

To: ETFO Thames Valley Teacher Local Members
From: Craig Smith, President, ETFO Thames Valley Teacher Local (ETFO TVTL)
Date: March 6, 2024
Regarding: **Student Attendance**

School attendance at school is compulsory for elementary students in grades 1-8. Kindergarten is not a compulsory program for students in Ontario.

Teachers should take and report student attendance at the beginning of each session (morning and afternoon). Problems with student attendance and chronic student absenteeism **must** be dealt with by the school Principal and/or the Board Attendance Counsellor assigned to the school. For greater clarity:

Section 265 (c) of the **Education Act** states that it is the **duty** of the Principal to;

register the pupils and to ensure that the attendance of the pupils for every school day is recorded in the register supplied by the Minister in accordance with the instructions contained therein or in such other manner as approved by the Minister.

Further, Section 25 (1) of the **Education Act** states that;

Every board shall appoint one or more attendance counsellors.

Section 25 (5) indicates that;

A school attendance counsellor appointed by a board **has jurisdiction** and **is responsible** for the enforcement of compulsory school attendance in respect of every child who is required to attend school and who,

(a) is qualified to be a resident pupil of the board; or

(b) is or has been enrolled during the current school year in a school operated by the board...

Advice to Teachers:

- Take and report student attendance as per past practice.
- Refrain from undertaking statutory duties, as outlined in the **Education Act**, that are those of Principals and Attendance Counsellors.
- Do not undertake the work of other bargaining units or employee groups.

Violations of the Education Act should be reported to the ETFO Local Office immediately.

For more information regarding this *Communiqué* please contact the Local office by phone at 519-474-3150, or by email at etfotvl@etfothamesvalley.com