



**DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD  
ONTARIO NORTH EAST**

**Policy No. 2.1.20**

**Section: School Related**

**Related References: Education Act, PPM 131**

**Appendices: A-E**

**Approved: March 4, 2003**

**Revised: September 1, 2015**

**Review Date:**

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**TITLE: Home Schooling Policy**

**1.0 Rationale:**

Home Schooling can be an acceptable alternative to day school. School boards have an obligation to ensure that students of compulsory school age are receiving satisfactory instruction. It is the intention of District School Board Ontario North East to be in compliance with subsection 21(2) clause (a) of the Education Act and subsection 24(2) and /or section 30 "Inquiries by the Provincial School Attendance Counsellor" and all other relevant sections. As well as, Policy/Program Memorandum No. 131, "Home Schooling."

**2.0 Definitions:**

**3.0 Policy:**

DSB Ontario North East believes that our teachers provide excellent learning opportunities for our students; however, there can be a variety of circumstances that result in parents or guardians wishing to home school their child(ren). DSB Ontario North East recognizes that home schooling may be an acceptable alternative to regular school attendance.

## PROCEDURES:

### ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS

Notification by a parent to the Board of the intention to provide home schooling shall be accepted.

A supervisory officer of the Board shall be designated to monitor home schooling.

Parents who are providing home schooling shall be given a copy of this policy to ensure they are aware of their obligations and the obligations of the Board as well as the resources available to them.

The Board is under no obligation to provide resources or space to parents who choose to provide home schooling except as outlined in this policy where parents indicate their wish to have their children take part in appropriate EQAO assessment and/or testing.

The Board will investigate home schooling only if there is just cause to do so as outlined in this policy.

If required, the Board may request that the Provincial Attendance Counsellor conduct an inquiry into a home schooling situation to ensure a child is receiving satisfactory instruction and follow up on any recommendations which result from that inquiry.

Schools may only register students who are being home schooled for the portion of the day they are actually in attendance at the school.

In this document, *parent(s)* refers to parent(s) and guardian(s).

The sections and subsections of the Education Act that are relevant to this memorandum are listed in appendix A.

### **Procedures for Parents**

Parents who decide to provide home schooling for their child(ren) should notify the school board of their intent in writing.

Parents should provide the name, gender, grade, and date of birth of each child who is receiving home schooling. Parents shall also provide the telephone number, e-mail address, and address of the home. The letter should be signed by the parent(s). (Appendix B)

If any contact information changes, parents should notify the school board of the changes.

If parents decide to continue to provide home schooling in subsequent years, they should give notification each year in writing prior to September 1 to the school board. The letter should contain the same information as that in the initial letter described above.

### **Procedures for School Boards**

A copy of this policy will be given to the parents who are providing home schooling.

When parents give written notification of their intent to provide home schooling for their child, the board will consider the child to be excused from attendance at school, in accordance with subsection 21(2), clause (a), of the Education Act.

The board will accept the written notification of the parents each year as evidence that the parents are providing satisfactory instruction at home.

The board will send a letter each year to the parents, acknowledging the notification. Appendix C. Letter in Response to Parent's Notification

The board will not investigate the matter further.

If there are reasonable grounds to suspect that the child is not receiving satisfactory instruction at home, the board will take steps to determine whether the instruction is satisfactory.

### **Board Investigations of home schooling**

#### **Reasons for an Investigation**

The following is a list of some of the reasons that may give cause to investigate a particular instance of home schooling:

- refusal of a parent to notify the board in writing of the intent to provide home schooling
- a credible report of concern by a third party with respect to the instruction being provided in the home
- evidence that the child was removed from attendance at school because of ongoing conflicts with the school, not for the purpose of home schooling
- a history of absenteeism by the child prior to the parent's notifying the board of the intent to provide home schooling

#### **Guidelines for Conducting an Investigation**

Consideration will be given to the fact that the methodology, materials, schedules, and assessment techniques used by parents who provide home schooling may differ from those used by educators in the school system. For example, the parent may not be following the Ontario curriculum, using standard classroom practices in the home, or teaching within the standard school day or school year.

