

**Elmira Heights School
District
Comprehensive
Attendance Plan**

Elmira Heights School District Comprehensive Attendance Plan

(NOTE: This section of the document was created during the 10-11 School Year)

I. OBJECTIVES

The Elmira Heights Central School District believes that regular attendance establishes a pattern for success for all students in school and in future life. To benefit from the educational programs of the District, students must be in regular attendance and participate in those programs. Parents/Guardians are expected to help their students by making certain that they are in regular attendance. Regular attendance and promptness are essential for student success. Through the implementation of this policy the District expects to reduce the current level of unexcused absences, lateness to school, and lateness to classes.

Definitions

Based upon our District's education and community needs, values and priorities, the EHCS D has determined that absences, tardiness and early departures will be considered excused or unexcused according to the following:

a) Excused absences/tardies are defined as those due to personal illness or death in the family, impassable roads or weather, religious observance, quarantine, required court appearance, attendance at health clinics, approved college visits, approved cooperative work programs, military obligations, remedial or mental health treatments, or approved academic experiences.

b) **ANY** absence/tardy due to reasons other than the above will be considered unexcused. If a written excuse is not received within five (5) days of a student being absent, the recorded absence will not be changed from "unexcused" to "excused" without a doctor's note.

* See building schedules listed in section VII

II. STRATEGIES EMPLOYED TO ACCOMPLISH OBJECTIVES

The administration and support staff of the Elmira Heights School District would like to work closely with parents and/or guardians to ensure regular attendance for all students. Regular participation in classroom activities fosters critical thinking, communication skills, and responsibility, all which are essential skills for future employment. Good attendance in school is also part of the self-discipline that we try to instill in our students to enable them to act as responsible members of the community. Elmira Heights School District will employ the following strategies to ensure the effectiveness of this attendance plan.

- increase awareness of policy among staff by:
 - i. including a copy of the policy in the teacher's handbook

- ii. explaining the policy at new teacher orientation
 - iii. reviewing the policy semi-annually during staff meetings
- increase awareness of policy among students by:
 - i. including highlights of the policy in the student handbook
 - ii. discussing attendance requirements at all grade level assemblies early each year
 - iii. including a copy of the attendance policy on the district website (www.heightsschools.com)
- increase awareness of policy among parents by:
 - i. place notification of policy on district website (www.heightsschools.com)
 - ii. discussing the policy at Open House/ Parent Night annually
 - iii. including a summary of attendance requirements in the school district's calendar
 - iv. Reminding parents of attendance requirements through ongoing contacts made with the family regarding attendance issues.

III. GENERAL PROCEDURES

Each absence/ late arrive will be recorded through the main offices.

On the secondary level, grades 6-12, attendance will be taken during each class period and compiled in a central location within each school.

On the elementary level, grades pre-K-5, attendance will be taken once at the beginning of each day. The teacher, or adult supervisor in-charge, will know the whereabouts of each child throughout the day.

Any absence or late arrival or early dismissal must be accounted for. It is the parent's responsibility to notify the school within 24 hours of the absence AND to provide the school with a signed ORANGE NOTE (see Appendix #1). The ORANGE NOTE should be given to office personnel in each building upon the student's return to school. Each day a child is absent a phone call from the parent is requested; however, all absences will be recorded as unexcused until an ORANGE NOTE is returned to school. At the secondary level it is the student's responsibility to provide documentation for all in-school appointments will prevent a student from attending class prior to dismissal from the class.

Parents will be notified by phone is their child is absent, late, or has an unexcused departure from school. If the absenteeism is appropriately accounted for through parent contact, the automated system contact for that student can be cancelled.

