

Kelowna Secondary School - Attendance Policy

The goal of this policy is to support and encourage students to make regular attendance a priority here at KSS. It is our belief that every student at K.S.S. has the opportunity to achieve success. Regular attendance is a critical component of that success, and requires the partnership of the student, their guardians, and the school.

Note: The School Act (Article 3) requires that all children who reside in British Columbia must participate in an educational program provided by the Board until he or she reaches the age of 16 years.

In the current environment, expectations are in place for teachers to provide instruction which brings content and skills to students in ways that assist in, enhance and expand their learning. In the modern classroom a significant number of learning outcomes are not completed or assessed through paper assignments and activities alone. If the student is not in the class, he or she misses not only all of the instruction and explanation designed to facilitate student learning, but many required learning outcomes as well. Given enough absences, in many courses the required elements of the course cannot be met, regardless of what the student tries to take on at home by way of make-up work. An absence is an absence, regardless of the reason. Each absence results in a lost learning opportunity in the classroom, which may not be regained.

Our experience tells us that students who miss large numbers of classes are at a significantly increased risk of lower academic performance, and thus put their graduation in jeopardy. This policy is aimed at aiding academic success by making transparent the structures in place used to monitor regular attendance, structures that require the participation of students, their guardians, and school staff.

Home/School Communication and Attendance Procedures:

Communication between parents, students, and teachers is critical when a student is absent from class. Students are ultimately responsible for this direct communication and for any work they miss during an absence. If students are unable to contact teachers for homework themselves, parents can e-mail the teachers directly to request missed work. Contact information can be found on our website. Please do not contact the main office for this purpose.

Parents/Guardians are required to call the school attendance line (250-870-5105 Ext. 1) if a student(s) in their care is going to be absent from class (es) Please do not call the main office. Parents should leave a message on the attendance line for any excused lates, early dismissals, and absences. Please leave only one message for a known multi-day absence. (eg. vacation) The attendance line is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

IMPORTANT: Notes are not accepted at the office to either excuse absences or to sign students out.

Tardiness: If late for school, the student must sign in at the office immediately upon arrival and proceed promptly to class.

We believe that parents need to be aware of all student absences; therefore, the Synervoice automated attendance system contacts the parents/guardians of absent students if they fail to contact the school.

Absences:

Numerous reasons for student absences may include: student illness; medical, dental, or out-of-town specialist appointments; serious illness or death in the immediate family; family emergency; observance of a religious holiday; employment; truancy: on or off property; family vacation; other absence not approved by the school (**see note below**).

***Please note** that not all absences will be approved by the school, and under all circumstances students are still responsible on future assessments for the learning outcomes that were missed. Please be aware that teachers are not required to provide assignments missed during unauthorized absences. (ie. family vacation)

Absences due to school activities or events, i.e. field trips, sports trips, or in-school suspensions, or school approved community activities or events, are excluded from the attendance expectations criteria regarding the "stages of intervention".

It is the school's expectation that parents will liaise closely with the school via the attendance line to ensure accurate attendance information is recorded and unauthorized absences are limited.

Student Attendance Criteria and Procedures:

- ❑ STAGE 1: Truancy in any class will be dealt with by the classroom teacher. A phone call home will be placed. Unauthorized absences may result in a lunch hour and/or in-school detention to make up the time missed /or may take the form of service assigned to benefit the school. School detentions may be served with the classroom teacher or possibly with Mrs. Hicks in room 127A at administrative discretion.
- ❑ STAGE 2: Repeat occurrences of truancy will result in a referral to the attendance administrator. A parent contact will be made and the student may be placed on an attendance contract.
- ❑ STAGE 3: Failure to comply with an attendance contract or the directive of school administration may result in a definite suspension of 1-10 days (in or out of school) as determined by the administration.
- ❑ STAGE 4: After returning from a definite suspension, continued persistent excessive truancy will lead to the permanent removal from classes and/or an indefinite suspension from KSS.