



Student Attendance at Competitive Dance & Performing Arts Events

1 message

Curriculum Branch (MET) <casspb@ontario.ca>

Mon, Sep 21, 2026 at 9:08 AM

To: "inspiredancechallenge@gmail.com" <inspiredancechallenge@gmail.com>

Dear James Tedesco,

Thank you for your letter on behalf of *Inspire Dance Challenge* to the Honourable Paul Calandra, Minister of Education, about Ontario's attendance policy.

The Ministry of Education recognizes that regular attendance and participation are critical to student achievement. This is why the ministry is including attendance and participation as part of final course marks. At the same time, the intent is that students are not negatively impacted when they are absent for valid reasons and those absences are appropriately excused.

The [2026-27 Enrolment Register Instructions for Elementary and Secondary Schools](#) outline the circumstances in which a student's absence is considered excused or unexcused. A full list of excused absences can be found under the list of "G" codes or "General Absence" days. This list includes school-related field trips, including sporting or competitive events.

Alternatively, pupil attendance may be excused by the principal, in accordance with subsection 23(3) of [Ontario Regulation 298: Operation of Schools – General](#). The parent/guardian of the pupil or the pupil (if the pupil is an adult) must submit a request in writing to the principal, requesting that the pupil be excused for a specified time frame (e.g., for an appointment, family obligation, non-school-related sporting events or activities, mental health absences without appropriate supporting documentations, vacation, or other reason approved by the principal including illness). The principal must also approve the parent's written request for the absence to be considered excused. This option allows students that are absent for unique circumstances to be addressed locally, with principal decision-making guided by the Enrolment Register Instructions and existing board policies.

We encourage parents/guardians to review this guidance and to connect with their child's school to discuss specific situations—the school will be best positioned to support in planning for any absences.

Thank you again for writing and we hope this information is helpful. We appreciate your input as Ontario continues to build an education system that inspires all students to reach their full potential.

Sincerely,

Curriculum, Assessment and Student Success Policy Branch

Ministry of Education