

August 28, 2026

Dear Sport Sector Partners,

We have heard from several sport stakeholders seeking further information regarding the Ministry of Education's policy on high school attendance and whether there are implications for students participating in sanctioned sports activities. To provide some clarity for the sport sector, the Ministry of Sport is sharing information recently clarified by the Ministry of Education.

The Ministry of Education has confirmed that the updated attendance policy does not create new restrictions on student participation in extracurricular, athletic, cultural, or educational activities that require an approved absence from school.

The Minister of Education has also confirmed that **parents or guardians may continue to request that their child be excused** from school for a variety of activities, including sport, music, debate, and other educational opportunities. **Students will not be penalized for absences that are approved through existing school attendance processes.** The policy is intended to address unexcused absences and chronic absenteeism, not participation in sport, or other activities that contribute to a well-rounded education.

Importantly, **there has been no change to the process** for obtaining an excused absence. Parents and guardians remain responsible for notifying their child's school and following the school's established attendance procedures, including providing any required information or documentation to support an absence request.

Parents and schools may refer to the [Ontario Enrolment Register Instructions](#), which outline the criteria for excused absences. Under subsection 23(3) of [Ontario Regulation 298 "Operations of Schools – General"](#), a principal may excuse a student's absence for various reasons, including participation in non-school-related sporting events or activities. A parent would provide a written request to the principal that the student be excused for a specified time frame.

For students under 18, it is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to submit the necessary information to the school. For students over 18, it is the responsibility of the individual to submit the necessary information to the school. Where the appropriate process is followed and the absence is approved, absences related to sport

competitions and training opportunities will continue to be treated as excused absences.

The Ministry of Education recognizes the positive contributions that organized sports make to student achievement, well-being, and development and remains committed to balancing the importance of regular classroom participation with the need for appropriate flexibility in individual circumstances.

PSOs are encouraged to share this information with athletes, parents, guardians, coaches, and other stakeholders who may be seeking clarification regarding school attendance requirements and participation in sport activities.

Should you have additional questions related to the Ministry of Education's policy, please contact the Ministry of Education at Minister.edu@ontario.ca.

Thank you again and I hope this information is helpful.

Sincerely,



Tyler Currie
Assistant Deputy Minister
Sport, Recreation and Major Events Division
Ministry of Sport