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**HORIZON SCHOOL DIVISION****POLICY HANDBOOK**

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| <b>Policy Code:</b>                      | IE   |
| <b>Policy Title:</b>                     | Attendance (authorized and unauthorized)                                   |
| <b>Cross Reference:</b>                  | IC, IGD  |
| <b>Legal Reference:</b>                  | <i>Education Act</i> S. 7, 8, 9, 256, 258, <i>Trespass to Premises Act</i> |
| <b>Adoption Date:</b>                    | April 23, 1997   |
| <b>Amendment or Re-affirmation Date:</b> | <b>April 2025</b>  |

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**POLICY**

THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF HORIZON SCHOOL DIVISION RECOGNIZES THAT THE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARENTS, STUDENTS, TEACHERS, AND PRINCIPALS WITH REGARD TO STUDENT ATTENDANCE ARE SPECIFIED IN THE EDUCATION ACT. THE BOARD BELIEVES THAT THERE IS A STRONG CORRELATION BETWEEN REGULAR ATTENDANCE AND STUDENT LEARNING. AS SUCH, THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES EXPECTS ALL STUDENTS TO ATTEND SCHOOL REGULARLY AND PUNCTUALLY AND EXPECTS PARENTS AND STUDENTS TO BE ACCOUNTABLE FOR THE DAYS WHEN STUDENTS ARE ABSENT.

**DEFINITIONS**

1. Attendance officer is defined as the superintendent
2. Excusable absences means an absence as defined in Section 7(4) of the Education Act:
  - 2.1. The student is unable to attend due to reason of sickness or other such unavoidable cause;
  - 2.2. The day is recognized as a Religious holidays by the denomination to which the student belongs;
  - 2.3. The principal of the school has suspended the student from school and the suspension is still in effect;
  - 2.4. The student has been expelled from a school and has not yet been enrolled in another education program, or
  - 2.5. The board
    - 2.5.1. determines that the parent of the student has shown sufficient cause as to why the student should not be required to attend school, and
    - 2.5.2. excuses the student from attending school for a prescribed period of time.
  - 2.6. Where a student is excused from attendance at school under 2.5, that student is excused from attendance at school only during the period of time prescribed by the board.
3. Inexcusable absences shall include all other reasons for being absent and may be referred to as truancy.

## **Policy IE – *Student Attendance, Cont’d.***

4. Parent is as defined under the Education Act.
5. Student is as defined under the Education Act.

### **GUIDELINES**

1. The preamble of the Education Act states:
  - 1.1. parents have the right and the responsibility to make informed decisions respecting the education of their children, and
  - 1.2. parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that may be provided to their children..
2. While parents provide the reason for the absence, it is the school that determines whether the absence is excusable or inexcusable.
3. Students and parents shall account for absences or tardiness in a manner satisfactory to the school and in alignment with policy and the Education Act.
4. Schools are not mandated to provide school work for extended absences. Student absences of two or more weeks from school or instruction due to illness, injury, life events, participation in major events, or international travel may, depending on circumstances, result in parents being responsible for the education of their child.
5. A student who was not in attendance in September is transferred out according to the September 30 count date requirements.

### **REGULATIONS**

1. Students are required to attend school regularly and punctually unless excused under the provisions of the Education Act.
  - 1.1. The definition of regular and punctual may vary depending on school and/or program and shall be defined by the school in relation to active participation in learning.
  - 1.2. No person shall
    - 1.2.1. disturb or interrupt the proceedings of a school,
    - 1.2.2. disturb or interrupt the proceedings of a school meeting,
    - 1.2.3. loiter or trespass in a school building or on property owned by a board, or
    - 1.2.4. conduct themselves in a manner detrimental to the safe operations of a school.
  - 1.3. The superintendent or designate may issue a no trespass order against an individual who has not abided by clause 1.2 above.

**Policy IE – *Student Attendance, Cont’d.***

- 1.3.1. Notice not to trespass may be given orally or in writing
- 1.4. Students not registered in the school may not partake in classroom or school related activities without principal approval.
2. Schools shall establish and communicate an attendance administrative guideline which includes a process for,
  - 2.1. tracking student attendance,
  - 2.2. keeping parents informed of student attendance issues,
  - 2.3. students and/or parents to notify the school of student absences, and
  - 2.4. consequences that may result from truancy.
3. Schools shall make students and parents aware of their responsibility for regular and punctual student attendance and of consequences that may result from truancy.
4. Teachers shall keep accurate attendance records for each of their students using the Student Information System and report attendance to the principal and/or parents in accordance with school practices.
5. Students and parents shall account for student attendance absences including tardiness in a manner satisfactory to the school.
6. School administrators, consistent with the Education Act, shall determine whether absences are excusable or inexcusable based upon reasons and rationale communicated by the student and/or parent(s).
7. When students are inexcusably absent they are not automatically excused from classroom work or assessments they miss.
  - 7.1. Students excusably absent may or may not be excused from missed classroom work and/or assessments at the discretion of the teacher.
8. Parents and school staff should work collaboratively to enforce student attendance.
9. When in the judgment of the principal or designate a student's absence record becomes a concern, the principal or designate shall utilize the continuum of supports and services and may initiate one or more of the following actions:
  - 9.1. encourage through discussion with the student;
  - 9.2. collaboration with parents;
  - 9.5. adjust a program or schedule;
  - 9.6. provide counselling;

**Policy IE – *Student Attendance*, Cont’d.**

- 9.7. deny school privileges;
  - 9.8. impose a suspension;
  - 9.9. use of external supports;
  - 9.10. refer the matter to Alberta Education Office of Student Attendance and Reengagement for a hearing of the Attendance Board.
  - 9.11. recommend for expulsion; and/or
  - 9.12. other action deemed appropriate by the school administration.
10. When, in the judgment of the principal, a student is in repeated violation of the attendance provisions of the Education Act, and/or the school, the Attendance Officer is to be consulted.
- 10.1. If the attendance officer has reasonable and probable grounds to believe that a student is not attending school in accordance with section 7 of the Education Act, the attendance officer may enforce school attendance as per the Education Act.

## **No Trespass Order**

[DATE]

To: [NAME OF PARENT IF SENT TO PARENT]

At around [TIME] on [DATE], the principal of [SCHOOL NAME] was ... [DETAILS OF EVENT]. I have confirmed that [NAME OF STUDENT] did ...[DETAILS OF EVENT].

[STUDENT’S NAME]’s actions are in direct violation of division policy and section 256 of the Education Act which reads: “27(1) No person shall (a) disturb or interrupt the proceedings of a school, (b) disturb or interrupt the proceedings of a school meeting or board meeting, (c) loiter or trespass in a school building or on property owned by a board, or (d) conduct themselves in a manner detrimental to the safe operations of a school.

As [NAME OF STUDENT] [IS/IS NOT] a Horizon School Division student, is [a,b,c,d above], this letter serves as a “No Trespassing Order” for [STUDENT’S NAME] and notice of Section 2 of the Trespass to Premises Act, which states no person shall trespass on premises with respect to which that person has had notice not to trespass.

Should [NAME OF STUDENT] be present again on any Horizon School Division property, including, but not limited to, [SCHOOL NAMES] it will be considered a contravention of Section 256 of the Education Act and Section 2 of the Trespass to Premises Act. Should this occur, [STUDENT’S NAME] shall be prosecuted for a trespassing offence and liable to a fine up to a maximum of \$1,000.

Sincerely,

Cc: POLICE [INCLUDE NAME]  
[NAME OF PRINCIPALS OF ADDITIONAL SCHOOLS WHERE TRESSPASS ORDER  
APPLIES]  
Superintendent of Schools