Determining whether instruction is satisfactory will focus on the following:

- a plan for educating the child
- plans to ensure literacy and numeracy at developmentally appropriate levels
- plans for assessing the child's achievement

In conducting an investigation, the appropriate supervisory officer may meet with the family. For a guide to discussion see "Guide for the Discussion" (Appendix D).

At the discretion of the supervisory officer, the parents may be asked to provide a written submission with information on the home schooling being provided. See "Gathering Information in and Investigation" (Appendix E).

When the supervisory officer is conducting the investigation, a member of a recognized support group for parents who provide home schooling may be present. These support groups include the Ontario Federation of Teaching Parents, the Ontario Christian Home Educators' Connection, the Home School Legal Defence Association of Canada, and the Catholic Home Schoolers' Association – Ontario.

When the supervisory officer is unable to determine from the investigation whether the child is receiving satisfactory instruction, in accordance with subsection 24(2) and/or section 30(7) of the Education Act further action may be taken. The supervisory officer may request that the Provincial School Attendance Counsellor inquire into the case.

Before requesting an inquiry by the Provincial School Attendance Counsellor, the appropriate supervisory officer shall:

- take appropriate steps to determine whether the child is receiving satisfactory instruction;
- retain documentation of its communication with the parents, including copies of written communication, notes on telephone calls and other verbal communication, a record of the types of communication (e.g., telephone call, registered letter), and a record of the number of attempts to communicate;
- retain documentation on the nature of the information and material provided by the parent in response to the board's investigation;
- prepare a factual summary of its investigation, including a conclusion, which will be forwarded to the Provincial School Attendance Counsellor.

### **Inquiries by the Provincial School Attendance Counsellor**

Upon request from a Board the Provincial School Attendance Counsellor shall inquire into the case under subsection 24(2) of the Education Act.

The Provincial School Attendance Counsellor will appoint an inquiry officer to conduct the inquiry.

If the inquiry determines that the child is not receiving satisfactory instruction and the Provincial School Attendance Counsellor orders that the child attend school, appropriate action shall be taken by the Supervisory Officer to ensure school attendance.

### **Resources for Parents Providing Home Schooling**

- 1) Assessments and Tests for students in Grades 3, 6, and 9, and/or the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (normally given to students in Grade 10) administered by the Education Quality and Accountability Office.

Parents providing home schooling who wish their child(ren) to participate in any of the above assessments and/or tests must contact the school board by September 30<sup>th</sup> of the year in which the assessments/tests are being conducted for information about the dates, times, and locations.

- No fees will be charged by the board or by the EQAO.
- Space shall be provided for these children at a local school at the time and on the dates when assessments/tests are being administered to the board's regular day school students.
- The school will request sufficient assessment/test materials from the EQAO so that the children who are receiving home schooling can participate.
- The superintendent or the school will also inform the parent of the date, time, and location of the assessment/test.
- It is the responsibility of the parent to provide transportation for the child to and from the site.
- The EQAO will send the results of children who are receiving home schooling to the school where they participated in the assessment/test. Schools will send these children's results directly to the children's homes.
- The results of children who are receiving home schooling will not be included in school and board reports generated by the EQAO or by the schools and boards.

### **2) Courses Offered Through the Independent Learning Centre**

[www.ilc.org](http://www.ilc.org)

A parent who wishes to enrol a child of compulsory school age in courses offered through the Independent Learning Centre (ILC) may do so, provided that the parent has notified the school board of the intent to provide home schooling.

### **Inquiries by the Provincial School Attendance Counsellor**

Upon request from a Board the Provincial School Attendance Counsellor shall inquire into the case under subsection 24(2) of the Education Act.

The Provincial School Attendance Counsellor will appoint an inquiry officer to conduct the inquiry.

