

How Can Parents and Guardians Help Their Children in High School

Completing Assignments, Projects and Other Course-Related Requirements:

One obstacle that comes between students being successful or not earning their credit is providing evidence of their learning and understanding. If students do not complete projects, assignments or on-going work, then teachers are not able to provide them with feedback on how they can improve their work. If students do not provide teachers with *any* evidence of their learning and *hand in minimal or no work*, then teachers are not able to assist them and assess and evaluate where they are in the course. Many times this leads to students not achieving their credit in a course.

How you can help: Most teachers will be asking students to practice their skills through homework, outside of class time. Student who play hockey regularly explain to me that when they are on a hockey team, there are actually more practices to improve their shooting, passing, skating and hockey strategy during the hockey season than there are actual games. Homework is the equivalent of hockey practice. If students are not practicing their skills at home through doing their homework, projects, or even reading and writing for interest, then they will not be prepared to do well during their assessments of learning (the actual game.) You can support your child by encouraging them to focus on some of their school work at home on a regular basis. If they explain night after night that they do not have homework, then you are encouraged to call the school at 705-859-2870 or email me at mstaruck@wbe-education.ca and I will connect you with your child's teachers so you can receive this feedback.

Attendance:

This semester there were 86 days of classroom instruction. I am proud to say that there were a number of students who had near-perfect attendance. In almost every one of those cases of great attendance, students achieved all four of their credits. Students who did very well in their courses also had excellent attendance. Attendance can make a positive impact on how your child does in school. Not attending consistently inevitably has the opposite effect.

How do I know if my child's learning is being hurt by absences?

In order to keep high expectations in our classrooms, the pace of the course and the instruction within the course must keep moving, especially for students who come to school every day. Students not only assessed by written work. Teachers are also assessing by making observations of students engaged in group work and activities. Teachers may also be

conducting face-to-face verbal student/teacher conferences in order to assess the learning and thinking of your child. These are not assessments that students can just show up to class once in a while and take advantage of. They need to be present in class to take advantage of these opportunities. This is why it is important for students to be in class every day. Also, absences create gaps in student learning and understanding, and make school frustrating and difficult for students to keep up in their learning and feel success. Your child's attendance is indicated for each class in the right hand column of the report card. Keep the following thoughts in mind:

- 10 days absent in a semester – 12% of the course missed – Time to start being concerned.
- 20 days absent in a semester – 25% of the course missed – Many gaps in learning may have now occurred. You should be very concerned. Students have now fallen far behind and have become frustrated. Many students start considering giving up for the rest of the semester.
- 30 days absent in a semester – 35% of the course missed – Huge gaps in learning and ability to show evidence of learning. Parents should be seriously concerned. More often than not this leads to students not achieving their credits and having to repeat the course again next school year.
- Any more than 30 days missed in a semester almost always leads to being unsuccessful in a course.

If you want an update of your child's attendance, do not hesitate to call our Guidance Department and they will provide you with up-to-date reports of your child's attendance.

Important Note: Keep in mind that we have a built in a Student Success Block at the end of the school day every Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 3:00 pm to 3:30 pm. If your child misses time, they should be going for support during this time. All teachers are available for extra one-on-one tutoring or small group support. If you want to make sure your child is being guided to take advantage of this support, contact our Student Success Teacher, Ms. Candace Cheechoo, and she will make sure your child is scheduled in and supported during this regular academic intervention time.