IV. POLICY

- a. All absences from school will be covered by this policy. No distinction will be made between excused or unexcused when determining the total number of days absent from each course
- b. Students who are absent from class for more than twenty (20) minutes of the allotted class period shall be considered absent. In order for students to attend a school sponsored function, the student must be signed in to the office no later than (10) minutes after the beginning of period 1 on the day of the activity. The principal may grant permission for a student to be absent under special circumstances as defined by State Education Law: illness or death in the family, required court appearance, attendance at health clinics, approved college visits, approved cooperative work programs, military obligations, remedial or medical health treatment or approved academic experiences. Tardiness to school for personal illness for part of the school day will render a student ineligible that day.
- c. Once in school, students shall not be considered absent when they are authorized by school officials to be somewhere other than in their regularly scheduled class. For example, if school personnel expects a student to report elsewhere during their regularly scheduled class time for such activities as meetings, conferences with school personnel, testing, physical exams within the school setting by school physician, music lessons, or field trips, the student shall not be considered absent. It is the responsibility of the student and/or the designated staff member to provide the teacher with written documentation to attend these sessions before they are permitted to leave the class. However, the student must make up all missed work.
- d. At the secondary level, once a student has accumulated 20 period absences, excused or unexcused, for any 1 credit course, and 1- period absences for an ½ credit course, he/she will be unable to attend or be a participant in ANY extra-curricular activities, for the remainder of that course. These activities/ privileges include the following:
 - a. Pass Privileges
 - b. Dances
 - c. Sporting Events (including attendance, practice or participation in an event)
 - d. Field Trips (including class trips)
 - e. Junior/ Senior Prom
 - f. Early Dismissal/Late Arrival Privileges (Senior Only)
 - g. Senior Breakfast
 - h. Senior Trip

V. NOTIFICATION SEQUENCE

The following refers to the notification processing pertaining to the number of absences in a single course and/or academic year. A student may be notified several different times if excessive absences exist in more than one class. Again, no

distinction will be made between excused or unexcused when notification is provided to families regarding absences from school.

- The administration in each building shall send written notification to the parents regarding a student’s absences from school. The letters shall notify the parents as follows: (Note- Notifications will NOT be sent for 6 days absent after April 1 of the calendar year)

After the 6th absence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written Notification of absences/ encouragement of parent to support regular school attendance • Required Dean/ Student conference
After the 10th absence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written Notification of absences/ encouragement of parent to address chronic problem that seems to be occurring • Required Principal/ Student conference
After the 14th absence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written Notification of absences/ arrange required parent-school support team meeting
After the 18th absence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written Notification of absences and school’s responsibility to notify county officials of chronic attendance issues for student/family

* see Appendix #2-“Written Notifications”

- As soon as possible after the 5th, 10th, 15th, 20th, 25th, and 30th weeks of school the administration in each building shall send written notifications to the parents documenting a student’s tardiness to school/ absences from classes. The letters shall notify the parents as follows:

After the 6th tardy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written Notification of tardiness will be provided to parent/ encouragement of parent to support regular school attendance • Required Dean/ Student meeting
After the 10th tardy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written Notification of tardiness will be provided to parent/ encouragement of parent to address chronic problem that seems to be occurring • Required Principal/ Student conference
After the 14th tardy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written Notification of tardy/ single class absences will be provided to parent/ arrange required parent-school support team meeting
After the 18th tardy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written Notification of tardy/ single class absences and school’s responsibility to notify county officials of chronic attendance issues for student/family

* see Appendix #2- “Written Notifications”

VI. INCENTIVES AND CONSEQUENCES FOR BEHAVIORS

Each school, where administration deems appropriate, may use the following list of incentives to encourage good attendance:

- Community donated gifts are given or raffled to students who meet attendance standards
- Participation in extra curricular activities for students who meet attendance standards
- Recognition awards for students who meet attendance standards
- Attendance record used when considering issuance of working papers

Each school, in accordance with EHSD Board Policy, may use the following list of sanctions to discourage poor attendance:

- Loss of the right to play school sports
- Loss of the right to participate in extra-curricular activities
- Loss of the right to attend school-related trips
- Loss of parking privileges
- Attendance at meetings with parents, administration, and/or counselors to discuss impact of excessive absences on educational program and progress
- Repetition of course or grade level due to excessive absences which has caused a lack of completion of required course work.

In order for students to attend a school sponsored function, the student must be signed in to the office no later than (10) minutes after the beginning of period 1 on the day of the activity. The principal may grant permission for a student to be absent under special circumstances as defined by State Education Law: illness or death in the family, required court appearance, attendance at health clinics, approved college visits, approved cooperative work programs, military obligations, remedial or medical health treatment or approved academic experiences. Tardiness to school for personal illness for part of the school day will render a student ineligible that day.

Students who are suspended from school (ISS or OSS) on a day of an athletic game or practice session, party, school dance, or other school affair scheduled after regular school hours are not eligible for participation or attendance at such events.

VII. BUILDING SCHEDULES

Cohen Elementary School-	Start time- 7:55
Cohen Middle School-	Start time- 8:15
Edison High School-	Start time- 8:20

Students who arrive after building start times will be considered tardy to school.

