

Topic:	Home Schooling
Effective:	September 2004
Cross-Reference:	Halton District School Board Attendance Manual
Revision Date(s):	September 2012, September 2014, December 2018
Review Date:	January 2021
Responsibility:	School Operations

INTENDED PURPOSE:

Section 21 (2) a) of the Education Act outlines the legal basis for home schooling (i.e., a person is excused from attendance at school if the person is receiving satisfactory instruction at home or elsewhere). The Halton District School Board will respect parental decisions to home school. Our best mechanism to ensure that a child's developmental and educational needs are being met is to maintain a positive, open relationship with families who elect to home school their child(ren) to the best extent possible.

This procedure outlines the necessary steps to facilitate home schooling for those families that choose to do so.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

- Parents must indicate to their home school Principal their intent to home school their child(ren).
- Children being home schooled will not be entitled to attend school on a part-time basis and will not be entitled to Board services or instructional materials.
- If at any time, the Board has reasonable grounds to believe that a child is not receiving satisfactory instruction at home and believes that the child should not be excused from attendance at school, the Board will initiate procedures to cause the child to attend including, where necessary, a request for an inquiry by the Provincial School Attendance Counsellor.
- When a child who has been previously home schooled registers with the Halton District School Board, they shall be placed in the age-appropriate grade in elementary school. Decisions regarding course selection and pathway placements for secondary school students will be made when students register for school. Schools will require evidence of prior learning in a variety of areas to determine appropriate grade and course type.

PROCEDURE:

1. When a parent/guardian indicates their intention to withdraw their child(ren) from school to provide home schooling, the Principal or designate will offer the parent/guardian an opportunity to discuss their choice (the purpose of this is to ascertain whether the child has been experiencing problems of which the principal is unaware, whether the parent is dissatisfied with anything related to the education provided to date, or whether there are alternative reasons a parent chooses to play a direct role in their child's education).
2. The parent/guardian must annually complete and sign the "Notification of Intent to Home School" (Appendix A). This information is tracked and housed centrally by School Operations.
3. The "Notification of Intent to Home School" form should be forwarded by the Principal to the Family of Schools Superintendent of Education.
4. A letter acknowledging the request, will be generated from the Superintendent to the parent/guardian. A copy of this letter and the completed "Notification of Intent to Home School" form will be added to the Ontario Student Record (OSR).
5. The Ontario Student Record folder should be retired in accordance with The Ontario Student Record (OSR) Guideline, 2000.
6. On the Attendance Register, the student should be shown as "Retired" on the first date of home schooling.

7. On the Home Schooling Tracking Form (Appendix C), indicate that the child has been retired.
8. Parents/guardians who home school their child may make a request to have their child participate in EQAO assessments at their home school. Parents must notify the school by December 30 in the school year they are requesting their child participate.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT HOME SCHOOLING***Supplementary Information for Principals and Vice Principals***

- Q. What is the difference between 'home schooling' and 'home instruction'?
- A. 'Home schooling' is the provision of satisfactory instruction by a parent/guardian outside of the regular school system. 'Home instruction' is the provision of a limited amount of instruction by the school board to a pupil who is temporarily unable to attend school due to illness or injury. For information on home instruction, see the Home Instruction Administrative Procedure found on the HDSB website at www.hdsb.ca.
- Q. Are principals required to meet with parents/guardians to review their home school education plan(s) for their child(ren)?
- A. As the parent(s)/guardian(s) have made the decision to home school, responsibility for providing satisfactory instruction rests with them. The absence of articulated Ministry of Education standards for "satisfactory instruction" makes the assessment of the program arbitrary.
- Q. Is the school responsible for evaluating the child's progress?
- A. No. Assessment and evaluation are an important part of the instructional process, therefore the responsibility rests with the person(s) providing the home schooling program. Note that if at any time, the Board has reasonable grounds to believe that a child is not receiving satisfactory instruction at home and believes that the child should not be excused from attendance at school, the Board will initiate procedures to cause the child to attend including, where necessary, a request for an inquiry by the Provincial School Attendance Counsellor.
- Q. Will the Halton District School Board allow students to attend school for part of the day and be home schooled for the other part?
- A. No. Ministry of Education documents indicate that a Board is under no obligation to accept a student on a part-time basis once a parent/guardian decides to home school. This is the position adopted by the Halton District School Board.
- Q. Can parents/guardians withdraw their child for part of the day to receive subject-specific instruction from a private tutor or tutorial agency?
- A. The definition of home schooling includes instruction "elsewhere", such as at a tutorial service. The Halton District School Board will not register students on a part-time basis who are receiving instruction at home or elsewhere.
- Q. Can the parent/guardian of a home schooled child request HDSB resources?
- A. No. The Halton District School Board does not provide resources for home schooling. Parents can access the Ministry of Education website (<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca>) to access program information and can contact publishers to purchase materials or may purchase materials at a retail teachers' store.
- Q. What should a school do if it has cause to believe that children who are being home schooled are not receiving instruction?
- A. If a school has reasonable grounds to believe that a child of mandatory school age who would normally attend school is not being educated, the Principal will attempt to initiate contact with the family. If the family indicates that they have chosen to home school, the Principal may ask them to complete Appendix A or send a letter to the School's Superintendent of Education indicating their decision. If the parent/guardian refuses to do either, the Principal will inform the school's Superintendent of Education and School Social Worker. A referral may be made to the Provincial Attendance Counsellor.

