



Providence Christian School

Attendance Policy

Adopted 20140114 Updated 20220913 & 20240205

Rationale

Faithful attendance at school is necessary both to obtain the maximum benefit of the education provided and to meet the requirements of the law. Parents must encourage and ensure the punctual and regular attendance of all their children at school.

Observations

- School attendance in Alberta is regulated in the Alberta Education Act.
- Regular daily attendance is compulsory for students who, at September 1 in a year are 6 years of age or older, and younger than 16 years of age.¹
- The Education Act gives the principal authority to determine
 - 'that the parent of the student has shown sufficient cause as to why the student should not be required to attend school, and
 - to excuse the student from attending school for a prescribed period of time.
- The Education Act stipulates that 'Where a student who is required to attend a school under section 7, enrolled in a private school, and does not regularly attend that private school, and the person responsible for the operation of that private school has made all reasonable efforts to ensure that the student attends school, the person responsible for the operation of that private school shall refer the matter to the Attendance Board.'
- Providence Christian School is under obligation to give credible access to 25 hour of instruction per credits to a student enrolled at the school. The principal is responsible to guard the quality of the program and to determine what constitutes credible access.
- Self-discipline regarding regular attendance is expected of all students in all grades. Unnecessary absences or repeated tardiness is a discourtesy to fellow students and the teachers and places an additional burden upon teachers to provide make-up work.
- The school provides lengthy holidays during the summer, at Christmas time, in mid-February, and at Easter during which time families should plan their vacations.

¹ Education Act Section 7(1)

Policy

1. Some absences from school for all or part of the school day shall be recognized as unavoidable and therefore "**Excused**" upon receipt of note or phone call from the home. Teachers are expected to assist students in whatever way possible to make up work that was missed during their absence. Examples of **Excused** absences are the following:
 - a) Personal illness, injury, or doctor appointments which cannot be scheduled after school hours or on Friday.
 - b) Illness in the immediate family which requires the student's presence.
 - c) Death in the family.
2. Some absences are avoidable and will be considered "**Unexcused**." Teachers are not expected to provide work for a student either prior to or after an **unexcused** absence. All assignments missed during an **unexcused** absence shall be given a grade of "zero." Make-up work shall be done at the discretion of the teacher. Examples of **unexcused** absences include the following:
 - a) Shopping, haircuts, etc.
 - b) Baby-sitting, part-time jobs, helping at home.
 - c) Recreation.
 - d) Family vacation
3. Application to excuse an otherwise unexcused absence should be made in writing to the principal at least four weeks prior to the beginning of the absence. In excusing an absence for reasons other than those noted above, the principal (for absences up to 8 school days) or the School board (for absences longer than 8 school days) in consultation with the classroom teacher(s) shall take into consideration the following:
 - a) The age and achievement level of the children
 - b) The probable impact on the children's academic progress
 - c) The possible educational benefits to be gained from the absence.
 - d) The impact of the absence on the classroomA positive response to an application to excuse an otherwise unexcused absence will require the adoption of a specific contract that outlines dates, schedules, goals, and standards for the work to be done by the student for the set period that he/she is not in physical attendance in the school.
4. Regarding **Unexcused** absences:

If the total number of **Unexcused** absences exceeds 8% of in-class instruction

 - a) the principal will contact the parents to confirm the reasons for the absences, to review the attendance expectations, to ensure that all the required course work is completed successfully, and ...
 - b) the student may not participate in extracurricular activities and ...

- c) students in grades 10-12 will be placed on an attendance contract outlining expectations for attendance.

If the total number of **Unexcused** absences exceeds 16% of in-class instruction retention at grade level of a K-9 students will be reviewed by .. and the possibility of enrolment withdrawal considered.

- a) students in grades 10-12 will be withdrawn from the affected course(s)

5. Regarding **Excused** absences:

If the total number of **Excused** absences exceeds 16% of in-class instruction

- a) the principal will contact the parents to confirm the reasons for the absences and
- b) a plan will be made to enable the student to successfully complete the course requirements depending on the circumstances and resources of the school.
- c) Student grades will be based on the student's ability to demonstrate an understanding of the required course concepts. Failure to show an understanding of a concept will result in a zero for that concept. Their course mark will be based on their ability to demonstrate an understanding of the entire course content.

6. Students who are absent from school for all or part of the school day without the knowledge and consent of either parents or the school shall be considered truant. The principal will investigate all cases of truancy and take appropriate disciplinary action. (See Discipline Policy.) Repeated cases of truancy shall be reported to the Board which may take further action including (in the case of students 15 years and younger) reporting the situation to the Provincial Attendance Board.

7. Students shall not be released early from school unless they are accompanied by someone authorized by a parent or guardian. Exceptions are in place for high school students who drive themselves and/or have an agreed schedule of early leaving.

An early release will be recorded as an **Excused** or **Unexcused** absence on the same basis as other absences. A student who is present for at least half of a morning or afternoon will be marked as present for that half day.

8. Students are expected to be on time to each class throughout the day. Students are to be in their seats with all their books and materials available when the class starts. Students who are late or unprepared will be subject to regular disciplinary procedures. (See Discipline Policy.)

9. Students in Grade Eleven or Twelve who are currently on the Honor Roll and who have spares in their timetable may leave the school during their spares, or during lunch.
 - a) Students who wish to exercise this privilege must bring a note from their parents indicating their approval of such absences.
 - b) Students must notify their homeroom teacher when they leave and when they return. If a spare occurs at the end of the day, and they have no after school responsibilities, then it is not necessary to sign back in. In these cases, they are considered dismissed for the day. Students who fail to abide by these procedures may lose their privileges.
 - c) A student loses this privilege if they fail to maintain their level of achievement.