(NOTE- This section of the document was created during the 11-12 school year by the Attendance Committee)

VIII. Response to Intervention Model for School Attendance

In keeping with the Elmira Heights Central School District's belief that regular attendance establishes a pattern for success for all students in school and in future life a three tiered approach to improving school attendance will be adopted. Such a Response to Intervention model (see Appendix # 3) to school attendance supports the following basic tenants:

1. Regular attendance at school is a priority. Targets for attendance are set and monitored regularly
2. Families need to understand early on why regular attendance at school is important and how inconsistent attendance affects academic success.
3. Positive supports before punitive actions are more successful at increasing school attendance rates and student engagement.

Tier I- Tier I in the three tiered RTI model would include all universal supports and services provided to 100% of the student population in order to support regular attendance at school. Tier I initiatives are low in cost and aim to be preventive in nature. Tier I interventions in the Elmira Heights School District shall include (but not be limited to):

- School Attendance letters being sent on a regular basis to parents outlining student absence totals and the importance of regular school attendance on academic success.
- Use of Synervoice system to notify parents of daily absences
- Communications by school staff at "Transition" years (i.e. kindergarten, 6th and 9th grades) discussing regular school attendance with parents and problem solving any barriers that may be presented
- Informational campaigns completed to ensure that all families know the value of strong school attendance and consequences of poor school attendance. All families should know about incentive programs implemented at the schools to improve school attendance.
- PBIS programming specific to buildings emphasizing regular attendance at school
 - Example: Elementary School may designate a month as "School Every day/ Everyone" and provide incentives to classrooms who improve attendance for that month
 - Example: Middle School may have competitions between classrooms/ homerooms for best attendance for that month. A pizza party/ ice cream social could be provided to the winner
 - Example: High School teachers may provide extra points towards grades for students with fewer than 2 absences in a given time period.

Tier II- Tier II in the three tiered RTI model would target students "at-risk" for poor attendance or those students with increasing attendance rates (approximately 15-20% of the student population). Tier II initiatives in the Elmira Heights School District shall include (but not be limited to):

- All Tier I interventions and the addition of parent meeting with building administrators when attendance totals reach identified thresholds as outlined in the Elmira Heights School District Comprehensive Attendance Plan.
- When parent permission is agreed to, students identified as being in Tier II will receive Synervoice “Wake UP! Edison” phone calls at the high school level or “Wake UP! Cohen” phone calls at the middle school level.

Tier III- Tier III in the three tiered RTI model would target students who are chronically absent or habitually truant from school. This would include about 5-15% of the Elmira Heights School District student population. Tier III initiatives in the Elmira Heights School District shall include (but not be limited to):

- All Tier I & Tier II interventions and the addition of student/ parent involvement in “Get to School! Stay in School” grant funded program (See Appendix B)
- Also, interventions such as referrals to Chemung County agencies such as Children’s Integrated Services (CIS) and Child Protective Services (CPS) can be considered.

IX. Synervoice Applications in Elmira Heights School District Comprehensive Attendance Policy

1. Daily 10:00 phone calls home with the following announcement for those students who are recorded as absent from school at the 10:00 AM hour and no written ORANGE NOTE or parent phone call regarding the absence has been received:
 - a. [School] calling please hold...This is a message from [School]. A student in your household in grade [10] named [Ryan] is currently listed as absent from school. Please notify the school of your knowledge of this absence as soon as possible.
2. Daily evening phone calls home with the following announcement for those students who remained absent from school for the day and no written ORANGE NOTE or parent phone call regarding the absence was received by the district:
 - a. [School] calling please hold...This is a message from [School]. A student in your household in grade [3] named [Ryan] was absent [March 1st]. Please send a written note explaining the absence on the student’s return to school.
 - b. For secondary schools only a nightly Synervoice message reporting on period absences is also utilized by the Elmira Heights District. The message is as follows:
[School] calling please hold...This is a message from [School]. A student in your household in grade [8] named [Ryan] was absent [March 1st] [Period 1, period 2, period 3, etc]. Please send a written note explaining the absence on the student’s return to school.
3. Morning “Wake UP! Edison” or “Wake UP! Cohen” phone calls with the following message are made to those students in Tier II when written parent permission is obtained:

X. Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports related to Regular School Attendance in the Elmira Heights School District

The Elmira Heights School District believes that one effective strategy for improving attendance is engaging students, parents, educators and community members in a campaign that offers positive rewards for getting to school on-time.

