

## R 4211 ATTENDANCE (Support Staff) (M)

Paragraph three of each of the District's employee attendance policies makes reference to "counseling" with the employee's supervisor. (Per policy, this counseling shall occur after 6 absences for 10-month employees, 6.5 for 11-month, and 7 for 12-month). In cases as defined by policy in which an employee must report for counseling, this counseling is defined as "an investigation into the causes of the absences and discussion of the means by which the employee can improve his or her attendance." **The investigation shall be a conversation regarding such causes and possible improvement. This shall occur in an informal meeting between the employee and supervisor.** The supervisor will be expected to record the date and content of the meeting on a form, which the employee will be asked to sign and of which they will receive a copy. Improvement or failure to improve attendance after such a meeting may lead to attendance being addressed in the employee's evaluation. As is the case in all such meetings, an employee is entitled to representation by a building representative or officer of the local bargaining unit.

*In any case in which the supervisor has knowledge of an extended illness or surgery leading to extended continuous absence, the supervisor may simply document "extended medical" on a summary group report to the Superintendent and eliminate this first informal counseling step.*

In any case in which an employee's attendance calls for counseling, and in which the counseling reveals a misuse of sick time for the illness of family members, the supervisor shall immediately refer the employee to the Superintendent, who shall then meet jointly with the employee and a local bargaining unit representative in order to review the appropriate Family Leave options available. Revelation of any other misuse at this stage is potential grounds for documentation and reprimand.

At any step in this process, the provision of a physician's note regarding an employee absence, submitted within forty-eight hours of the employee's return to work from that absence, may be considered a mitigating factor in attendance review. This is not to limit the District's legal right to ask for physician documentation of sick time whenever appropriate (18A:30-4). An employee's attendance history, including patterns of absence or prior years in which thresholds were reached, shall also be considered as factors in such review.

When an employee's attendance, absent the circumstances in paragraph two above, reaches the level of "chronic absenteeism" as defined by policy\*, that employee and their representative shall meet with the superintendent to discuss and review the reasons for



# REGULATION

## RIVERSIDE TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION

SUPPORT STAFF  
R 4211/Page 2 of 2  
ATTENDANCE (Support Staff) (M)

their absenteeism. At this time the employee will be asked, and is expected to explain, any mitigating circumstances leading to such absence. (Absent such explanation, the District shall not be responsible to explore means of assistance.) The Superintendent shall attempt to determine ways in which the district as employer can assist the employee in improving their attendance. The employee shall also offer means of improving, and a plan for attendance remediation shall be agreed upon. The goal of such remediation shall be, at minimum, to reduce absenteeism to a level below the threshold explained above. This meeting shall be documented by summary memo to be placed in the employee's personnel file. The employee retains all enumerated rights to respond in writing, as well as to timelines thus involved.

Failure to meet the goals of the aforementioned remediation plan can lead to disciplinary action, up to and including withholding of a salary increase or increment, or in the case of annual personnel, non-renewal of employment. Nothing in this regulation is intended to limit any legal action the Board might take in response to more serious or extreme attendance or disciplinary matters. Any such action in attendance matters requiring the approval of the Board of Education shall be undertaken only after the Superintendent has reported on the full record of the meetings and the circumstances involved in the employee's absences to the Board. The employee retains all legal rights associated with such Board discussion or deliberation.

\*"Chronic absenteeism" is defined in the policy as "Occasional absences comprising five per cent or more of the total days in his or her work year". For these regulations, an occasional absence shall then be defined as the use of a personal day, or non-consecutive sick days. Consecutive days may be considered as an "occurrence," or individual event depending on the results of investigation.

Adopted: 02 April 2009

