

GIMLI HIGH SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE POLICY

A key element to a student's success in school is regular attendance in all classes. Regular attendance is the responsibility of parents / guardians and is compulsory by law. Penalties for non-compliance fall under the Public School Act regulations.

The staff of Gimli High School, with the support of the Parent Advisory Council, developed the following attendance policy to encourage excellent student work habits. This policy is not intended to penalize students who may be absent for reasons beyond their control such as extended illness; rather, it is intended to encourage student responsibility and successful study practices. Legitimate reasons for absences are illness, bereavement, school sponsored activities and special approved parental requests. A medical certificate must certify five or more days for illness. Medical and dental appointments should be made outside of school hours.

Since class participation is an important aspect of evaluation, a substantial portion of a student's grade is based on the student's involvement in course activities. Term work, tests, and class participation usually comprise at least 60% of the student's final mark; this percentage can be as high as 100% in courses in which there is no final exam. Absences, therefore, have a detrimental effect on performance. The purpose of this policy is to reduce absences from class so that every student can excel. Truancy (absent without just cause) has negative effects on student success.

1. Any student accumulating **twelve (12)** absences in a one-credit course (**six (6)** absences for half-credit courses) will have his/her status in the course automatically reviewed. The school administration, in consultation with the classroom teacher, will decide whether or not the student will continue in the class. A student who has been excessively truant, may be denied credit in the course. The conditions for a student's return to the class will be established by the administration and the classroom teacher.
2. This policy in no way condones truancy from class. Students are expected to attend all classes and should only be absent for legitimate reasons.
3. Students are expected to be in class on time. Students who are frequently late disrupt the learning conditions of others in the class. Students who persist in being chronically late may be denied entry into class and marked absent.
4. All absences will be counted, including suspensions. However, school-sponsored field trips, drama or music activities, or extra-curricular activities, which cause a student to miss class, will not be recorded as absences. Also, in rare instances where courses are scheduled so that timetable conflicts occur, students will not be marked absent as a result of the conflict.
5. In the case of a lengthy illness or a prevailing medical condition requiring frequent appointments, a doctor's note must be provided to the school.
6. Where a student is absent due to participation in music, drama, cultural, or recreational events at the provincial or national level, **PRIOR** contact should be made with the school.
7. In the case of denial of credit, a student will have the right to appeal. However, appeals will only be considered in exceptional circumstances.

Notification of Absences

Where possible, a student should notify his/her teachers in advance of an absence. Parents can contact the office and/or the school administration and this information will be forwarded to the classroom teacher(s). Notes written by parents are also an effective way of communicating information to classroom teachers. Students will not be penalized for work missed for legitimate absences. Parents should notify the office of any absences due to appointments or illness.

Attendance in all classes is the responsibility of both the student and parents / guardians. Students are also responsible to be in class on time. Parents will be notified of student absences by our daily Schools Connect computerized phone/email message system. Notification of absences will also occur in the following manner:

Full Credit Courses

- At **4** absences, the classroom teacher will notify a parent by telephone.
- At **8** absences, the classroom teacher will inform the office. The school administration will notify parents by telephone and may meet with the student.
- At **12** absences, the classroom teacher will inform the office. The student's status in the course will be reviewed and the student may be withdrawn. The school administration will notify parents either by phone or letter.

Half Credit Courses

- At **2** absences, the classroom teacher will notify a parent by telephone.
- At **4** absences, the classroom teacher will inform the office. The school administration will notify parents by telephone and may meet with the student.
- At **6** absences, the classroom teacher will inform the office. The student's status in the course will be reviewed and the student may be withdrawn. The school administration will notify parents either by phone or letter.

It is our hope that parents will assist the school in its application of the attendance policy by ensuring that the school administration is informed early when unusual circumstances may lead to significant absences.

It is also very helpful to students if out-of-school appointments do not conflict with school courses. There are several days in the school year when there are no classes and these opportunities would be ideal for making routine appointments. A list of these dates can be found in this handbook. In addition, it is helpful if appointments can be made at times early or late in the day, enabling students to avoid missing an entire day of classes.

Appeal Process

If a student is denied credit due to attendance, he/she can appeal this decision. The student must present a written appeal to the school administration within 2 class periods of reaching 12 absences (6 absences for a half-credit course). The appeal should be submitted to the school administrator on the **Attendance Appeal** form. The school administration, in consultation with the student's teachers, will decide whether or not the student will be re-instated in the course.

LATENESS

Continued lateness to class impacts negatively on the learning environment by disrupting the flow of the lesson underway. This is in conflict of our commitment to provide positive learning environments that promote student academic success. GHS expectations are:

- Students will be denied entry into the classroom after the bell has rung.
- Students denied entry into class will be required to work with GHS staff on the value of arriving on time, how lateness negatively impacts on their learning, the reasons for their tardiness and how they can rectify this concern in the future.
- The above assignment will be completed in writing, submitted to the staff member working with them, and its completion will be a condition of their re-admittance to class.
- At **4** lates, the classroom teacher will notify a parent by telephone.
- At **8** lates, the classroom teacher will inform the office. The school administration will notify parents by telephone and may meet with the student.

- At **16** lates, the classroom teacher will inform the office. The student's status in the course will be reviewed and the student may be withdrawn. The school administration will notify parents either by phone or letter.
- Note: Lateness to class is a behavioral issue and will be dealt with in that regard. Refusal to abide by the above classroom re-integration requirements will be addressed in a disciplinary manner.

Parents will be notified of student lateness to class by our daily Schools Connect computerized phone/email message system.