

**POLICIES AND PROCEDURES  
FOR THE  
SEMINOLE TRIBE OF FLORIDA  
CENTER for STUDENT SUCCESS and  
SERVICES**

**K-12 PROGRAM**

**February 1, 2017**



*The Seminole Tribe of Florida Tribal Council and the Seminole Tribe of Florida Center for Student Success and Services have the right to interpret the content of these Policies and Procedures. Nothing contained in these Policies and Procedures confer any right, contractually or otherwise upon any third party. These Policies and Procedures may be amended at any time.*

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*\*\*\*All program forms are available online and may also be obtained at the local Center for Student Success and Services office*



### **CENTER FOR STUDENT SUCCESS AND SERVICES – MAIN OFFICE**

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## PRIVATE SCHOOL SCHOLARSHIP POLICY AND PROCEDURES

*The purpose of the K – 12 Private School Scholarship is to provide each recipient with the opportunity to attend an educational institution valued in academic excellence, integrity and fairness.*

### **Costs Covered By The Scholarship**

- K-12 Private School Tuition (for the regular school year)
- Registration
- Books (First time of issuance only)
- Lab Fees
- Admission and Reenrollment Fees
- Test Fees (SAT, ACT, etc.) to include two retakes.
- School ID (First time of issuance only)
- Approved School Bus Transportation To/From School up to \$300 per month for the Regular school year (unless transportation is provided and funded by the school)
- School Required Laptops Grades 5-12 (Documentation is required from the school and must meet the iPad/Computer Policy guidelines)
- Optional Courses And Academic Remedial Programs Must be Pre-Approved by the Education Director

### **Costs Not Covered By The Scholarship**

- Summer School Programs (The private school scholarship applies only to the standard school year beginning in the fall (August/September) and ending in May/June.
- All other school expenses, but not limited to: including uniforms, lost or damaged books, after school care, after school programs, yearbooks, holiday celebrations/parties, late registration fees, and other fees, are the responsibility of the parent or legal guardian.

### **Eligibility Requirements**

- The student must be an enrolled member of the Seminole Tribe of Florida (STOF).
- Students in grades K-11 must have successfully completed the previous academic school year and have been promoted to the next grade level.
- Students in **grades 2-12** must have and maintain a minimum cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 2.5
- The student must have no more than ten (10) unexcused absences for the school year
- The student must be accepted into a **private school that has accreditation in the same name as the institution at the time of application and has been approved by the STOF Center for Student Success and Services. SACS accreditation is preferred.** (A school's accreditation may be verified by the K-12 Advisor prior to enrollment and is accepted by the state of residence.)
- The parent must submit a STOF Private School Scholarship Application to the local K-12 Advisor of the Center for Student Success and Services by **January 31<sup>st</sup>**.
- The parent/ guardian must not withdraw the student from his/her present school, enroll the student in the requested school, or anticipate STOF funding until the Private School Scholarship Application is approved **in writing** by the Center for Student Success and Services.
- It will be the responsibility of the parents/legal guardians to provide financial support for their child(ren) to continue attending private school, or enroll their child(ren) in a public/charter school system if they are deemed ineligible for the K-12 private school scholarship.
- Students at the age of 17 **must agree to complete the entire academic year**, failure to do so will require the student to become financially responsible for any outstanding balance or fees.

### **Scholarship Application Process**

The steps below are essential in completion of the private school scholarship application.

- The parent/legal guardian should meet with the local K-12 Advisor to discuss the student's progress and needs to identify the best educational setting and school.
- The parent must obtain and fully complete the current application online via the Center for Student Success and Services' website or in person from the Center for Student Success and Services.
- The parent must mail, fax, e-mail, or hand-deliver the application and **all** requested documents to the local K-12 Advisor of the Center for Student Success and Services by January 31<sup>st</sup>.
- Applications will be reviewed for completeness and eligibility. Parents will be notified of the status of the students' application received by January 31<sup>st</sup> on or before May 1<sup>st</sup> via mail, e-mail, or hand delivery.

### **Education Release/Consent Form**

An Authorization of Release of Information Form for the current school year should be signed by the parent/legal guardian and must be on file in the Center for Student Success and Services. All education related information (report cards, interim/progress reports, etc.), will be maintained in confidential files.

### **Grade Point Average (GPA) Requirement**

Scholarship eligibility requires a minimum 2.5 GPA. The K-12 Advisors monitor the academic progress of all students. It is the student's and/or the parent/legal guardian's responsibility to ensure all report cards are submitted to the Center for Student Success and Services within two (2) weeks following the end of the grading period.

In an effort to review, process, and provide notification of approval status prior to schools' requests for fees for the upcoming school year, **grade point averages for scholarship eligibility determination will be based on the average of the following:**

- Term 4 weighted GPA from **previous** school year;
- Term 3 weighted GPA from **current** school year;
- Term 2 weighted GPA from **current** school year;
- Term 1 weighted GPA from **current** school year.

If the average of the four (4) terms above is less than the minimum required 2.5 GPA, the following options will be afforded the student:

- The average of the four (4) terms of the current school year will be calculated after the completion of the school year. If the GPA is a 2.5 or above, the scholarship application will be approved. **Fees will be paid upon verification of the GPA.**
- The student may attend a summer program (offered through the Center for Student Success and Services or at the parent's expense) or course forgiveness program to **replace** one (1) or two (2) courses for which a grade of "D" or below was previously earned. After the "failing" grade is replaced with the new grade, if the new GPA is a minimum 2.5, the scholarship application will be approved. (Only "like" classes will be forgiven; for example, if a science class is failed, it must be replaced with the same or similar science class.)

The Seminole Tribe of Florida will continue to pay for the private school scholarships for all students approved for a scholarship for the duration of the academic year. Therefore, if a student's grade point average (GPA) falls below a 2.5 in a given term, as long as he/she is currently enrolled in the same school, the scholarship will neither be denied nor suspended for the academic year. For any student who falls below a 2.5 GPA in any given term, the K-12 Advisor will request a joint conference with the teacher/school and parent/guardian and complete an action plan of strategies within three (3) weeks after the conclusion of the term.

### **Grade Point Average (GPA) Calculation and Conversion**

The Center for Student Success and Services does not include exam grades, participation grades, conduct grades, and social skills grades in the calculation of the student's GPA.

When required, all grades will be converted to a numeric GPA as per the Center for Student Success and Services guidelines equivalent to the following:

### **Grading Scale Conversion**

<b>4.0</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>
<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>F</b>
<i>90-100</i>	<i>80-89</i>	<i>70-79</i>	<i>60-69</i>	<i>0-59</i>
<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Excellent</i>	<i>Satisfactory</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>Needs Assistance</i>	<i>Below Expectation</i>
<i>Excellent</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Passing</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>Failing</i>
<i>E</i>	<i>G</i>	<i>L</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>N</i>
<i>E=100</i>	<i>S=80</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>N=60</i>	<i>N/A</i>
<i>E-Advanced</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>M-Proficient</i>	<i>N-Basic</i>	<i>U-Below Basic</i>
<i>Exceeds Expectation</i>	<i>Meets Expectation</i>	<i>Progressing to Expectation</i>	<i>Needs Support</i>	<i>N/A</i>
<i>O-Outstanding</i>	<i>S-Satisfactory</i>	<i>N-Progress Shown</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>U-Unsatisfactory</i>
<i>S-Mastery</i>	<i>W-Satisfactory</i>	<i>N-Needs Improvement</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>U-Unsatisfactory</i>
<i>Mastered</i>	<i>Improved</i>	<i>Practicing</i>	<i>Presented</i>	<i>N/A</i>

### **Report Card Policy**

- The student's and/or the parent/legal guardian's must ensure that all report cards are submitted to the local K-12 Advisor of the Center for Student Success and Services within two (2) weeks following the end of the grading period.
- Failure to provide the report cards as required may jeopardize the private school scholarship.

### **Attendance Requirements**

- The maximum allowable number of unexcused absences for each school year is not to exceed ten (10) days.
- Students receiving a STOF private school scholarship must adhere to attendance guidelines and truancy policies and procedures regardless of age.
- The student must adhere to attendance requirements as outlined in the Truancy Policy of the STOF Center for Student Success and Services and the school's attendance policy.
- Truancy will affect future eligibility for the private school scholarship.

### **Student Behavior**

- Students who receive the scholarship are required to adhere to their school's Code of Conduct.
- The parent/legal guardian must notify the Center for Student Success and Services if the student is suspended, expelled, or dismissed from school while on scholarship.
- The K-12 Advisor will offer assistance, and if deemed necessary, will make a referral to appropriate Tribal department for additional assistance.

