



# St. Michaels University School

Outstanding preparation for higher learning and for life.

## Senior School Attendance Policy:

Policy and Procedures for Ensuring Regular Attendance

### Table of Contents

1. Introduction .....	2
Preamble .....	2
Definitions .....	2
2. Policy .....	3
2.1 Principles .....	3
2.2 Responsibilities .....	3
3. Procedure .....	4
3.1 Overview .....	4
3.2 Procedure by Responsibility .....	4
3.3 Sample Case .....	7

# SMUS Senior School Attendance Policy

## Introduction

### 1. Preamble

At SMUS, there is an expectation that students will attend classes and participate fully in the life of the school. By being present in class, students have the best opportunity to make the most of the educational opportunities afforded by SMUS and to develop the important teacher-student relationships for which we are known. Irregular attendance may lead to underachievement and a lack of participation in school life in general.

Students will miss class time for various reasons. This is understood and this document will outline the responsibilities of the student, parent and school when this situation arises. Students who participate in extracurricular events may need to miss classes in order to fulfill their commitment. Medical appointments and illness may also result in missed classes and through proper communication, a student's success at the school is still possible because of resources that are available, both human and physical.

The school is committed to a positive policy that encourages excellent attendance and at the same time allows students to pursue their interests and passion available through an extensive extracurricular programme.

The aim of this document is to ensure that there is a clear system in place for reporting, tracking and rectifying attendance on a daily basis as well as to outline the procedure for those students where non-attendance is identified as a barrier to their success.

### DEFINITIONS

Word/Term	Definition
Absent - Excused	Student is not present in class and school is aware of the reason and it is Ministry approved
Absent - Unexcused	Student is not present in class and school has not been made aware of the absence or absence is not Ministry approved
Late	Student arrives late to class with no valid excuse
Tardy	Student arrives late to class with a valid excuse
Ministry	Ministry of Education of British Columbia
SDS	Student Data System – the school's data management system used to track attendance

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# Policy

## 2. 1 Principles

The School is committed to working with students and parents to ensure regular attendance. With a strong commitment to personal excellence, SMUS will support students as they pursue their interests through extracurricular involvement in and out of school. We will also support students who are experiencing difficulty in attending school because of a medical condition to the point where it is in the student's best interest to address the health concern ahead of academics.

The School Data System (SDS) will be used to collect and update the attendance data.

## 2. Responsibilities

<b>1.</b>	<b>The School</b> The School has an obligation to inform students and parents of the attendance policy. The School will record attendance and report the data to the Ministry on a monthly basis and to parents on scheduled reports throughout the school year. The School will contact parents when attendance concerns arise. The School will inform parents of the resources available when attendance concerns arise. At any time, the School will make attendance data available for a parent or legal guardian when requested.
<b>2.</b>	<b>The Student</b> Students must play an active role in taking responsibility for accurate attendance reporting. Students must ask permission of their teacher prior to a scheduled absence. Students are responsible for work that is covered in a class where they have been absent. Day students must report to the data centre with a note for a scheduled absence that is not school-related, ie. medical. Boarding students are to make all medical appointments through the Health Services Office in order that they are properly recorded. Students must communicate at the earliest possible time with the classroom teacher by email when a class is missed.
<b>3.</b>	<b>Parents</b> Parents play an important role in supporting regular attendance at school. The school calendar is published in advance of the upcoming school year in order to plan student travel so that classes are not missed. Reinforcing the importance of student attendance in class is one way to ensuring a positive experience at the school. It is important to note that holiday time outside of the scheduled school holidays is viewed as an unexcused absence. For a scheduled absence, day student parents must submit a note, email or phone the Data Centre ahead of time noting the date and time of the absence and the reason. For an unscheduled absence, they are asked to phone the Data Centre with the reason for the absence. This plays a crucial role in maintaining accurate attendance data. Parents will inform the School of any situation that may hinder the student's ability to attend classes.

# Procedure

## 3. 1 Overview

There are many people involved in the success of our students at SMUS Senior School. The following outlines what each of these participants will do with respect to attendance. This will include; classroom teacher, homeroom teacher, Houseparent Staff, Assistant Director; Student Life, Health Centre staff, Data Centre staff, student and parent.

