



202.1 AP Student Attendance

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LEGAL REFERENCE:

- [Education Act – Sections 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 31, and 32](#)

CROSS REFERENCE:

- [202.3AP Appeals Concerning Student Matters](#)
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PROCEDURES:

1. Expectations for student attendance at school is provided in the Education Act.
2. Students are required to attend school regularly and punctually. It shall be the responsibility of students and parents/guardians to ensure compliance with this requirement and the responsibility of schools to ensure that students and parents/guardians are informed promptly when the attendance of students is not satisfactory.
3. Attendance data will be included on each student's report card and included in his/her student record portfolio.
4. The principal, in consultation with staff, students and the school council, is expected to have in place a system for monitoring student absences.
 - 4.1 All staff is required to accurately report student attendance in the Student Information System.
 - 4.2 In situations where the absence is known to parents/guardians a notification procedure will be established by the school that will allow parents/guardians to verify the absence.
 - 4.3 In situations where the absence is not verified through the parent/guardian notification procedure, parents/guardians must be informed as soon as possible on the day of the absence.
 - 4.4 For all grades, unverified absences will be reported to the office by the classroom teacher. This will occur immediately after morning and afternoon attendance is taken. Every attempt will be made to contact parents immediately to verify the absence.
 - 4.5 Electronic reporting (such as Synervoice) of student absence to parents/guardians may be used for ongoing communication of student absence, but is not an appropriate verification mechanism.

5. Responsibilities for school attendance will be shared among the following:
 - 5.1 Students
 - 5.1.1 Students will maintain regular class attendance; and
 - 5.1.2 In the event of an absence, students will be required to provide an explanation for this absence upon their return to the building, if their parent has not already done so.
 - 5.2 Parents/Guardians
 - 5.2.1 Parents are expected to encourage regular school attendance and ensure that their son/daughter regularly attends class.
 - 5.2.2 In the event of an absence, the parents are responsible for providing a written/verbal explanation for the student's absence.
 - 5.3 Teachers

Teacher responsibilities for student attendance require the following:

 - 5.3.1 The maintenance of accurate daily/block attendance records in the Student Information System and communication within the school's established absence reporting procedures;
 - 5.3.2 Verbal communication with parents when absences are observed to be interfering with the student's learning
 - 5.3.3 Immediate reporting of instances where the student is suspected of truancy during approved school events (including field trips).
 - 5.4 Principal

Administrative responsibilities for student attendance include the following:

 - 5.4.1 The development of a school attendance policy that fulfills the requirements of the school community, optimal student learning and the structures as set out in these administrative procedures.
 - 5.4.2 The structure and set-up of the daily attendance gathering process.
 - 5.4.3 The record keeping of attendance concerns and all records connected to these concerns.
 - 5.4.4 Establishing a student attendance communication system and ensuring the appropriate execution of the communications between the school and the home (both verbal and written) put into place to address attendance concerns.
 - 5.4.5 Ensure accurate attendance data is placed on the student reports home and a copy is placed in the student cumulative record.
6. At the beginning of the school year these processes and procedures shall be communicated to students, parents and staff.
7. The school administration is assigned the responsibility of determining the classification of a student absence. Student absences will fall into one of five categories:
 - Absent Unexcused (AU)- unverified absences that have not been approved by school administration.
 - Absent Excused (AE) - absences verified by the parent/guardian which shall include:
 - illness
 - religious holidays
 - medical or legal appointments
 - compassionate reasons
 - family supervised activities
 - other reasons as approved by the school administration

School Excused (SE) - absences incurred as a result of participation in a school approved activity or as a result of administrative procedure which may include:

- school athletics
- off campus programming
- other school activities as approved by the principal
- inclement weather admin procedure

In-school Suspension (ISS)

Out of School Suspension (OSS)

8. It is strongly recommended that any student absence be explained by electronic communication or a note signed by the parent/guardian and that the correspondence is retained until the end of the school year. Telephone calls explaining absences must be recorded in an attendance document.
9. In cases of unexplained absences, suspected truancy, or excessive absenteeism (more than 15% of instruction to date), the principal shall contact the parent or guardian as soon as a pattern of unacceptable attendance becomes evident. An annotated log (Exhibit 1) is to be kept of each contact with the home. In all cases where student absenteeism reaches a threshold of 15% of the student's attendance days/blocks to date, the teacher and principal will automatically receive an electronic notification from the Student Information System.
10. Following the initial contact by the principal, should the pattern of unacceptable absenteeism continue, the principal may issue a letter of concern (Exhibit 2).
11. Should the pattern of attendance fail to improve after a reasonable time frame, the principal may formally request the development of an Attendance Improvement Plan. (Exhibits 3 & 4).
12. Should the conditions of the Attendance Improvement Plan not be met, the following may occur:
 - 12.1 When the student is under 16 years of age and the parent/guardian refuses to/is unable to cooperate, the Principal shall complete an Attendance Board Referral Form (see extranet) and inform the Superintendent of Schools.
 - 12.2 For high school courses in which attendance is monitored by individual courses, where an Attendance Improvement Plan has failed, the following options are available to the school administration:
 - 12.2.1 ask the student to voluntarily withdraw from the course(s)
 - 12.2.2 suspend the student from the course(s) and recommend course expulsion
 - 12.2.3 report a mark to Alberta Education for the discontinued course(s) if the mid-point part of the semester or school year (for non-semestered courses) has been reached
13. When an extended student absence is due to an illness or an extenuating circumstance, it is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to inform the principal as soon as possible of the circumstances surrounding the absence and take steps to address potential educational impacts. In these instances, further verification may be waived.