

## **PREGNANT/PARENTING/MARRIED STUDENTS**

### **ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES: (Attachment for Policy No. 234)**

#### **I. PURPOSE**

The School District of Philadelphia (the District) is committed to the protection of the educational rights of married and/or pregnant/parenting students. Pregnant and parenting students, regardless of their marital status, have the same rights as any other student to attend any district school or program and to do so in an environment free of discrimination or harassment. The District shall make reasonable adjustments to facilitate the equal access and full participation of pregnant and parenting students.

#### **II. DEFINITIONS**

Pregnant student: A female student who is pregnant. May also be referred to as an expectant student.

Parenting student: Any student, male or female who is the biological parent or legal guardian of a child. May also be referred to as a school-age parent, teen parent or adolescent parent. Parenting student does not include any person whose parental rights have been terminated.

Biological Parent: A parent who has conceived (biological mother) or sired (biological father) rather than adopted a child and whose genes are therefore transmitted to the child.

Custodial Parent: The parent who has either sole physical custody of the child or the parent with whom the child resides for a majority of the time. Although courts often give two parents who are both fit parents joint custody of the child, the court may refer to the parent with the larger timeshare with the child as a custodial parent at times in court documents and during hearings.

ELECT Program: Education Leading to Employment and Career Training (ELECT) is a comprehensive, school-based, community-linked program that provides a broad array of academic and social service supports designed to help expectant and parenting students stay in school, earn a high school diploma or GED, and achieve the self-sufficiency required to make a successful transition to employment.

Approved Documentation of Parenting Status: The following documents of evidence include: (1) birth certificate, (2) ultrasound, (3) letter from physician, (4) WIC paperwork, and/or (5) child's medical card.

False Pregnancy or Pseudocyesis: A condition in which a woman believes that she's pregnant, yet conception hasn't taken place and no baby is forming inside.

Reasonable Adjustments: Students may request adjustments based on general pregnancy needs or accommodations based on a pregnancy-related complication. For example, a larger desk, elevator access, or allowing you to make frequent trips to the restroom, when necessary because of your pregnancy.

### III. RESPONSIBILITY

The Office of Family and Community Engagement is responsible for ensuring that pregnant and parenting students are informed of their rights under policy 234. Each school within the District also has the responsibility to post and share this information with students and must:

- Disseminate this policy among all school staff and administration, and must inform school staff students, and parents about the policy at the beginning of each school year, to ensure all parties are made aware of their student rights and responsibilities set forth in this policy to help students stay on track toward graduation.
- Identify a Teen Parent Student Liaison to counsel students and to interface with internal and external resources. This individual may be a counselor, school nurse or member of the school administration. The Teen Parent Student Liaison shall:
  - i. Provide pregnant and/or parenting students with information about Title IX rights and how to report suspected Title IX violations.
  - ii. With consent of the student make referrals to the ELECT program.
  - iii. Data entry students' pregnant/parenting status in the student information system.
  - iv. Before, during and after teen parent leave, link the student to academic and social supports within in the District and outside of the school (child care, health care, etc.).

### IV. REGULATORY GUIDANCE

School Reform Commission Policy 234 ("PREGNANT/PARENTING/MARRIED STUDENTS," states that a student who is eligible to attend district schools and who is married and/or pregnant/parenting shall not be denied an educational program solely because of marriage, pregnancy, pregnancy-related disabilities, or potential or actual parenthood. Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972 and its implementing regulations stipulate that<sup>1</sup>:

- No rule concerning a student's actual or potential parental, family, or marital status which treats students differently on the basis of sex shall be applied (*Section 106.40*).
- Schools must treat pregnancy, childbirth, false pregnancy, termination of pregnancy and recovery therefrom in the same manner and under the same policies as any other temporary disability with respect to any medical or hospital benefit, service, plan or policy the school administers, operates, offers, or participates in with respect to the school's students (*Section 106.40*).
- A physician's note certifying that the student is physically and emotionally able to continue participation may be required only if such certification is required for all students for other physical or emotional conditions requiring the attention of a physician (*Section 106.40*).
- Students are permitted to take a leave of absence for pregnancy, childbirth, false pregnancy, termination of pregnancy and recovery therefrom for so long a period of time as is deemed medically necessary by the students' physician, at the conclusion of which

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<sup>1</sup> Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, 20 U.S.C. §§ 1681-1688; 34 CFR §§ 106.31-106.40; 34 CFR §§ 106.8 (1975).  
<http://www2.ed.gov/policy/rights/reg/ocr/edlite-34cfr106.html>

the student shall be reinstated to the status which she held when the leave began (*Section 106.40*).

