

# COMMONWEALTH CHARTER ACADEMY

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS POLICY SECTION: 200 PUPILS

### 205. LEARNER ATTENDANCE AND TRUANCY

#### § 1. Purpose and Authority

Commonwealth Charter Academy (CCA) recognizes that regular school attendance is an important factor in educational success, and supports a comprehensive approach to identify and address attendance issues.

Through this policy, the Board directs CCA administrators and staff to enforce the compulsory school attendance requirements of Article XIII of the Pennsylvania Public School Code (School Code), 24 P.S. § 13-1301 *et seq.*, and Chapter 11 of the State Board of Education regulations, 22 Pa. Code § 11.1 *et seq.*, which are applicable to all CCA learners of compulsory school age. Compulsory school age means the period of a child's life from the time the child's parent/guardian elects to have the child enter school, which shall be no later than eight (8) years of age, until the age of seventeen (17) or graduation from high school.

The Board directs the CEO or designee to develop the administrative guidelines or regulations required to implement this policy.

#### § 2. Guidelines

##### ***Minimum Requirements for Administrative Guidelines or Regulations***

Each year, the Board approves a school calendar consisting of a minimum of 180 school days. Regular school attendance shall be expected of all learners during the days and hours that school is in session. However, the unique nature of the cyber charter school provides learners the flexibility to complete school work synchronously or asynchronously in accordance with an individual learner's learning needs and abilities.

The administrative guidelines or regulations developed by the CEO or designee under this policy shall, at a minimum:

1. Detail the process for monitoring and maintaining accurate attendance records.
2. Detail the process for submission of requests and excuses for absences.
3. Detail the process for written notices, School Attendance Improvement Conferences, School Attendance Improvement Plans, and referrals to a school-based or community-based attendance improvement program, the appropriate local children and youth agency, or the appropriate judge.
4. Ensure that learners who complete assigned work are not counted as absent.

5. Comply with the requirements of Article XIII of the School Code and Chapter 11 of the State Board of Education regulations.

### ***CCA's Response to Unexcused Absences and Truancy***

CCA shall provide notice to the parent/guardian upon each incident of unexcused absence.

Following accumulation of the equivalent of three (3) unexcused absences, CCA shall send written notice to the parent/guardian in accordance with applicable law and administrative guidelines.

Following accumulation of the equivalent of four (4) unexcused absences, CCA shall send written notice to the parent/guardian scheduling a School Attendance Improvement Conference between appropriate school staff, parent/guardian, learner, and other service providers to determine what may be preventing the learner from participating in the learning program, and to develop a School Attendance Improvement Plan (SAIP). Failure to adhere to the SAIP and/or continued accrual of unexcused absences will result in additional actions in accordance with applicable law and administrative guidelines, which may include, referral to a school-based or community-based attendance improvement program, referral to county Children and Youth Services (CYS), filing a truancy citation in the office of the appropriate judge, or withdrawal from CCA (for learners 17 or older).

Following accumulation of the equivalent of six (6) unexcused absences, CCA may suspend internet subsidy payments to the parent/guardian or lock school-issued computers or technology until the parent/guardian and learner contact the assigned CCA staff person and agree to comply with the SAIP.

### ***Special Needs and Accommodations***

If a learner with excessive unexcused absences may qualify as a learner with a disability, and require special education services or accommodations, the Director of Special Education or designee shall be notified and shall take action to address the learner's needs in accordance with applicable law, regulations, and Board policy.

For learners with disabilities who are accumulating unexcused absences, the appropriate team shall be notified and shall address the learner's needs in accordance with applicable law, regulations, and Board policy.

### ***Discipline***

CCA shall not expel or impose out-of-school suspension, disciplinary reassignment, or transfer for truant behavior of learners who are of compulsory attendance age.

### ***Collaboration***

CCA shall cooperate with other local educational agencies, county children and youth agencies, and/or judicial authorities when a learner who enrolls in CCA has already been referred by

his/her former school for services or prosecution for violating the compulsory school attendance requirements.

CCA shall identify and collaborate with existing community-based attendance improvement programs or initiatives for learner referrals. When a community-based program is not available, CCA shall develop a school-based attendance improvement program on a case-by-case basis.

### ***Distribution of Policy***

At the beginning of each school year, or upon enrollment during the school year, the CEO or designee shall notify learners and parents/guardians about CCA's attendance policy and guidelines. The CEO or designee shall also publish information about the policy and guidelines in CCA's Learner Handbook and post the policy on CCA's publicly accessible website.

<b>History:</b>	Adopted August 14, 2019
<b>Previous Coding:</b>	None
<b>Legal Ref.:</b>	24 P.S. §§ 13-1301 – 13-1345; 24 P.S. § 15-1546; 24 P.S. § 17-1743-A(d); 42 Pa.C.S. § 6302; 22 Pa. Code Ch. 11
<b>Cross Ref.:</b>	Confidentiality of Student Communications and Records is addressed in Board Policies 113.4, 207, and 216