

Title: **Safe Arrivals**

Adopted: October 13, 2026

Effective: October 16, 2026

Amended/Reviewed: N/A

This procedure must be interpreted, applied, and implemented in ways that uphold Indigenous and human rights and responsibilities, promote accessibility, and prevent and address (and do not reinforce) discrimination/discriminatory barriers.

1.0 RATIONALE

This procedure supports the implementation of the DDSB Safe Arrivals Policy and establishes consistent requirements for attendance reporting, safe arrival, student attendance confirmation, and follow-up regarding unexplained absences.

Safe Arrival focuses on attendance verification and the follow-up of unexplained absences to confirm that students have arrived at school safely. Student Attendance Confirmation focuses on verifying student presence at key points throughout the instructional day to ensure students remain accounted for following transitions and changes in location. Consistent implementation of both processes supports student safety and well-being and enables timely action when concerns arise regarding a student's whereabouts.

2.0 DEFINITIONS

2.1 Student Attendance Confirmation: The process of verifying, recording and reporting a student's presence and location during the instructional day at required verification points, using a Board-approved method.

Parent/Guardian/Caregiver: A parent, guardian, caregiver, or other person responsible for a student.

2.2 Safe Arrival: The process used to account for students who are absent from school and to ensure timely follow-up regarding unexplained absences.

2.3 Unexplained Absence: An absence for which the school has not received notification or confirmation from the parent/guardian/caregiver.

3.0 RESPONSIBILITY

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is responsible for the implementation and monitoring of this procedure.

Superintendents are responsible for supporting implementation and monitoring compliance within their areas of responsibility.

Family of Schools System Leads are responsible for supporting principals in the implementation of this procedure.

Principals are responsible for establishing school-based processes that support attendance reporting, safe arrival, student attendance confirmation, documentation, and response protocols consistent with this procedure.

Employees with assigned responsibilities under this procedure are responsible for carrying out duties related to attendance reporting, student attendance confirmation, supervision, documentation, and student safety in accordance with this procedure.

Parents/guardians/caregivers are responsible for reporting student absences, late arrivals and early departures in accordance with school processes and for maintaining current contact and emergency information with the school.

Students are responsible for attending school regularly and complying with attendance requirements.

4.0 APPLICATION AND SCOPE

This procedure applies to Durham District School Board elementary schools and to students enrolled in Junior Kindergarten to Grade 8 programs.

This procedure establishes requirements for attendance reporting, safe arrival processes, student attendance confirmation, response to attendance discrepancies, and documentation practices that support student safety and compliance with Ministry requirements.

5.0 PROCEDURES

5.4 Reporting Student Absences

Parents/guardians/caregivers are responsible for notifying the school when a student will be absent, arrive late, or leave school before the end of the instructional day.

Schools shall establish processes to receive absence notifications and communicate these processes to parents/guardians/caregivers.

5.5 Safe Arrival Attendance Verification

Schools shall implement safe arrival processes in accordance with Ministry and Board requirements.

Formal attendance shall be taken and recorded in accordance with applicable Ministry enrolment register requirements and Board processes. Student Attendance Confirmation throughout the instructional day shall be completed in accordance with section 5.X of this procedure.

Principals shall establish school-based processes to ensure attendance information is accurately recorded and maintained.

5.6 Unexplained Absences

Schools shall establish procedures for the timely follow-up of unexplained absences.

Where a student is absent and the absence has not been reported or verified, reasonable efforts shall be made to contact the parent/guardian/caregiver to verify the student's absence as soon as reasonably possible. Where contact cannot be established, the school shall follow established escalation and emergency contact processes in accordance with Board and school safe arrival protocols.

Schools shall maintain records of follow-up activities related to unexplained absences.

5.7 Student Presence Verification

In addition to Safe Arrival attendance verification, schools shall implement Student Presence Verification practices to ensure students are accounted for throughout the instructional day.

Student presence shall be intentionally verified at a minimum:

- a) At the beginning of each instructional period;
- b) following recesses, lunch periods, and nutrition breaks;
- c) immediately following transitions between learning spaces or locations, including movement between classes on a rotary schedule and transitions between portables and the school building;
- d) following outdoor learning activities on or off school property, including field trips;
- e) following assemblies and other school events occurring during the instructional day; and
- f) following planned or unplanned changes in student location or learning environment where student presence must be reconfirmed.

5.8 Documentation of Student Presence Verification

Student Attendance Confirmation shall be documented using a Board-approved method or documentation process.

Educators shall record Student Attendance Confirmation at the required verification

points and report the information to the school office, using the Board-approved process determined by the principal/designate, as soon as reasonably possible.

Principals shall ensure records are maintained and available to demonstrate compliance with Board and Ministry requirements.

5.9 Attendance/Presence Discrepancies

Where a discrepancy regarding a student's attendance, presence, or whereabouts is identified, the employee shall:

- a) re-confirm attendance or student presence records;
- b) review available information that may explain the discrepancy; and
- c) immediately notify the principal/designate and school office where the discrepancy cannot be resolved

5.10 Students Who Cannot Be Accounted For

Where a student's whereabouts cannot be confirmed, the principal/designate shall immediately initiate school procedures to locate the student.

The school office shall review available information to determine whether the student is participating in another authorized activity or program.

Parents/guardians/caregivers shall be notified as soon as reasonably possible when a student's whereabouts cannot be confirmed.

Where the student's whereabouts remain unconfirmed, the school shall initiate applicable missing student response protocols and related emergency procedures in alignment with Board requirements and the Provincial Model for a Local Police/School Board Protocol.

6.0 COMMUNICATION

Principals shall ensure information regarding Safe Arrival processes, absence reporting requirements, roles and responsibilities, and Student Attendance Confirmation practices is communicated to employees, students, parents/guardians/caregivers and other relevant members of the school community at the beginning of each school year and as required throughout the year.

7.0 APPENDICES

Appendix A: Student Presence Verification Record

8.0 REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

- Education Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. E.2
- Policy/Program Memorandum 123: Safe Arrivals

- Student School Attendance Confirmation Policy (September 2026)
- Enrolment Register Instructions for Elementary and Secondary Schools
- Provincial Model for a Local Police/School Board Protocol (2026)