## 2 Procedure by Responsibility

<b>1.</b>	<b>The School</b>
1.1	<b>Classroom Teacher will</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explain the attendance policy to students at the beginning of the course.</li> <li>• Enter attendance at the beginning of each class</li> <li>• Correct any errors in attendance through the SDS or by contacting the Data Centre</li> <li>• Submit a list of students participating in a school event for which the teacher is responsible; i.e. an off-campus theatre trip. [This list is to be created in the SDS and accessed by the Data Centre.]</li> <li>• Enter a pre-planned cancelled class into the SDS as a calendar event and in the box for Event Details, enter the reason [ie. at Vancouver AP Conference]             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Email Data Centre to let them know that the class has been cancelled</li> <li>○ Notify students</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>N.B. When the teacher is absent for something unexpected and the class cannot be covered, the Director’s assistant will enter the cancelled class in SDS as per teacher instructions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contact the parent or guardian when <b>three</b> unexcused absences have been noted. [This contact must also be communicated with the Assistant Director; Student Life, the homeroom teacher and if applicable, the Senior Houseparent.] N.B. For classes held once a week in the evening, one missed class constitutes the equivalent of three unexcused absences.</li> <li>• Contact the homeroom teacher and Assistant Director; Student Life and Senior House Parent when attendance concerns escalate.</li> <li>• Continue to monitor students of concern.</li> </ul>
1.2	<b>Homeroom Teacher will</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Check the attendance information for students in their homeroom regularly by using the SDS.</li> <li>• Remind students to ask parents to communicate as expected with the Data Centre.</li> <li>• Monitor classroom teacher contact with parents or guardians in order to identify attendance concerns.</li> <li>• Communicate with the Assistant Director; Student Life and Senior Houseparent if applicable when a pattern of unexcused absences is identified in more than one subject area.</li> <li>• Participate in team-based meetings when a significant attendance concern is evident.</li> </ul>

1.3	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Data Centre Staff will</b></p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notify parents of day students when their child is not present in one or more classes in the school day.</li> <li>• Email a student when an absence has been recorded for a class.</li> <li>• Remind classroom teachers when attendance has not yet been entered on a particular day.</li> <li>• Make a daily attendance report available to Faculty and House staff through SDS.</li> <li>• Update attendance information as it is made known.</li> <li>• Submit an annual report to the Ministry of Education.</li> </ul>
1.4	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Health Centre Staff will</b></p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enter "Absence – Excused" in the SDS for students where there is a clear medical need for this to happen.</li> <li>• Enter boarding student medical appointments into the SDS.</li> <li>• Notify the Senior Houseparent of a boarding student where the frequency of the Health Centre visits indicate issues which are not average health related concerns and need to be addressed.</li> <li>• Encourage students to attend class and avoid missing any tests.</li> </ul>
1.5	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Houseparent Staff will</b></p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Check the attendance data for their boarding students each school day.</li> <li>• Ask students to speak to their classroom teacher if an error has been made in attendance data entry.</li> <li>• Assign consequences to students for having an unexcused absence or late. [These consequences are currently a Friday Night Prep at a minimum to a weekend gating at the maximum for an unexcused absence and vary for a late dependent on the situation.]</li> <li>• Participate in team-based meetings when a significant attendance concern is evident for one of their boarding students.</li> </ul>
1.6	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Assistant Director; Student Life will</b></p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor classroom teacher contact with parents or guardians in order to identify attendance concerns.</li> <li>• Support classroom teachers as they encourage regular attendance</li> <li>• Ensure that unexcused absences are followed up.</li> <li>• Participate in team-based meetings when a significant attendance concern is evident.</li> <li>• Communicate directly with students and parents and Senior Houseparent for a boarding student when prior attempts at improving attendance for a student have not worked.</li> <li>• Put an attendance contract in place where necessary.</li> <li>• Contact the Health Centre and/or school counselor if attendance issues are related to wellness.</li> </ul>
<b>2</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>The Student will</b></p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attend classes regularly and punctually unless they have an authorized absence.</li> <li>• Request permission for a planned absence longer than a half day through the use of the Green Sheet.</li> <li>• Communicate with the classroom teacher at the earliest possible time following an unplanned absence.</li> <li>• Provide a note from home to the Data Centre to excuse absences that are not school-related.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Be responsible for work that is covered in missed classes.</li> <li>● Speak to their classroom and/or homeroom teacher when attendance issues begin to appear.</li> <li>● Meet with the Assistant Director; Student Life when progress is not being made to improve attendance.</li> <li>● Work with the support available at the school and with parents to rectify attendance issues.</li> </ul>
<b>3</b>	<b>The Parent will</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Ensure their child attends school regularly</li> <li>● Make appropriate travel arrangements throughout the school year to ensure that their child does not miss classes unnecessarily.</li> <li>● Notify the Data Centre as outlined in the Parent Handbook when a absence occurs.</li> <li>● Email <a href="mailto:extendedleave@smus.bc.ca">extendedleave@smus.bc.ca</a> to ask for an extended leave of longer than half a school day (non-school related).</li> </ul>

### 3 Sample Case

- 1 Student has accumulated three unexcused absences
- 2 Classroom teacher contacts parent and cc's the Senior Houseparent (if relevant), Homeroom Teacher, Assistant Director; Student Life
- 3 If student improves attendance, then no further action is required. If not...
- 4 Student misses another class
- 5 Classroom teacher contacts parent (and SHP) again and includes the aforementioned staff in the communication
- 6 A plan is discussed with the classroom teacher and the student and parent and implemented to address the problem and the Homeroom teacher and Assistant Director; Student Life are informed of the plan
- 7 If student improves attendance, then no further action is required. If not...
- 8 Classroom teacher contacts Assistant Director; Student Life who asks the student to meet to put a plan in place that may include an attendance contract
- 9 If at any point the Homeroom teacher feels that it is a problem for the student in more than one subject area, this will be communicated to the Assistant Director; Student Life.

**This procedure may also apply for students that have accumulated excused absences if they are seen to be interfering with the student's ability to succeed at the school.**