

ATTENDANCE OFFICER

Background

The Division believes that all students should attend school on a regular basis, unless excused in accordance with the provisions of the *Education Act*. The Division further believes that procedures should be in place to assist schools in dealing with students who are experiencing chronic attendance problems.

Procedures

1. The Board delegates to the Superintendent of Schools the authority and responsibility to enforce student attendance including:
 - a. determining that a parent has shown sufficient cause why the student should not be required to attend school and excusing that student from attending school for a prescribed period of time;
 - b. appointing one or more attendance officers, with the associate superintendent serving as the senior attendance officer; and
 - c. referring a student who is six years of age or older as of September 1 and who is younger than sixteen years of age, to the attendance board.
2. Parents/guardians have the prime responsibility for ensuring that students attend school regularly and punctually. If a student develops a serious attendance problem and the school staff and administration are unsuccessful in resolving the problem after exhausting all the resources available to them, the student may be referred to the attendance officer for that region. The "Attendance Officer Referral Form" shall be used by the school administration when making the referral.
3. The attendance officer may take whatever action is deemed prudent to improve student attendance including such things as:
 - a. consulting with the student, parent(s), and school staff;
 - b. arranging for a referral to an appropriate agency;
 - c. sending or transporting the student to school; or
 - d. arranging for enrolment in an alternative school program.
4. Actions taken by the attendance officer should be documented using the Student Attendance Report form.
5. Where attendance does not improve significantly following actions taken by the attendance officer, the matter shall be referred to the senior attendance officer who may give written direction to the student to attend school. Full documentation shall accompany such a referral.

6. Where a student fails to comply with such written direction, the senior attendance officer may make an “ex parte” application to a judge or justice of the peace as per Section 8 of the *Education Act*.
7. If the attendance officer is of the opinion that an “ex parte” application would not be effective, the senior attendance officer may refer the matter to the Superintendent, with a recommendation for referral to the attendance board as per Section 9 of the *Education Act*.
8. A referral to the attendance board by the Superintendent shall be made using the appropriate form: Attendance Board - Notice of Referral.
9. The attendance board provides a means to enforce compulsory school attendance. Referrals may be made to the attendance board, by the Division of which the student is a resident student or that operates or supervises the school in which the student is enrolled when:
 - a. a student who is required to attend a school under Section 7 of the Education Act does not attend school, and
 - b. attempts to enforce school attendance under Section 8 of the Education Act have, in the opinion of the board, not been effective.
10. Section 49 of the *Education Act* states that on hearing a matter referred to it, the Attendance Board may, subject to any terms or conditions that the Attendance Board considers proper in the circumstances, make an order doing one or more of the following:
 - a. directing the student to attend school;
 - b. directing a parent of the student to send the student to school;
 - c. subject to sections 11,20 and 40, directing the student to take an education program set out in the order;
 - d. reporting the matter to a child intervention worker under the Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act;
 - e. imposing on a parent of the student a monetary penalty not exceeding \$100 per day, to be paid to the Crown for each day that the student does not attend school, up to a maximum of \$1000,;
 - f. giving any such other direction not referred to in clauses (a) to (e) that the Attendance Board considers appropriate in the circumstances.

December, 2003
Update: April 2020

References

Section 1, 7, 8, 9, 31, 32, 33, 46, 48, 49, 52, 53, 55, 196, 197, 222 Education Act

Forms

[Attendance Officer Referral Form](#)
[Student Attendance Report Form](#)