### Transportation/Bus Behavior

- Students who utilize any transportation provided and/or paid for by the Center for Student Success and Services are expected to comply with all transportation rules provided to the student and parent/legal guardian.
- Violations will result in disciplinary action according to the Center for Student Success and Services' and/or agency's transportation policy.
- If a student is suspended or expelled from the bus/ transportation, it will be the parent's/legal guardian's responsibility to provide transportation to and from the school for the duration of the suspension.
- If the student is expelled the parent/legal guardian will be responsible for providing transportation to and from school for the remainder of the school year.

Students must adhere to Center for Student Success and Services K-12 Bus Policies. Transportation/ bus violations include, but are not limited to:

- Eating or drinking on the bus
- Failing to sit in the seat assigned
- Disrupting, distracting, or disobeying bus staff
- Failure to utilize required safety equipment on the bus
- Getting out of the seat while the bus is in motion
- Loud talking, inappropriate remarks, or spitting out of the bus window at other students, pedestrians, or motorists
- Placing head, arms, or legs outside the window of the bus
- Opening a school bus emergency door and/or exiting the bus when the bus is stopped unless directed by the school bus operator while bus is stopped, in motion, or during an evacuation drill
- Threats against the bus operator, bus monitor, or passengers on the bus
- Hitting or inappropriately touching the bus operator, bus monitor, or passengers on the bus
- Profanity directed at the bus operator or bus monitor
- Fighting on the bus
- Smoking on the bus
- Throwing objects in or out of the window of the bus, which may or may not cause injury to person(s) or physical/property damage
- Vandalism of seats or other bus equipment
- Any other egregious act
- **Repeated violations and unacceptable behaviors, upon the fifth (5<sup>th</sup>) violation, will be considered willful disobedience and/or open defiance of authority and may result in bus suspension for the remainder of the school year.**

### Expulsion

Each student is responsible for maintaining regular attendance, proper conduct and compliance with all policies.

- The Seminole Tribe of Florida Center for Student Success and Services will deny, withdraw or rescind the scholarship from any student who is or has been dismissed or expelled from private school. Parent/Legal guardian will be responsible for any outstanding fees or payments due to the institution.
- Referrals and assistance to alternate programs and services will be recommended for each student as needed.
- To be considered for any future scholarship, the student will be required to wait until the beginning of the next school year. The parent/guardian will be required to submit a new application for the scholarship, and the student must meet all eligibility criteria.

### **Withdrawal From Private School**

- The parent/legal guardians must contact the Education Advisor immediately should it be necessary to withdraw a student from school.
- Parent/Legal guardian must obtain signed Center for Student Success and Services Withdrawal Form from the Education Advisor within five (5) business days of withdrawing the student failure to do so will result in the parent/legal guardian being responsible for any and all outstanding fees. Additionally, non-payment of any outstanding fees will render the student ineligible for any future scholarships until all outstanding fees are paid.
- Upon withdrawal, parent/legal guardian will be responsible for outstanding payments due to the institution.

### **Transferring From Private School**

- Transfers during the school year are not permitted and will not be covered by the K-12 Private School Scholarship.
- If a student transfers during the school year from one private school to another private school the parent/guardian will be responsible for any costs incurred at the new school and the remaining fees from the previous school.
- If transferring from one private school to another at the conclusion of an academic year, the parent/guardian must submit the required application to the Center for Student Success and Services by **January 31<sup>st</sup>**. Failure to do so will result in the denial of the scholarship for the upcoming school year.

### **Private School “Tuition Freeze” / Re-Enrollment Fees**

The Center for Student Success and Services will submit payment to the school or reimburse the cost of the tuition freeze/placement hold pre-paid by the parent by the school’s established deadline provided the following requirements are met:

- The parent/guardian must communicate their intent to prepay the tuition with the K-12 Advisor.
- The parent/guardian must submit the private school scholarship application for the upcoming school year to the Center for Student Success and Services by January 31<sup>st</sup>.
- The student must be in good standing at the current private school and be pre-approved/approved for the STOF Private School Scholarship for the upcoming school year.
- The parent must submit the valid ‘Paid’ invoice/receipt received from the private school to the Center for Student Success and Services within ten (10) business days of receipt.

### **Deadline Exception**

Students who are being released from a treatment program, but did not complete a private school scholarship application for the current school year must:

- Notify the Advisor at least seven (7) business days prior to release from treatment program, and
- Submit a Private School application no later than seven (7) business days after release.

### **Private School Remedial Programs**

Placement in a private school academic remedial or alternative program will require one preliminary and one follow-up meeting with the K-12 Advisor, parent, and school representative resulting in a Center for Student Success and Services plan of action, with an exit strategy, prior to program payment.

## TRAVEL POLICY AND PROCEDURES

### **Definition of Education Travel**

Student travel expenses covered in this section are limited to:

- Only trips sponsored and/or approved by the Center for Student Success and Services
- Visits to higher educational schools and colleges for the purpose of obtaining information prior to the submission of college application and/or admission
- Required college orientation for the college to which the student was admitted
- Close Up trip(s)
- Boarding school travel expenses will include transportation for the student to and from school at the beginning and end of the school year, Winter Break, and Spring Break.
- School sponsored field trips and college tours that include any activity other than college visits will not be covered by the Center for Student Success and Services.
- Academic sponsored trip that are required by the learning institution (Supporting documentation is required)
- Travel for summer programs and leadership experience opportunities will not be covered by the Center for Student Success and Services.
- *Travel arrangements must be made by/through the Center for Student Success and Services at least thirty (30) days in advance. Any personal travel arrangements will be at the expense of the parent.*

### **Student Travel –General Requirements**

The following are the qualifying guidelines for any college visit(s) sponsored by the Center for Student Success and Services:

- Be enrolled in the 11<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> grade
  - Have a cumulative GPA of at least 2.5
  - Have a good attendance record
  - Pass the tribe required drug test
  - Adhere to the rules of good behavior as set forth by the Center for Student Success and Services.
  - Must meet the admissions requirements for the prospective college/university.
- 
- International trips will not be sponsored by the Center for Student Success and Services.
  - Expenses for summer trips and programs will not be paid by the Center for Student Success and Services.
  - Students must be in good standing and have good academic and attendance records for the current year in which travel is to take place. Attendance records will be reviewed by the STOF's Center for Student Success and Services.
  - The Center for Student Success and Services has a zero tolerance drug policy. All students will be drug tested before attending any overnight trips sponsored by the Center for Student Success and Services. Any student found in possession of, or using drugs during a trip sponsored by the Center for Student Success and Services will be sent home immediately and will not be eligible to attend any other trips for the remainder of the school year.
  - Students who exhibit behavioral issues on any trip sponsored by the Center for Student Success and Services will be counseled by the appropriate staff member and given an opportunity to make corrective changes. If the student continues to display inappropriate behavior they will be sent home.
  - Students with a history of behavioral issues or problems (on previous trips) will be reviewed for eligibility for any subsequent Center for Student Success and Services sponsored trips.



- Any intent to cancel and/or withdraw from a trip must be communicated to the Center for Student Success and Services within seven (7) working days prior to departure (if and when foreseen and allowable). Documentation may be required.
- If a student/parent fails to show up on the day of travel, or cancels the trip for reason(s) not approved by the Center for Student Success and Services (other than emergencies), the student/parent must reimburse the Center for Student Success and Services all costs incurred.

### **Student Travel –College Tour Requirements**

- College trips must be coordinated through the Higher Education Program Manager. (Please see Higher Ed Policies and Procedures for additional travel requirements governing college trips.)
- Students must be an enrolled member of the Seminole Tribe of Florida.
- High school students, who are enrolled in the 11<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> grade, are allotted a maximum of two (2) out of state college visits per school year, and two (2) in state college visits that require an overnight stay and/or STOF travel expenses per school year. *Note: Overnight arrangements will only be made for travel exceeding two hundred (200) miles beyond the traveler’s home.*
- All local in-state college visits that do not include or require overnight stay are permitted.
- The participating student must have a GPA of 2.5 or higher on their most recent report card.
- All Travel must be approved/ arranged by the Office Manager through the STOF’s Native American Travel Department. If parent/student arranges travel, they are responsible for the cost incurred and will not be reimbursed.
- Students who are recruited by a college/university and invited to visit the institution must provide the following documents:
  - Letter stating the request from college/university (on College/University letterhead)
  - Detailed program or schedule itinerary from the school
- Maximum days for a visit sponsored by the Center for Student Success and Services will not exceed three (3) working days (including travel time). If a student exceeds the three (3) working days then the student will be responsible for any/all additional expenses incurred.
- If the student chooses to visit another school within the same state and exceeds the three (3) days maximum travel time, such visit will be considered the second (2<sup>nd</sup>) and final visit allotted for the academic year.
- The student must submit a completed College/School Visitation Form thirty (30) days prior to travel. After any college visit, the student will be required to submit the completed Campus Tour Survey form and return it to the K-12 Advisor within two (2) weeks after travel.