If the inquiry determines that the child is not receiving satisfactory instruction and the Provincial School Attendance Counsellor orders that the child attend school, appropriate action shall be taken by the Supervisory Officer to ensure school attendance.

### **Related Policy**

Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR)

Sections 7.2.5 Ontario Schools, Kindergarten to Grade 12: Policy and Program Requirements, 2011 (OS) will also apply to students enrolled in an Ontario secondary school, other than mature students (as defined in OS), who are entering secondary school after having received home schooling.

### **Funding for Part-Time Attendance**

The Ministry of Education provides funding to boards for students who attend school on a part-time basis. The per-pupil grants are prorated according to the amount of time the student is in attendance at the school.

### **Enrolment Registers**

A school will not record a child who is receiving home schooling on a full-time basis in the enrolment register for full-time day school students.

If a student is receiving some instruction at a school operated by a board, the student's enrolment for this instruction will be recorded in the appropriate register.

## **Relevant Sections of the Education Act**

- Subsection 21(1) requires every child to attend school from the age of six until the age of eighteen.
- Subsection 21(2) lists the legal reasons that a child may be excused from attending school. One of the reasons is that "the child is receiving satisfactory instruction at home or elsewhere", stated in clause (a).
- Subsection 21(5) requires parents to send children to school.
- Subsection 24(1) deals with the appointment of the Provincial School Attendance Counsellor, and subsection 24(2) sets out the authority and mandate of the Provincial School Attendance Counsellor to conduct an inquiry into the reasons for, and other circumstances related to, a child's non-attendance at school.
- Section 25 deals with the appointment by school boards of school attendance counsellors, and authorizes a school attendance counsellor to enforce compulsory school attendance.
- Section 26 sets out the duties and powers of school attendance counsellors.
- Section 30 deals with prosecution of parents or guardians for a child's non-attendance at school.
- Subsection 30(7) authorizes a court to order an inquiry under subsection 24(2).

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## Appendix B

### NOTIFICATION OF INTENT TO PROVIDE HOME SCHOOLING

To District School Board Ontario North East:

I/We herewith provide the names, gender, and date of birth for each child of compulsory school age for whom I/we intend to provide home schooling.

First and Last Names	Gender	Date of Birth	Grade

Name of parent/guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

Home address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Mailing address (if different from home address): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

I/We wish to notify District School Board Ontario North East that I/we will be providing home schooling for our child(ren) starting in \_\_\_\_\_. I/we understand our responsibility under the Education Act to provide satisfactory instruction for our school-age child(ren) and do hereby declare our intent to do so.

Signature of parent/guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



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**Appendix C**

**LETTER IN RESPONSE TO PARENT'S NOTIFICATION**

Dear \_\_\_\_\_ ,

Thank you for notifying District School Board Ontario North East of your intent to provide home schooling for your child(ren):

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Your child(ren) is/are excused from attendance at school for the school year \_\_\_\_\_ under subsection 21(2), Clause (a), of the Education Act, because your child(ren) is/are receiving satisfactory instruction at home.

If you would like your child(ren) to participate in the assessments for students in Grades 3,6, and 9, and/or in the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (normally given to students in Grade 10), that are administered by the Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO), you should contact me by September 30 (*or another date specified by the school board*) for information about the dates, times, and locations.

Enclosed please find a copy of our Home Schooling Policy.

Sincerely,

Signature of school board official: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of school board official: \_\_\_\_\_

Title of School board official: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix D

### Guide for the Discussion

- Do you have an instructional plan, regularly planned instructional time, and a daily work schedule? Please provide details.
- What subjects are you teaching?
- What do you expect to accomplish with your child in English, mathematics, and other subjects this year?
- Is your instructional program based on the Ontario curriculum or on a different curriculum?
- If you follow the Ontario curriculum, which documents do you use?
- If you do not use Ontario curriculum documents, please describe the curriculum documents you do use.

