attend alternative to suspension programs are not considered absent.

VI. MAKE-UP WORK. (This does not apply to specific homework provided under F.S. § 1003.01 to certain suspended students.)

A. **EXCUSED ABSENCES:**

Make-up work for credit and grade is allowed for all excused absences. It is the student's responsibility to get the missed work. **The number of days allowed to make up the work shall be the same as the number of days the student was absent.**

B. UNEXCUSED ABSENCES: (EXCEPT OUT OF SCHOOL SUSPENSIONS)

Make-up work for credit and grade is allowed. It is the student's responsibility to get the missed work. The number of days allowed to make up the work shall be the same as the number of days the student was absent. Work made up after an unexcused absence in elementary or middle school may be dropped a letter grade and must be dropped a letter grade in high school.

C. SUSPENSIONS:

Make-up work for credit and grade is allowed. It is the student's responsibility to get the missed work. Work is due on the day of return from the suspension. Work made up after an unexcused absence in elementary or middle school may be dropped a letter grade and must be dropped a letter grade in high school.

VII. RESPONSIBILITY OF PARENTS AND STUDENTS TO ATTEND SCHOOL

Parents and students must do the following in connection with school attendance:

A. Ensure the attendance of a child of compulsory school attendance age, as required by law. (F.S. 1003.24)

B. **Notify school personnel of their child's absence prior to the end of the school day of the absence, if possible and provide written notification within 48 hours of the child's return to school. Otherwise, the absence will be unexcused.**

C. **If requested, provide documentation of illness from a physician or public health unit within 48 hours. The maximum number of days that a student may be absent without acceptable documentation justifying the absence is 5.**

D. Notify the school of any change of address, phone numbers and emergency contact numbers;

E. Obtain application from currently assigned school if a student is eligible for homebound instruction.

F. Notify school personnel if the family is moving out of town or out of the school's attendance boundary.

G. Be aware of school district calendar and coordinate trips, vacations and personal business to support attendance on school days.

H. Notify the school and request a copy of the Hospital/Homebound referral packet if a student is expected to miss at least 15 consecutive school days due to illness, medical condition, or social/emotional reasons, or may miss excessive days intermittently throughout the school year for the same reasons.

VIII. RESPONSIBILITY OF SCHOOL DISTRICT REGARDING STUDENT ATTENDANCE

A. PATTERNS OF NON-ATTENDANCE

Non-attendance for instructional activities is established by tardiness, early-release, or absences from school.

1. Each principal must make the necessary provisions to ensure that all school attendance reports are accurate and timely and must provide the necessary training opportunities for staff to accurately report attendance (F.S.1003.23 (1)). Principals are required to maintain an attendance record which shows the absence or attendance of each child enrolled for each school day of the year. (F.S.1003.23 (2))
2. **When a student accumulates five (5) absences during a grading period, other than out-of-school suspensions, whether excused or unexcused, school personnel shall make a good faith effort to contact the parent by telephone to discuss the reasons for the absences and shall document such contact.**
3. **A letter shall be sent to the parent or guardian and a referral will be made to the school's Child Study Team for a student who has had at least five unexcused absences, or absences for which the reasons are unknown, within a calendar month, or 10 unexcused absences, or absences for which the reasons are unknown, within a 90-calendar-day period,.**
4. If the parent or guardian of a child who has been identified as exhibiting a pattern of non-attendance enrolls the child in a home education program, the Superintendent shall refer the parent to a home education review committee composed of the district contact person for home education and at least two home educators selected by the parent from a district list of all home educators who have conducted a home education program for at least three years and have indicated a willingness to serve on the committee.
5. If a child subject to compulsory school attendance will not comply with attempts to enforce school attendance, the Superintendent may file a truancy petition pursuant to the procedures set forth in Section §984.12, Florida Statutes. The superintendent may also refer the case to the case staffing committee which may file a child-in-need-of-services petition. The superintendent may also take such steps as are necessary to bring criminal prosecution against the parent. (F.S. §1003.26)
6. Students 14-18 years of age who have 15 unexcused absences within 90 calendar days and have a driver's license will have their driver's license suspended by the Division of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles or will not be issued a license if they apply for one.