

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

Background

Regular attendance at school is essential if educational benefit is to be maximized.

Responsibility for maintaining acceptable attendance rests with the parent and/or the student.

The school has a responsibility to keep the student and parent regularly informed of attendance requirements and status.

Procedures utilized in connection with student attendance shall be in accordance with the laws of natural justice. The main purpose for pursuing attendance problems must be with the intent of improving attendance and encouraging students to remain in school. The Division has recourse to the Provincial Attendance Board.

Procedures

1. Students shall attend every class.
 - 1.1 A Principal may excuse from attendance any student whose absence is:
 - 1.1.1 The result of participation in a school activity authorized by the Principal; or
 - 1.1.2 Previously arranged with and acceptable to the school administration.
2. Student attendance shall be monitored on a daily basis.
 - 2.1 Each school shall record the attendance of each child on at least a daily basis.
 - 2.1.1 A record of excusable and inexcusable absences shall be maintained for each student;
 - 2.1.2 Responsibility for proof of excusable absence rests with the parent or legal guardian, or with an independent student; and
 - 2.1.3 Where a student and/or parent or legal guardian has been advised of an inexcusable absence, they shall have three days from receipt of the notice to provide proof that the absence was excusable.
3. In dealing with student absenteeism the following sequence of events shall occur. These steps reflect the shortest route possible, not the required time frame. Sufficient time must be provided between each step to allow for adequate communication and adjustment in behaviour.
 - 3.1 Step 1 - The student and/or the parent or legal guardian shall be advised of the attendance record, the procedures and potential consequences of further truancy.
 - 3.2 Step 2 - The student and parent or legal guardian shall be advised of the inexcusable absences and reminded of the potential outcome.

- 3.3 Step 3- The school shall do at least one of the following:
 - 3.3.1 Meet with the student and parent or legal guardian;
 - 3.3.2 Advise the parent or legal guardian of the situation by signature mail; and/or
 - 3.3.3 Require the student to consult with counselling or community support services;
 - 3.3.4 Suspend the student.
- 3.4 Step 4 - Proceed with one of the following and confirm the action by signature mail.
 - 3.4.1 For a student under the age of 16, the Principal may refer the matter to the Superintendent.
 - 3.4.2 After attempts by the Superintendent to enforce attendance have not been effective, the Superintendent may refer the matter to the Provincial Attendance Board.
 - 3.4.3 For a student 16 years of age or older, the Principal will request the withdrawal of the student. Where the student refuses to withdraw, the Principal may recommend to the Board through the Superintendent the student's expulsion from the appropriate course(s).

Reference: Section 1, 13, 14, 15, 60, 126 School Act