Iron Ridge Secondary Campus Attendance Guidelines

Purpose

At Iron Ridge Secondary Campus, we believe that regular attendance is essential for student success. Being present, prepared, and engaged in learning helps students achieve their best academically, socially, and personally. Our attendance policy is designed to support students and families in building strong habits, while also outlining responsibilities, interventions, and consequences if absences become frequent.

Responsibilities

Students

- Attend the entire duration of all scheduled classes, on time and prepared to learn.
- Communicate with teachers regarding missed work due to absences.
- Take responsibility for catching up on missed learning.

Parents/Guardians

- Ensure that students attend school regularly and punctually.
- Notify the school of any absences.
- Work in partnership with the school to support attendance if concerns arise.

Teachers

- Take accurate attendance each class period.
- Communicate with students and parents about attendance concerns.
- Provide opportunities for students to make up missed learning when appropriate.

Administration

- Monitor attendance patterns and support staff, students, and families.
- Implement interventions when absences become frequent.
- Refer cases to the Wolf Creek Public Schools Attendance Officer or Alberta Attendance Board when required.

Types of Absences

- **Excused Absence:** Illness, medical appointment, family emergency, school-approved activity (e.g., sports, field trips).
- **Unexcused Absence:** Missing class without valid reason or parent/guardian notification.
- **Chronic Absenteeism:** Missing 10% or more of the school year (approx. 18+ days).

Interventions for Frequent Absences

Absence Level (per semester)	School Response
3 unexcused absences in a course	The teacher contacts the student and parent to discuss concerns.
5 unexcused absences in a course	The teacher notifies administration. Parent/guardian meeting arranged; Attendance Improvement Plan (AIP) may be created.
8–10 unexcused absences in a course	Student placed on Attendance Contract. Privileges (athletics, extracurriculars, special events) may be suspended until improvement occurs.
Chronic Absenteeism (10%+ of school days, excused or unexcused)	Administration meets with students and family to review barriers, implement supports, and adjust learning plans.
Persistent non-attendance	The case may be referred to Wolf Creek Public Schools Attendance Officer and, if unresolved, the Alberta Provincial Attendance Board for legal action.

Impact on Learning and Credit Standing

Students with **excessive absences (excused or unexcused)** may fall behind and risk losing credit for the course. Teachers and administration will work with students on make-up assignments, alternate timelines, or adjusted supports, but students are ultimately responsible for missed work. A student may be withdrawn from a course if they have missed more than 30% of classes, excused or unexcused, and are not able to meet course requirements.

Celebrating Good Attendance

At IRSC, we believe in recognizing positive habits. Students with strong attendance records may be eligible for:

- Recognition in school assemblies and newsletters
- Eligibility for extracurriculars, leadership roles, and awards
- Being role models in living out the **#BisNation values**:
    - Be a good citizen
    - Invest in your learning
    - Show respect
    - Overcome obstacles
    - Never settle

Appendix A: Course Withdrawal Due to Attendance

Guiding Principle

At Iron Ridge Secondary Campus, we believe in supporting every student to achieve success. Withdrawal from a course due to attendance concerns is considered a last resort after documented interventions and supports have been provided.

Criteria for Withdrawal

A student may be withdrawn from a course if all of the following conditions are met:

1. **Excessive Absences**
    - The student has missed 30% or more of instructional time in the course (excused or unexcused).

2. **Impact on Achievement**
    - The student is not demonstrating the ability to meet course outcomes due to missed instructional time and lack of engagement.

3. **Interventions Attempted**
    - Prior to withdrawal, the following must be documented:
        - Teacher contact with parent/guardian (for students under 18).
        - Administrative meeting with student and parent/guardian.
        - Attendance Improvement Plan (AIP) or Attendance Contract.
        - Consideration of supports such as alternate timelines, tutoring, online/independent learning.

4. **Communication**
    - The student and parent/guardian have been informed in writing of attendance concerns and the potential for withdrawal.

Process for Withdrawal

1. **Referral** – Teacher notifies administration of ongoing attendance concerns.
2. **Review** – Administration reviews attendance records, interventions, and achievement data.
3. **Meeting** – Student and parent/guardian are invited to a formal meeting to discuss next steps.
4. **Decision** – If criteria are met, administration may approve course withdrawal.
5. **Written Notice** – A withdrawal letter is provided to the student and parent/guardian, outlining:
    - Reason for withdrawal
    - Attendance record
    - Supports previously offered
    - Alternative programming options (e.g., online modules, credit recovery, future re-enrollment)

Important Notes

- Students 16 and older may be withdrawn from a specific course, but schools remain responsible for offering alternate programming options until age 19.
- Withdrawal should always be framed as an opportunity for the student to re-engage through a more flexible pathway, not as a punishment.

Final Statement

Attendance is a **shared responsibility** between students, families, and the school. By working together, we ensure every Bison is on track for success and living out the values of #BisNation.