

Attendance Policy

Freedom Thinkers Education

POLICY STATEMENT

Freedom Thinkers Education PBL Society values regular attendance as essential to student learning and success. Consistent attendance allows students to fully participate in project-based learning (PBL), contribute meaningfully to collaborative projects, and develop academically, socially, and emotionally. This policy outlines attendance expectations, the rationale behind them, and the procedures for managing student absences.

POLICY RATIONALE

Regular attendance is critical to student success in our school environment. When students are frequently absent, they miss important learning experiences, peer collaboration, and project work, which can negatively impact both their own progress and the success of group projects. This policy aims to:

- Ensure students benefit from consistent learning experiences.
- Foster responsibility, accountability, and commitment among students.
- Minimize disruptions to learning caused by frequent absences.
- Provide a clear framework for monitoring attendance and addressing attendance concerns.

POLICY AND PROCEDURES

1. Attendance Expectations

- Students are expected to arrive at school on time and attend all scheduled classes and school activities.
- Parents/guardians should notify the school in advance of any planned absences whenever possible.
- In cases of illness or emergency, parents/guardians should notify the school as soon as reasonably possible.

2. Recording and Monitoring Attendance

- Student attendance is recorded and monitored daily.
- The Ministry of Education requires schools to report whether absences are due to illness or other reasons. Parents/guardians are therefore required to inform the school of the reason for each absence.

3. Addressing Absences

- **Excused Absences:** Absences due to illness, medical appointments, family emergencies, or other legitimate reasons will be considered excused. Parents/guardians may be required to provide supporting documentation when requested by the school.
- **Unexcused Absences:** Absences without a valid reason or without notification to the school will be considered unexcused.

4. Intervention for Frequent Absences

- If a student accumulates **20 absences** during a school year, a meeting will be scheduled with the student, parents/guardians, school administration, and any other relevant staff members. The purpose of the meeting will be to discuss the reasons for the absences and develop an attendance improvement plan.
- The student's attendance will continue to be monitored to support implementation of the attendance improvement plan and to encourage improved attendance.

5. Extended Absences and Additional Charges

- If a student misses **more than 30 school days** in a school year, whether the absences are excused or unexcused, an additional fee of **\$1,000** will be charged to the parents/guardians.
- Exceptions to this fee include:
 - An approved medical leave supported by documentation from a qualified medical professional.
 - A pre-approved project-based learning opportunity authorized by the school.
- School administration will work with the parents/guardians and the student to develop a plan for completing missed work and supporting the student's successful return to learning.

6. Appeal Process

- Parents/guardians have the right to appeal the additional fee for extended absences.
- Appeals must be submitted in writing to the school administration within **10 days** of receiving the fee notification.
- The appeal will be reviewed by the Board of Directors of Freedom Thinkers Education PBL Society, and a written decision will be communicated to the parents/guardians within **15 days** of receiving the appeal.

7. Communication and Support

- The school will communicate with parents/guardians if a student's attendance begins to raise concerns.
- Resources and support will be made available to students and families to help address barriers to regular attendance whenever possible.

Conclusion

Maintaining regular attendance is a shared responsibility between the school, students, and parents/guardians. This policy is intended to support student success by ensuring students are present, engaged, and able to fully participate in their educational experiences. We appreciate the partnership and commitment of families in supporting regular attendance and student achievement.

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