

## Employee Attendance Expectations

- All employees are expected to be present for work on *scheduled workdays at assigned times* unless on approved leave only when necessary.
- No employee absence without authorized leave shall be accepted.
- Employees who take any unauthorized leave from work shall be subject to progressive discipline up to and including dismissal in accordance with Osceola County School Board Rules and the terms and conditions of our applicable collective bargaining agreements (e.g., contracts).
- Employees should be aware of:
  - ✓ the value of the employee's unused sick leave benefits; **and**
  - ✓ the consequences of unpaid leave.
- SDOC employees should consider building up the employee's sick leave balance. SDOC benefited employees earn paid sick leave to cover the employee's absence from work due to personal sickness, accident, disability, or extended personal illness. In addition, SDOC employees may use available sick leave for up to six (6) workdays of personal leave within the employee's scheduled work year.
- SDOC administrators recognize an employee may have a periodic need to miss work under the above certain circumstances. However, unnecessary and unplanned absences create additional pressure on school staff and resources, and an employee's absence can affect students and co-workers negatively.
- Sick Leave Benefits
  - Accumulated sick leave is a valuable monetary benefit.
  - Under the School District's new *Sick Leave Buyback Program*, employees may receive an annual payment for unused sick leave if the employee has:
    - Earned more than fifteen (15) accumulated sick leave days; **and**
    - Used only up to three (3) sick leave days during the school year.
  - In addition, employees can receive terminal pay for the value of unused sick leave at retirement or separation from the School District.
- Unpaid Leave
  - The School District remains considerate of employees' personal needs but cannot ignore or condone how unauthorized leave affects our daily operations and the delivery of appropriate services to our students.
  - While absences *with* earned, accumulated, and authorized leave are appropriate, absences *without* authorized leave violate Osceola County School Board policy and affect our students and co-workers when the duties absent employees are expected to perform are not completed.

- **Osceola County School Board Rule 6.511 – Absence without Leave** states:
  - I. *Administrative and Instructional - Any member of the administrative or instructional staff who is willfully absent from duty without leave shall forfeit compensation for the time of the absence and the employee's contract shall be subject to cancellation by the School Board. In addition, such absence without leave shall interrupt continuity of service. ...*
  - II. *Professional Support - Any other employee who is willfully absent from duty without leave shall be subject to dismissal from employment and shall forfeit compensation for the time of the absence.*
  - III. *Three (3) working days of failure to report for duty or be on approved leave will be determined abandonment of position and employee will be subject to termination.*

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## Requirements for Reporting Absences

- **Instructional Employees**

To report an absence from work, **instructional employees** shall:

1. Request a substitute through the automated substitute calling system (e.g., Frontline) prior to seven o'clock p.m. (07:00 PM) the night before the absence except when unforeseen events make such arrangements impractical; **and**
2. Request the appropriate leave through the SDOC Employee Portal.
3. School administrators or their designees (e.g., substitute coordinators) may request, but not require, that instructional employees call to report an absence from work so that appropriate coverage for student safety, supervision, and instruction can continue efficiently.

### **Instructional Employees' Contract, Article V: Teaching Conditions**

*5.18 Teachers shall follow the procedures set forth for the automated substitute calling system. Whenever practicable the teacher will ensure that lesson plans for student activities are available for the substitute for that particular day or number of days. Items such as class rolls, seating charts, and registers of attendance should be available where applicable. When extended absences are anticipated, class record books should be made available to the substitute teacher. When these conditions have been met, a substitute teacher will be provided for the teacher. The Board will not utilize regularly employed teachers to cover classes for absent teachers in order to avoid hiring substitutes. A teacher majority committee should establish an emergency class coverage plan at each site. Auto-splitting of classes shall be used as a strategy of last resort if no substitute is available unless the teacher majority committee establishes an emergency class coverage plan that includes this strategy. The school principal (or his or her designee) shall submit an electronic copy of this plan to the Superintendent (or his or her designee), and the School District shall forward an electronic copy of each school's plan to the Association upon request. Before a personal leave of absence, teachers shall make every reasonable effort to notify the substitute coordinator prior to seven o'clock p.m. the night before the absence except when unforeseen events make such arrangements by the teacher impractical.*

- **All Other Employees**

To report an absence, **all other employees** shall:

1. Request the appropriate leave through the SDOC Employee Portal by noon (12:00 PM) of the workday before the absence except when unforeseen events make such arrangements by the employee impractical; **and**
2. Contact the employee's administrator/ supervisor.