### **Orientation Visits**

To qualify, the student must be accepted to an accredited college or university

- Travel for full-time students attending in-state or out-of-state freshman orientation will be paid for by the Center for Student Success and Services.
- Travel expenses for in-state students will include the following:
  - Car rental
  - Hotel, if dormitory is not provided
  - Allotted ‘per diem’ will be paid only to the Tribal member parent or Tribal member chaperone.
- Student must submit the following documents to the K-12 Advisor
  - Letter of Acceptance (on school letter head)
  - Letter stating the request from college/university (on school letterhead)
  - Detailed schedule/agenda
- Pass the tribe-required drug test.
- Adhere to the rules of good behavior as set forth by the Center for Student Success and Services.

### **Boarding School Travel**

Students attending boarding school will receive three (3) round trip tickets per school year. If required, additional round trip ticket(s) will be provided for a parent/guardian to accompany the student to and from school each year, not to exceed three (3) round-trip tickets in a school year. If the parent/ guardian is unable to chaperone, the student will travel unaccompanied per airline regulations. The Center for Student Success and Services Office Manager will make travel arrangements.

### **Student Travel –Close Up Trip Requirements**

- Close-Up trips must be coordinated through the K-12 Advisor.
- High school students who are enrolled in the 9<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade are eligible to participate in the Close-Up Trip to Washington, D.C.
- High school students are able to attend the Close-Up trip every year if they meet trip criteria.
- The participating student must have a GPA of 3.0 or higher on the most recent report card.
- Students must submit two (2) essays as below:

#### **First Essay:**

The first essay, submitted at the time of application, must address the following:

- a. Why are you joining this program?
- b. What do you expect to learn?
- c. What ideas/experiences do you want to take back home?

#### **Second Essay:**

The second essay, submitted within 14 days after returning from the trip, must address the following:

- a. Discuss your experiences and highlights of the program.
  - b. What important things/issues did you learn? Were your expectations met?
  - c. What affected you most and why?
- Each essay must be on a single page, preferably typed, at least 300 words, and must be approved by the K-12 Advisor.
    - a. Essays will be reviewed by the K-12 Advisor for evidence of research skills, sentence structure, grammar, and format.
    - b. The student will be required to make revisions as requested and to re-submit the first essay no later than two (2) weeks prior to Close Up trip departure date.

### **Education Travel Expenses Covered**

Applicable travel expenses for the student and one (1) chaperone will be covered by the Center for Student Success and Services as outlined below. The chaperone may be the parent/guardian or an approved staff member from the Center for Student Success and Services,

- If the student/parent/chaperone chooses to travel on their own accord, then all travel expenses will be their responsibility and will not be reimbursed by the Center for Student Success and Services.
- If a parent/chaperone is not available to travel, the student will be accompanied by an Center for Student Success and Services staff member.
- All travel must be requested at least thirty (30) calendar days prior to the departure date.
- Costs will be covered for round-trip transportation including airfare, hotel, and car rental. Allotted 'per diem' will be paid to Tribal member parent, Tribal member chaperone, or Center for Student Success and Services chaperone only.
- Reimbursement for luggage fees is limited to one (1) piece of luggage per student and one (1) piece of luggage per chaperone. Any additional luggage or excess baggage weight requiring extra fees will be the responsibility of the student, parent and/or chaperone.
- Unless preapproved by the Education Director or designee, the Center for Student Success and Services will not reimburse for the following:
  - a. Gas
  - b. Mileage
  - c. Tolls

### **Rules for Students on Center for Student Success and Services Travel**

- Students who have passed drug screenings and have met all academic requirements for travel will be assigned to an adult chaperone.
- Students must be respectful and follow the directives of their assigned chaperones.
- Students must be accompanied by their chaperone at all times during scheduled activities and must maintain contact with the chaperone during leisure time.
- Students must **not** be in the room of any other student of the opposite gender. Any student found at any time in the room of student(s) of the opposite gender will be required to meet with the adult chaperone in charge of the trip and will be subject to disciplinary actions up to and including early dismissal from the trip (i.e., sent home).
- Students will share rooms with other students of the same gender and must be in their assigned rooms after curfew. Room checks will be made, and any student not in their assigned room will be subject to disciplinary actions including early dismissal from the trip (i.e., sent home).
- Alcohol and drugs are strictly prohibited, and any student found using or in the possession of drugs or alcohol will be sent home. Parents will be notified and a referral requesting a substance abuse evaluation will be sent to STOF Center for Behavioral Health.
- Students are representing their families and the Seminole Tribe of Florida. It is expected that all students will conduct themselves in accordance with the guidelines of this policy.
- Any behavior including, but not limited to, destruction of property, theft, disrespect to adults or other students, criminal activity, the use of drugs or alcohol, fighting, inappropriate sexual conduct, refusing to comply with written or verbal rules, will result in the student being sent home and the incident will be noted and will impact any consideration for future trips.

### **Student Travel Procedures**

- The K-12 Advisor must receive the completed Center for Student Success and Services Travel packet including Parent Agreement for Minor Traveling without a Chaperone and/or The Center for Student Success and Services Student Travel Guidelines, from the student or parent by the established deadline.
- The K-12 Advisor will review the student's attendance and GPA to confirm eligibility for the trip.
- If the trip includes overnight stay, the parent and student will be instructed to:
  - a. Schedule a drug screening fourteen (14) days prior to departure date, and
  - b. Sign a release at the clinic/facility for the results to be sent to the Center for Student Success and Services.
- After the parent returns the signed travel packet and the 'cleared' drug screen has been received by the K-12 Advisor and forwarded to the K-12 Program Manager, travel arrangements will be requested for the student and accompanying parent or chaperone (if applicable).
- The Center for Student Success and Services staff member (K-12 Advisor for boarding school travel or Higher Ed Recruiter for college visits) will prepare a file for the trip to include the signed travel documents, contact numbers for parents/legal guardians and copies of the travel itineraries. This file will be maintained by the Center for Student Success and Services staff and taken on the trip for information and emergency purposes.
- If a situation develops that requires a student to be sent home, the department's staff member will notify the Education Director or designee (verbally and with follow up documentation) for approval to proceed with the necessary 'return' travel arrangements.
- The Center for Student Success and Services staff member (K-12 Advisor for boarding school travel or Higher Ed Recruiter for college visits) will contact the parent/legal guardian to discuss the situation and arrangements that are being made for the return travel. When the arrangements are finalized, the K-12 Advisor will contact the parent/legal guardian and develop a clear plan for the student's arrival and pick-up at the destination.

- If the student is unaccompanied (i.e. sent home prematurely for misbehavior) the following will apply:
  - a. The staff member will accompany the student to the airport, assist with airline check-in and accompany the student to the security check-in, and if allowable, to the departure gate.
  - b. The staff member will remain at the airport until the flight has departed. If the departing flight is delayed, the staff member will stay in contact with the student via cell phone or text to ensure they are secure at the departure gate and remain at the airport until the flight has departed.
  - c. The staff member will call the parent/guardian after the arrival time to ensure that the student arrived safely and is in the custody of the parent/legal guardian.

## SCHOOL BUS POLICY AND PROCEDURES

This policy is for the safety of every student and will be enforced by the bus drivers and monitors. Students are responsible for their behavior and self-control on the bus and at bus stops at all times. Disorderly students can threaten the safety of all riders by distracting the bus operator.

