STUDENT ATTENDANCE

Belief
Regular attendance and punctuality are essential if a student is to achieve maximum benefit from his or her schooling.

Guidelines

1. Regular attendance at school maximizes students’ opportunities to participate more fully in learning activities, form relationships with others, increase the likelihood of school bonding, and successful high school completion.

2. The responsibility for maintaining good attendance rests with the student and the parents / guardians.

3. Students are required to attend school and the classes in which they are registered regularly and punctually or have approval of the Superintendent or designate to withdraw from regular attendance.

4. A student is excused from attending school according to the provisions of section 13(5) of the *School Act*.

5. The Superintendent or designate may excuse students from attending school for a prescribed period of time in accordance with section 13(e)(i)(ii) of the *School Act*.

6. Schools shall keep the student and parents/guardians informed of attendance requirements and status.

7. The Principal is responsible for ensuring that an accurate record of student attendance is kept and communicated to parents/guardians on a regular basis, or in the case of attendance problems in a timely fashion such that parents/guardians have an opportunity to deal with the problem early.

8. The Director of Support Services is responsible for the administration of the attendance procedure for the Division and is designated as the "Attendance Officer" in accordance with the *School Act*.

9. Principals shall give due consideration to a formal attendance review / intervention when a student’s absences reach 10% of the total instructional days in a month.

10. The Principal is responsible to maximize the likelihood of excellent student attendance through strategies such as:
   10.1 Ensuring a positive school culture that makes the school a place where students feel safe and respected.
   10.2 Making attendance expectations clearly known to students, staff and parents;
10.3 Strategizing ways to engage students in positive relationships with staff;
10.4 Strategizing ways to regularly acknowledge excellent attendance;
10.5 Strategizing ways to regularly acknowledge and reward improvements in attendance.

11. The Principal shall establish and implement school procedures and supports to ensure students attend school, and deal with students who are chronically absent or late for school or classes. Such procedures reflect efforts by the school to determine the reasons for the student’s absence/lateness and provide appropriate supports such as:

11.1 Modified timetables/scheduling
11.2 Specialized learning supports
11.3 Individual program plan
11.4 Community programming/supports
11.5 Online classes
11.6 Peer/Community mentoring
11.7 Counselling
11.8 Transition plans
11.9 Parent volunteers
11.10 Off campus programming

12. In cases of unsolved chronic truancy, the Principal may refer the matter to the Attendance Officer or the Attendance Board as provided by the School Act.

Reference: Section 1, 12, 13, 14, 15, 60, 61, 126 School Act
Every Student Counts: Make the Attendance Connection, Alberta Education
Supporting Behavior and Social Participation of All Students: Regular Attendance, Alberta Education