

## STUDENT ATTENDANCE

### Background

Regular attendance by students in all their classes enhances their performance and contributes substantially to their learning. While students have a right to access an educational program, they also have a responsibility to attend classes regularly and pursue their studies in a diligent manner.

Specific provisions for regulating the attendance of students shall be developed in consultation with students, staff and parents' advisory councils as appropriate.

### Procedures

1. An accurate daily record of attendance shall be kept for each student.
2. Principals are expected to have in place a system for verifying reasons for non-attendance on a daily basis.
  - 2.1 For all grades, unexplained absences will be reported to the office.
  - 2.2 In the elementary and middle schools, attendance shall be done in the morning and afternoon. All unexplained absences during the school day shall be reported to the office immediately after the absence becomes apparent. All reasonable efforts must be immediately made to determine the whereabouts of students reported absent.
  - 2.3 In the elementary and middle schools, a phoning system shall be in place to contact parents with regard to unexplained absences as soon as possible.
  - 2.4 In the secondary school, attendance shall be done during each period. All reasonable efforts must be made shortly to determine the whereabouts of students reported absent. Parents shall be contacted through an automated message.
3. Teachers shall assist in maintaining an accurate attendance record for each student.
4. Parents are to be encouraged to take the initiative in advising the school when students are absent.
  - 4.1 Short-Term Absences (One Day to One Week)
    - a. Parents/guardians are expected to notify the school of any short-term absences. This can be done by completing the online attendance form and/or contacting the school principal directly.
  - 4.2 Extended Leaves of Absence (Exceeding One Week)

**Note:** Extended absences during the month of September are governed by Administrative Procedure 300.

- a. Families planning to be away during the school year for an extended period exceeding one week, between October 1 and June 30, must complete and submit an Extended Leave of Absence Form to the school principal prior to the start of the absences.
  - b. For absences of more than one week and less than four weeks (20 instructional days): a place in the student's current school will be held.
  - c. For absences of more than four weeks (more than 20 instructional days): the student will be withdrawn from the school register and must re-register through Central Registration upon return. Every effort will be made to place the student in their catchment school; however, placement will be dependent on available space. If there is no space at the catchment school, the student will be placed at the next closest school with space.
5. In cases of unexplained absences, suspected truancy or excessive absences occurring, the parent or guardian shall be contacted as soon as a pattern of poor attendance becomes evident, as determined by the school's attendance procedures.
  6. Initial investigation of reasons for excessive student absence from school shall be the responsibility of the Principal or designate. An annotated log shall be kept of each contact with the home.

7. The Principal shall work directly with the student and the family to resolve attendance issues.
8. Principals will refer students to an expanded school-based team when further supports are required.

*Reference: Sections 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 17, 20, 22, 65, 79, 85 School Act*

*SD No. 40 (New Westminster)*

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*Adopted: May 30, 2017*

*Revised: August 2025*

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