1. The driver and monitor's instructions must be followed at all times. Bus drivers have the responsibility and authority to document to the local STOF Center for Student Success and Services incidents involving violation of the policy.
2. Students are expected to arrive at the bus stop location at least fifteen (15) minutes prior to the pick-up time.
3. Students are to maintain appropriate behavior at all stop locations.
4. Students must depart or be picked up from the afternoon bus stop location no later than ten (10) minutes after arrival of the bus stop.
5. Students will only travel on their assigned bus to and from the assigned stops/locations. In the case of an emergency, the pick-up and drop-off location may only be changed when approved by the Center for Student Success and Services at least twenty-four (24) hours prior to the one-time change taking place.
6. Unauthorized students, friends/ guests, and parents will not be permitted to board or ride the bus.
7. The parents/guardian of the student(s) will be liable for any vandalism to the bus, its equipment, or to any other vehicles, initiated or caused by their child.
8. Students must stand in line, single file to board the bus. They must proceed toward the bus and be ready to board by the time the bus arrives. Students must wait until the bus has come to a complete stop before approaching the door.
9. Students must proceed directly to their assigned seat and be seated.
10. Students must remain seated while the bus is in motion.
11. Students are not permitted to change seats or leave their seats unless instructed to do so by the bus staff or Center for Student Success and Services.
12. Students must keep their hands, feet, and objects to themselves and not disturb others.
13. Throwing objects at, in, around, and out of the bus, or at the bus stop is not permitted.
14. Students are not allowed to shout or make loud or distracting noises.
15. Students are not allowed to use profanity and/or obscene vulgar language or gestures, fight, or engage in bullying nor harassment or other improper and/or illegal conduct.
16. Consumption of food or beverages are not permitted on the bus.
17. Students must enter and exit the bus safely, quickly, and quietly in an orderly fashion.
18. Upon departing the bus, students must walk "away" from the bus for safety purposes. Students are not permitted to walk alongside the bus.
19. If students must cross the street after getting off the bus, they should cross in front of the bus, far enough ahead so that the student and the driver can see each other. Students should look both ways before crossing the street for their own safety.
20. The emergency door at the rear of the bus is to be used as an exit only in case of emergency only.
21. Hazardous items are not permitted on the bus.
22. Band instruments that will interfere with the seating and safety of others are not permitted on the bus.
23. Any objects that may impair the vision of the bus driver are not permitted on the bus.
24. Electronic devices may be used on the bus, at the owner's risk. The Center for Student Success and Services will not be responsible for lost, broken, or stolen items. Electronic devices with volume controls must be used with head phones.
25. Toys are not allowed on the bus, no exceptions. Confiscated toys will be taken to the Center for Student Success and Services for parents to retrieve.
26. Students are not permitted to bring nor possess alcoholic beverages, drugs, tobacco, weapons, animals, glass containers, matches, lighters, fireworks, or explosives on the bus at any time.

27. The lighting of matches or smoking is prohibited on the bus.
28. Parents are reminded that misconduct by any student while riding a school bus represents a serious threat to the safety of all occupants, as well as other motorists, pedestrians, and members of the community. Failure to observe any safety rules while riding a bus may result in, but are not limited to; a verbal reprimand, a parent conference, and/or suspension from the bus for a specified amount of time depending on the level of the infraction. Consequences will result from bus referrals written for infractions including, but not limited to those below.
- Eating or drinking on the bus
  - Failing to sit in the seat assigned
  - Disrupting, distracting, or disobeying bus staff
  - Failure to utilize required safety equipment on the bus
  - Getting out of the seat while the bus is in motion
  - Loud talking, inappropriate remarks, or spitting out of the bus window at other students, pedestrians, or motorists
  - Placing head, arms, or legs outside the window of the bus
  - Opening a school bus emergency door and/or exiting the bus when the bus is stopped unless directed by the school bus operator while bus is stopped, in motion, or during an evacuation drill
  - Threats against the bus operator, bus monitor, or passengers on the bus
  - Hitting or inappropriately touching the bus operator, bus monitor, or passengers on the bus
  - Profanity directed at the bus operator or bus monitor
  - Fighting on the bus
  - Smoking on the bus
  - Throwing objects in or out of the window of the bus, which may or may not cause injury to person(s) or physical/property damage
  - Vandalism of seats or other bus equipment
  - Any other egregious act
  - **Repeated violations and unacceptable behaviors will be considered willful disobedience and/or open defiance of authority and may result in bus suspension for the remainder of the school year.**
29. In the event a student exhibits unsafe, unmanageable, or egregious behavior on the bus or poses a serious threat to themselves and/or to the safety or health of staff or other riders, the bus operator may contact the school and return the student to the school and/or contact the police. If this occurs, the bus operator will contact the parent/guardian immediately and inform accordingly.
30. Students who violate the behavior and safety rules may have bus-riding privileges denied temporarily or permanently by the school administration and/or Center for Student Success and Services. If a student is suspended from the bus, it will be the parent's responsibility to transport the student to and from school for the duration of the bus suspension.

## INCENTIVE AWARDS POLICY AND PROCEDURES

The Incentive Awards were established by the Tribal Council and the Center for Student Success and Services to encourage Seminole students to excel in attendance, punctuality, and academics at all levels. The awards recognize the efforts and achievements of each student at the end of each **school year**.

- To be eligible for an award, the student must successfully complete the entire school year.
- Students must be enrolled in an accredited public, private, or charter school.
- Parents must ensure the student's final report card is submitted to the K-12 Advisor by June 30<sup>th</sup>.
- Certificates will be awarded to recognize student achievement as outlined below.
- Individual monetary incentives will not be provided.
- Awards will be presented at each Reservation's Community Meeting in July or August.

### **Certificate Awards and Eligibility Requirements**

- **Kindergarten Completion Award:** Must successfully complete the entire school year
  
- **High School Completion Award:** Must successfully complete state high school requirements
  
- **Excellence in Education Award (Grade 1-12):** Requires a cumulative GPA of 4.0
  
- **A Honor Roll (Grade 1-12):** Requires a cumulative GPA of 3.76 – 3.99
  
- **B Honor Roll (Grade 1-12):** Requires a cumulative GPA of 3.0 – 3.75
  
- **Advanced Placement Achievement Award (Grade 9-12):** Requires successful enrollment and completion in at least one Advanced Placement (AP) class.
  
- **STEM (Science Technology Engineering And Mathematics) Award (Grade 9-12):** Requires successful enrollment and completion in at least one Advanced Placement (AP) or Honors science, technology, engineering, or math class.
  
- **Honors or Advanced Placement (AP) Class Achievement Award (Grade 1-12):** Requires successful enrollment and completion in at least one class designated on the report card as an "Honors" or "Advanced Placement" (AP) class
  
- **Improved GPA (Grade 1-12):** Requires consecutively increased GPA every grading period of the school year.
  
- **Achievement Award:** Requires a documented Individual Education Plan (IEP) and 2.0 GPA
  
- **Perfect Attendance and Student Achievement Award:** No absences for the entire school year and must earn a minimum GPA of 2.5
  
- **Perfect Attendance Award:** No absences for the entire school year with a GPA below 2.5
  
- **Attendance Award:** Must not exceed three total absences for the school year.



- **School Awards and Certificates:** Students who have received a certificate(s) from their school will be recognized. (The award/certificate must be given to the Advisor 14 days prior to the ceremony.)

<b>COMPUTER POLICY AND PROCEDURES</b>
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The Center for Student Success and Services Policy and Procedures request for computers (iPad, desktop, laptop, Microsoft Pro 3 tablet, personal computer) is as follows:

**Students Grades 5 – 12**

1. All students in grades 5 – 12 are eligible to receive a computer but must have a letter from their school stating that a computer is **required**.
  - a. A signed letter, on school letterhead from a school administrator or teacher, stating that a computer is required as part of the school wide curriculum or school wide daily instruction. Examples includes: usage of blackboard, digital curriculum, access to course content, and homework/supplemental resources.
  - b. Examples that will not be covered include: Recommendations, school projects/research, particular assignments or for particular classes.
2. Computers **required** by schools for students in grades 5 -12 will be purchased by the Center for Student Success and Services.
3. The parent/legal guardian will be responsible for an i-Tunes account (if required), and any expenses, including but not limited to, all damage/repair, upgrades, and replacement costs for lost units.
4. Students receiving a computer from any Center for Student Success and Services program will not be eligible to receive another unit for five (5) years from the date the first one is received.
5. The computers purchased by the Center for Student Success and Services will not exceed a purchased price of \$1,200. Students will be eligible to receive a printer and a computer if the total cost does not exceed \$1,200.00.
  - a. All expenses that exceed \$1,200.00 will be the responsibility of the parent/legal guardian.
  - b. This includes but is not limited to more expensive computers, additional software, i-Tunes accounts, printers, wireless and cell service, and accessories.
6. The parent/guardian must receive written pre-approval if requesting to purchase a computer in lieu of receiving the unit(s) purchased by the Center for Student Success and Services. Any request for reimbursement will be denied without written pre-approval from the Center for Student Success and Services.
7. If the student's tuition is inclusive of a computer, the student is not eligible for a unit through the Center for Student Success and Services.
8. The parent/legal guardian/student must sign the Computer Agreement upon receipt of the unit.
9. In the event that it is discovered that a student has used his/her computer in an inappropriate manner as determined by the Center for Student Success and Services, the computer may be confiscated and the Center for Student Success and Services may refuse to provide a replacement to the student.
10. If the student drops out of school or program within 1 semester (or 2 terms) of receiving the computer, the parent/guardian will be required to repay 100% of the purchase price.



