

<b>Kelsey School Division</b> <b>Box 4700</b> <b>The Pas, MB R9A 1R4</b>  <b>Phone: 623-6421</b>	<b>Code: JE</b>
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### STUDENT ATTENDANCE

- A. The Manitoba Public Schools Act, Section 260, requires all children of compulsory age (age 7 to 17 inclusive) to attend a school. Section 260 (1) states that “every parent of a child of compulsory school age . . . shall ensure that the child attends school.” Section 260 (2) states that “any person who fails or refuses . . . is guilty of an offence.”
- B. Regular school attendance shall be expected of all registered students according to the Public Schools Act.
- C. Admission to school may begin in September of the year the child reaches a 5<sup>th</sup> birthday by December 31 and shall be compulsory in September of the year the child reaches the 7<sup>th</sup> birthday by December 31 and shall remain so until the child reaches the 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. Any person has the right to attend until the end of the school year which includes the 21<sup>st</sup> birthday.
- D. In all cases, significant failure to attend school regularly shall be considered to be a symptom of medical, psycho-social and/or family problems and shall be dealt with accordingly. It shall not automatically be considered as cause for punitive or legal action.
- E. The Superintendent shall appoint an official Attendance Officer for the purpose of carrying out the provisions of the Act.
- F. For policy purposes, missed classes will be categorized as “excused”, “unexcused: or “explained”. Parent/guardian permission for absence may be given in advance to the school administration either by phone or in writing.
  - 1. Excused Absences – Grades K-12  
 Acceptable reasons for student absence according to the Public Schools Act are:
    - a) Absences by reason of sickness or other unavoidable cause (including the presence of a communicable disease, medical appointments, compassionate leave)
    - b) Absence on a day regarded as a holy day by the church or religious denomination to which the student belongs.
    - c) Attendance at an approved home study course or private school. Student must be registered with Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth.
    - d) Participation in a superintendent approved out of school program.

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2. Accountable Absences – Grades K-12  
Students may be absent for other reasons providing that the school administration is informed of the absence and the absence is approved by the parent(s)/guardian(s). When these absences occur, the student or parent(s)/guardian(s) must make arrangements with the student’s teacher(s) to ensure that the class work will be covered either before, during, or after the absence.
  
3. Unexcused Absences – Grades K-12  
Unaccountable absences are those about which the school has not been informed. It is the parent(s)/guardian(s) responsibility to ensure that the school is notified of each absence. All absences not reported to the school within a reasonable length of the student’s return to class will be deemed as unaccountable.

G. School administration, in conjunction with the Superintendent, will be responsible for the development of a written attendance policy particular to that school, and make it available to all students and parents at the beginning of each school year.

H. A school-based attendance protocol should include the following:

1. A statement emphasizing the importance of good attendance.
2. A definition of what is an acceptable reason for a student’s absence as well as a definition of what is unacceptable.
3. If proof of a valid reason for absence is required (such as a medical certificate), the situations for which such proof is required must be clearly defined and consistently defined.
4. A statement that it is permissible for student to miss for certain obvious reasons, including illness, participation in specific events such as athletics, etc.
5. A clear description of the steps that will be taken to deal with poor attendance.

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6. A clear indication of the implications of any corrective steps that are taken i.e., the consequence of any corrective step should be clearly stated.
7. Clear communication processes for actions taken at significant benchmarks. This communication shall be with parent(s)/guardian(s) as well as with the Superintendent, so that all are aware as situations become serious.
8. An opportunity for parent(s)/guardian(s) to appeal any action(s) taken or for the student to appeal if they are of the age of majority. The protocol should consider the need for temporary reinstatement of the student until the appeal is heard. The appeal process should include opportunity for higher levels of appeal from the school, to the Superintendent, to the Board of Trustees. The decision of the Board shall be final.

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## **STUDENT ATTENDANCE – SCHOOL BASED ATTENDANCE PROTOCOL**

School-based attendance protocol should include the following:

- A statement emphasizing the importance of good attendance
- A definition of what is an acceptable reason for a student's absence as well as a definition of what is unacceptable
- If proof of a valid reason for absence is required (such as a medical certificate), the situations for which such proof is required must be clearly defined and consistently defined.
- A statement that it is permissible for student to miss for certain obvious reasons. Examples of such obvious reasons include illness, participation in specific events such as athletics, etc.
- A clear description of the steps that will be taken to deal with poor attendance.
- A clear indication of the implications of any corrective steps that are taken i.e. the consequence of any corrective step should be clearly stated.
- Clear communication processes for actions taken at significant milestones. This communication shall be with parent(s)/guardian(s) as well as with the Superintendent, so that all are aware of situations as they become serious.
- An opportunity for parent(s)/guardian(s) to appeal any action(s) taken, or for the student to appeal if they are of the age of majority. The protocol should consider the need for temporary reinstatement of the student until the appeal is heard. The appeal process should include opportunity for higher levels of appeal from the school to the Superintendent to the Board of Trustees. The decision of the Board shall be final.