



STUDENT ATTENDANCE

Background

As indicated in *Board Policy 1: Board Mandate, Mission, Vision, Values, and Goals* it is the mandate of the Board to provide students with a complete offering of learning opportunities delivered within the context of Catholic teachings and the legislated requirements of the provincial and federal governments. Regular attendance by students in all of 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 these classes regularly and pursue their studies in a diligent manner.

Provincial legislation requires students to attend school regularly and punctually and identifies circumstances under which an absence may be deemed as excusable.

The Superintendent shall serve as the Attendance Officer for the Division unless that responsibility has been delegated by the Superintendent to another individual.

Procedures

1. The Superintendent may excuse the attendance of a student pursuant to Section 7 of the *Education Act* as follows:
 - 1.1 Special educational program examination and determination needs.
 - 1.2 Student behavioural disorder, pending an assessment and review for educational program identification and placement.
 - 1.3 Students in need of special treatment due to illness and/or behavior.
2. The Principal may temporarily excuse attendance of a student for the following:
 - 2.1 Family vacations where minimal school program time is involved.
 - 2.2 Family separations where agreements stipulate the spending of a specific amount of time with one (1) parent or the other provided minimal school program time is involved.
 - 2.3 Other reasons deemed acceptable to the Principal.
3. Parent(s)/guardian(s) and students are to be encouraged to schedule medical, dental or other such related appointment at times that do not conflict with regular hours of instruction.
4. The Principal shall ensure that students missing instructional time are advised they are responsible for the material covered in their absence.

5. Parent(s)/guardian(s) will be requested by the Principal to phone or send a written explanation to provide the reasons for a student's absence from classes.
6. The Principal shall ensure that attendance problems are investigated and discussed with the concerned students and their parent(s)/guardian(s). Persistent attendance problems may be referred to the Attendance Officer for further action.
7. The Principal shall ensure that an accurate record of student attendance is kept.
8. The Principal shall ensure that written procedures have been established to deal 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 parent(s)/guardian(s) concerning the attendance problem.
 - 8.3 Progressively more serious consequences for students who are persistently and inexcusably absent.
 - 8.4 Referral to the Attendance Officer if a serious attendance problem cannot be resolved.
9. The Attendance Officer shall review all cases submitted to their attention and, in consultation with the Principal and parents determine an appropriate course of action.
10. Actions taken by the Attendance Officer shall be documented.
11. Where attendance does not improve significantly following written direction to the student, the Attendance Officer may make an “ex parte” application to a judge or justice of the peace as per Section 8 of the *Education Act*.
12. If the Attendance Officer is of the opinion that an “ex parte” application would not be effective, they may refer the matter to the Superintendent, with a recommendation for referral to the Attendance Board as per Section 9 of the *Education Act*.
13. A referral to the Attendance Board by the Superintendent will be made using the Attendance Board—Notice of Referral form (Appendix).
14. Section 49 of the *Education Act* states that on hearing a matter referred to it, the Attendance Board may, subject to any terms or conditions that the Attendance Board considers proper in the circumstances, make an order doing one (1) or more of the following:
 - 14.1 Directing the student to attend school.
 - 14.2 Directing the parents of a student to send the student to school.
 - 14.3 Subject to sections 20 and 40 of the *Education Act*, directing the student to take an education program, course or student program set out in the order.
 - 14.4 Reporting the matter to a Director under the *Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act*.

- 14.5 Imposing on the parent a monetary penalty not exceeding \$100 per day, up to a maximum of \$1,000, to be paid to the Crown for each day that the student does not attend school.
- 14.6 Giving such other direction not referred to in clauses 8.1 to 8.5 as the Attendance Board considers appropriate in the circumstances.
- 15. Students whose attendance is not made compulsory by the *Education Act*, and who attend irregularly without justification or excuse, may be asked to withdraw from school by the Principal.
 - 15.1 In the case of students who are not independent students, such action will be taken only after consultation with parent(s)/guardian(s).
- 16. The Superintendent may excuse a student from attending school under the provisions of Section 7 of the *Education Act*.

References Sections 7, 8, 9, 20, 31, 32, 33, 40, 46, 47, 48, 49, *Education Act*