

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 among the school, the student (when applicable), and the parent/guardian in expecting and supporting regular attendance of students;
- Requires that schools consistently track and record student attendance on a daily basis and investigate reasons for non-attendance;
- Requires that schools enroll and withdraw students in the Student Data System (MySchoolSask) 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 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 student's absences occurs in a timely manner on a daily basis. Consideration of what constitutes a "timely manner" should be discussed with the School Community Council (SCC).

- 1.1.3 Communicate with grades 10 to 12 students and parent/guardians that if the student's attendance impacts their mark to where it is likely they will earn less than 30% as a final mark, that the student will be withdrawn from the class before the course end date.
- 1.1.4 Ensure that students are enrolled and withdrawn from the Student Data System.
- 1.1.5 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 messages, 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 year-end 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 Schools 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 RtI Team 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, and/or Guidance/Career Counsellor, 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 Schools), students at 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 at 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 local 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 Local Attendance Counsellor, an In-School Administrator, Student Counsellor, Student Support Teacher, Student Support Consultant, parent/guardian, student as well as outside agency support.

3. Follow-up Protocol – Division Level

3.1. The Superintendent of Schools 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 email or mail of their responsibilities and the expectations of the Division.

4. Withdrawal of Grades 10-12 Students from a Course Based on Attendance
 - 4.1. The Principal shall:
 - 4.1.1. Withdraw a student from a course only after other attendance interventions (e.g. tutorial, attendance contract, assignment extension, RTI referral) have been attempted and were unsuccessful.
 - 4.1.1.1. All attendance interventions shall be tracked on Form 340-1.
 - 4.1.2. Share both the interventions and the withdrawal opportunity with the parents/guardians prior to the student being withdrawn from the class.
 - 4.1.3. Withdraw the student prior to the last 20 hours of instruction if attendance indicates that the student's mark will be less than 30%. If a student is not withdrawn before 20 hours of instruction, the student may be offered credit recovery or credit extension prior to withdrawing them from the class.
5. Withdrawal of all Grade Levels From MySchoolSask (MSS)/Student Data System (SDS)
 - 5.1. The Principal shall ensure that non-attending students are withdrawn from the SDS following the Ministry of Education's standards of practice.
 - 5.1.1. Reason is known
 - Withdraw student from the SDS within 10 consecutive school days of non-attendance indicating the reason for withdrawal.
 - 5.1.2. Investigation has been initiated
 - If a student has more than four (4) days of unexplained absences in a month, the Principal shall complete Form 340-2 and report the absence to the local attendance counsellor.
 - Students remain enrolled in the SDS if contact with the student/family is maintained and efforts to achieve regular attendance is ongoing (typically 10 to 20 school days).
 - 5.1.3. Investigation is continuing
 - Withdraw student from the SDS within 20 school days using appropriate withdrawal reason (enrollment outcome) code, even though investigation continues. Refer to Appendix B Enrolment and Withdrawal Keys.
 - Code "61 – Discontinued Schooling – monitoring" is for students who have been contacted but are not attending. This provides the school the ability to maintain a student's class schedule in cases where there is the possibility that a student might return.

5.1.4. Investigation is complete

- Withdraw student from SDS using appropriate withdrawal code of reason “unknown”.

5.1.5. Alternate Student Placement Rubric

5.1.5.1. If a student returns to school at the beginning of a school year, after a significant absence, an alternate placement may be considered in consultation with the Superintendent of Schools.

5.1.5.2. The GSSD Student Placement Rubric will be used to determine the alternate placement.

Reference: Section 85, 87, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 175 Education Act; Form 340-1; Form 340-2; Alternate Student Placement Rubric; Appendix A Attendance Flowcharts; Appendix B Enrolment and Withdrawal Keys

Updated: June 2016, August 2018, November 2021, October 2022