- Students shall not be discriminated against or excluded from education programming or activity, including any class or extracurricular activity, on the basis of such student's pregnancy, childbirth, false pregnancy, termination of pregnancy or recovery there from (*Section 106.40*).
- A student may participate in a program or activity for pregnant students, but participation must be completely voluntary and the separate program or activity must be comparable to that offered to non-pregnant students (*Section 106.40*).
- Students who believe that they have been subject to discrimination or harassment due to their pregnancy may file a complaint or seek resolution with the District's Title IV Coordinator.

## **V. REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS TO FACILITATE FULL EDUCATION PARTICIPATION**

District schools shall make reasonable adjustments to facilitate the equal access and full participation of pregnant and parenting students in all school programs and activities. Such accommodations, implemented on a case-by-case basis, may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Providing schedule flexibility (later start times, changes to academic roster) whenever possible to enable full participation and reduce school tardiness and absences due to medical, childcare or other pregnancy or parenting related concerns;
- Permitting additional time to the pregnant or parenting student for class changes;
- Permitting the pregnant student the use of elevators when this need is supported by the student's physician and when it is possible to do so;
- Permitting the pregnant and parenting student to engage in alternative activities that satisfy physical education requirements when requested by the pregnant or parenting student and her physician;
- Providing hall passes for bathroom use; and
- Providing pregnant and parenting students with class and homework assignments missed during any short term, excused period of absence (i.e., longer than one week but less than four weeks) to enable the student to complete the assignments and receive credit for them if they are satisfactorily completed by the student within a reasonable amount of time. Tests may also be made up within a reasonable amount of time, and the teacher has discretion to determine if the same or reasonably equivalent test shall be administered.

## **VI. BREASTFEEDING STUDENTS**

The school shall provide reasonable accommodations to any lactating student to express breast milk, breastfeed an infant child, or address other needs related to breastfeeding. A student shall not incur an academic penalty for using any of these reasonable accommodations, and shall be

provided the opportunity to make up any work missed due to such use. Reasonable accommodations include, but are not limited to:

1. Access to a private and secure room, other than a restroom, to express breast milk or breastfeed an infant child;
2. Permission to bring onto a school campus a breast pump and any other equipment used to express breast milk;
3. Access to a power source for a breast pump or any other equipment used to express breast milk; and
4. Access to a place to store expressed breast milk safely. A reasonable amount of time to accommodate the student's need to express breast milk or breastfeed an infant child.

## **VII. SCHOOL UNIFORMS**

Pregnant students will not be denied attendance at school or otherwise denied an education for failing to wear clothing that complies with the district-wide or school specific uniform code, if such failure is due to pregnancy. Issuing a suspension to a student or taking any punitive disciplinary action against a student not in uniform (such as sending the student home or not allowing the student to attend class) is prohibited and a violation of the Student Code of Conduct and District policy. Pregnant students are allowed to wear appropriate maternity tops and bottoms that are the same colors designated for the school's uniform.

## **VIII. ATTENDANCE and TARDINESS**

Every child between the ages of 6 and 21 has the right to attend school. Pregnant and parenting students have the same rights and obligations under compulsory school attendance laws. These attendance rights and obligations apply to students regardless of their marital or parental status. All schools shall maintain an attendance policy that: (1) provides thirty (30) days of excused absences for a student who provides documentation of the birth of the student's child; and (2) provide excused absences for a student who provides appropriate documentation of pregnancy or that the student is the parent of a child needing care.

Students who are pregnant: All efforts should be made to ensure that the pregnant student is enrolled and attending school.

Complicated Pregnancy: If complications arise during pregnancy such that attendance at school would be harmful to the physical or mental health of the pregnant student or infant, the student should submit a statement from the attending physician specifically supporting the absence and requesting homebound instruction for a specific period of time.

If a pregnant student has a medical reason to limit her participation in her regular school program, it is the responsibility of the student/parent to provide the school with appropriate documentation from her medical provider. The principal or designee shall establish procedures to develop an educational plan consistent with the health care provider's instructions. Subject teachers should be alerted if special considerations for the student's health are required. Schools

should make reasonable adjustments when provided with such information in the same manner as is provided to any other student with a health condition.

