



# Student Attendance Matters

On average, 25% of all students miss 16 or more days of school.

## What is the student attendance policy?

We want to see our students succeed and we know that student success is linked to regular attendance in school. The student attendance and engagement policy is a provincewide policy that sets a clear expectation for students, parents and teachers.

"Truancy is associated with poorer student performance in mathematics" and "skipping days of school is associated with poorer performance" — *PISA in Focus, January 2014*

## Are there consequences under the policy?

High school students who miss more than 20% of class time may be at risk of losing their credit. Decisions about loss of credit will be made by school administrators, in collaboration with the student's teacher, and will consider the student's individual circumstances. For junior high and elementary school students, there will be more emphasis on working with parents to address missed class time.

Attendance becomes a greater concern as students move to junior and senior high, on average students in these grades miss more days per year.

## How many days can my child miss?

We want students to be in school every day, but we know that is not always possible. Communication between the family and school is key when a student is absent. At all levels, but especially in elementary grades, the focus will be on identifying attendance issues early and responding in a way that helps build good attendance habits.

For high school students, missing 20% of class time (**generally** a day a week, or 1 in every 5 classes) puts them at risk of losing credit in that course.



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## What is considered an absence?

Any time a student is not in class, except when they are taking part in a school activity, is considered an absence.

More junior high students miss 16 days or more, compared to elementary and senior high students.

## Where can I find more information?

For more information and additional Frequently Asked Questions, visit <https://www.ednet.ns.ca/student-attendance-and-engagement-policy>

On average, about 6% of all students missed more than 35 days of school in 2015–16.

## I have a child with special needs. How will they be affected by this policy?

The goal is to help all students attend school as much as they are able. For children with special needs, parents will work closely with the school – and any community partners as appropriate, to develop the right support for the student.