

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

Background

Regular attendance by students in all their classes enhances their performance and contributes substantially to their rate of progress. While students have a right to access an educational program they also have a responsibility to attend classes regularly and pursue their studies in a diligent manner.

Specific provisions for regulating the attendance of students shall be developed by the schools in consultation with students, staff and Parents' Advisory Councils as appropriate.

Procedures

1. An accurate daily record of attendance shall be kept for each student by the school.
2. Schools are expected to have in place a system for verifying reasons for non-attendance on a daily basis.
 - 2.1 For all grades, unexplained absences will be reported to the office.
 - 2.2 In the elementary schools, attendance shall be done following all scheduled breaks, including lunch and recess. All unexplained absences during the school day shall be reported to the office immediately after the absence becomes apparent. All reasonable efforts must be immediately made to determine the whereabouts of students reported absent.
 - 2.3 In the high school, attendance shall be done during each period. All reasonable efforts must be made shortly to determine the whereabouts of students reported absent.
3. Teachers shall assist in maintaining an accurate attendance record for each student.
4. Because schools are often asked to document student absence/attendance, it is strongly recommended that any student absence be explained by a note signed by a parent or guardian and that the notes shall be retained for at least one (1) year.
5. Parents are to be encouraged to take the initiative in advising the school when students are absent.
6. In cases of unexplained absences, suspected truancy or excessive absences occurring, the parent or guardian shall be contacted as soon as a pattern of poor attendance becomes evident, as determined by the school's attendance procedures.

7. Initial investigation of reasons for extended student absence from school shall be the responsibility of the Principal or designate. An annotated log is to be kept of each contact with the home.
8. The Principal shall establish procedures with students who are inexcusably absent from school or classes. These procedures are to reflect:
 - 8.1 Efforts to work directly with the student to resolve the issue;
 - 8.2 Ongoing communication and consultation with the parents concerning the attendance problem;
 - 8.3 Progressively more serious consequences for students who are persistently and inexcusably absent; and
 - 8.4 After all possible avenues of remediation have been exhausted at the school level, subsequent absences by the same student shall result in the Principal referring the matter to the Superintendent or designate.

Legal Reference: *Sections 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 17, 20, 22, 65, 79, 85 School Act*