### **Short Term Excused Absences and Late Arrival / Early Dismissal**

A student who is the (biological / custodial) parent of a child shall be considered excused when his or her absence or tardiness is due to the illness or the medical appointment of his/her child.

A student who is the parent of a child shall be allowed to sign out early from school due to an emergency related to their child (e.g. need to pick up their child from child care, medical emergency, etc.)

A student who is the parent of a child shall also be considered excused due to lack of child care when the student has made a reasonable effort to secure and maintain reliable child care.

A school may require verification of appointments from pregnant students' licensed healthcare providers or the licensed healthcare providers for students' children only if such verification is also required from students for other medically related absences.

### **Long Term Excused Absences and Pregnancy / Teen Parent Leave**

Students are entitled to an extended absence or leave of absence for reasons of pregnancy and related medical conditions, including pregnancy-related illness or health condition, childbirth, and recovery. The leave shall be for at least thirty (30) days and/or the duration deemed medically necessary by the student's licensed healthcare provider recuperate from child birth and arrange for child care. The student should submit a statement from the attending physician stating the birth date of the infant. Following the six week post-partum period, once cleared by a physician for a female student, the parenting student shall follow the School District of Philadelphia policies for absences.

School Administration may excuse absences due to pregnancy or childbirth for as long as the student's doctor says it is necessary.

Students will be allowed to return to the same academic and extracurricular status as before medical leave began, which should include giving students the opportunity to complete all assignments and tests missed, or a reasonable equivalent of the work missed during their absence within a reasonable time period. Teachers may not refuse to allow pregnant or parenting students to submit work after a deadline was missed because of pregnancy or childbirth. If teachers' grading is based in part on class participation or attendance in which students' missed class because of pregnancy or childbirth, they should be allowed to make up the participation or attendance credits they didn't have the chance to earn.

Teachers shall follow the Title IX requirements related to excused absences/medical leave. Schools will support the continuation of learning during excused absence and leave, as medically appropriate. Every reasonable effort should be made to provide homework and make-up work to remain current with assignments and to avoid losing academic time.

### **Absence Codes**

<b>Absence Code</b>	<b>Absence Reason</b>	<b>Excuse Code</b>	<b>Status Code</b>
1	Excused Absence or Other Urgent Reasons (Principal's Approval)	Absent	Excused
4	Excused Early Dismissal	Early Release	Excused
5	Illness	Absent	Excused
13	Excused Lateness	Tardy	Excused

## **IX. HOMEBOUND**

The purpose of homebound instruction is to provide students with some level of instructional services during a temporary period of absence so that, on return to school, they can re-engage successfully with their instructional program. Pregnant and parenting students are expected to abide by the School District of Philadelphia's homebound and attendance policies. Pregnancy and recovery from childbirth are not considered medical conditions that meet eligibility for homebound instruction. Homebound instruction is not to be granted to the student teen parent due to lack of child care and is not to be granted solely because the pregnant student is in her third trimester. The eligibility criteria for participation in homebound instruction are the same for all students, whether or not they are pregnant or have given birth.

In order for a pregnant or parenting student to be eligible for homebound instruction a physician must certify that the student is under medical care for an illness or injury that is acute, catastrophic or chronic in nature (i.e. placenta previa, placental abruption, preeclampsia, at risk of preterm labor, etc.), and unable to attend school for a period of at least four (4) weeks. The criteria described above would have to be met in order for a student to receive homebound instruction for medical circumstances related to pregnancy or recovery from childbirth, including cesarean section delivery.

If assistance is needed in determining the proper procedures for homebound instruction contact School Health Services at 215-400-4170.

## **X. CONFIDENTIALITY AND DISCLOSURE OF PREGNANCY AND PARENTING STATUS**

Pregnant and parenting students have the right to have their health and personal information regarding their pregnancies and related conditions kept confidential within the boundaries of applicable law.

Personal information students share with school personnel such as the school nurse, social-worker or counselor is confidential and should not appear in the student's academic record or discussed with others without their permission. An exception to this rule of confidentiality includes, but is not limited to, a reasonable suspicion of child abuse, neglect, or a clear and present danger to the health or safety of the student. The child abuse reporting responsibility DOES NOT include notifying students' parents or guardians of a pregnancy or related conditions.

In cases where students' parents or guardians are unaware of a pregnancy, students may be encouraged to involve his/her parents or guardians but may not be coerced or forced to do so.

