



ATTENDANCE COUNSELLING SERVICES

Responsibility:	<i>Superintendent, Student Achievement & Well-Being Supervisor of Social Work Services Social Work Department</i>
Legal References:	<i>Education Act (Part II – School Attendance) Ministry of Education: Instructions for the Use of Computerized Enrolment Registers Elementary and Secondary Schools (http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/forms/enrol/212372e.pdf).</i>
Related References:	<i>Administrative Procedure 2240 – Temporary Student Withdrawal on Short- Term Basis; SES-11-AB Absenteeism and School Interventions Checklist; SES-04-AS-F School Attendance Letter Template SES-11-AA School Attendance Letter for Subsequent Referrals Template; SES-11-A School Attendance Letter for Students Withdrawn from Parental Control Template IS-10-01 Student Referrals to Social Workers Student Success Framework</i>
Revisions:	<i>September 2016</i>
Reviewed:	<i>September 2016</i>

1. Preamble

- 1.1 The procedure that follows provides general guidelines and expectations for addressing pupil absenteeism. The Principal shall ensure the instructions for daily school attendance are followed as outlined in the Ministry of Education's Instructions for the "Use of Computerized Enrolment Registers Elementary and Secondary Schools".

2. Absenteeism and School Interventions

- 2.1 This procedure is in accordance with the Education Act and the Ministry of Education's guidelines for addressing pupil absenteeism. This procedure applies to all pupils of compulsory school age and affects school enrolment reporting.
- 2.2 Instructions are outlined and published annually in the Ministry of Education's "Instructions for the Use of Computerized Enrolment Registers for Elementary and Secondary Schools". The Principal's responsibilities are referenced within the "Admission" and "Absenteeism" sections.
- 2.3 When a pupil displays an attendance problem (a pattern of unexplained absences or habitual absenteeism), the Principal will intervene. Interventions may include:
- 2.3.1 Speaking with the pupil to address the issue;
 - 2.3.2 Contacting the parent/legal guardian and informing them of the issue;
 - 2.3.3 Planning with the parent/legal guardian, pupil, and school personnel regarding possible interventions;
 - 2.3.4 Inviting the parent/legal guardian to attend a school meeting to review interventions and progress.
- 2.4 Following a continued pattern of absenteeism, the Principal will send a letter to the pupil's parent/legal guardian outlining the number of absences and the impact this has

on the pupil's progress. Form SES-04-AS-F provides a format for this letter. In the case where a student 16 years of age or over has withdrawn from parental control, form SES-11-A provides a format for this letter. It is recommended that the Principal keep a record of all contact with the pupil and parent/ legal guardian. This may be necessary for any future proceedings.

- 2.5 If there is no resolution as a result of the school's interventions, the Principal shall consult with the Social Worker assigned to the school.
- 2.6 In the case where a pupil was referred to Social Work Services in the previous school year(s) and the Principal wishes to send a letter in the current school year that reflects the ongoing attendance concerns, form SES-11-AA provides a format for this letter.

3. Referral to Social Worker

- 3.1 If further intervention by the Social Worker is deemed appropriate following the consultation, a written referral is initiated via the Social Work Referral Database. The Principal will inform the parent/legal guardian that a Social Work referral has been made.
 - 3.1.1 The Principal may delegate the authority to make Social Work referrals to a Vice Principal by completing the 'Principal Delegation of Authority Form – Student Referrals to Social Workers' (form IS-10-01).
 - 3.1.2 The Principal will provide the Social Worker with a copy of the school attendance letter that was previously sent to the parent/legal guardian and a copy of the pupil's attendance profile.
- 3.2 The Social Worker will inquire into the pupil's absenteeism upon referral. If best efforts to resolve the absenteeism are not successful, the social worker will send a warning letter to the parent/legal guardian and/or pupil, as per the Education Act, Sec 26(4). A copy of the Education Act requirements for compulsory school attendance will be enclosed with the letter.

4. Prolonged Absences (15 Consecutive Days)

- 4.1 A pupil from the age of 5 up to their 14th birthday, who is absent for 15 consecutive days, will remain in the register if the Principal has referred the case in writing to the Social Worker.
A pupil aged 14 up to their 18th birthday, who is absent for 15 consecutive days, may remain on the register for up to 60 consecutive days if the Principal has referred the case to the Social Worker.
- 4.2 A copy of the Social Work referral is retained at the school. The Social Worker will provide, upon request, a Prolonged Absence Report Memo (15 –day Report) to the Principal to be enclosed in the school register. If a pupil is to remain in the Register for one or more subsequent 15-day periods, the Principal must inform the Social Worker about the continued absenteeism. It is the responsibility of the Principal to request Prolonged Absence Reports from the Social Worker indicating that the pupil's file is still active.
- 4.3 In the case of the pupil who is seriously ill, the pupil's name is retained in the Register if appropriate medical documentation is received and kept on file. A referral to the Social Worker is not required in this case.
- 4.4 For further instructions regarding prolonged absenteeism or temporary withdrawals, please refer to instructions outlined in Administrative Procedure 2240 – Absenteeism: Temporary Student Withdrawal on Short-Term Basis.