- Incentives don't need to be costly. Simple rewards including recognition from peers and the school through assemblies, free homework passes, interclass competitions, events all work as meaningful incentives in improve school attendance.
- Perfect attendance is not ALWAYS the goal being sought as students should not come to school when they are sick. Students should be rewarded for improved attendance, not just perfect attendance and offering rewards on a weekly basis can allow students to earn positive rewards.
- Each building in the district is encouraged to establish a building-specific PBIS program focusing on improved attendance. (see Appendix D for supporting information from www.attendanceworks.org)

Appendices

#1 - Orange Note

#2 - Written Notification Letters

#3 - Attendance RTI Pyramid

**#4 - "Wake Up!" Edison/ Cohen Parent
Permission**



ORANGE NOTE

School: Edison H.S. Cohen Middle Cohen Elementary

Date: _____ Grade: _____

Student Name: _____

Absent

Reason: _____

Tardy (Time In): _____

Reason: _____

Early Departure (Time Out) : _____

Reason: _____

*** Parent Signature ***

School start times:

Edison-	8:20 AM	733-5604
Cohen Middle-	8:20 AM	734-5078
Cohen Elementary	7:45 AM	734-7132

Daily Attendance Letter #1

(NOTE: All letters are printed on school letter head)

July 23, 2014

To the Parent/Guardian of:

[Student Name]

[Student address]

Dear Parent/Guardian:

I am writing to notify you of the absences your child has had from school. To date, [student name] has missed the following [# of days] days of the current 2011-2012 academic year:

11/09, 12/07, 12/22, 01/04, 01/27, 02/29, 03/02, 03/28

Although it may not seem significant at this time, any absence from school regardless of the reason is detrimental to a student's educational success. Studies have shown that consistent school attendance, academic success, and school completion have a positive correlation. Please be sure to provide the school with appropriate ORANGE NOTE(s) corresponding to each documented absence. Also, don't hesitate to contact us with any questions you may have about this correspondence.

Sincerely,

[Principal's name]

[School name]

Daily Attendance Letter #2

July 23, 2014

To the Parent/Guardian of:

[Student Name]

[Student address]

Dear Parent/Guardian:

This letter is a follow up to my original letter dated 03/15/2012.

We continue to be concerned regarding [Student name] absences from school. [Student name] has missed the following 10 days of the current 2011-12 academic year:

09/13, 10/03, 10/04, 11/01, 11/15, 11/17, 12/01, 12/21, 03/12, 03/13

This amount of absences is becoming significant and can have detrimental effects on any child's academic success. Research shows high absenteeism can lead to significant academic struggles as well as higher dropout rates.

Please be sure to provide the school with appropriate "ORANGE NOTE(s)" corresponding to each documented absence. We again encourage you to address this issue with your student and to call us with any questions that you may have about this correspondence or for any supports or services that the school may offer you and your student.

Sincerely,

[Principal's name]

[School name]

Daily Attendance Letter #3

July 23, 2014

To the Parent/Guardian of:

[Student Name]

[Student address]

Dear Parent/Guardian:

We continue to have deep concerns regarding [Student name]'s significant absences from school. [Student name] has missed the following 17 days of the current 2011-12 academic year:

09/20, 10/12, 10/13, 10/14, 10/17, 10/18, 10/20, 12/22, 01/27, 02/06, 02/07, 02/14, 02/27, 02/28, 02/29, 03/01, 03/02

We have scheduled an appointment for you with our Edison team at the following date and time:

Date of Meeting:

Time of Meeting:

Place of Meeting: [School name] Conference Room

If this meeting time is not convenient for you please call to reschedule. Also, please be sure to provide "ORANGE NOTES" for all days absent for your student at the time of this meeting. We look forward to seeing you on the above mentioned date to discuss this issue in detail.

Sincerely,

[Principal's name]

[School name]

Daily Attendance Letter #4

July 23, 2014

To the Parent/Guardian of:

[Student Name]

[Student address]

Dear Parent/Guardian:

We continue to have deep concerns regarding [Student name]'s significant absences from school. [Student name] has missed the following 37 days of the current 2011-12 academic year:

09/26, 10/03, 10/07, 11/01, 11/08, 11/09, 11/10, 11/15, 11/21, 11/28, 12/02, 12/08, 01/03, 01/05, 01/09, 01/11, 01/23, 01/24, 01/26, 02/08, 02/09, 02/10, 02/13, 02/14, 02/24, 02/27, 02/28, 02/29, 03/01, 03/02, 03/06, 03/07, 03/12, 03/26, 03/27, 03/28, 04/02

We again have scheduled an appointment for you with our Edison team at the following date and time to discuss this matter in detail.

