

 <p>DIVISION SCOLAIRE <b>LOUIS RIEL</b> SCHOOL DIVISION</p>	<p><b><i>Student Presence &amp; Engagement: Definitions &amp; Responsibilities</i></b></p>
<p>ADMINISTRATIVE PROTOCOL</p>	<p>Supporting Policy JE</p>

## I. DEFINITIONS

**Presence:** When a student attends and participates in the school or classroom on the days when they are supposed to be. This is an entry point to being able to engage students in the process of learning. Students may be present even if they are not physically within a classroom, depending on their student-specific plan.

**Engagement:** Students' attitudes towards schooling, their attendance and participation in school activities, disposition towards learning, and working and socializing with others in school. Engagement is expressed in students' feelings that they belong at school, and in their participation in school activities (OECD, 2003).

**Regular Attendance:** Coming to school and/or participating in learning consistently and on a routine habitual basis, missing no more than 5 days for the entire school year.

**Absence:** Any time that a student is not in class or not participating in a school activity while not being on suspension/expulsion.

**Excused Absence** refers to any time that a student is not in class or not participating in school activity while not being on suspension/expulsion, with a mutually agreed excuse between the parent/guardian and the school principal. In practice, this has also been referred to as a verified absence.

**Unexcused Absence** refers to any time a student is not in class or not participating in school activity while not being on suspension/expulsion, without a mutually agreed excuse between the parent/guardian and the school principal, with or without parental/guardian approval.

**Chronic Absenteeism:** Being absent without an excuse for 10 or more classes in a single high school course or 10 per cent or more of instructional days in Kindergarten to Grade 8 in a reporting period.

**Severe Chronic Absenteeism:** Being absent without an excuse for 20 or more classes in a single high school course or 20 per cent or more of instructional days in Kindergarten to Grade 8 in a reporting period.

**Student-specific plan (SSP)** - A planning, record-keeping, and communication document, as outlined in the [Standards for Appropriate Educational Programming in Manitoba \(2022\)](#). Student-specific planning is a process through which members of student support teams meet the unique needs of individual students and may range from short-term strategies applied in the classroom to comprehensive, individualized programming.

Source: [Safe and Caring Schools: A Policy Directive and Action Plan to Enhance Student Presence and Engagement](#), p. 7 & 8

## **2. RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Students**

- Responsible to attend school and classes regularly and punctually.
- Comply with the school's code of conduct, and complete assignments and other related work required by teachers.
- It is recognized that elementary age students are more dependent on their parent(s)/guardian(s) to assist them to attend school regularly.
- Participate in student-specific planning as developmentally appropriate.

### **Parents/Guardians**

- Have the right to be informed regularly of the attendance, behaviour, and academic achievement of their child in school and participate in planning.
- Responsible to cooperate fully with the child's teachers and other employees of the school division or school district to ensure the child complies with the school's code of conduct.
- Take all reasonable measures to ensure the child attends school regularly.

### **Teachers**

- Responsible for monitoring and recording student attendance.
- Responsible for timely communication to the Principal and the parent.
- Identify potential issues related to chronic lateness and/or absenteeism.
- Promote and support regular attendance.
- Communicate (verbal and in writing if needed) with students and parents/guardians when concerns related to attendance arise.
- Document steps taken to communicate with students, parents/guardians and outside agencies when concerns related to attendance arise.
- Participate in the student-specific planning process.
- Monitor student presence and absence data and alert Student Services Teacher where chronic absenteeism is a concern.

### **Principals/Designates**

(i.e., Vice-Principals, Student Services Teachers, Community Liaison Worker, Clinicians, School Secretary)

- Responsible to work with teachers, students, parents/guardians, and others as needed, to promote regular attendance, including identifying supports in response to student absences.
- Ensure accurate attendance records are kept, namely consistent, daily recording procedures and common metrics on student presence and absence, including whether absences are excused or unexcused.
- Monitor and review student attendance data, ensure that student attendance is a standing agenda item at school-based support team meetings, and oversee the student-specific

planning process, including the assignment of a case manager for students experiencing chronic absenteeism.

- Implement an early warning system and non-punitive outreach protocols to identify students who are likely to experience chronic absenteeism by monitoring, disaggregating, and responding to student presence and absence data trends at all levels.
- Monitor enrolment data which includes comparing enrolment registers year over year, as well as reviewing unclaimed pupil files and homeschool reports from the department.
- Develop and implement procedures for investigating and identifying the causes of student absences and determining the appropriate supports that are required to promote regular attendance.
- Invite community agencies, organizations and associations, other education authorities, and regional health and children's services authorities to plan collaboratively in support of appropriate educational programming and planning for students.
- Lead school-based attendance initiatives.

### **School Divisions**

- Ensure that student attendance is a standing agenda item at senior administration meetings.
- Ensure students who are eligible for enrolment with the division receive regular and appropriate educational programming.
- Work with schools, parents/guardians, community and other partners to ensure that students are regularly present.
- Monitor and analyze division-wide and school enrolment and attendance data.
- Ensure that schools track student attendance accurately, document any students who are chronically absent, and take immediate, sustained action to address causes of chronic absenteeism until the student is regularly present.
- Work with schools and agencies to identify supports and interventions to help meet both the educational and non-educational needs of students and families to ensure regular school attendance, such as through coordinated services.
- Ensure culturally safe educational environments and cultural competence among all staff.
- Report to MEECL regarding Chronic Absenteeism and Severe Chronic Absenteeism, as required

### **Manitoba Education & Early Childhood Learning (MEECL)**

- Monitor and support implementation of Policy Directive in school divisions, reviewing and updating on a three-year cycle
- Assist divisions through consultation and collaboration with interdepartmental contacts and community service agencies, as necessary
- Collect, analyze and report provincial attendance data through the provincial attendance index
- Establish and maintain connections with inter-sectoral partners to support student presence and engagement in schools
- Create a culturally relevant and responsive curriculum and expand the implementation of anti-racism and anti-discrimination education
- Support the implementation of attendance strategies, including restorative practice
- Support culturally safe educational environments and cultural competence among all MEECL staff

**Government Service Providers and Community Partners**

- Reinforce the importance of school attendance in all interactions with family and students.
- Responsible for sharing relevant information with schools and working collaboratively with students, parents/guardians, schools, and school divisions
- Provide supports and services that encourage regular attendance and help decrease any barriers that may be affecting a student's ability to attend school.
- Participate in coordinated case management and responsive planning for those who are chronically absent