

ATTENDANCE OF STUDENTS

Background

Students are required to attend school in accordance with the Education Act and this administrative procedure. When students are absent from school, the Division provides support, determines underlying reasons for non-attendance and implements appropriate intervention strategies. For the purposes of this administrative procedure, absenteeism is tracked by half day increments for elementary schools and per period for high schools as directed by the Director or designate as determined by the school's grade configuration.

The Good Spirit School Division believes regular and punctual attendance is necessary for students to maximize their learning and achievement. The Division also:

- Believes in a collaborative approach between the school and the parent/guardian in expecting and supporting regular attendance of students;
- Requires that schools track and record student attendance consistently on a daily basis and investigate reasons for non-attendance;
- Requires that schools enroll and withdraw students in the Student Data System according to standards of practice outlined by the Ministry;
- Requests that parents/guardians communicate to the school with prior notice of a student's unavoidable absence;
- Understands that ongoing collaboration may be needed to support students when avoidable absences/tardiness negatively impacts their learning and achievement.

Procedures

1. Tracking and Recording Protocol

1.1 The principal shall:

- 1.1.1** Be authorized to implement school based tracking, recording and reporting procedures that are consistent with the legislation and other directives issued by the Ministry, Board policy and administrative procedures.
- 1.1.2** Ensure that notification of students absences occurs in a timely manner on a daily basis. Consideration of what constitutes a "timely manner" should be discussed with the SCC.

- 1.1.3 Ensure that students are enrolled and withdrawn from the Student Data System.
- 1.1.4 Ensure that proactive, positive messaging regarding student attendance and its impact on achievement, grade level reading and high school completion are communicated within some of the following: school websites, newsletters, school signage, social media accounts as well as with report card distribution, during SCC meetings, parent nights, etc.

2. Follow-Up Protocol – School Level

- 2.1. When a student is recorded absent without permission or notification from the parent/guardian, the Principal or designate shall:
 - 2.1.1. Ensure that the parents/guardians are contacted by phone when a student is absent. When necessary, alternate contact methods such as emails, text message, SchoolMessenger, etc. may be used.
 - 2.1.2. For all students with higher than 10% absenteeism, attendance shall be monitored using Form 340-1. For students who accumulate 20% absenteeism for a year or a high school semester, a record of all contact (and attempts) and intervention strategies should be kept for each student on Form 340-1 – Attendance Monitoring Checklist and attached to the yearend attendance summary that is kept in the cumulative records.
 - 2.1.3. Investigate reasons for non-attendance with a focus on intervention and prevention. The principal if deemed appropriate, may involve other school or system personnel such as vice- principals, school counsellors, Elders, guidance/career counsellors, and through referral, the Division support services and Superintendents of Education in such investigations.
 - 2.1.4. Each month, send a message home, text, email (or mail) attendance summary information to parents/guardians of students with > 20% absenteeism.
 - 2.1.5. Students with severely chronic absenteeism (>20%) over three consecutive months, shall be monitored and may be referred to the School Rtl Team, the Behaviour Coach or to other Student Services personnel.
 - 2.1.6. With students who have absenteeism >20%, *where the absence is impacting learning*, the school will ensure that meetings or conferences occur with the student, parent/guardian and administration team. The school counsellor, an Elder, guidance/career counsellor, and/or Behaviour Coach may be involved to help determine supports that can be in place for student success. Intervention plans are to be implemented

2.1.7. In accordance with the Education Act, the principal shall:

- 2.1.7.1. Report to the Local Attendance Counsellor (Superintendent of Education), students of compulsory school age who are absent more than four (4) school days out of a month, where the principal deems these absences to be unjustified.
- 2.1.7.2. Refer to the Local Attendance Counsellor, students of compulsory school age with chronic attendance problems such as habitual tardiness, avoidable irregular attendance, apparent neglect or disregard of the rules with respect to school attendance and who after documented interventions are not showing an improvement with respect to attendance
- 2.1.7.3. After receiving the principal's report and a copy of Form 340-1, the attendance counsellor in consultation with the Principal, teachers, school counsellor or Student Services personnel shall consider what further action shall be taken. During this process, parent/guardian and student are informed, consulted and given reasonable opportunities to cooperate in resolving attendance problems. An intervention meeting to address the absenteeism may be scheduled at this time. The meeting may include the Attendance Counselor, a school administrator, counselor, Behaviour Coach, SST, SCC, parent/guardian, student as well as outside agency support.

3. Follow-up Protocol – Division Level

- 3.1. The Superintendent of Education for each school will be the local attendance counsellor.
- 3.2. After receiving an attendance report/referral, the local attendance counsellor or designate shall:
 - 3.2.1. If necessary and with the Director's approval, take appropriate action regarding the principal's recommendation.
 - 3.2.2. In cases of unresolved chronic non-attendance, advise parents or guardians and other persons in charge by mail of their responsibilities and the expectations of the School Division.

Reference: Section 85, 87, 109, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 175 Education Act

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