

1. What is the definition of an “eligible” student?

“eligible student” (as defined in the Independent School Regulation at:

http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/legislation/schoollaw/i/bcreg_262-89.pdf) means a student

- (a) who is of school age, and
- (b) whose parent or guardian
 - (i) is, or was at the time of that parent's, or guardian's death, a citizen of Canada or a permanent resident, as defined in the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act* (Canada), who is or was at the time of the parent's, or guardian's death, ordinarily resident in British Columbia, or
 - (ii) is lawfully admitted to Canada and is ordinarily resident in British Columbia.

2. What is the definition of “school age”?

A person is deemed to be of school age at the beginning of a school year if the person will have reached the age of 5 on, or before December 31 of that school year and continue to be of school age until the end of the school year in which the person reaches 19. As set out in section 1(2) of the Independent School Act at: http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/legislation/schoollaw/independent_school_act_contents.pdf

Parent/Guardian Questions

3. How should an independent school verify parent/legal guardian’s lawful admission to Canada and residency in British Columbia?

By using the “Legal Residency of Parent” - Appendix II or III form (produced by the Office of the Inspector of Independent Schools) for this purpose, or something similar into the school’s student registration information.

4. How can residency be established?

A list of indicators is provided in “Eligible Student Information” Appendix I to assist with determining residency.

5. Does the guardian of a child have to be appointed through a BC judicial process?

Yes (“guardian” means guardian of the person of a child within the meaning of the *Family Relations Act*). Documentation from another country is not acceptable. It must be through a BC judicial process.

6. If a parent/guardian is on a work visa, are his/her children eligible students?

Yes, if the parent/guardian will be working in BC for one year or longer. Copy of the parent’s/guardian’s “Employment Authorization” from Citizenship and Immigration Canada must be placed in the student record.

7. If a student's parent/guardian is a student attending a university, or school in BC, can the student be considered an eligible student?

Yes, if the parent/guardian will be attending a university or school in BC for one year or more. Copy of parent’s/guardian’s “student visa” from Citizenship and Immigration Canada must be placed in the student record.

- 8. If a student's parent/guardian is in BC on a visitor's permit, can the student be considered an eligible student?**
No.
- 9. If parents/guardians leave BC to reside in another province or country, is the student an eligible student?**
Only if a parent/guardian would continue to meet "residency" in BC requirements, and only for the period of time that such is the case.
- 10. If parent/guardian leaves BC during the school year and no longer is a BC resident, is the student eligible for funding for the remainder of the days enrolled?**
Only if a parent/guardian would continue to meet residency in BC requirements and only for the period of time that such is the case.

Student Questions

- 11. Do status Aboriginal students living on reserve, who are funded by the federal government through Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) qualify for any provincial funding?**
No, their funding is fully provided by the federal government.
- 12. Do status Aboriginal students living off-reserve, who are not funded by the federal government qualify for provincial funding?**
Yes.
- 13. Are home-schooled students that are registered with the school to be included in the ES Audit count?**
No.
- 14. Can students who are children of foreign diplomats and refugees be considered eligible students?**
Yes, if they meet the requirements stated in Legal Residency of Parent - Appendix II; copy of official documentation must be in the student(s) file.
- 15. Can a foreign exchange student be considered an eligible student?**
Yes, if the exchange is a one-on-one student exchange and completed within a 2 year timeframe.
- 16. Can international students in British Columbia on student visas (visa students) be considered eligible students?**
No. An eligible student's parent/legal guardian must be a citizen of Canada or a permanent resident, as defined in the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (Canada) or be lawfully admitted to Canada and be ordinarily resident in BC.

Hours of Instruction and In Attendance Questions

- 17. Do I have to calculate attendance differently, now that the Ministry is using hours instead of days to calculate full time attendance?**
No, all the rules regarding attendance remain the same.

18. How do schools compare hours of instruction to days of instruction?

Full-time attendance for 600 hours of instruction is comparable to (for example) approximately 4.5 hours per day (or more) of instruction x 135 days of school. (i.e. # of hours/day x # of days in school)

19. What is the minimum number of hours of attendance for half time Kindergarten students in Section A. of the ES Audit form?

Half time Kindergarten students must attend a minimum of 320 hours by May 15.

20. Should the following days be included in the total hours of instruction: scheduled student examination days, learning activity days (i.e. field day) school community involvement days and days that school is closed due to inclement weather?

Yes, they may be counted as school hours (formerly called "school days"). Please refer to Educational Standards Order, section 3.

21. Should the following days be included in the total hours of attendance: teacher professional days, statutory holidays, school holidays, and extended school holidays?

No.

22. Do I include recess and lunch breaks when calculating hours of instruction?

No. Please refer to Educational Standards Order, section 3.

23. Can a kindergarten student be considered a full-time eligible student (1.0 rather than 0.5 FTE) if enrolled in a full-day program?

Yes, for the 2011/12 school year the BC Government has provided funding for universal full-day or half day Kindergarten available in independent schools.

24. Can a student be counted as 1 FTE, (as opposed to .5 FTE) if that student is in kindergarten, but is age 6 (grade 1 age)?

Depending on whether the student is attending a full day or half day kindergarten program, as long as they are "of school age", then they are counted by the program (grade) they are enrolled in, not by age.

25. Can a student who is enrolled at a school, but has to be away from school for a period of time (e.g., due to pregnancy) be considered a fully eligible student?

Yes, as long as the school continues to provide and supervise the student's educational program and assess student progress.

26. If a student is away sick for an extended period of time, e.g., five months, can the student be counted for funding purposes?

Yes, if the school continues to provide and supervise the student's educational program and assess student progress as far as possible. The auditor must be satisfied that there is sufficient documentation to substantiate this in the student's file.

27. If a student "skips" school various days, is that student still considered to be "in attendance" for funding purposes on those days?

No, un-excused absences do not count as days "in attendance".

28. If a student is absent various days due to illness, is the student considered to be "in attendance" for funding purposes on those days?

Yes. Excused absences may count as days "in attendance".

29. If a student goes on an extended holiday and is expected to brief the school and give presentations on return to school, can the days missed be counted?

Yes, if this is an excused absence and the school continues to provide and supervise the student's educational program and assess student progress.

30. If a student moves out of BC (and no longer resides in BC) and is completing courses provided by the school, can the student be considered an eligible student?

No.

31. If a student, who was enrolled as an eligible student on September 30, becomes a registered home-schooled student in January, can the school claim the September to January portion of the student grant?

Yes, only as a pro-rated portion for September to January; for the remainder of the school year the student is to be considered a home-schooled student.

32. Does a study block count towards the 600 hours?

Yes, if attendance is taken and it is supervised by a teacher.