English Language School Board

OPERATIONAL PROCEDURE

ATTENDANCE AND ENGAGEMENT	
Policy Section **Programs and Services**	*Procedure Number* **406.1**
Page **1 of 5**	*Approved Date* **November 3, 2015**
Reviewed Date	*Effective Date* **November 3, 2015**
Supersedes: Attendance and Engagement (406.1), September 1, 2015	

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The English Language School Board seeks full cooperation from parents/guardians in promoting regular school attendance and punctuality to their school age children.

1.2 Attendance in school is central to educational achievement and school success. School attendance is required by law, under the *School Act,* for all children between the ages of six (6) and sixteen (16). Parents/guardians must ensure that students attend and remain in school daily.

1.3 The School Board strongly encourages the following:

1.3.1 When possible medical/dental appointments and extracurricular activities should be scheduled after school hours;

1.3.2 Family vacations should be taken during school vacation and recess periods.

1.4 No student will be excused from regular attendance and schoolwork to take private lessons in sports, music, art, dance, or any other area without prior approval of the Minister responsible for public education in Prince Edward Island.

2.0 DEFINITIONS

2.1 **Excused Absence –** An absence from school which has been approved in accordance with section 70 of the *School Act*.

2.2 **Late** - Student arrives with more than 50% of AM/PM remaining or arrives with more than 50% of class remaining if using period attendance collection.

2.3 **Early Departure** - Student departs with less than 50% of AM/PM remaining or departs with less than 50% of class remaining if using period attendance collection.

3.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1 Students shall*:*

3.1.1 Attend classes regularly and punctually and participate in the education programs in which the student is enrolled as required by the *School Act*,

3.1.2 Be engaged in learning;

3.1.3 Complete work missed during excused and unexcused absences;

3.1.4 Comply with the Attendance and Engagement policy and procedure.

3.2 Parents/Guardians shall:

- 3.2.1 Ensure their child is punctual and regularly attends school;
- 3.2.2 Support their child in the pursuit of learning;
- 3.2.3 Notify the school prior to or on the day of their child's absence;
- 3.2.4 Contact the school in advance of any planned, extended periods of absence;
- 3.2.5 Support the completion of work missed during excused and unexcused absences;
- 3.2.6 Collaborate with school staff to support student attendance and engagement.

3.3 Teachers shall*:*

- 3.3.1 Support students in the pursuit of learning;
- 3.3.2 Maintain daily/course attendance data in StudentsAchieve;
- 3.3.3 Support and encourage student punctuality and regular attendance;
- 3.3.4 Contact the student and parent/guardian to discuss attendance concerns;
- 3.3.5 Permit students with absences the opportunity to complete missed assignments and tests;
- 3.3.6 Refer students with ongoing attendance problems to administration;
- 3.3.7 Collaborate with administration and parents to support student attendance and engagement.

3.4 Administrators shall:

- 3.4.1 Ensure that students, parents/guardians, and staff are aware of the Attendance and Engagement policy and procedure;
- 3.4.2 Ensure teachers maintain attendance data as outlined in this procedure;
- 3.4.3 Ensure that student attendance is reported to parents/guardians in a timely manner;
- 3.4.4 Collaborate with school staff and parents to support student attendance and engagement;
- 3.4.5 Report frequent student absenteeism to the Superintendent when the explanation of a student's absences is unsatisfactory and interventions at the school level have been exhausted in accordance with this procedure;
- 3.4.6 Report in detail chronic absences and the interventions implemented by the school to the Department of Community Services and Seniors – Child Protection where absenteeism is suspected to be a symptom of neglect.

3.5 The Superintendent shall:

- 3.5.1 Ensure that schools are aware of and follow the Attendance and Engagement Procedure;
- 3.5.2 Investigate cases of student absenteeism which have been reported by a school principal, in accordance with 5.5.3 or 6.5.4, and take any action as required under the *School Act.*

3.6 Department of Community Services and Seniors - Child Protection shall:

- 3.6.1 Assess all child protection reports received from the school to determine if the report meets the criteria for an investigation under the *Child Protection Act*.

4.0 EXCUSED ABSENCES

4.1 A student is excused from attending school on an instructional day if:

- 4.1.1 The student is unable to attend school because of illness or through other cause which has been reported to and approved by the principal;
- 4.1.2 The day is recognized as a religious holiday by the religious denomination to which the student belongs; or
- 4.1.3 The Minister certifies in writing to the school board that the student:
  - a. Is exempt from attending school; or
  - b. Is taking part in a home education program.

5.0 PROCEDURES – GRADES K-9

5.1 These procedures are to be applied to student absences. ***Absences involving extenuating circumstances will be reviewed by the Principal and procedures will be changed accordingly.***

5.2 **Step 1** – When a student has **5 days** of absences in a reporting period:

- 5.2.1 The classroom teacher will phone home (3 attempts) to communicate concern about attendance;
- 5.2.2 If contact is unsuccessful the teacher will inform administration.

