

POLICIES, GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES

SUBJECT	N.E.P.N. CODE
STUDENT PRESENCE & ENGAGEMENT	JE

I. POLICY

The Board of the Louis Riel School Division (LRSD) believes that students who attend school regularly:

- are more engaged in learning;
- have a greater opportunity to access school and community resources;
- have a greater sense of belonging; and
- are more likely to reach their full potential.

The Board further believes that:

- student presence* and engagement* are required for success;
- schools must employ both proactive and reactive approaches to enhance student presence and engagement;
- student absences* can constitute a serious impediment to a student’s educational performance and well-being;
- student absences can have lasting negative impacts on student achievement, graduation rates, transition to post-secondary education, employment, and social inclusion, as well as on the community at large; and that
- staff, parents/guardians, and students share a collective responsibility to facilitate and promote student presence and engagement.

The Board recognizes that attendance issues are often a first sign that a student is experiencing life challenges that may result from a multitude of contributing factors, ranging from academic, social, economic, and psychological. As mandated by Manitoba Education and Early Childhood Learning in [Safe and Caring School: A Policy Directive and Action Plan to Enhance Student Presence and Engagement](#), the Board calls on staff, parents/guardians, and students to implement the **GUIDELINES** and **PROCEDURES** outlined below with the goal of enacting a coordinated and comprehensive system response to enhancing student presence.

Adopted: September 5, 2023	Legal References: Safe and Caring Schools: A Policy Directive and Action Plan to Enhance Student Presence and Engagement
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II. GUIDELINES

- A. Being absent has a range of root causes and effects. When supporting and responding to a student’s absence from school, a student’s and parent(s)/guardian(s)’ unique needs and circumstances will be considered in identifying and removing barriers, in enhancing student presence and engagement, and in promoting a sense of belonging. Supporting and improving regular attendance* and engagement for all students requires collective coordination and partnership between and among schools, organizations, parents/guardians, students, and communities, and across government agencies.
- B. In order to successfully enhance student presence and engagement, practices and strategies to support attendance will:
- begin with relationships; reciprocal and respectful relationships between students, parent/guardians, Elders/Grandmothers/Grandfathers, Knowledge Keepers, communities, organizations, and the school need to be established, nurtured, and cared for
 - comply with
 - [The Public Schools Act \(Manitoba\)](#);
 - [The Education Administration Act \(Manitoba\)](#);
 - [The Human Rights Code](#)
 - [The Protecting and Supporting Children \(Information Sharing\) Act](#)
 - [The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act](#)
 - reference common terminology (see [LRSD Administrative Protocol – Student Attendance Definitions & Responsibilities](#))
 - reflect an understanding that student success and well-being is the collective responsibility of all who are responsible for children and youth
 - put students at the centre to drive all planning and responses
 - reflect an understanding that safe, caring, and inclusive learning environments are foundational to student presence and engagement
 - require consistent attention and collective action; ensuring student presence requires continuity of effort and resources over time

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- work in collective coordination and partnership with schools, organizations, parent/guardians, and communities, and across government agencies to support and improve regular daily presence and engagement for all students

III. PROCEDURES

- A. The ability of students to be present and engaged in school is greatly enhanced when students, parents/guardians, teachers, and administrators work together, aligning their efforts with those of the Division, Manitoba Education and Early Childhood Learning, and government service providers. [LRSD Administrative Protocol – Student Attendance Definitions & Responsibilities](#) outlines the roles of each of these groups and includes documenting, analyzing and reporting on absences.
- B. Preventative practices to enhance student engagement, well-being, and success can include:
- Creating a safe, welcoming and culturally responsive school environment for students.
 - Improving student and parent/guardian engagement with school.
 - Enhance visibility of all staff at transition times.
 - Creating and implementing a culturally relevant and responsive curriculum.
 - Establishing and implementing restorative practices.
 - Expanding implementation of anti-racism and anti-discrimination education.
 - Continually gather and analyze data around student engagement.
- C. The Principal will oversee the development and implementation of a system that ensures timely, personal outreach to students whose absence is unexcused*.
- D. If a student exhibits Chronic Absenteeism* or Severe Chronic Absenteeism*, the unique needs and circumstances of each student, as well as the procedures below will guide attendance support planning based on the professional judgement of the Principal (or designate).
- I. When student absences are Chronic, a meeting of the core team is required, including parent(s)/guardian(s). If a student reaches Severe Chronic Absenteeism, an in-school intervention is needed along with other members of the school support team and external agencies, if applicable. A Student-Specific Plan* must also be developed, implemented, monitored, evaluated, and updated. Suspensions, expulsions, and withdrawal from school or school activities are prohibited as a punitive response to absenteeism.

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- An intervention plan may be developed to guide school teams in determining the most appropriate alternative educational programming. This programming remains the responsibility of the school even when the student is not in attendance. The Principal, Classroom Teacher and/or Student Support Teacher may provide learning materials appropriate to the individual student and their supports while not in attendance for short periods of time. As LRSD does not provide remote education, this strategy is only used for short windows of time.

Supporting Documents:

- [Policy JBA – Appropriate Educational Programming](#)
- [Policy JK – Supporting Student Behaviour](#)
- [LRSD Supporting Student Behaviour Support Document](#)
- [Intervention Letter Template](#)
- [Safe and Caring Schools – Use of Seclusion Administrative Protocol](#)
- [Standards for Appropriate Education Programming in Manitoba \(2022\)](#)
- [Safe and Caring Schools: A Policy Directive Enhancing Proactive Supports to Minimize the Use of Seclusion \(2021\)](#)
- [Mamàhtawisiwin: Indigenous Education Policy Framework \(2022\)](#)
- [Manitoba’s K to 12 Education Action Plan: A Roadmap in Response to the Recommendations of the Commission on K to 12 Education \(2022\)](#)
- [Our Children’s Success: Manitoba’s Future. Report of the Commission on K to 12 Education \(2020\)](#)
- [A Place Where it Feels Like Home: The Story of Tina Fontaine \(Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth Report; 2019\)](#)
- [Safe and Caring Schools: A Whole-School Approach to Planning for Safety and Belonging \(2017\)](#)

* Note: Terms marked with an asterisk are defined in [LRSD Administrative Protocol – Student Presence & Engagement: Definitions & Responsibilities](#)

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