



Extended Student Absences

Administrative Procedure 1.B.045

Board Governance Policy Cross Reference: 2, 3, 5, 15

Legal Reference: Public Schools Act

Date Adopted: September, 2013

Date Amended: August 31, 2015; April 2019

Date Reviewed: February, 2019; November, 2020

Background

The School District of Mystery Lake has a concern regarding the increasing number of students who miss extended periods of time from school. When this happens, students miss valuable curriculum that can't be made up. As well, teachers are often asked to do a lot of extra planning to accommodate the student absence. Evaluation becomes difficult when trying to account for extended absence against assignments and tests missed.

Students/families are requested to refrain, and strongly discouraged from, scheduling vacations occurring during class times. Each spring the School District of Mystery Lake approves its Annual School Calendar for the following year; this calendar should be consulted before planning an extended absence. This calendar is available from the School District of Mystery Lake website <http://www.mysterynet.mb.ca> or by contacting the office either by telephone at (204) 677-6150 or by email at sdml@mysterynet.mb.ca.

Legal Attendance Requirements

The School District of Mystery Lake's expectations for student attendance are those found in Part XIV of the *Public Schools Act*.

The *Public Schools Act*: Part XIV; Section 259.1(1), 259.1(2), 262

Section 259.1(1), "A child of compulsory school age shall attend school."

Section 259.1(2), "Subsection (1) does not apply to a child described in clauses 262 (a) to (j)."

Section 262, "No person is guilty of an offence under subsection (260(2) for failing or refusing to ensure that his or her child attends school if

- a) The child is in regular attendance at a private school, as defined in The Education Administration Act;

- a) in the case of a child who is 16 years of age or older, the child is enrolled in an adult learning centre registered under The Adult Learning Centres Act and is taking a program of study leading to a high school diploma;
- b) the field representative certifies that in his opinion the child is currently receiving a standard of education at home or elsewhere equivalent to that provided in a public school;
- c) the child is unable to attend school by reason of sickness or other unavoidable cause or is excluded from attendance under subsection 261(2);
- d) the child is absent from school on any day regarded as a holy day by the church or religious denomination with which the child is affiliated
- e) repealed, S.M. 2011, c.3, s. 12;
- f) the principal of the school has suspended the child from the school and the suspension is still in effect;
- g) the child has been expelled and has not been permitted to enroll in another school division;
- h) the child has received, or has completed the necessary requirements to receive, a graduation diploma or certificate of completion, as defined in the regulations made under subsection 259(2);
- i) the child is at least 15 years of age and is participating in an activity or program provided for in the regulations made under section 262.2;
- j) the child is absent or excused from school as authorized under this Act, a regulation made under this Act or another enactment; or

Procedure Statement and Guidelines

For purposes of this Procedure Statement Guidelines, the School District of Mystery Lake defines “extended absence” as any absence longer than five (5) consecutive school days.

Extended Absence Related to Illness

In cases of illness requiring an extended absence, the District will make alternate arrangements for instruction for the student through resources available to it. Arrangements will depend on the length of the expected absence, the nature of the illness and other relevant criteria.

Voluntary Extended Absences

The School District of Mystery Lake believes in providing a structured academic program. Attendance at school is critical. If families choose to take an extended absence, parents must accept that there is an academic cost involved with missed curriculum and school time. Effective teaching requires that the teacher be able to interact directly with the student and assess the student personally. The optimal

educational experience is that in which the student engages in the classroom environment with their teacher and peers. We ask that the following points be carefully considered prior to making a choice between attending school and a voluntary “extended absence”.

- Parents/guardians need to arrange a meeting with school administration and school staff a minimum of three (3) weeks prior to the beginning of the extended student absence. At this time, school staff will discuss procedures for program delivery as a result of the absence.
- The student should be in good standing with the school with regards to
 - Attendance
 - Academic standing
 - Behavior
- When a student is away on an extended absence while school is in session, the student will be marked absent in the school’s Attendance Register.
- All school work missed during an extended absence is the student’s and parent’s responsibility.
- While away the student should partake in a minimum of 2-3 hours designated study time daily.
- The student will be held accountable for all work missed. In some subjects/cases, teachers may, within reason, be able to provide packages of work for students to take with them. In other subjects/cases, it will be entirely the responsibility of the student to make up missed work after consulting the teacher(s) before leaving and/or upon return. The teacher is not responsible to provide instructions outside school hours for the student to get caught up.
- The student shall be required to have any pre-assigned work completed upon their first day back to school. Students are responsible for collecting their missed work the first day they return to class.
- Should a piece of *formative* assessment take place during the student’s “extended absence”, it is understood that opportunities for the student to engage in formative assessment work during the absence will be limited or non-existent. (Formative assessment pieces take place over a period of time, are used to enhance student learning, and give the student more than one opportunity to master the program outcome(s) before a mark is assigned. If a student is not present in

class during the period of time when a formative assessment piece is provided, achievement of outcomes will be determined with a summative assessment piece (one opportunity) for which a mark is assigned.)

- Extended leave absences will be considered excused absences. Should the number of these absences alone or combined with any other excused absence day(s) exceed twenty percent (20%) of the course instructional time; the student will not be eligible to receive an exam exemption.