

Attendance Policy

Section 31 of the Education Act states that the “student shall attend school regularly and punctually”. To that end, ESBCHS has developed the following guidelines to deal with attendance issues:

1. Expectations Regarding Attendance and Punctuality

- Achievement, attendance and punctuality are very closely linked: students who have irregular attendance and punctuality patterns dramatically increase their risk of failure. Students are expected to be on time and attend all classes.

2. Parental Responsibility

- Parents/guardians have the primary responsibility to monitor attendance and impose consequences. Parents are encouraged to resist allowing absences for anything other than those reasons outlined in the Education Act (i.e. student's health, religious holidays, extra-curricular activities). The school recognizes that students may be absent for other legitimate reasons; however, all absences contribute to missed instructional time, which can impact student achievement. Parents are asked to use School Messenger - Safe Arrival to verify all absences. Unverified absences will be considered trancies. All absences must be verified within 48 hours.
- Parents are asked to please refrain from scheduling family vacations during school time, especially during the scheduled exam periods at the end of each semester. The [ESBCHS Missed Assessment Policy](#) outlines the ways in which student absences during exam periods will be addressed.

3. Punctuality/Late Protocol

Students are expected to be on time and prepared for every class and to be present in the classroom prior to announcements and the playing of the national anthem each morning for block 1. Students who arrive late for class are to proceed directly to their classroom and should make the teacher aware of their late arrival. If a student arrives within the first 20 minutes of class, they should ask their teacher to amend their attendance so that it reflects being Late rather than Unexcused. Students who arrive more than 20 minutes after the start of class will be marked with an unexcused absence (U) rather than a late (L), and communication from a parent is required to excuse the absence. If a student leaves class for an unreasonable length of time, teachers may mark the student as U (unexcused).

4. Automated Messaging System

Students who are absent without verification by their parent(s)/guardian(s) will receive an automated email absence notification. The automated messaging system (School Messenger-Safe Arrival) will advise parents of an unverified absence via email to email addresses which have been provided to the school, and will also send an SMS text to parents who have enabled that function. Please note that the most common reason for a mistaken call is that a student arrived late for class and did not check in with their teacher to have the attendance updated. Students do not sign in at the office when late but should always sign out if they leave the building and will miss any classes.

5. Chronic Absenteeism

Students may be removed from any course in which they have missed in excess of 20 classes due to verified and/or unverified absences. Under normal circumstances, the following steps will occur before removing a student from a course:

- After each unverified absence, parents will receive an automated notification by phone call, email, and/or SMS text message (if enabled by parent).
- After 5 absences (excused or unexcused), teachers will contact parents regarding a growing attendance problem
- After 8 absences (excused or unexcused), the student is referred to an administrator to meet with the student to establish strategies to curtail continued attendance issues.
- After 10-15 absences (excused or unexcused), the student may be placed on attendance probation by the administrator, and parents will be notified.
- After 20 absences (excused or unexcused), and if previous interventions have not met with positive results, a student will be at risk of being removed from the class and referred to an alternate program delivery format at the discretion of the principal.

6. Catching Up on Missed Work

Teachers will endeavour to assist students with work they have missed; however, teachers may not be able to provide the additional assistance to students with unverified absences or who demonstrate chronic absenteeism. At the teacher's discretion, students may be assigned a mark of 0% for work, assessments or exams missed or due on the day of an unverified absence or for work not submitted within a reasonable time following a verified absence.

[Click here to view the Extended Leave Policy for absences over 5 days](#)