

**ATTENDANCE****Category:** Educational Services**Effective:** February 2017**Policy Statement**

The Education Act refers to regular school attendance as both a duty of the pupil and an expectation on the part of parents to cause attendance to take place. The Act recognizes that regular attendance supports the learning success of the student and contributes to the learning environment of the school. (Article 13 -1).

The purpose of a student attendance policy is to promote good attendance in order to develop positive lifelong learning patterns. An attendance policy is a tool to keep the student in school rather than to exclude them from the educational process. To that end, emphasis must continue to be placed on the development of a positive learning environment and on regular communication with students and parents in promoting student attendance.

Students who miss school without cause often create difficulties for themselves, other students and school staff. Regular attendance at school is expected and mandatory under Section 14(d) of the Education Act.

This policy will:

- Provide consistency in tracking and reporting attendance.
- Ensure interventions based on Best Practice are implemented when attendance issues arise.

Individual student attendance will be tracked daily by their teachers in a consistent and organized manner, with the expectation that timely and effective interventions will occur.

Schools are permitted the opportunity to create a School Attendance Policy that is in compliance with the District Attendance Policy and adheres to the Goal/Principle that an attendance policy is a tool to keep the student in school rather than exclude them from the educational process.

Definitions**Nature of Absences:**

- No consequences will be associated for those absences considered acceptable by the Education Act:

The Education Act states that a child is not required to attend school if the child:

- a. Is unable to attend school by reason of the child's sickness or other unavoidable cause;
- b. Is officially excluded from attendance under the Act or the regulations (e.g. suspension);

**ATTENDANCE****Category:** Educational Services **Effective:** February 2017

- c. Is absent on a day regarded as a holy day by the religious denomination of the child or the parent of the child; or
- In circumstances considered exceptional by the Minister, a child is exempted from attendance in writing by the Minister (e.g. if the Minister considers the child needs additional supports before attending school.)
 - No consequences will be associated for absences considered as school-sanctioned activities. A school sanctioned activity is one approved by the school administration and/or Director of Schools. (This absence will be recorded as A – excused absence)

Chronic Non-Attendance is when the referral has been directed to the School Based Education Support Team and interventions have been unsuccessful.

Procedures

Individual student attendance will be tracked and documented in a consistent and organized manner

- Expectations for attendance should be communicated to parents and students at the beginning of each school year and reviewed as necessary.
- Individual student attendance will be recorded by the teacher(s) daily or by class.
- Personal contact will be made with parent/guardian by the teacher and/or designated educational staff member prior to or on the 5th absence.
- On or before the 10th absence the teacher and/or designated educational staff member will refer to the School Based Education Support Team for appropriate ongoing interventions. The principal will notify guardian in writing of the concern regarding absences.
- The principal will ensure regular (min. monthly) generation and review of attendance reports with the School Based Education Support Team.
- The Principal or designate will ensure ongoing communication with student, parent/guardian regarding non-attendance.
- The Principal or designate will notify the Director of Schools of chronic non-attendance.

Interventions

- Interventions with respect to any student absenteeism will be initiated and documented.

Schools will differentiate interventions for unacceptable absenteeism for elementary, middle and high school students.

**ATTENDANCE****Category:** Educational Services**Effective:** February 2017

All student absences from school for any reason are to be supported by a written excuse from a parent/guardian or health professional. An unauthorized absence may result in disciplinary action. Parents/guardians of students who are continually absent without authorization will be contacted by school staff and asked to assist staff to remedy the situation. Interventions may include help from guidance staff, help from community / government agencies, school behavioral contracts, and parent-teacher conferences.

Reference

- New Brunswick [Education Act Section 13\(c\), 14\(d\)](#)
- [Human Rights Act](#)
- [Family Services Act Article 31](#)



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Sample Letter A

Dear

I am writing to express my concern regarding your child`s attendance. Regular attendance is critical to the academic success of your child. Children who miss a considerable number of classes frequently do not achieve at the same level as their peers. Our records indicate that _____ has now missed _____.

Please review the attached data:

CODES:

- U= unexcused absence
- A= excused absence
- T= tardy (late to class)

As the parent/guardian of this child, it is your responsibility to ensure that your child is attending school. The N. B. Education Act states that, "... a parent is expected to cause his or her child to attend school as required by this Act".

It is my understanding that _____ contacted you
_____ (put in interventions and contacts to date)

Our desire is to see your child succeed in school. We are interested in working with you to meet that end. Please discuss this with _____(child`s name).

_____ (someone from the school) will be in contact with you to discuss how we can support you in ensuring your child attends school.

Thank you for your consideration and help in this matter.

Yours truly,

School Principal

**ATTENDANCE****Category:** Educational Services**Effective:** February 2017**Sample Letter "B"**

Date

Name
Address

Dear

This is to inform you of our concern regarding name of student.

Name of student has missed a total of ____ days to date this school year, which is ____ percent of instruction time lost.

We have contacted you on date(s) and have organized a meeting which took place on date to determine strategies and interventions to support your son/daughter's return to school.

The Education Act, Article 13(1) states:

"In support of the learning success of his or her child and the learning environment at the school, a parent is expected to:

c) cause his or her child to attend school as required by this Act."

Article 14(1) Role of Student

"It is the duty of the pupil to:

d) attend school regularly and punctually."

A prolonged absence from school can have a negative impact on the academic and social development of a student.

We request a formal written excuse of name's absence to date. We also request a note from your doctor should the absences be due to a medical condition.

If the absence continues without the requested documentation, the school is obligated under the Family Services Act to report any concerns for the safety and wellbeing of a child (30(1) Family Services Act).

Thank you in advance for your cooperation in this matter.

Yours truly,

School Principal

Attachment:

- record of absences / tardiness