5.3 **Step 2** – When a student has **10 days** of absences within the school year:

- 5.3.1 The classroom teacher will notify administration about the attendance concern;
- 5.3.2 Administration will send home the *Initial Notification of Absenteeism* letter to communicate concern about attendance and to arrange a parent/guardian meeting;
- 5.3.3 Administration will refer to the school-based Student Services Team.

5.4 **Step 3** – When a student has **15 days** of absences within the school year:

- 5.4.1 The classroom teacher will notify the administration that a student has 15 absences;
- 5.4.2 Administration will send home the *Second Notification of Absenteeism* letter;
- 5.4.3 Administration will meet with the parent(s)/guardian(s), and where appropriate, the student to develop a support plan. Administration will document the support plan and meeting discussions and will provide a written copy to the parent(s)/guardian(s);
- 5.4.4 Administration will inform parent(s)/guardian(s) that if the support plan is unsuccessful there will be a report to the Superintendent. When non-attendance is suspected to be an indicator of parental neglect, administration shall make a report to the *Department of Community Services and Seniors - Child Protection,* as required under the mandatory reporting section of the *Child Protection Act*, as per section 11(f).

5.5 **Step 4** – When a student has more than **20 days** of absences within the school year:

- 5.5.1 The classroom teacher will notify the administration that a student has more than 20 absences;
- 5.5.2 Administration will send home the *Third Notification of Absenteeism* letter;
- 5.5.3 Administration will report the frequent absence concern to the Superintendent and provide the supporting documentation and information as outlined in Section 5.0.

5.5.4 The Superintendent will investigate cases of student absenteeism, in accordance with section 5.5.3, and take any action as required under the *School Act.*

5.5.5 When non-attendance is suspected to be an indicator of parental neglect, administration shall make a report to the Department of Community Services and Seniors - Child Protection, as required under the mandatory reporting section of the *Child Protection Act*, as per section 11(f). The report should include:

a) Attendance record;
b) Documented communication to parent(s)/guardian(s);
c) Interventions and results;

6.0 PROCEDURES - GRADE 10 – 12

6.1 These procedures are to be applied to student absences. ***Absences involving extenuating circumstances will be reviewed by the Principal and procedures will be changed accordingly.***

6.2 **Step 1** – When a student has **5 days** or periods of absence per subject:

6.2.1 The subject teacher will communicate concern about attendance to the student;

6.2.2 The subject teacher will phone home (3 attempts) to communicate concern about attendance;

6.2.3 If contact is unsuccessful the teacher will inform administration.

6.3 **Step 2**– When a student has **10 days** or periods of absence per subject:

6.3.1 The subject teacher will communicate concern about attendance to the student;

6.3.2 The subject teacher will notify the administration that a student has 10 absences;

6.3.3 Administration will meet with the student to discuss possible future disciplinary action. Administration will call home (3 attempts) and send the *Initial Notification of Absenteeism* letter;

6.3.4 Administration will meet with the student and parent(s)/guardian(s) to develop a support plan and discuss possible implications of continued absenteeism. Administration will document the support plan and meeting discussions and will provide a written copy to the parent(s)/guardian(s);

6.3.5 Administration will refer to the school based Student Services Team.

6.4 **Step 3** – When a student has **15 days** or periods of absence per subject:

6.4.1 The subject teacher will notify the administration that a student has 15 absences;

6.4.2 Administration will call home to report to the parent(s)/guardian(s) that their student is not to attend school until a parent meeting occurs to address attendance issues. Administration will send home the *Second Notification of Absenteeism* letter.

6.5 **Step 4** - When a student has **20 days** or periods of absence per subject:

6.5.1 The subject teacher will notify the administration that a student has 20 absences;

6.5.2 Administration will send home the *Third Notification of Absenteeism* letter;

6.5.3 In discussions with subject teacher(s) administration may,

6.5.3.1 Implement a reduction in schedule or referral to an alternative placement for the purpose of increasing student success. Parents will be responsible for their student (including transportation) during the periods of the school day that they are not attending; or

6.5.3.2 Discontinue the student for the remainder of the semester. Programming such as Credit Recovery and future registration may be explored at the school level. The parent will have the right to appeal any changes to the student's education plan;

6.5.4 Administration will report the frequent absence concern to the Superintendent and provide the supporting documentation and information as outlined in Section 6.0.

6.5.5 The Superintendent will investigate cases of student absenteeism, in accordance with section 6.5.4, and take any action as required under the *School Act.*

6.5.6 Where non-attendance is suspected to be an indicator of parental neglect, administration shall make a report to the Department of Community Services and Seniors - Child Protection, as required under the mandatory reporting section of the *Child Protection Act*, as per section 11(f). The report should include:

a) Attendance record;

b) Documented communication to parent(s)/guardian(s);

c) Interventions and results;

7.0 CROSS REFERENCE

7.1 406 Attendance and Engagement Policy

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