



Shonto Governing Board of Education, Inc. Policy Statement

SUBJECT: EMPLOYEE ATTENDANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

POLICY NUMBER: GCC

CANCELS POLICY NUMBER: N/A

DATE OF ORIGINAL POLICY: 9/4/07

EFFECTIVE DATE: 12/28/16

DATE OF NEXT REVIEW: 12/19

DATED: 12/28/16

I. PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT:

Section III of the Personnel Policy establishes the School's policy on Absenteeism. That policy addresses the importance of regular attendance and inappropriate use of all types of leave. This policy establishes a specific definition of the term "Abuse of Leave" and identifies a plan of action for counseling and progressive discipline for employees who abuse the leave system. The policy also allows for consideration of each individual's circumstances and promotes communication regarding the need for alternative forms of leave.

Most employees are responsible and recognize the important role that good attendance plays in helping to improve student achievement. Research notes, however, that it is typically 10-15 percent of employees who have a significant absenteeism problem, and they tend to abuse sick leave year after year. This has a negative impact on co-workers who have to cover for the missing employee, and it reduces the level of services provided to students. This policy is intended to minimize the inappropriate use of leave to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the School. This policy does not limit the legitimate and appropriate use of leave provided by contract or school policy.

Section III provides that "Excessive absences may result in disciplinary action and may result in termination of employment. In considering excessive absenteeism, the number of days absent and/or the number of occurrences of absence shall be considered, or any unusual observed pattern.

Section IX of the Personnel Policy also has a clause that defines "abuse of sick leave. That clause reads as follows: "Abuse is hereby defined as the use of sick leave that does not meet the requirements under the conditions of usage. It is not determined necessarily by how many sick leave days an employee uses any fiscal year, although excessive absenteeism is clearly an indication of abuse. Any employee may, in fact, use only a few days of sick leave in a fiscal year, but take such days when there is no apparent need to do so."

These sections of the Personnel Policy have not resolved the ongoing problem because they contain no specific consequences, nor do they clearly define how abuse is to be handled. The Board wishes to create a comprehensive response to excessive absenteeism whether it be through abuse of sick leave, personal leave, or unpaid vacation leave or other paid or unpaid leave. Therefore, the Governing Board establishes the following policy:



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II. POLICY STATEMENT:

It is the policy of the Governing Board that employees who have engaged in excessive absenteeism will be placed on an Employee Attendance Management System, which shall include counseling the employee, more strict monitoring of use of leave, and more stringent limitations of the use of leave until the behavior improves; furthermore, if attendance does not improve, the employee may be recommended for non-renewal or subject to discipline up to and including termination.

III. EXCEPTIONS TO POLICY:

Staff who can provide documentation that absences which otherwise appear excessive were a legitimate use of leave will not be placed on an Attendance Improvement Plan. Examples of legitimate use of leave include, but are not limited to hospitalization for self or member of the immediate family, severe illness or other compelling reason in which the employee or member of the immediate family is under doctor's orders to remain at home, intermittent leave for ongoing required medical treatment, approved FMLA leave, personal ceremonies for the employee that cannot be scheduled at another time, or other approved leave provided by policy. Vacation Leave that has been preapproved by the immediate supervisor in accordance with the Vacation Leave Policy shall not be included in the calculation of excessive absenteeism.

IV. AMPLIFYING INSTRUCTIONS AND GUIDELINES:

A. DEFINITIONS

- a. Approved absence: an absence from work in accordance with policy. This can include pre-approved vacation, or sick or personal leave where appropriate notice has been given to the supervisor.
- b. Unapproved absence: an absence from work that is not covered by the Personnel Policy. This can include using sick leave where the employee is not actually sick, asking for one type of leave when another type of leave would be more appropriate, failing to report an absence within the appropriate time, or using more leave than has been allocated under a specific category.
- c. As used in this policy, "Excessive Absenteeism" shall be presumed when an employee has used a two year average of fourteen (14) days or more per year of leave, other than vacation leave, that does not involve a prolonged illness, hospitalization, recovery from surgery, or a ceremony undertaken by the individual and not for anyone else. This presumption can be overcome by the employee showing evidence that each absenteeism was in accordance with the Personnel Policies.