## **HOME EDUCATION POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

### **Definition**

A “home education program” is the sequentially progressive instruction of a student directed by his or her parent.

### **Enrollment Procedures**

1. Parents/legal guardians who choose the home education option must submit a copy of the Letter of Intent form to the Education Director or designee and complete a Pre-Qualifying Application for Home Education, for:
  - a) review
  - b) approval of the plan
2. The parent must notify the district school superintendent of the county in which the parent resides of her or his intent to establish and maintain a home education program.
  - a) The notice must be in writing, signed by the parent, and shall include the names, addresses, and birthdates of all children who shall be enrolled as students in the home education program.
  - b) The notice must be filed in the district superintendent’s office within 30 days of the establishment of the home education program.
  - c) A copy of the notice must be given to the local K-12 Advisor in the Center for Student Success and Services within five (5) days.
3. If the student is presently enrolled in a school, the parent/legal guardian must ‘officially’ withdraw the student from the school. This process insures that the student is not considered a drop-out or truant.
4. The Home Education application must be completed annually, submitted and approved prior to the beginning of the school year. Parents/legal guardians renewing must submit applications prior to January 31<sup>st</sup>.
5. Parents/legal guardians who do not register with the Superintendent via the required Letter of Intent to the Director of Education or designee are not approved through the pre-qualifying process, and whose child(ren) are not enrolled in a public school or accredited private school will be deemed truant.
6. A Verification of Home Education participation letter must be provided to the Center for Student Success and Services Director of Education or designee within thirty (30) calendar days from the start date of each school year.

### **Portfolio Requirements**

1. The parent shall maintain a portfolio of records and materials. The portfolio shall consist of the following:
  - a) A log of educational activities that is made contemporaneously with the instruction and that designates by title any reading materials used.
  - b) Samples of any writings, worksheets, workbooks, or creative materials used or developed by the student.
2. The portfolio shall be preserved by the parent for two (2) years and shall be made available for inspection by the STOF Center for Student Success and Services and/or district school superintendent, or the district school superintendent’s agent upon fifteen (15) days written notice.
3. Failure to produce the portfolio(s) upon request will result in a truancy referral completion by the K-12 Advisor.

### **Delivery of Instruction**

1. Parents may choose to teach and/or direct the education of their own children at home.

2. The parent is not required to hold a valid regular State teaching certificate.
3. If someone else becomes a child's primary instructor and directs the child's education whether in the home or not, the instruction must take place daily and consistently, and each instructor must hold a valid Florida State teaching certificate in the subjects and grades being taught.
4. If the Home Education program is provided through a private tutoring program/company, the following guidelines must be followed:
  - 1) The student must have regular school attendance for a term of **180 days**. The person tutoring/instructing the student must meet the following requirements:
    - a) Holds a valid Florida certificate to teach the subjects or grades in which instruction is given.
    - b) Keeps all records and makes all reports required by the state and district school board and makes regular reports on the attendance of students.
  - 2) Private tutors/instructors shall keep and prepare attendance records as follows:
    - a) The attendance shall be checked each school day and recorded in the teacher's register or by some approved system of recording attendance.
    - b) Students may be counted in attendance only if they are actually present at school or are away from school on a school day and are engaged in an educational activity which constitutes a part of the school-approved instructional program for the student.
5. The tutor must hold a Florida certificate in the grades and subjects in which instruction is given.
6. Tutors are required to keep all records and require students to be in actual attendance for the minimum length of time prescribed.
7. Please refer to Tutoring Program policy and procedures for additional requirements.

### **Contracted Services**

All contacted service providers must comply with Florida State Statute 1002.43 which requires regular school attendance to be achieved by attendance in a private tutoring program if the person tutoring the student meets the following requirements:

- (a) Holds a valid Florida certificate to teach the subjects or grades in which instruction is given;
- (b) Keeps all records and makes regular reports on the attendance of students;
- (c) Requires students to be in actual attendance for the minimum length of time one hundred and eighty (180) days.

All contacted service providers must:

1. Submit and follow a calendar of "school" days to include one hundred and eighty (180) days. The calendar must provide for a six (6) hour day, five (5) day week, from Monday through Friday. There may not be any "make-up" days for students who miss days due to absence.
2. Record the daily arrival and departure time of each student.
3. Submit weekly attendance reports, including absences, tardies, and early dismissal of each student to the Executive Administrative Office with copy to the Center for Student Success and Services Director or designee.
4. Submit quarterly report cards and quarterly progress reports for each student to the Executive Administrative Office with copy to the Center for Student Success and Services Director or designee.
5. Provide a course of study for each elementary student to include a minimum four (4) courses (reading/language arts, mathematics, science, social studies).
6. Provide a course of study for each middle and high school student to include a minimum six (6) courses (reading/language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, and two electives).
7. Allow the Center for Student Success and Services of TRIBE to audit student's portfolio and course work at any time.
8. Require all instructors to possess a valid Florida certificate for the subjects or grades in which instruction is given. A copy must be provided to the Executive Administrative Office with copy to the Center for Student Success and Services Director or designee.
9. Provide Home Education Verification Letters from the School District in which the student resides within thirty (30) days of each student's start date each school year.
10. Maintain a pupil/teacher ration no greater than 1:10.

11. Provide a pre and post assessment for each student, which includes reading and mathematics subtests. The Contractor must provide the results of the pre-test and instrument within ten (10) days of the start of the school year. The Contractor must provide the results of the post-test and instrument within ten (10) days of the conclusion of the school year. The Contractor must provide the name of the desired assessment instrument to the Center for Student Success and Services Director or designee prior to administration for approval.

### **Testing Requirements**

1. The parent shall provide for the student to take an annual state student assessment test used by the school district and administered by a certified teacher, at a location and under testing conditions approved by the school district which will document the student's demonstration of educational progress. The parent must provide results of the assessment to the local Center for Student Success and Services Advisor within 5 days of receipt. Failure to do so will result in the home education program in non-compliance and permits the Center for Student Success and Services and/or superintendent to terminate the program. Non-compliance with this requirement would also result in deeming the student truant.
2. The district school superintendent shall review and accept the results of the annual educational evaluation of the student in a home education program.
  - a) If the annual evaluation indicates the student has not achieved adequate progress or is performing below ability, the student will be referred to the Center for Student Success and Services K-12 Program Manager for review and recommendations. The K-12 Program Manager after review and consultation with the Education Director and appropriate sources will notify the parent/legal guardian with the recommendations. Recommendations will include but not be limited to:
    - i. Reinstatement in Home Education on a probationary status. The student will be given 30 school days at the beginning of the next school year to improve performance. The student's progress will be reviewed and followed by additional recommendations.
    - ii. Denial of Home Education with a recommendation for an alternative educational placement.
    - iii. Referral for further evaluation or services.
3. Center for Student Success and Services's approval for continuation in the home education program will be contingent upon the student demonstrating educational progress at the end of the probationary period. Parents/legal guardians who refuse to comply with the recommendations of the Center for Student Success and Services may be referred to Truancy for review and intervention.
4. Annual exams must be administered by a certified teacher.

### **Virtual School**

1. Florida Virtual School is free to students who reside in the state of Florida.
2. Florida Virtual School full-time provides:
  - Florida-certified teachers
  - Textbooks and other curriculum materials
  - Online resources, such as instructional tools, movies, and encyclopedias
3. Students who elect to enroll "full time" in the State's Virtual program must complete and agree to the following guidelines:
  - a) The student and parent/legal guardian must meet with the local K-12 Advisor to discuss the State's Virtual School option.
  - b) After discussion and review of the student's academic standing, if the K-12 Advisor agrees with the Virtual school option, the student and parent/legal guardian will:
    - Complete The Virtual School Application Form attesting that the student will be enrolled in a minimum of six classes which must be four (4) academic core classes (mathematics, science, English and social studies) **and** two (2) elective classes that will keep the student on track for high school graduation.

- The parent/legal guardian and the student agree to complete all requirements for high school graduation including Florida Standards Assessment (FSA) testing, EOC exams, achieving the 24 required credits and maintaining a minimum GPA of 2.5.
  - The student will agree to do the work and keep abreast with the assignment requirements.
  - The student will report any issues or difficulties to the K-12 Advisor in a timely manner.
4. Prior public school enrollment is required for eligibility grades 2-5.
  5. Participation in any virtual school program other than Florida Virtual School must be approved by the Center for Student Success and Services K-12 Program Manager.

### **Termination Procedure**

1. The parent/guardian must notify/ register with the public school superintendent
  - a) A written notice of termination of the home education program shall be filed in the district school superintendent's office within 30 days after said termination.
  - b) A copy of the notice must be given to the local Advisor in the Center for Student Success and Services within 3 days.
2. The parent must complete the Home Education Termination form with the local Advisor in the Center for Student Success and Services and obtain a signed copy within 3 days of termination.
3. The student must be in attendance at an educational program approved by the Center for Student Success and Services within 5 days of terminating the home education program. Failure to do so will result in a referral to the Truancy Coordinator.

