

	<b>EDUCATION</b> <span style="float: right;"><b>III-B-6</b></span>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>STRAIT REGIONAL SCHOOL BOARD</b> <i>Excellence in Lifelong Learning</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>POLICIES - GUIDELINES</i></p>	<b>CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION</b> <b>Use of Instructional Time</b>
	Adopted: <span style="float: right;">May 7, 2008</span> Revised: <span style="float: right;">June 4, 2014</span> <span style="float: right;">October 7, 2015</span>
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### Use of Instructional Time

#### Policy Statement

The Strait Regional School Board believes that the quality and quantity of instructional time is integral to student learning and as such it is an important resource that must be protected.

The Strait Regional School Board will maintain the integrity of instructional time requirements for schools in the educational process while balancing the value of co-curricular, extra-curricular and enrichment activities. In addition, the School Board acknowledges the valuable contribution provided by external resources for the holistic development of our students.

The focus of this policy is to help ensure students have the time they need to learn and teachers have the time they need to teach.

This policy addresses school-wide, multi-class or individual class activities which impact on the normal instruction schedule of schools.

In the implementation of this policy and supporting procedures, schools must adhere to relevant legislation, policies and procedures, including but not limited to:

- *Education Act and Regulations Under the Act*
- Department of Education and Early Childhood Development's Use of Instructional Time Policy Framework and *Time to Learn Strategy: Instructional Time and Semestering*
- Collective Agreement between the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development of the Province of Nova Scotia and the Nova Scotia Teachers Union
- Collective Agreement between the Strait Regional School Board and the Nova Scotia Teachers Union
- Strait Regional School Board Student Travel Policy and supporting procedures
- Nova Scotia School Athletic Federation Handbook
- Other applicable provincial and School Board policies and procedures.

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**Definitions:**

Instructional time

Use of instructional time is related to specific learning outcomes of the Public School Program. Instructional time is the time scheduled in the 195-day school calendar that is intended specifically for instruction, and in accordance with the Ministerial Education Regulations 2(1) to (6) and e (1) to (11) inclusive, is not less than a certain number of hours of teaching in each classroom on each school day.

Discretionary Absence

Discretionary Absence is an absence resulting from a decision by parents to withdraw their child(ren) from regular instruction for non-school-related reasons (e.g., vacations, sport, music, theater or other activity unrelated to the program offered by the school). **Parents are responsible to support their children in achieving learning success (Education Act, Section 25 (1) a). During this absence, parents/guardians, students and the school staff are expected to work cooperatively to ensure that any outcomes missed are covered by the student.**

Non-classroom Activities

Non-classroom Activities refers to activities, during scheduled instructional time, which takes place outside of classrooms.

Non-instructional activities

This term refers to activities other than those intended to address outcomes of the Public School Program.

**Guidelines**

1. All instructional time is to be used to address the outcomes of the Public School Program (PSP) and shall adhere to the requirements for instructional time as described in the Provincial Time to Learn Strategy: Instructional Time and Semestering.
2. Schools should eliminate all unnecessary interruptions to the instructional day.
3. Schools should ensure that non-instructional activities occur outside of instructional time.
4. Decisions on the **reasonable** use of instructional time for non-classroom activity or activities not directly related to curriculum outcomes should be guided by the following:

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- Recognize that delivery of the Public School Program is the first priority of every school and non-classroom activity not clearly linked to outcomes should be strictly limited;
  - Use the specific learning outcomes of the Public School Program to determine and justify the educational value to students of the proposed use of instructional time;
  - Recognize that schools are responsible for protecting the resource of instructional time; and
  - Ensure that the impact of learning lost as a result of missed instructional time is assessed.
5. Schools should consider the educational value of the activity and the instructional time lost when scheduling presentations, speakers and charity events.
  6. Non-classroom activities must be inclusive and planned to ensure they are accessible to all students.
  7. Non-classroom activities will not interfere with normal school operation for remaining students.
  8. Media shown to students must normally be on the Authorized Learning Resources (ALR) List or available through the Education Media Library. Other media not included on the ALR must support specific learning outcomes of the Public School Program, be age appropriate, have an appropriate bias evaluation and be used with copyright clearance. For more information related to copyright requirements, please access *Copyright Matters! Some Key Questions and Answers for Teachers* ([www.cmec.ca](http://www.cmec.ca)).
  9. All research requests must be made in accordance with Strait Regional School Board External Research policy and supporting procedures, VI-D-2 and PRO VI-D-2. Administrators are to monitor use of class time for student surveys to minimize loss of instructional time.
  10. Schools shall adhere to the Nova Scotia School Athletic Federation guidelines when organizing invitational tournaments to minimize the amount of instructional time lost. Exceptions require the approval of the Director of Programs and Student Services.
  11. The principal, in collaboration with the teaching staff, will determine the appropriate support that schools will provide for discretionary absences, special circumstances and absences due to school-sponsored activities.
  12. Students are required to be good ambassadors for their school and community. At all times, students shall adhere to the Provincial School Code of Conduct Policy, and are subject to other provincial and school board policies.

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13. Students are required to participate fully in learning opportunities and attend school regularly and punctually as outlined in *The Education Act*.
14. Parents/guardians are required to ensure that their children regularly attend school to support achievement of learning outcomes.
15. The Strait Regional School Board has established a detailed set of procedures to guide all aspects of this policy. Please refer to PRO III-B-6.