B. ATTENDANCE EXPECTATION



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Even though employees accrue sick leave each month, there is no automatic right of employees to take sick leave unless they or a member of their immediate family are sick. Employees should use these sick leave days judiciously so that they are available when legitimately needed. In appropriate use of leave may lead to denial of future leave. Open communications between the employee and supervisor are necessary to ensure that the employee may take leave when necessary and to determine if they employee may be entitled to alternative forms of leave, such as FMLA.

C. ATTENDANCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

Employees who have an average of fourteen (14) days or greater over a two-year period or first year employees who meet the fourteen day maximum shall be placed on an Attendance Management Plan. As noted in the Exceptions to Policy section, days which can be excused for the reasons stated would be counted toward the average. Date for the 2006-2007 and 2007-2008 school years will be included in the calculation of the average when this policy takes effect in July 2008. Employees who have suspicious patterns of absenteeism may be counseled regarding the use of leave even though they do not meet the fourteen-day average.

Initial Counseling

1. The Supervisor will meet with each person who meets the presumption of Excessive Absenteeism and seek information that might clarify days that were included in the average that should be excluded. At all times and with each individual, the Supervisor is expected to treat the employee with professional courtesy. This will occur prior to someone being placed on an Attendance Management Plan. This counseling shall be completed prior to September 1st. The employee shall be given a copy of each documented absence over the relevant period and given ten (10) days to provide an acceptable reason for excluding any days from the average.
2. The Supervisor will counsel each employee and communicate attendance expectations and the progressive discipline that could unfold if the excessive absenteeism continues. The employee will sign a document acknowledging that such discussion took place. This shall be completed on the day of the initial counseling. A copy of this signed document shall be sent to the Personnel Office for placement in the employee's personnel file.
3. If the employee accrues five absences in the school year during which the initial counseling took place, the Supervisor shall meet with the employee to discuss the nature of the absences and the standards for taking leave. If the five days are due to a single prolonged absence, the employee shall be required to provide



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documentation of the need for the absence and discuss the matter with the Supervisor upon the employee's return to work.

Written Counseling

1. If the absenteeism persists or the sixth day is reached and all three personal days are used, the Supervisor shall meet with the employee and provide him or her with letter of concern. A copy of that letter of concern shall be sent to the Personnel Office for placement in the employee's personnel file. If the absenteeism still continues to persist and a seventh day of sick leave is used, the employee should be given a second letter of concern during another formal meeting. This letter would have stronger language and warn the employee that unless attendance improves, non-renewal of contract or termination may be necessary. A copy of that letter shall be sent to the Personnel Office for placement in the employee's personnel file.
2. If the employee needs reduced hours or intermittent leave to accommodate an illness or family situation, the employee should request such an accommodation is reasonable, the employee's schedule may be altered. It is the responsibility of the employee to make these needs known. Not all requests for accommodation will be granted.

Suspension without Pay (only after consultation with the appropriate supervisor)

1. If the problem of Excessive Absenteeism persists and the employee has used the year's allocation of personal and sick leave, and is now being charged for leave without pay, the supervisor shall conduct a meeting with the employee immediately following the absence. If the supervisor determines that the use of any leave was inappropriate, the employee shall be advised that he or she is to be suspended without pay. Any such suspension without pay shall include a letter for the employee's personnel file. The first such suspension shall not exceed five days. A second suspension shall be for ten days. A third suspension shall be twenty days without pay or the persona maybe recommended for immediate termination. Any suspension or other disciplinary action shall be taken in accordance with the applicable provisions of the Personnel Policies.

V. DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY:

- A. The Superintendent of Schools is directly responsible for communicating this policy to all appropriate parties and enforcing its provisions.



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B. Each school principal and supervisor is responsible for communicating this policy to all staff under his/her jurisdiction annually in August.

VI. REPORTS:

The Supervisor shall provide the Superintendent, the appropriate administrator, and the Governing Board with a list of all personnel who have been paced in an Attendance Management Plan.

VII. FORMS:

None

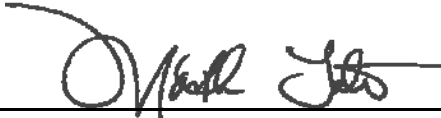
VIII. EXPIRATION DATE:

The policy, while approved in the school year 2007-2008, shall not take effect until July 1, 2008. This policy expires three (3) years after its acceptance unless re-approved.

IX. SIGNATURE BLOCK:

Submitted by: Lemual B. Adson Date: 12/28/16
Superintendent

Approved: December 28, 2016

Established: 
Martha Tate, President,
Shonto Governing Board of Education, Inc.