

<b>Administrative Procedures Manual</b>	<b>Administrative Procedure 330</b>
	<b>Student Attendance</b>
	APPROVED: September 2013
Page 1 of 2	AMENDED/REVIEWED: November 2020, September 2019, May 2019,
LEGAL REFERENCE:	Section 1, 7, 8, 9, 31, 32, 33, 46, 47, 48, 49, 52, 53, 55, 196, 197, 222 Education Act

**Background**

Regular attendance is expected of every student in the Grande Prairie Public School Division. Grande Prairie Public School Division recognizes that regular attendance at school is critical to student success and is of the utmost importance for a child to achieve their full potential.

The Education Act requires attendance at school for eligible students who, at September 1 of that school year, are six years of age or older, and younger than sixteen years of age.

Attendance is a partnership between the school, the teacher, the student, the parent and the community. Although student attendance is primarily the responsibility of parents and the students, a high degree of communication between the home and school is vital in ensuring optimal attendance is achieved. The Division expects every teacher, counsellor, principal and parent to make every effort to support all students in school through high school completion. Staff must identify and address attendance concerns at every grade level.

Early interventions focused on attendance will make a difference for those students who are moving towards disengagement from school. It is very important for schools to accurately monitor, identify early and to intervene with students who are identified with attendance concerns.

The Division has a legal responsibility to ensure that students attend school on a regular basis and shall ensure that students abide by provincial attendance laws. The Division shall use all legal means necessary to correct absenteeism that has a negative impact on student learning.

Division school plans are grounded in the collaborative tiered model (see Attendance Pyramid-Appendix A). The Attendance Pyramid includes attention to the school and classroom learning environment and strategies, carefully monitored data collection, and specific targeted responses and interventions based on that data. The focus on attendance issues must be in a restorative, supportive context.

**Definitions**

**Regular attendance:** Regular attendance is defined as attending school every day that school is in operation unless the absence considered an excused absence.

**Absenteeism:** A pattern of absences where there is an impact on a student’s learning, progress, and/ or achievement. Absenteeism occurs when a child is routinely excused from school by a parent or guardian on a frequent enough basis to have a detrimental impact on a child’s success in school.

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## **Procedures**

1. Principals will develop a School-based Attendance Plan that will be submitted to the Director of Student Supports which reflects Board policy and aligns with both Division administrative procedures and the Division attendance pyramid. This plan must contain provisions for:
  - 1.1. Accurate attendance records.
  - 1.2. Intentional monitoring of the first month of school.
  - 1.3. Timelines and thresholds for parental contact and individualized student conversations.
  - 1.4. Expectations and strategies at all tiers: universal, classroom, targeted and intensive supports.
  - 1.5. Individualized student support plans.
  - 1.6. Communication plan.
  
2. School Administration may request from a parent or caregiver that they provide notice from a physician, counsellor, or nurse practitioner that clearly identifies a child's need to be excused from attending school for an established period of time.
  
3. The Designated Division Attendance Officer will:
  - 3.1. Review and provide feedback on submitted School-based Attendance Plan.
  - 3.2. Upon receiving a referred student: review school-based interventions with school administration to determine next steps.
  - 3.3. Establish final recommendations to remediate absenteeism.
  - 3.4. Bring forward persistent cases of absenteeism to the Attendance Review Board.