### **Graduation/ Diploma**

1. The STOF Center for Student Success and Services, school districts, adult high schools, and community colleges are not authorized to award a regular high school diploma to home education students.
2. Florida Virtual School (FLVS) is not authorized to award a regular high school diploma to home education students. part-time and home education students who take courses with Florida Virtual School are not eligible to receive a diploma or GED diploma directly from FLVS.
3. Students attending Florida Virtual School full-time who follow a traditional, 180-day school calendar will graduate with a diploma. When enrolled as a student in Florida Virtual School full-time, FLVS is considered the school of record. Full-time FLVS students will take courses with FLVS, receive grades through FLVS, and graduate with an FLVS diploma.
4. A home education student may take the General Educational Development (GED) test at an education center and be awarded a Florida GED diploma if the student receives a passing score. To pass the individual tests, students must receive a minimum score of 410 points on each. To earn the GED diploma, students must earn an average score of 450 points or higher (a cumulative score of 2,250 points or higher) on all five tests.
5. A regular diploma from a fully accredited private, public, or charter school or a GED diploma are the only documents accepted by the Office of Trust Management (OTM) to validate high school completion.
6. A home education affidavit will not be accepted by OTM in lieu of a diploma or GED diploma.

### **Funding and Services**

- Home education students may be eligible to receive required books, curriculum materials and a computer as per the Computer Policy and Private School Scholarship Policy.
  - Payment will be limited to accredited institutions. The accreditation must be in the same name as the institution providing services.
  - Please refer to Tutoring Program policies and procedures for additional requirements.
7. Home Education Students will be deemed truant for any of the following:
    - a. If the parents/legal guardians do not register with the Superintendent

- b. If the parents/legal guardian do not submit the required letter of intent to the Director of Education
- c. If the student is not approved through the Center for Student Success and Services pre-qualifying process
- d. If the student is not enrolled in school will be deemed truant.

<b>APPROVED STATE VIRTUAL SCHOOL POLICY AND PROCEDURES</b>
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*NOTE: Not all Virtual Schools are free. Please check with your county and/ or state.*

1. The parent/legal guardian of a Seminole Tribal member students who want to sign up for an approved State's "Virtual School" to achieve extra credit or make up credit, must meet with the local STOF K-12 Advisor in the Center for Student Success and Services.
  - The K-12 Advisor will contact the public school and make arrangements for the class/classes.
  - The student will be required to access the Virtual system and complete the assignments.
  - The K-12 Advisor will assist with issues, request tutoring if necessary and monitor the student's progress.
2. Seminole Tribal member students who elect to enroll "full time" in the State's Virtual program must complete and agree to the following guidelines:
  - A. The student and parent/legal guardian must meet with the local K-12 Advisor to discuss the State's Virtual School option.
  - B. After discussion and review of the student's academic standing, if the K-12 Advisor agrees with the Virtual school option, the student and parent/legal guardian will:
    - Complete The Virtual School Application Form attesting that the student will be enrolled in a minimum of six classes - four (4) academic core classes: mathematics, science, English and social studies **and** two (2) elective classes that will keep the student on track for high school graduation.
    - The parent/legal guardian and the student agree to complete all requirements for high school graduation including FSA testing, EOC exams, achieving the 24 required credits and maintaining a minimum GPA of 2.5
    - The student will agree to do the work and keep abreast with the assignment requirements.
    - The student will report any issues or difficulties to the K-12 Advisor in a timely manner.
  - C. The student and parent/legal guardian agree to follow the K-12 Advisor's direction regarding:
    - Scheduling classes.
    - Further evaluation by the Center for Student Success and Services for additional services.
    - Alternative options if the student is not successful in the Virtual Program.
3. Students who are dropped from the Virtual program due to failure to complete assignment(s), must consult with the K-12 Advisor regarding alternative options, including but not limited to,
  - enrolling into regular public school classes
  - enrolling into a private school (if approved)
  - enroll in the STOF GED program (if appropriate)
4. Students who are dropped from the Virtual program that do not contact the K-12 Advisor or who do not reenroll in an alternative option will be referred to the K-12 Program Manager for intervention.
  - The K-12 Program Manager will contact the student and parent/legal guardian and discuss alternative options and offer assistance.
  - Students who are not reenrolled after these interventions have been offered will be referred to the Truancy Coordinator for review and recommendations.

5. The K 12 Advisor will contact the student and parent/legal guardian and discuss the situation, alternative options, and the consequences of failing to reenroll the student.
  - Students who are not reenrolled after these interventions have been offered will be referred to Truancy for review and recommendations.
6. Only students who are enrolled and attending Florida Virtual School Full Time who follow a traditional, 180-day school calendar will graduate with a diploma. When enrolled as a student in Florida Virtual School Full Time, FLVS is considered the school of record. The student must take courses with only FLVS, receive grades through FLVS, and graduates with an FLVS diploma

<b>GENERAL EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT (GED) TEST AND DIPLOMA POLICY AND PROCEDURES FOR MINORS</b>
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The Center for Student Success and Services recognizes that a GED program may be the best option for some students to complete their high school education.

### **Eligibility Requirements**

- K-12 GED candidates must be at least 16 years of age, but has not reached eighteen (18) years of age.
- The parent/guardian **and** student must have met with the K-12 Advisor prior to withdrawing from school.
- The parent/guardian **must** be present with minor children (less than eighteen (18) years of age) when applying for participation in the GED Program.

### **GED Enrollment Procedures**

- Students must be officially withdrawn from high school. The student must submit official withdrawal documentation (including confirmation from the previously attended school) to the K-12 Advisor.
- The GED application and Tutoring Request must be completed by the parent/guardian.
- **Both** the parent/guardian and minor must **read and sign** the GED Commitment Agreement Form.
- The parent/guardian must complete the GED Underage Waiver Application and Tutoring Request Form.
- The Advisor will:
  - a. Assist with completion of the GED application and Tutoring Request form
  - b. Add the student to GED Minor Master List, providing contact information for parent/guardian and student, username and password for GED.com and GED start date.
  - c. Inform GED students they are required to complete the GED pretest, using the GED curriculum established by the Center for Student Success and Services, which will determine a plan of action for studying for and completing the GED program. The K-12 Advisor will receive a copy to ensure tracking and progression.
- If a student does not enroll in the GED program within five (5) business days of dropping out or withdrawing from a public, private, charter, virtual school or home education program, the student will be deemed truant.

### **GED Participation Requirements**

- Tutoring Program staff will be assigned by the Seminole Tribe of Florida and **all** sessions are required to be held in the Center for Student Success and Services.
- Minor students enrolled in the GED program must spend a **minimum of ten (10) hours per week (Monday through Thursday)** preparing for the GED test with the assigned Tutoring Program staff at the Education Office.
- The minimum hours required is ten (10) hours per week. This does not include the time spent taking tests or engaged in independent study.
- Exceeding ten (10) hours in one week will not excuse the GED student for reporting less than ten (10) hours in any future or previous weeks. There are no allowances for rolling over hours exceeding the ten (10) hour minimum requirement in any given week.
- There are no allowances for make-up of hours. Students are not allotted vacation or holidays during the prescribed standard school days.
- If the Center for Student Success and Services center is closed due to a holiday or other STOF days off, the ten (10) hours must be attained during the days the center is open that week.
- A signed note from the parent/legal guardian is required to excuse absences due to a death in the immediate family and/or Clan.



- a. If there is an absence due to illness (or pregnancy), the parent/legal guardian will be required to present a certified medical note from the student's treating medical provider within three (3) business days.
- b. If a GED student is unable to attend a Tutoring Program assistance session (for reasons other than illness), the student must provide a written valid excuse to the Center for Student Success and Services within three (3) business days.
- Students must display proper behavior when attending an assistance session.
- If the GED student does not complete the minimum required ten (10) hours of study each week, the student will be deemed truant.
- All GED students are allotted six (6) months to complete the GED Program unless the student has an IEP and/or the Director of Education has approved for the student to continue the GED process for an additional time period as determined by the Center for Student Success and Services.
- Students who fail to meet the minimum required ten (10) hours per week, as per the GED Commitment Agreement, will be referred for truancy. The student will remain truant until the student meets the requirements of the Tribal Truancy Committee and recommit to the ten (10) hours of assistance for a period of 30 days.
- Upon the first day of the month following the student's eighteenth (18<sup>th</sup>) birthday, the GED student will be required to adhere to all GED requirements as prescribed in the Higher Education policies and procedures.

