

306 STUDENT ATTENDANCE

Belief

Student attendance enhances a student's opportunity to succeed in school. Student attendance is a shared responsibility of the parent, student and teacher.

Procedures

1. 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.
2. A student is excused from attending school whose parents provide teachers with acceptable written explanations for their absence.
3. Principals are required to ensure that valid health related issues are not the primary cause of poor attendance.
4. Principals are required to establish school level attendance plans that encourage regular attendance, monitor student attendance, involve the parent in resolving attendance problems and develop school measures that address poor attendance.
5. Principals shall give due consideration to a formal attendance review / intervention when a student's unexcused absences reach 10% of the total instructional days in a month.
6. 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.
7. Formal communication to parents regarding poor attendance, and attempts to resolve the poor attendance, are documented through formal written correspondence that has been inserted into the Student Record Portfolio.
8. The Associate Superintendent: Student Services is responsible for the administration of the attendance procedure for MESC.
9. The Principal is responsible to maximize the likelihood of excellent student attendance through strategies such as:
 - 9.1. Ensuring a positive school culture that makes the school a place where students feel safe and respected.
 - 9.2. Making attendance expectations clearly known to students, staff and parents;
 - 9.3. Strategizing ways to engage students in positive relationships with staff;

- 9.4. Strategizing ways to regularly acknowledge excellent attendance;
 - 9.5. Strategizing ways to regularly acknowledge and reward improvements in attendance.
10. 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:
- 10.1. Modified timetables/scheduling
 - 10.2. Specialized learning supports
 - 10.3. Individual program plan
 - 10.4. Community programming/supports
 - 10.5. Peer/Community mentoring
 - 10.6. Counselling
 - 10.7. Transition plans
 - 10.8. Parent volunteers
 - 10.9. Off campus programming
11. In instances where corrective measures taken by the school have not been effective in addressing poor student attendance, the Associate Superintendent: Student Services is to be advised.
12. The Associate Superintendent: Student Services will:
- 12.1. Confirm appropriateness of school measures taken;
 - 12.2. Advise if additional measures are required;
 - 12.3. Determine if a referral to the Superintendent is recommended.
 - 12.4. Provide Superintendent with a complete report.

Reference:

Every Student Counts: Make the Attendance Connection,
Alberta Education Supporting behaviour and Social Participation of All Students: Regular Attendance,
Alberta Education