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Mental Health Day Best Practices

Per Public Act 102-0321, which impacts Illinois School Code, 105 ILCS 5/26-1, all students can be excused for a temporary absence “with absence for cause by illness being required to include the mental or behavioral health of the child for up to 5 days for which the child need not provide a medical note, in which case the child shall be given the opportunity to make up any school work missed during the mental or behavioral health absence and, after the second health day used, may be referred to the appropriate school support personnel.” We believe that taking care of mental health is critical to the overall success of our students. To this end, La Moille CUSD developed this protocol so that our Administration/Guidance Office is actively involved in supporting students using the Mental Health Days. The District will be applying the Illinois School Code to best support our students in the following manner:

1. When a student determines the need to utilize a Mental Health Day, the student’s parent/guardian will report the absence to the Attendance Office and indicate their desire to utilize a Mental Health Day. Reporting this absence will follow the same guidelines as reporting any other type of absence. Per the Illinois School Code, a medical note will not be required for these allotted five (5) days.
2. The Attendance Office will record the absences in Teacher Ease using the attendance code of MHD to indicate Mental Health Days.
3. After a student has used the second Mental Health Day, administration and the guidance department will meet with the student on the day of return to the building. During the meeting the staff member will check on the mental health status of the student and will provide assistance as determined necessary by the information discussed during the meeting.
4. After a student utilizes a third Mental Health Day, administration and the guidance department will meet with the student and parents/guardians on the day of return to the building. During the meeting the counselor will check on the mental health status of the student and will discuss counseling services and resources with the parents/guardians and student.
5. Each subsequent day the student uses as a Mental Health Day, a meeting will be required on the day of return where referral to counseling services will be initiated. For instance, a student who has used Mental Health Day absences 4 separate times (not consecutive school days), would have met with administration/guidance a total of three times.
6. Once the student has used the allotted five (5) Mental Health Days, then the student’s absences would return to the regular attendance policies as established by the La Moille Student Handbook.
7. Since Mental Health Days are excused absences, students will be allowed to make-up missed work.



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