#### **GED Testing Procedures – Pre-Test**

- GED students are required to complete the GED pretest using the GED curriculum established by the Center for Student Success and Services.
- The pre-test must be taken and completed within five (5) business days from the official withdrawal date from the GED student's last school of enrollment. If the GED student does not complete the enrollment process within five (5) business days of withdrawing/dropping out of school, the student will be deemed truant.
- All GED students will be monitored by an assigned assistant or Center for Student Success and Services staff during all pre-testing sessions.
- The student will be issued four (4) GED vouchers to cover the cost of the initial pre-test administered. The GED pre-test will be utilized to identify if the student is ready for the official exam and can be used to identify if further sessions are needed.

#### **GED Testing Procedures – Official Exam**

- Upon completion of preparation for the Official GED Test, the GED student must inform the K-12 Advisor of their desire to move forward with requesting approval of the District to take the official GED Test.
- The K-12 Advisor will complete the Florida GED Testing Program Underage Waiver Form and submit it to the District School Board for approval. (The K-12 Advisor must refer to the rules and regulations for GED testing in the county of which the student resides. Most counties will require a separate application needing signature and approval of school board superintendent, and notary.)
- Upon approval from the District School Board, the K-12 Advisor will assist the student with contacting Pearson Vue to remove the hold on GED test registration. Once the hold is removed, the student will be able to register for the official GED Test and select a GED Testing Center.
- The parent/guardian:
  - a. Must pay for all sections of the Official GED Test at the time of registration.
  - b. May request reimbursement for official testing fees **after** the test is taken and a passing score is received.
- If the student registers for, but does not take the official test as scheduled, the parent/guardian will not be reimbursed.
- It is the student/parent's responsibility to reschedule a test prior to the scheduled test day and within the timeframe required by the testing agent.
- The student must provide the Center for Student Success and Services Advisor with the password and username upon registration.
- All students needing accommodations must check "yes" when prompted to do so during online registration.



- a. The student will receive an e-mail with specific instructions in order to receive accommodations by the Pearson VUE Accommodations Scheduling team (*Notification on the decision is usually delivered in writing within 30 days.*)
  - b. If approved, student will be provided with specific instructions on the process to schedule their GED Test with the Pearson VUE Accommodations Scheduling team.
  - c. If the request is not approved, the student will also be provided information on the appeal process.
- The GED test is scored by computer.
  - a. The passing standard is a score of 150 on a scale of 100 to 200 scaled score points for each of the four content areas.
  - b. The students will need to earn a total score of 600 or higher to receive the GED test credential.
  - c. Students may also earn an “Honors” score if they receive a score of 170 or higher on any subject.
- The GED Testing Service allows individuals to take the test three (3) times without any waiting period. After the third attempt, students must wait sixty (60) days after their last attempt before they can test again. Therefore, test-takers have the opportunity to take the GED test up to a maximum of eight (8) times in any given a year, if required.
- Students may take sections of the new GED test in any order they choose.

**Completion of the GED Program/ Receiving a Diploma**

1. The student/parent is required to submit the official GED document of passing score within five (5) business days of receipt to the K-12 Advisor.
2. The K-12 Advisor will request the GED diploma from Pearson Vue on behalf of the student/student.
3. Upon receipt of the GED Diploma, the K-12 Advisor will:
  - a. Scan the document(s) with the transcripts into the Student Tracking System
  - b. Verify the document(s) for verification before submitting to Office of Trust Management.
  - c. Notify the diploma recipient and coordinate for delivery of the diploma.

## TRUANCY POLICY AND PROCEDURES

The Seminole Tribe of Florida values academic excellence and the attainment of quality education that will lend to well-rounded Tribal members. Student absenteeism can lead to low academic achievement and school dropout. The Truancy Policy herein applies to all enrolled Tribal member students and is applicable to students in public school, private school, charter schools, home education, GED program, treatment programs and all other educational settings or institutions.

### Defined Terms

1. **STOF Truant** – is a student who has five (5) unexcused absences within a calendar month, or ten (10) unexcused absences within a school year. The truant student will be referred to Truancy for a truancy referral by a school, K-12 Advisor, or other source.
2. **Excused Absence** – Students must be in attendance, unless excused, for one of the reasons listed:
  - Illness of student
  - Death in student’s family or student’s Clan
  - Required court appearance or subpoena by a law enforcement agency
  - Scheduled medical or dental appointment
  - Students having, or suspected of having, a communicable disease or infestation
  - National holidays, including Indian Day
  - Special events, including Corn Dance
    - i. The student must notify the school and obtain authorization from the Center for Student Success and Services at least five (5) school days prior to the event.
    - ii. Students are afforded a maximum four (4) days for Corn Dance participation
    - iii. Corn Dance participation is limited to one Corn Dance per year per student
  - Center for Student Success and Services sponsored field trips
  - Students who attend alternative to suspension programs are not considered absent. (Students who are externally or on an outdoor suspension are unexcused.)
3. **Unexcused Absence** - is any absence other than those above. A parent may write no more than five (5) notes to excuse absences each year.  
*\*\*\*Please Note: 1 Absence = 360 minutes* of early removal from school.
4. **Tardy** – is recorded when students are late for school. Multiple tardies are compiled and tabulated as unexcused absences.

### Student Attendance

- The student’s attendance will be closely monitored by the K-12 Advisor. The K-12 Advisor will discuss the attendance issues with the parent/legal guardian and collect any documentation supporting an absence.
- Upon the tenth (10<sup>th</sup>) unexcused absence, the K-12 Advisor will create a Truancy Referral.  
*Note: Five (5) tardies will result in one unexcused absence.*
- Absences with a parent note will be limited to five (5) parent notes per school year.

- Upon the 3<sup>rd</sup> consecutive school days of absences due to illness, the parent/legal guardian will be required to present a certified medical note to the school. A copy of the certified medical note must be submitted to the K-12 Advisor within five (5) school days.
- A signed notification from the parent/legal guardian is required in the event of absences due to a death in the immediate family and/or Clan and must be submitted to the K-12 Advisor within five (5) school days of occurrence. (A maximum of four (4) days absence will be excused for death in family or Clan).
- Failure to provide medical notes, within the required five (5) school days to the school and/or to the K-12 Advisor will result in the absence being deemed unexcused.
- A notarized letter from an attorney or copy of a subpoena must be provided to the K-12 Advisor for absences due to a court appearance within five (5) school days of appearance.
- A student who has ten (10) or more unexcused absences within a school year will not be eligible for any scholarship provided by the Center for Student Success and Services.
- If truancy issues continue, a referral will be sent to the appropriate STOF Department to provide additional assistance.
- Students receiving a STOF private school scholarship must adhere to attendance guidelines and truancy policies and procedures regardless of age.
- Students who are attending a public school, private school, charter schools, home education, or treatment program must adhere to attendance guidelines and truancy policies and procedures regardless of age.

*Note: The student's primary institution's policy must meet the standards no less stringent than those stated within the Center for Student Success and Services Truancy policy. If the institution's policy is less stringent than the Tribe's Truancy policy, the Tribe's Truancy policy will supersede and prevail.*

### **Truancy Referral Procedural Steps**

#### **STEP ONE (TEN DAY STATUS)**

A Truancy Referral will be submitted to Truancy with a copy to the K-12 Program Manager upon the student's **tenth (10<sup>th</sup>) unexcused absence**. A parent meeting will be scheduled by the K12 Advisor at the school site to discuss the attendance issues of the student. A letter with a meeting time, date, location and reason for the meeting will be mailed to the parent/legal guardian, followed by a phone call to confirm the meeting. At the parent meeting, the K12 Advisor and parent(s)/legal guardian(s) will review and discuss the truancy concerns, the efforts made to address the issues and the STOF policy. Also, the parent/legal guardian will be required to sign the STOF Attendance Agreement.

- The parents/ legal guardians will be given ten (10) school days to improve their student's attendance. During the ten (10) school day period, the student(s) must attend school every day – there may be no tardies, unexcused absences(\*), or early removal from school. The start date will be the first school day following the parent meeting.  
*\*\*\*Only absences excused by a medical note or absences due to a death in the immediate family/Clan or absences due to court subpoena will be excused.*
- Parent notes to document absences other than death will not be acceptable beyond Step One.
- If the parent/legal guardian complies and the student is in attendance for the ten (10) day period, the student will be monitored for **the remainder of the school** year in which the attendance will be thoroughly evaluated by the K-12 Advisor and Truancy every thirty (30) calendar days.
- During the remainder of the school year, the student may have no more than five (5) additional unexcused absences (or a combination of unexcused absences, tardies, and early removal from school to equal five (5) days).

