



TCSA POLICY	
<b>TITLE</b>	Student Attendance
<b>POLICY NUMBER</b>	21-11-V1
<b>PROGRAM NAME</b>	JK-Grade 12
<b>DOMAIN NAME</b>	Education
<b>EFFECTIVE DATE</b>	30-June-2023
<b>NEXT REVIEW DATE</b>	<b>30-June-2026</b>
<b>APPROVAL DATE</b>	30-June-2023
<b>ISSUING AUTHORITY</b>	Tłıchǫ Community Services Agency
<b>ACCREDITATION STANDARD</b>	N/A

## POLICY AND GUIDING PRINCIPLE

This policy draws its authority from the NWT Education Act and the NWT School Handbook. The Tłıchǫ Community Services Agency (TCSA) believes that that regular classroom attendance at school is an important prerequisite for student achievement and success. This policy is adopted in order to affirm that responsibility for attendance lies with the student and his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) and outlines schools' responses to absenteeism.

## PURPOSE/RATIONALE

This policy will provide guidance on processes to encourage successful school attendance. Board members recognize and appreciate the pivotal role school attendance plays in achievement in school and subsequently in adult life and acknowledges the barriers that many families have to regular school attendance. Thus encourages a holistic approach to attendance management.

It is the policy of the TCSA that all students registered in schools attend school regularly and punctually unless exempted from doing so for a legitimate reason.

The purpose of this policy is:

- To set a high expectation for student attendance as the foundation for all academic success;



- To promote responsible participation in the school community;
- Set clear expectations for schools' responses to absences including chronic absenteeism including responsibility for missed work; and
- To outline sanctioned excuses for absences from school.

## DEFINITIONS

**Chronic Absenteeism:** where a student is absent from school for any reason more than 10% of the time. “Chronic absenteeism can occur as early as preschool and kindergarten and has been shown to be related to future chronic absenteeism, grade retention, and poor academic achievement, particularly for social skills and reading. The literature reveals that poor school performance is associated with poor adult health outcomes.” (*The Link Between School Attendance and Good Health*, Allison, M. et al., 2019)

**Excused absence:** An absence from school that is confirmed by a parent or guardian as sanctioned due to illness, suspension, vacation, traditional or religious activities. Further defined in the Education Act and NWT School Handbook.

**Unexcused absence:** An absence from school that is not sanctioned by a parent or guardian, often referred to as truancy.

## SCOPE/APPLICABILITY

This policy will apply to all students registering at and attending TCSA schools, including alternative programming. Attendance of students over the age of 21 (mature students) will fall under the TCSA Mature Student Policy.

## PROCEDURE

1. Director of Education under the TCSA Senior Secondary Policy has to approve all transfers in/out of courses after the first 3 weeks of the semester.
2. Teachers will keep accurate records of student attendance daily using the designated electronic system in addition to paper records. Principals will regularly review teachers attendance records to ensure accurate and appropriate response.
3. School secretaries will update attendance records where parents/guardians contact the school to provide excused absences, and will, where possible and in conjunction with teachers contact all absent students' families to obtain excuses.



4. The Education Act provides for excusable absence from classroom attendance generally for the following reasons:
  - a. A student is unable to attend because of sickness or other unavoidable cause that has been reported to the Principal.
  - b. A student is absent on a day regarded as a holy day by the religious denomination to which the student belongs.
  - c. The student has been suspended, expelled or excused from attending school by the proper school official.
  - d. In the opinion of the Superintendent or his/her designate, the student is receiving adequate instruction elsewhere such as home schooling or a private school.
  - e. The Principal of the school, after consultation with the parent(s)/guardian(s) has excused the student from attending school for a period of time that the Principal may direct in order to allow the student to participate in traditional aboriginal activities on the land or other learning experiences away from the school.
  - f. In addition to the Education Act sanctioned absences, excused absences will include, at the Principal discretion, competing in Arctic Winter Games and other non-school sponsored territorial level extra-curricular activities.
5. School response to excused absences shall include at the teachers' discretion:
  - a. Confirming the absence is excused as defined by this policy and keeping accurate records of these absences;
  - b. Extended time to complete missed course work/learning, including where appropriate providing alternative assignments;
  - c. Excusing work;
  - d. Where the absence is extended considering alternative models for learning such as distance education, online learning, or self-directed learning; and
  - e. In alignment with the TCSA Student Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting policy: effort, attendance/participation, attitude and other behaviors will not be included in marks but will be reported separately unless they are stated as part of a learning goal.
6. School response to absences shall include at the principals' discretion:
  - a. A tiered school wide response to establishing attendance goals and reducing barriers to attendance
  - b. In the absence of a school policy TCSAs will use the guidelines:
    - i. Tier 1 - 90% or higher attenders will receive classroom level interventions such as establishing high expectations for student attendance, regular contact with student/families upon absence, expectations for completing missed work, and possibly using flex and after school work periods.



- ii. Tier 2 - 60-90% attendance, in addition to the tier 1 approach, the school will provide additional supports by way of the use of alternative school supports such as office and administrative staff (such as community liaison) contacting home, School Based Support Teams, use of school clubs and high interest courses at the start of the day, providing items to reduce barriers (ex: showers at school, alarm clocks), and access to school services such as counselling.
- iii. Tier 3 - chronic absentee students with less than 60% attendance, in addition to the tier 1 and 2 strategies may include mentor programs, strategic course assignment with possible spares, connecting student to school supports such as counsellors, peer support workers, Elders, and liaison workers, consideration for family meetings with SBST including Child and Family Services where appropriate, further reduce barriers with specialized programming to establish positive relationship with school.

## **PERFORMANCE MEASURES**

Audits of the school registrations and attendance are conducted by the Regional Education Information and Computer Technology Coordinator in conjunction with the Principal and Director.

## **CROSS-REFERENCES**

TCSA Student Assessment, Evaluation, and Records Policy  
TCSA Senior High Program Policy  
TCSA Mature Student Policy

## **ATTACHMENTS**

NA

## **REFERENCES**

- NWT Education Act



- <https://publications.aap.org/pediatrics/article/143/2/e20183648/37326/The-Link-Between-School-Attendance-and-Good-Health?autologincheck=redirected> “The Link Between School Attendance and Good Health” *Pediatrics* (2019) 143 (2): e20183648. Mandy A. Allison, MD; Elliott Attisha, DO; Marc Lerner, MD; Cheryl Duncan De Pinto, MD; Nathaniel Savio Beers, MD; Erica J. Gibson, MD; Peter Gorski, MD; Chris Kjolhede, MD; Sonja C. O’Leary, MD; Heidi Schumacher, MD; Adrienne Weiss-Harrison, MD

## **APPROVAL**

Reviewed and Approved By:

---

Kevin Armstrong  
Chief Executive Officer  
30-June-2023

Reviewed and Approved By:

---

Ted Blondin  
TCSA Chairperson  
30-June-2023