

Dear Parent/Guardian,

The Nova Scotia Department of Education and Early Childhood Education has just released a new student attendance and engagement policy for schools across our province. The policy and a supporting operational plan have taken effect as of October 1, 2017.

The policy is designed to identify and address absenteeism before it becomes a problem for students through early and targeted interventions.

Under the policy:

- students will be considered absent unless they are attending an activity that directly relates to their learning, or a school activity
- Addressing absenteeism or chronic lateness will vary based on the age, grade and the individual circumstances of the student. Parents/Guardians of students whose attendance pattern is of concern will be contacted by the school at various intervals to discuss attendance issues and to strategize on steps to improve attendance for the student.
- teachers will not be required to prepare additional materials or release test and exam information ahead of their release to the class
- Grade 10 to 12 students who miss more than 20 per cent of class time for a given course may lose a credit for that course based upon individual circumstance and the professional judgment of the teacher and principal

Parents, students, and teachers are invited to provide feedback on the policy and its implementation throughout the year. The department will review the policy and adjust based on lessons learned and feedback received after the 2017-18 school year.

A copy of the policy, operational plan and more information is available at www.ednet.ns.ca/student-attendance-and-engagement-policy. Should you have any questions or concerns please feel free to contact the school.