



# CHALO SCHOOL

## Chalo School (Draft) Attendance Policy and Procedures

*Adapted from School District #81 Attendance Policy and Procedures and written in consideration of Promising Practices for Raising the Attendance Rates of Students in First Nations Schools in BC - Draft One - June 2014*

### **Philosophy and Background:**

The Community Education Authority recognizes that regular attendance and school success go “hand in hand” and that chronic absenteeism is directly related to students dropping out of school.

“Chronic absenteeism is generally defined as missing ten percent or more of a school year, including excused and unexcused absences – which is approximately 18 days a year or just two days every month.”

Not all classroom work can be made up. Explanations, clarifications, discussions, opportunities for feedback, and group learning activities are invaluable components of an effective learning environment. Each absence results in a lost learning opportunity in the classroom, which may not be regained.

The general goals of Chalo School’s attendance policy are to

- Ensure high levels of learning for all students by promoting regular attendance
- Help students develop social responsibility in preparation for their future careers.

The Community Education Authority recognizes its responsibility to ensure effective instruction and encourage students to attend and be involved in their education and in the school community. The final responsibility, however, falls to the students and their parents/guardians. With this in mind, we feel that communication is essential, and we endeavor to keep parents informed of their child’s absences on a daily basis.

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. Students are responsible for any schoolwork that they have missed.

### **Home/School Communication and Attendance Procedures:**

Communication between parents, students, and teachers is critical when a student is absent from class. Students and their parents/guardians are ultimately responsible for this direct communication and for any work the student misses during an absence.

Parents/Guardians are requested to call the school or provide a written explanation to the school office (774-7651) if a student in their care is going to be absent from class.

Upon returning to school, a student may be required to bring a note from a parent or guardian confirming that the parent is aware of the student's absence. If late for any class, the student must sign in at the office for a "late slip" immediately upon arrival and proceed promptly to class.

The Community Education Authority believes that parents need to be aware of all student absences; therefore, the Chalo School receptionist and/ Youth Care Worker will contact the parents/guardians of absent students if they fail to contact the school.

**Absences:**

There may be numerous reasons for not attending classes. An example is travel from Fort Nelson for orthodontic work. The following reasons for absences have been taken into consideration in arriving at the allowance of 20 absences in any one class per semester as the criteria in this policy:

1. Student illness
2. Medical, Dental, or out-of-town Specialist appointments
3. Serious illness or death in the immediate family
4. Family emergency
5. Observance of a religious holiday
6. Employment
7. Truancy: on or off property
8. Family vacation
9. Other absence not approved by the school (see note below)

Note: Absences due to school activities or events, i.e. field trips, sports trips, or suspensions, or school approved community activities or events, are excluded from the attendance expectations criteria regarding course withdrawal. Students are responsible for schoolwork missed.

School approved community activities or events may include those operated by recognized community organizations to promote healthy lifestyle and recreational practices, such as Minor Hockey, Figure Skating, Cadets, Dance, Swimming, etc. It is Chalo School's expectation that parents and the officials of any such organization will liaise closely with the school office to ensure accurate attendance information is recorded and absences are limited.

If a student is missing or is scheduled to miss more than ten days of school for medical or mental health concerns, hospital/homebound teaching services are available. Parents can request this service by calling Chalo School's Administration.

**Student Attendance Criteria and Procedures:**

Classes may have volunteer peer student mentors, students gaining Teacher Assistant credits, or Educational Assistants to review missed assignments after students return from an absence.

Teachers will keep copies of hand outs/assignments/tests etc. available for peer helpers, EAs, or student Teacher Assistants to use. A location other than the classroom may be used for the completion of missed assignments if appropriate/available.

At **5 absences** from class in any one subject, teachers will have a documented phone call with parents/guardians.

At **10 absences** from class in any one subject, teachers will have a documented phone call, meet with students and parents, and a letter will be sent to their parents/guardians. Other teacher or administrative support interventions should be ongoing and other school, community, or Fort Nelson First Nation resources may be accessed at this time, i.e. hospital/homebound instruction; drug and alcohol counseling; academic assessment, etc.

At **15 absences** from class in any academic core subject (English, Math, Science, Social Studies), the teachers, Chalo School Administration, and/or Education Director will meet with students and their parents/guardians.

At **20 absences** from class in any academic core subject, students who are not passing may be withdrawn from the class or classes. A student may complete the course(s) through an alternate program of studies and will be referred to the Community Education Authority (CEA).