



ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE 330

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

Background

Regular school attendance is a significant contributing factor to student learning, success and maximization of the benefits of effective educational opportunities and resources available in schools. In accordance with the *School Act* and related regulations, regular school attendance is required and expected of all students attending the division's schools.

Specific provisions regulating, monitoring and reporting the attendance of students shall be developed by schools in consultation with students, parents, teachers, school administrators and school councils, as appropriate.

It shall be the responsibility of parents to ensure compliance with student attendance requirements and the responsibility of schools to ensure that parents are informed promptly when the attendance of students is unsatisfactory.

The responsibility for the supervision of student attendance rests with school principal and shall form part of school policy. School attendance policies shall be filed with the Superintendent of Schools and any/all amendments shall be forwarded to the Superintendent.

Procedures

1. Schools shall develop a school attendance policy that defines expectations for student attendance.
2. Regular student attendance is the responsibility of the parent/guardian and the student.
3. The staff in each school will make every effort to ensure that the school provides an environment which encourages students to attend.
4. The school shall develop and maintain an accurate daily record of attendance for each student in compliance with legislative and regulatory requirements.
5. School administrative procedures established to deal with inexcusable student attendance matters shall be accessible to students, parents/guardians, and other stakeholders groups.
6. Schools are expected to have in place a daily system for monitoring and reporting student attendance. Monitoring of student attendance will include verifying reasons for non-attendance.
 - 6.1 For all grades, absences are reported to the school office using the monitoring system.

- 6.2 For ECS to grade 6 students, all unexplained absences during the school day shall be reported to the school office immediately after the absence becomes apparent. Reasonable efforts must be made to determine the whereabouts of the student(s) reported absent. Parents will be immediately notified if the child is not located so that the parent can help to locate the child.
 - 6.3 For grade 7 -12 students, unless the student is an independent student, school staff will make reasonable efforts to notify parents of unexplained absences.
7. Documentation related to any student absence/attendance shall be in the form of an explanatory note, signed and dated by the parent or guardian, or a logged phone call and/or verbal communication from the parent/guardian that indicates the date and time the parent/guardian called to report the absence. Logging parent contact may be by paper or electronic means. Absence/attendance documentation shall be retained by the school for a minimum of one (1) year, and be available upon request.
8. As determined and outlined in the school's attendance policy for cases of unexplained absences, suspected truancy or occurrence of excessive absences, the school shall appropriately contact and inform the parent or guardian as soon as a pattern of poor student attendance becomes evident.
9. After all possible school level remediation avenues have been exhausted, subsequent absences by the same student will result in:
 - 9.1 Consultation with student's parent or guardian in order to investigate and determine the underlying cause(s) for the student's absence(s). Written notes resulting from the consultation process are to be retained on file.
 - 9.2 The Principal or designate shall, following the contact(s) with the parent or guardian, complete and submit a referral letter to the Attendance Officer and provide copies of the following within the letter:
 - 9.2.1 student demographic information;
 - 9.2.2 a statement of explanation by the parent or guardian, i.e., Letter of Response from parent or guardian, or principal/parent or guardian meeting notes;
 - 9.2.3 the date and time of any/all parent or guardian meeting(s)/contact(s);
 - 9.2.4 commitments made by the school, student and parent or guardian; and
 - 9.2.5 action(s) taken by the school.
 - 9.3 The Attendance Officer (i.e. Superintendent of Schools) will through written letter and may include other communication mediums such as a meeting with the student and parent/guardian, direct that the student attends school. The student and parent/guardian will be provided with the opportunity to respond to the directive from the Attendance Officer.

9.4 Where the resolution to the attendance problem has failed in the use of the division's Attendance Officer referrals and documented process, the school Principal, in accordance with divisional procedure(s) and in collaboration with the division's Attendance Officer, will make referral for:

9.4.1 A Court Order served by a Judge or Justice of the Peace to the student in the presence of the parent or guardian; or

9.4.2 A hearing by the Attendance Board for action, in accordance with the *School Act* and accompanying Regulations.

Reference: Section 1, 12, 13, 14, 15, 60, 61, 126 School Act
Cross Reference: AP 320 – Student Records

Developed: November 2005
Amended: November 5, 2008