Any data collected should be tracked using the student's school ID# and de-identify the parenting status of the student from his/her academic record. Only a limited number of school staff such as the nurse or counselor should have access to data where the student's name is attached to parenting status. Staff collecting the data should explain that recording the student's parenting status allows the District to learn how many parenting students there are and how best to ensure these students have the supports they need to succeed.

Schools shall consult with the school nurse or the District's Medical Director, Deputy Chief of Health Services regarding health and medical concerns and medical release related to pregnancy. Every case is different, and school staff is advised to use their judgment and collaborate with their nurse and counseling staff as appropriate to determine what adjustments are necessary.

## **XI. RECORDING PREGNANT AND PARENTING STUDENTS**

The School District of Philadelphia has an established goal of providing pregnant and parenting students enrolled in its schools with supports and services they need to succeed as successful parents, students, and citizens. The District, along with its partners and service providers, strive to address the needs of its large urban youth population in the areas of education, social service, health care support, referral to childcare services, and preparation for employment.

In order to make sure all eligible students are being served and ensure adequate resources at each school, a pregnant and parenting tab in the student information system, Infinite Campus (IC), has been implemented to record pregnant and parenting students. All students who disclose their pregnant and/or parenting status must be entered into the tab by appropriate school personnel. Appropriate school personnel include, but are not limited to, the school principal, assistant principal, guidance counselor, and school nurse. Students who would like to be contacted regarding additional supports provided by the District must sign a consent form before being contacted. After signing the consent, a member of the pregnant and parenting teen support program will fully discuss the benefits of the program with a student and answer any questions the student may have. A copy of the consent form can be found on the last page of this document. A walkthrough of how to use the pregnant and parenting tab in IC can be found below.

If a student discloses their pregnant and parenting status to appropriate school personnel, it is the duty of the school personnel to inform the student of supports for pregnant and parenting students available through the District and report this information in the Student Information System (SIS). Personnel must record the disclosure of student supports available, record start date, expectant parent status, and pregnancy due date in the SIS. After the delivery of a child, appropriate school personnel will be responsible for entering the student's delivery date and the date approved leave will end after 30 excused absences in the SIS. If the student is already parenting, school personnel will be responsible for discussing supports available through the District and recording record start date, parenting status and number of child the student parents. If a student is no longer pregnant or no longer parenting, the appropriate school personnel must update the record in the SIS. Students interested in receiving additional supports for pregnant and parenting teens from the District must sign a consent prior to their information being shared.

## **CONSENT AND REFERRAL**

The Teen Parent Student Liaison or other approved school staff such as a school nurse, social-worker or counselor shall make all students aware of the services offered through the ELECT program. If students consent, a referral shall be made to the ELECT program by filling out the ELECT Student Referral Form. The Teen Parent Student Liaison or other approved staff will also enter data pertaining to students' parenting status in the Student Information System only after obtaining consent. Approved staff will be responsible for the entering the following fields:

- Expectant Parent Status
- Pregnant Student Status
- Number of Children
- Date Consent Signed





The School District of Philadelphia  
440 N. Broad Street, Suite 1114  
Philadelphia, PA 19130  
Phone: (215) 400-4250  
Fax: (215) 400-4278

## ELECT Student Referral Form

### Student Information

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_

Student ID \_\_\_\_\_

Student School \_\_\_\_\_

Grade \_\_\_\_\_

Student Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Alternate Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Are you currently pregnant? (Yes or No) \_\_\_\_\_

Are you currently parenting? (Yes or No) \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, How many children? \_\_\_\_\_

### Consent to be Contacted

I agree to have my parenting status tracked and be contacted by a member of the School District of Philadelphia's ELECT Program or one of their representatives. I have made this decision based on the information I have read in ELECT brochure. I understand that I may withdraw this consent at any time without penalty or negative consequences.

Student's Name (please print) \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

SDP Representative's Name (please print) \_\_\_\_\_

SDP Representative's Position (please print) \_\_\_\_\_

SDP Representative's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

### For SDP ELECT Use Only

Date Received: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Contacted: \_\_\_\_\_

Enrolled (Yes/No) \_\_\_\_\_ Enrollment Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Referral may be emailed to [ELECTData@philasd.org](mailto:ELECTData@philasd.org) or faxed to 215-400-4278

### For Questions or Concerns:

Please call 215-400-4250 or email [elect@philasd.org](mailto:elect@philasd.org) with any further questions or concerns.