

ATTENDANCE RULE: Students who do not attend any portion of a class shall be marked "absent." Those who attend but who arrive after the class period begins and within the first ten minutes of class shall be marked LT (Late) or LTE (Late-Excused). Those who attend but do not arrive within the first ten minutes may be marked VL (Very Late) or VLE (Very Late Excused).

- For safety and liability reasons, teachers should take attendance at or near the opening of class (i.e. within the first ten minutes of class).
- Teachers will work with their site's administrative team to utilize a system for changing an absence recorded in the opening minutes of class to a "Late" or "Very Late." Depending on the MS or HS site, options may include:
  - + Having a sign-in sheet for students who arrive late.
  - + Teachers changing the absences to tardies themselves.
  - + Providing the attendance clerk with the sign-in sheet so that s/he can change the absences to lates/tardies.
  - + Sending the student to the office for the attendance clerk to change the absence to a tardy. (least recommended because it requires student to miss even more class time and there may be extenuating circumstances why the student is late.)
- If a student habitually arrives unexcused late or very late, teachers should work with the student and her/his parent to address the behavior or the student/family situation that is resulting in the student being late. If this is not successful, an administrator should be contacted to intervene and work with the student and parent to resolve the issue. It's very important that administrators support the students and also the teachers involved. Students who are chronically late or very late may be subject to disciplinary consequences.

Add'l Notes and Q & A:

- Many teachers have not marked students as late or tardy when they come with a note excusing the student. I can understand allowing the option whether to mark them as LTE (late excused) or to just mark them as present.
- Shouldn't students who arrive only for the last five or ten minutes be marked as absent? No, this is what the VL code is for. Furthermore, if a student makes a habit of this, it should be brought to the attention of the student, parent, and/or administrator and dealt with accordingly.

- What about a student who leaves class early, say halfway through the period? I think this depends on the situation. I don't believe teachers have been marking students absent or tardy if they came to class but needed to leave early for an appointment. However, if a student leaves halfway through the period "for the restroom" and doesn't return, then I'd suggest marking her/him "VL" and following up with her/him as appropriate. If this behavior is chronic, then it should be brought to an administrator's attention.

I appreciate everyone's input. I fully realize that some teachers will have a hard time with this change. I suggest that you go back to the "Why" we are making this change, and how they can adjust, including:

- We want an accurate record, and it's not accurate to record a student as absent when they did, in fact, attend most or a portion of the class.
- We don't want to discourage students who running late to skip class altogether, figuring that they'll be marked absent anyway.
- Teachers have all kinds of ways to encourage students to arrive on time, including: making the opening moments of class inviting, fun, interesting; making the opening minutes important by incorporating important academic activities; etc.

Updated: August 26, 2014