Date of Meeting:

Time of Meeting:

Place of Meeting: [School name]Conference Room

Also, if this attendance issue is not resolved immediately for Holden we will have to notify the proper county agencies to help us address your child's educational needs. Finally, as outlined in previous correspondences regarding this issue, "ORANGE NOTE(s) are necessary for each absence that [Student name] has had. We look forward to seeing you on the above mentioned date to discuss this issue in detail.

Sincerely,

[Principal's name]

[School name]

Tardy Attendance Letter #1

July 23, 2014

To the Parent/Guardian of:

[Student Name]

[Student address]

Dear Parent/Guardian:

I am writing to notify you that your child [Student name] has been tardy to school on the following 8 days:

11/18, 01/18, 01/23, 02/02, 02/06, 02/10, 02/15, 02/28

The school day at [School name] starts promptly at [School start time]. We encourage you to discuss this issue of tardiness with your [School name] student so that it may be addressed. Numerous studies show the link between consistent attendance and school success. Also, don't hesitate to contact us with any questions you may have about his correspondence, and be sure to provide the school with necessary "ORANGE NOTE(s)" for school documentation.

Sincerely,

[Principal's name]

[School name]

Tardy Attendance Letter #2

July 23, 2014

To the Parent/Guardian of:

[Student Name]

[Student address]

Dear Parent/Guardian:

This letter is a follow up to my original letter dated 12/16/2011. We continue to be concerned regarding [Student name]'s tardiness to school. [Student name] has been late to school on the following 13 days during the current 2011-2012 academic year:

09/21, 09/30, 10/17, 10/18, 10/21, 10/26, 10/31, 11/04, 11/09, 11/10, 11/21,
11/22, 02/08

This excessive tardiness is becoming significant and can have detrimental effects on any child's academic success.

We again encourage you to address this issue with your student and to call us with any questions that you may have about this correspondence or for any supports or services that the school may offer to you and your student. Also, please be sure to provide the school with necessary "ORANGE NOTE(s)".

Sincerely,

[Principal's name]

[School name]

Tardy Attendance Letter #3

July 23, 2014

To the Parent/Guardian of:

[Student Name]

[Student address]

Dear Parent/Guardian:

We continue to have deep concerns regarding [Student name]'s significant tardiness to school at [School name]. [Student name] has been tardy on the following 14 days of the current 2011-2012 academic year:

09/23, 10/17, 10/20, 10/26, 11/01, 11/04, 11/21, 12/06, 12/13, 12/14, 12/16,
01/19, 02/09, 02/22

We have scheduled an appointment for you with our Edison team at the following date and time:

Date of Meeting:

Time of Meeting:

Place of Meeting: [School name] Conference Room

If this meeting time is not convenient for you please call to reschedule. We look forward to seeing you on the above mentioned date to discuss this issue in detail. Again, you are reminded to provide appropriate "ORANGE NOTE(s)" for each documented tardy date.

Sincerely,

[Principal's name]

[School name]

Tardy Attendance Letter #4

July 23, 2014

To the Parent/Guardian of:

[Student Name]

[Student address]

Dear Parent/Guardian:

We continue to have deep concerns regarding [Student name]'s significant tardiness to school at [School name]. [Student name] has been tardy on the following 29 days of the current 2011-2012 academic year:

09/26, 09/28, 09/29, 09/30, 10/03, 10/17, 10/18, 10/20, 10/21, 10/24, 10/25,
10/28, 10/31, 11/01, 11/07, 11/08, 11/09, 11/14, 11/15, 11/16, 11/28, 12/08,
01/09, 01/24, 02/02, 02/14, 02/16, 03/02, 03/05

We again have scheduled an appointment for you with our [School name] team at the following date and time to discuss this matter in detail.

Date of Meeting:

Time of Meeting:

Place of Meeting: [School name] Conference Room

Also, if this tardiness issue is not resolved immediately for [%StudentFirstName%] we will have to notify the proper county agencies to help us address your child's educational needs. We look forward to seeing you on the above mentioned date to discuss this issue in detail. As noted in previous correspondences regarding this issue, please be sure to provide "ORANGE NOTE(s)" for each documented tardy date.