#### **STEP TWO (INTERVENTION STATUS)**

A parent meeting will be held by the K-12 Advisor at the school site to discuss the attendance issues of the student upon one or more of the following:

- The student has a minimum of **fifteen (15) unexcused absences**; or
- If the parent/legal guardian fails to attend the Step One meeting (after ten unexcused absences).

Meeting notification will be as follows:

- A letter with a meeting time, date, location and reason for the meeting will be mailed to the parent/legal guardian, followed by a phone call by the K12 Advisor to confirm the meeting. At the parent meeting, the K-12 Advisor and parent(s)/legal guardian(s) will review and discuss the truancy concerns, the efforts made to address the issues and the STOF policy. Also, the parent/legal guardian will be required to sign the STOF Attendance Agreement.
- If the meeting is not confirmed via phone, a letter detailing the required meeting will be hand-delivered to the parent/legal guardian by the Seminole Police Department (SPD) or via certified mail at the known address. Confirmation of delivery will be deemed sufficient parent notification of meeting.

The following actions and/or interventions will take place:

- The parents/ legal guardians will be given thirty (30) school days to improve their student’s attendance. During the thirty (30) school day period, the student(s) must attend school every day – there may be no tardies, unexcused absences(\*), or early removal from school. The start date will be the first school day following the parent meeting.  
*\*\*\*Only absences excused by a medical note or absences due to a death in the immediate family/Clan or absences due to court subpoena will be excused.*
- Parent notes to document absences other than death will not be acceptable beyond Step One.
- If the parent/legal guardian complies and the student is in attendance for the thirty (30) day period, the student will be monitored for **the remainder of the school** year in which the attendance will be thoroughly evaluated by the K-12 Advisor every thirty (30) calendar days. During the remainder of the school year, the student may have no more unexcused absences.
- A referral will be made to the following Departments, as applicable, for resources and follow-up. The parent will be required to sign a Truancy Intervention Plan detailing the resources to be utilized and the actions to be taken by and on behalf of the parent and student(s), which may include:
  - 1) Seminole Police Department
  - 2) Center for Behavioral Health
  - 3) Children’s Center for Diagnostics and Therapy
  - 4) Children’s Protective Team

### **STEP THREE (BANKING STATUS)**

A recommendation will be made by the Director of CSSS Department or designee to the Executive Administrative Officer to have the student(s)’ per capita payment banked upon the following:

- If the parent/legal guardian is noncompliant with Step One and Step Two.
- If the student’s truancy has not been resolved and attendance improved throughout the two (2) steps;
- If the parent/legal guardian fails to attend the Step Two meeting after being duly notified.

Upon final approval from the Executive Administrative Officer, the per capita will be “banked” until the parent(s) and student become compliant as per Step Four.

- All banked monies will be automatically deposited into the student’s minor special trust account and will remain there (pending compliance) according to the regulations of the Office of Trust Management (OTM).
- Any parent(s)/legal guardians referred for truancy and have had their child’s per capita “banked”, will remain on monitoring status for a period of one (1) calendar year from the date of the withholding of the per capita.

- After the conclusion of the one calendar year, if the student has zero (0) unexcused absences, no further action will be taken, and the student's name will be removed from the Truancy List and the regular monthly per capita distribution will resume.
- After successful completion of Step One and Step Two, per capita will be released.

### **Additional Information**

- The K12 Program Manager or designee will collect a monthly Truancy Update Form from each K-12 Advisors.
- The K12 Program Manager or designee will review the forms and prepare a monthly report for submission to the Executive Administrative Officer, including recommendations with accompanying documentation to support "banking", release of the student's per capita distribution.
- The K12 Program Manager or designee will be responsible for completion of all administrative duties, including notifying the parents of the Executive Administrative Officer's decision.
- Students on the Truancy Report at the end of the school year are mandated to adhere to the requirements of the Truancy Policy beginning with the next school year.
- Students referred for truancy at the end of the school year, in which appropriate time did not exist to complete each step, will be placed on Step One at the beginning of the following school year.
- Students who are admitted to residential treatment programs during the school year will be reviewed by the K12 Program Manager or designee with input from the Family Services Department. If the residential treatment program does not have an educational component for the student to attend, the K12 Program Manager or designee will recommend that the student's monthly per capita be "banked". The student's case will be reviewed upon the end of treatment; if the student has re-enrolled in school and has complied with all other Truancy Steps, the student's monthly per capita will be released. Upon release from a residential treatment program the student must be registered and begin attending an accredited educational institution within five (5) calendar days of release from treatment.
- Home Education students are subject to the Truancy Policy and will be considered truant if:
  - a) The parent/legal guardian fails to apply/register with the Superintendent of the county in which they reside within thirty (30) calendar days of withdrawal from a public/private institution.
  - b) The parent/legal guardian fails to provide the Center for Student Success and Services with documentation of approved Home Education application from the Superintendent.
  - c) The parent/legal guardian fails to provide the required student logs and/or reports upon request from the Center for Student Success and Services.

### **Truancy Procedures for GED Students**

The Center for Student Success and Services offers GED enrollment and assistance for students in the preparation for the examination. The Department also initiates truancy referrals for all students under the age of eighteen (18) that have been reported as withdrawn or "dropped out" from school. The parents and students are required to contact and inform the K-12 Advisor of their intent to pursue a GED in lieu of a High School Diploma. If a student elects to pursue a GED diploma, the following will apply:

- a) Students under the age of eighteen (18) who withdraw or drop out of school must contact the Center for Student Success and Services within three (3) business days of withdrawal and complete the GED Commitment Form.
- b) The student must contact the Tutoring Program Coordinator to enroll for participation in the GED Assistance Program.
- c) The student will be informed that they are required to enroll into an approved GED program within five (5) business days after withdrawal or notification from the Center for Student Success and Services K-12 Advisor. Documentation must be provided to the Center for Student

Success and Services; failure to do so will result in a referral to Truancy, which may result in a recommendation to hold the student's per capita distribution.

- d) A student must begin their first assistance session with the Tutoring Program within ten (10) business days of signing the GED Commitment Form.
  - e) A minimum of ten (10) GED study hours must be completed every week during the regular business hours of the Center for Student Success and Services for the student to be considered compliant. The student will be assigned a tutor to assist in the preparation for the GED examination.
  - f) Make-up and roll-over time will not be allowed. During holidays and extended breaks (i.e. Thanksgiving and Christmas Holidays), students are required to complete GED study hours on the business days that the Center for Student Success and Services is open. If all ten (10) hours are not completed the student will be deemed Truant. Note: Tutoring for GED test will not be allowed on Saturday, Sunday or STOF designated days off.
  - g) The student must sign in and out with the GED Assistant each session. Only hours spent preparing for the GED exam will be applied towards the ten (10) required hours.
  - h) The student is required to complete the GED program within six (6) months unless the student has an Individual Educational Plan (IEP) and/ or the Director of CSSS Department has approved for the student to continue the GED program.
  - i) Students will be assisted by the Center for Student Success and Services to satisfy the requirements of the local school boards. If necessary, additional time may be approved by the Director of CSSS Department for the students to meet the requirements.
  - j) A GED student will be considered Truant if:
    - The student did not register with an approved GED program within 5 business days of withdrawal or after notification from the Center for Student Success and Services.
    - The student does not complete a minimum of 10 hours of tutoring per week.
1. If the student does not meet the ten (10) hours per week study requirement and deemed Truant, the K-12 Advisor will prepare a referral and provide the supporting documentation to Truancy.
  2. The Director of CSSS Department or designee will recommend, with accompanying documentation, to the EAO that the student's monthly per capita distribution be banked until compliance of the minimum study requirement of ten (10) hours per week is met for thirty (30) days or the student passes the GED exam.
    - a) The student's progress will be monitored by the K12 Advisor.
    - b) Once the student meets compliance with the study requirements or passes the GED exam, the Director of CSSS Department or designee will recommend with accompanying documentation to the EAO that the student's monthly per capita distribution be released.
  3. The student will remain under the supervision of the Center for Student Success and Services and be required to meet the minimum requirement of ten (10) hours of study per week until they complete the GED program, or until the program ends, in accordance with to the Center for Student Success and Services policy.
  4. Students who have been reported to be withdrawn, or have dropped out from school, and have been contacted by Center for Student Success and Services staff and refuse to sign up for the GED pre-tests, will be referred to Truancy. The K12 Program Manager or designee will recommend with accompanying documentation to the EAO to bank the student's monthly per capita distribution until the student enrolls in an approved GED program, meets the minimum ten (10) hours of study per week requirement for thirty (30) calendar days or passes the GED exam.

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