## Appendix D

### Guide for the Discussion (Cont'd)

- Please describe the typical kinds of activities that you provide for your child in the subjects you are teaching. Please provide samples of your child's work in each subject area.
- What types of materials do you use to assist you in accomplishing your plans (e.g., encyclopedias, textbooks, magazines, newspapers, television programs, materials on the Internet, computer programs)?
- Please describe the techniques you use to assess your child's learning.
- Do you use community resources to support your instruction? If so, which ones?
- Do you network with other parents who provide home schooling? How?
- Please feel free to provide any other information that would help the board determine whether instruction is satisfactory.

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## Appendix E

### GATHERING INFORMATION IN AN INVESTIGATION

Please complete this form and return it to ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) along with the additional material requested below. If you need more space, attach additional sheets.

*insert name of Supervisory Officer*

#### Program Planning

This section is intended to give the board information on your short- and long-range plans for your child's education.

Please describe your plan for your child's learning by answering the following questions:

Do you make instructional plans? Yes  No

Do you spend regularly planned instructional time with your child? Yes  No

Do you have a daily work schedule for your child's home schooling? Yes  No

If yes, please describe it.

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What subjects are you teaching?

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What do you expect to accomplish with your child in English, mathematics, and other subjects this year?

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## Appendix E (cont'd)

### Instructional Program

This section is intended to give the board information on the curriculum you follow.

Is your instructional program based on any of the elementary or secondary curriculum policy documents published by the Ontario Ministry of Education?

Yes  No

If yes, please check the appropriate boxes below.

#### Elementary Curriculum Policy Documents

Language

Mathematics

Science and Technology

Social Studies/History and Geography

The Arts

Health and Physical Education

French as a Second Language

*Secondary Curriculum Policy Documents*

Please specify:

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*Note:* Ministry of Education curriculum policy documents and curriculum support material may be downloaded free of charge from the ministry's website, at <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca>. This material may also be obtained through Publications Ontario. Contact Publications Ontario by using its toll-free telephone number, 1-800-668-9938, or visit its website, at <http://www.publications.gov.on.ca>, for more information

#### *Other Materials*

Please list any other curriculum documents that you use to help you design your instructional program.

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## Appendix E (cont'd)

### Instructional Activities

This section is intended to give the board information on the types of planned activities that you provide for your child to help him or her meet the learning expectations you have established.

Please describe the typical activities you use to help your child learn. For example, what types of activities does your child do while learning, and other subjects? Please include samples of your child's work in each subject area.

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### Instructional Materials

This section is intended to give the board information on the types of materials you use to help your child meet the learning expectations you have established.

Please indicate the resources you use to support your instruction.

Encyclopedias/reference books (please list):

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Textbooks:

English

Mathematics

Other subjects

Please list:

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Names of textbooks used:

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## Appendix E (cont'd)

Supplementary materials used:

<i>Never</i>	<i>Very Often</i>	<i>Often</i>	<i>Seldom</i>	
Magazines	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Newspapers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Science kits	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Films	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maps	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Charts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Models/Mock-ups	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Television programs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Radio programs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Posters	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Computer programs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Internet	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Other Supplementary materials (please specify):

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### Assessment of Student Learning

This section is intended to give the board information on how you evaluate your child's progress in learning.

What techniques do you use to assess student learning? Please describe them.

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## Appendix E (cont'd)

### Resources

This section is intended to give the board information on the resources you use to support your instructional program.

Please indicate the community and other resources you use.

Public library

YMCA/YWCA

Community Centre

Local gym facilities

Public swimming pool

Museums

Art galleries

Recreational/educational/social groups  
(e.g. Scouts, Guides)

Nature interpretive centers

Camping areas

Youth groups

Please specify:

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Networking with other families that provide home schooling can offer valuable support. Please indicate if you are a member of any of the following provincial associations.

Ontario Federation of Teaching Parents

Ontario Christian Home Educators' Connection

Catholic Home Schoolers' Association – Ontario

Other organizations or groups

Please specify:

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## Appendix E (cont'd)

### Other Information

Please provide below any other information that would help the board determine whether the instruction is satisfactory.

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Parent's/guardian's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_