Sincerely,

[Principal's name]

[School name]

RTI Attendance Initiatives: Elmira Heights School District

Tier III Interventions:

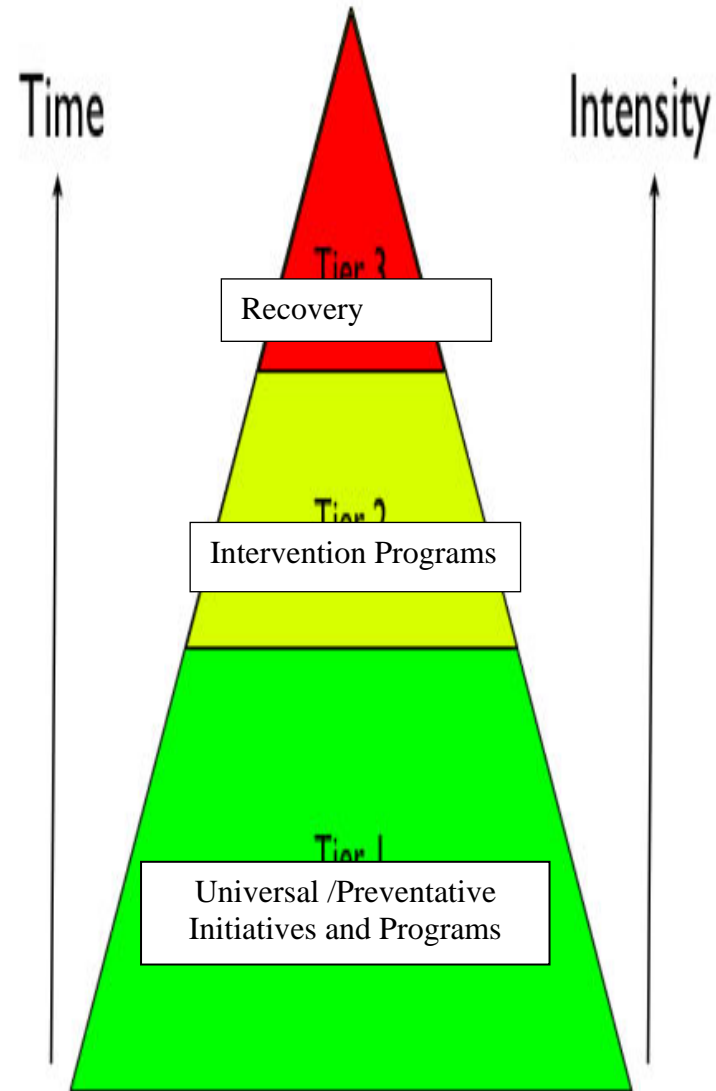
- Attendance visitor “Attend School, Stay in School”
- Possible referrals to CIS, CPS
- Synervoice “WAKE UP! EDISON, COHEN” PC’s
- Home Visits
- School Tool Attendance letters/parent meetings on regular basis to notify parents of attendance totals
- PBIS programming / school wide attendance campaigns
- Synervoice daily absent PC’s at 10:00 am and in evening
- Summer PC’s at transition years

Tier II Interventions:

- Synervoice “WAKE UP! EDISON, COHEN” PC’s
- Home Visits
- School Tool Attendance letters / parent meetings on regular basis to notify parents of attendance totals
- PBIS programming / school wide attendance campaigns
- Synervoice daily absent PC’s at 10:00 am and in evening
- Summer PC’s at transition years

Tier I Interventions:

- School Tool Attendance letters sent on regular basis to notify parents of attendance totals
- PBIS programming / school wide attendance campaigns
- Synervoice daily absent PC’s at 10:00 am and in evening
- Summer PC’s at transition years



**Parent Permission for
“Wake UP! Edison” “Wake UP! Cohen”
A.M. Phone call**

As the parent of Edison student/ Cohen Student _____
(circle one)

I agree to enroll my student in the “Wake UP! Edison”/ “Wake UP! Cohen” program for approximately 5 weeks in efforts to improve my student’s consistent attendance at school. As part of this program our home will be registered to receive an early morning SYNERVOICE phone call (approximately 6:00 AM-6:30 AM) to help wake my child and have him/ her arrive to school on time.

Parent Signature: _____

Dates of Program Involvement: _____

Date of Agreement: _____