

AVON MAITLAND DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

NO. 307

SUBJECT: SAFE ARRIVAL: ELEMENTARY AGE PUPILS

Legal References: *Education Act: Section 265 1(j) Duties of Principal: Care of Pupils; Child and Family Services Act; Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act; Ministry of Education Policy/Program Memorandum; No.123 Safe Arrivals*

Related References: *Administrative Procedure 113 School Councils; AP 308 Absence of Students; AP 346 Children in Need of Protection; AP 495 Volunteer Programs in the Schools*

1. Ensuring Safe Arrival

Although the director of education recognizes that parents and guardians have the primary responsibility for ensuring their children's safe arrival at school, the director requires that principals of all elementary pupils shall implement this procedure to ensure that schools and parents can account for any pupil's unexplained failure to arrive at school.

2. Safe Arrival Responsibilities

- 2.1 The director of education has developed this administrative procedure to ensure that all elementary schools develop and use a comprehensive safe arrival procedure in conjunction with daily attendance procedures, ensuring that all reasonable efforts are made to account for a student's unexplained absence.
- 2.2 This administrative procedure provides comprehensive guidelines to be used by schools and their school councils in developing safe arrival procedures that reflect the school community.
- 2.3 The principal shall:
 - 2.3.1 Inform parents of their responsibility under the *Education Act* to ensure their children's regular school attendance. The *Education Act* stipulates that the principal must approve any absence other than for reasons of illness, music lessons, suspension, expulsion and quarantine;
 - 2.3.2 Inform parents annually of their responsibility to inform the school on a timely basis if their child is going to be absent or late and provide a reason for that absence, Form 307A Safe Arrival: Letter of Responsibility;
 - 2.3.3 Provide parents with a copy of the school's safe arrival procedure;
 - 2.3.4 Review and revise the school's safe arrival procedure with school council; and
 - 2.3.5 Report to the Children's Aid Society any child under the age of 10, who is absent from school without reasonable supervision and care. For children 10 years of age, but under the age of 16, it shall be at the discretion of the principal (*Child and Family Services Act*).

3. Safe Arrival Procedures

- 3.1 Daily attendance and follow-up phone calls shall be made in a timely manner following both morning and afternoon attendance. In addition, attendance and follow-up shall be made following any instance where the student has been granted permission to leave the school premises throughout the school day and is expected to return.
- 3.2 Attendance must be collected daily from classrooms on the printed Maplewood monthly attendance grid. See sample Form 307B Safe Arrival: Daily Attendance Grid. In an effort to collect absence information from classroom teachers Form 307C Safe Arrival should be attached to the grid to allow for teachers to record reasons for absences provided to them by the parent/guardian. That information must be entered into the attendance note area of the Maplewood student record. The note must include the person contacted, the date, and the reason for the absence. Any unsuccessful attempts to contact must be noted as well.
- 3.3 Documentation of all calls made for unexplained absences and verification of parent or emergency contact may be captured on Form 307D but must be entered into the attendance note area of the Maplewood student record. The note must include the person contacted, the date, and the reason for the absence. Any unsuccessful attempts to contact must be noted as well.
- 3.4 The order of contact to home, work, and/or the emergency contact should be indicated by parents/guardians on the student registration form and annually on Confirmation of Emergency Contact and Personal Information Form. Verification of a student absence by a sibling will not be accepted.
- 3.5 Provisions shall be made for an attendance record to be left at the school for field trips departing prior to the start of the regular school day.
- 3.6 The use of an answering machine and email at the school enables parents to notify the school outside office hours of anticipated absences or late arrivals. The message must include the student name, the name of person leaving the message, the date of the absence and the reason for the absence.
- 3.7 Every student who arrives at school later than any expected arrival time must report to the office. The office should provide the student with an "admit slip" to inform the classroom teacher the office has marked the student present.
- 3.8 Detailed legal references for this administrative procedure are set out in Appendix A Safe Arrival Legal References.

Legal References: *Education Act*

21. (1) Compulsory attendance -- Unless excused under this section,

- (a) Every child who attains the age of six years on or before the first school day in September in any year shall attend an elementary or secondary school on every school day from the first school day in September in that year until the child attains the age of sixteen years; and
- (b) Every child who attains the age of six years after the first school day in September in any year shall attend an elementary or secondary school on every school day from the first school day in September in the next succeeding year until the last school day in June in the year in which the child attains the age of sixteen years.

(2) When attendance excused -- A child is excused from attendance at school if,

- (a) The child is receiving satisfactory instruction at home or elsewhere;
- (b) The child is unable to attend school by reason of sickness or other unavoidable cause;
- (c) Transportation is not provided by a board for the child and there is no school that the child has a right to attend situated,
 - (i) Within 1.6 kilometres from the child's residence measured by the nearest road if the child has not attained the age of seven years on or before the first school day in September in the year in question, or
 - (ii) Within 3.2 kilometres from the child's residence measured by the nearest road if the child has attained the age of seven years but not the age of ten years on or before the first school day in September in the year in question, or
 - (iii) Within 4.8 kilometres from the child's residence measured by the nearest road if the child has attained the age of ten years on or before the first school day in September in the year in question;
- (d) The child has obtained a secondary school graduation diploma or has completed a course that gives equivalent standing;
- (e) The child is absent from school for the purpose of receiving instruction in music and the period of absence does not exceed one-half day in any week;
- (f) The child is suspended, expelled or excluded from attendance at school under any Act or under the regulations;
- (g) The child is absent on a day regarded as a holy day by the church or religious denomination to which the child belongs; or
- (h) The child is absent or excused as authorized under this Act and the regulations....

265. (1) Duties of principal -- It is the duty of a principal of a school, in addition to the principal's duties as a teacher,

- (a) **Discipline** -- to maintain proper order and discipline in the school;
- (b) **Co-operation** -- to develop co-operation and co-ordination of effort among the members of the staff of the school;
- (c) **Register pupils and record attendance** -- to register the pupils and to ensure that the attendance of pupils for every school day is recorded either in the register supplied by the Minister in accordance with the instructions contained therein or in such other manner as is approved by the Minister;

Child and Family Services Act

Abuse, failure to provide for reasonable care, etc.

79. (3) No person having charge of a child less than sixteen years of age shall leave the child without making provision for his or her supervision and care that is reasonable in the circumstances.

Reverse onus

(4) Where a person is charged with contravening subsection (3) and the child is less than ten years of age, the onus of establishing that the person made provision for the child's supervision and care that was reasonable in the circumstances rests with the person.