

Frontier School Division is committed to enhancing student well-being and success through an equitable, inclusive and accessible education. The Division's aim is to support students in attending school regularly, maximizing their learning opportunities, and fostering a sense of belonging within the school community.

Attendance is a key factor in educational success and plays a crucial role in a student's wholistic development. The Division strives to create an engaging learning environment for all students. This policy reflects the dedication to working collaboratively with students, families, and the broader community to ensure every student has the best opportunity to thrive in their journey.

This policy is effective September 1, 2025.

Adopted June 12, 2025		
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1. General Guidelines

This policy and regulation align with Manitoba Education's directive to enhance student presence and engagement in schools. It represents Frontier School Division's approach to fostering a learning environment where every student is present and involved in their education. Recognizing the role of attendance in student success, this policy is designed to address the complex nature of absenteeism, ranging from individual student needs to broader systemic factors.

2. Goals

- a. **Enhance Student Presence and Engagement:** Foster an environment where every student feels valued, engaged, and motivated to attend school regularly.
- b. **Identify and Address Barriers to Attendance:** Proactively identify and address factors contributing to absenteeism, including social, economic, psychological, and health-related issues.
- c. **Ensure Consistent Attendance Monitoring:** Implement effective systems for monitoring, communicating, and addressing student attendance.

3. Definitions

- a. **Presence:** When a student attends and participates in the school or classroom on the days in which they are required. Students may be present even if they are not physically within a classroom, depending on their student-specific plan.
- b. **Engagement:** Engagement is expressed in students' feelings that they belong at school, and in their participation in school activities. This is an entry point to being able to engage students in the process of learning. Students' attitudes towards schooling, their attendance and participation in school activities, disposition towards learning, and working and socializing with others in school.
- c. **Regular Attendance:** Attending school regularly and participating consistently, missing no more than five days per year.
- d. **Absences:** Any time that a student is not in class or not participating in a school activity. Tracking of absences in Divisional Student Information System helps monitor student attendance effectively.
 - i. **Excused Absence:** Refers to any time that a student is not present in class or not participating in a school sanctioned activity (while not being on suspension) with the mutual consent of the school principal and the parent.
 - ii. **Unexcused Absence:** Refers to any time a student is not present in class or not participating in a school sanctioned activity (while not being on suspension).

- e. **Chronic Absenteeism:** Where unexcused absences account for 10 or more classes in a single high school course or 10 percent or more of instructional days in Kindergarten to Grade 8 in a reporting period.
- f. **Severe Chronic Absenteeism:** Where unexcused absences account for 20 or more classes in a single high school course or 20 percent or more of instructional days in Kindergarten to Grade 8 in a reporting period.
- g. **Student-Specific Plan (SSP):** A planning, record-keeping, and communication document, as outlined in Standards for Appropriate Educational Programming in Manitoba (MEECL, 2022). Student-specific planning is a process through which members of student support teams meet the unique needs of individual students; it may range from short-term strategies applied in the classroom to comprehensive, individualized programming.

4. **Proactive and Preventative Practices**

Consistently sharing attendance data with parents/guardians and students is a valuable practice. It fosters meaningful conversations about ways to enhance attendance and provides an opportunity to celebrate progress and successes together when improvements are achieved.

a. **Creating a Supportive School Environment**

Safe and Welcoming Atmosphere: Create and maintain a school environment that is safe, welcoming, and culturally responsive, ensuring that all students feel a sense of belonging and recognition.

Access: Address and fulfill basic student needs, including access to nutrition, transportation, and technology to support their physical health and academic focus.

Family Engagement: enhance family/ parental involvement in school activities and decision-making processes. Foster strong relationships with families and the community, recognizing their integral role in supporting student attendance and engagement.

b. **Transition Support**

Increase staff visibility and availability (if available) during key transition times throughout the school day and during critical periods such as grade progression or school changes. Provide additional support and guidance to students during these transition periods to ease their adaptation and maintain continuity in attendance.

5. **Coordinated Services:**

Frontier School Division recognizes the necessity of a coordinated, collaborative approach. This approach involves school-based, division-based and external support systems collaborating to provide comprehensive services specific to the needs of each student experiencing difficulty attending school or has chronic or severe chronic absenteeism.

a. **Case Management System**

Each student identified with chronic absenteeism is assigned a teacher or other designated staff person. This teacher or other designated staff person is responsible for coordinating the student-specific plan and ensuring that all necessary supports are in place.

b. **Student-Specific Planning**

Develop a student-specific plan for each student identifying the unique barriers affecting attendance and outlining strategies to address these barriers. Engage student specific support teams including but not limited to teachers, counselors, families/parents and the student, in this planning process.

c. **Interagency Collaboration and Information Sharing**

Foster partnerships with external agencies, including child and family services, health services, and community organizations, to provide additional support and resources for students and their families.

Establish clear protocols for sharing information between the school, the school division, external agencies, and families, respecting privacy and confidentiality while ensuring a comprehensive understanding of each student's needs.

6. **Response to Chronic Absenteeism:**

Frontier School Division emphasizes supportive and rehabilitative approaches over punitive measures. This approach is grounded in the understanding that each student's situation is unique and requires an individual response.

a. **Prohibition of Punitive Measures**

The use of suspensions, expulsions, and withdrawals as responses to absenteeism is prohibited. These measures are counterproductive and do not address the underlying issues of absenteeism.

b. **Student-Specific Planning**

For students experiencing chronic or severe chronic absenteeism, a detailed student-specific plan is required. This plan will identify unique barriers affecting attendance and outline specific strategies for addressing these issues. The planning process involves a core team, including parents or guardians, and is guided by the Standards for Appropriate Educational Programming.

c. **Ongoing Monitoring and Support**

Continuous monitoring of the implementation and effectiveness of the student-specific plans is essential. The school and division are responsible for seeking additional guidance and support through consultation and collaboration with relevant departments and community service agencies.

7. **Documentation, Monitoring, and Reporting**

Regularly monitor the attendance and engagement of students under case management to assess the effectiveness of interventions and adjust plans as needed.

Notification Procedure: If a student's absenteeism continues to be a concern despite interventions, the school division must provide a formal written notification to Manitoba Education, and if necessary, to Child and Family Services, outlining the steps taken and seeking further guidance and support.

8. **Roles and Responsibilities**

All stakeholders have responsibility in promoting regular school attendance and responding to absenteeism.

a. **Students**

- Attend school and classes.
- Follow the school's code of conduct.
- Participate in student-specific planning.

b. **Parents/Guardians**

- Stay informed about their child's attendance, behavior, and academic progress.
- Cooperate with school staff to ensure their child adheres to the school's code of conduct.

c. **School Support Teams**

- Monitor and record student attendance accurately.
- Communicate with principals and parents regarding attendance issues.
- Identify and address issues related to chronic absenteeism.
- Support regular attendance and participate in student-specific planning.

d. **Principals/Designates**

- Collaborate with teachers, students, and parents to promote regular attendance.
- Oversee accurate attendance records and student-specific planning.
- Report chronic or severe absenteeism to the school division.
- Lead school-based attendance initiatives and involve community agencies as needed.

e. **Community Partnerships**

- Consider methods of communication with community on the importance of daily regular attendance.
- Invite community to schools when celebrating student achievements and successes.

9. **Implementation and Monitoring**

Conduct regular training sessions and professional development workshops for staff, focusing on building student engagement and best practices in addressing attendance issues.

Ensure this policy is effectively communicated to all stakeholders, including students, parents, teachers, and administrative staff. Utilize various platforms such as school websites, newsletters, parent-teacher meetings, and student assemblies.

The effectiveness of the policy will be evaluated on an ongoing basis, with adjustments made, as necessary.

Information: New Policy Draft: Family/Community Engagement (under development)
[Policy F.1.B Appropriate Educational Programming](#)
[Policy G.1.A A Safe and Inclusive Learning Environment](#)
[Policy G.1.B Student Suspension](#)
[Policy G.1. C Student Expulsion](#)
[The Safe Schools Charter, Section 47](#)
[Student Presence and Engagement: Safe and Caring Schools Policy Directive](#)
[Minimize Use of Suspension: Safe and Caring Schools Policy Directive](#)
[The Protecting and Supporting Children \(Information Sharing\) Act](#)

Adopted June 12, 2025		
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