- Q. Who keeps track of students receiving home schooling?
- A. Tracking of students receiving home schooling occurs by:
1. Maintaining a list of students, at the school, who have been withdrawn for home schooling (refer to Appendix C) and forwarding this information to the normal receiving schools within the system at regular student transition periods (e.g., gr. 8 to 9).
 2. Indicating the student as “retired” in The Attendance Register and retired OSR form as part of the student’s record.
 3. Maintaining a record of students being home schooled by the School Operations Department by cross referencing with the receipt of parental letters of intent to home school and copies of “Appendix A”.
- Q. Where does a school place a child who returns to or enters our system after being home schooled?
- A. It is the Halton District School Board’s position that a child will be placed in the age-appropriate grade if attending an elementary school. Decisions regarding the placement of secondary school students will be made when students register for school. Schools will require evidence of prior learning in a variety of areas to determine appropriate grade and course type.
- Q. Where can I get more information about attendance requirements and regulations?
- A. One of the best sources of information is in the instruction section of the student attendance register available at the Ontario Ministry of Education website.



NOTIFICATION OF INTENT TO HOME SCHOOL

Please complete a separate form for each child being withdrawn for the purpose of Home Schooling.

Date: _____

To: Area Superintendent of Education

From: _____
(Name of Parent/Guardian)

Re: _____ (Name of child) _____ (Date of Birth DD/MM/YYYY)

(Address) (City)

(Postal Code) (Designated HDSB School)

(Parent/Guardian email address) (Phone Number)

Please be advised of my/our intent, as per the Education Act 21(2)(a), to withdraw my/our child(ren) from School so that s/he/they may receive satisfactory instruction at home or elsewhere.

Sincerely,

(Parent Signature)

(Principal Signature)

Copies to: Ontario Student Record Folder
Parent/Guardian

(original to Area Superintendent Of Education)

«Date»

«ParentsFirstName» «ParentsLastName»
«Address»
«City», ON «PostalCode»

Dear «ParentsFirstName» «ParentsLastName»,

In reply to your notification to us that you are home schooling your child(ren), «StudentsName», I bring to your attention that in accordance with the Education Act, "a child is excused from attendance at school if he/she is receiving satisfactory instruction at home or elsewhere."

Your decision to home school is a significant one and you should be aware that:

- a) As required under the Education Act, Regulations, and Requirements for Maintaining the Attendance Register, your child will be shown as having retired from the public education system;
- b) Part-time attendance at school will not be permitted by the Halton District School Board;
- c) Responsibility for program planning, assessment and evaluation rests with you as the teaching parent;
- d) Learning materials and/or resources are not provided by the Halton District School Board;
- e) Staff resources provided for speech therapy, special education assistance, vision, hearing, counseling and individual assessments will not be accessible through the Halton District School Board;
- f) Credits cannot be earned towards a high school diploma through home schooling;
- g) Access to a universal vaccination program through the school is not available. Please contact the Halton Region Health Department for assistance and information regarding this program.
- h) Should you choose to register your child with the Halton District School Board at some point in the future your child will be accepted as a new registrant and will be placed in the age-appropriate grade (elementary) or prior learning will be assessed and appropriate placement determined by the Principal (secondary).

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 your child's home school for information about the dates, times and locations.

Your child will be excused from classes for the **20XX-XX School Year**. If you continue to home school your child in the following year, please notify the school, which your child would otherwise be attending **prior to September 1, 20XX**.

You may wish to review information on the Ministry of Education website (<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca>) or to seek further support from a home schooling network.

For any further information or clarification, please contact me at 905-335-3663.

Sincerely,

«Superintendent»
Superintendent of Education

Copies to: «Principal», Principal, «HomeSchool»
Ontario Student Record
«Attendance_Councillor», Attendance Counsellor, «CouncillorsHomeSchool»
/file

Street Address: J.W. Singleton Education Centre • 2050 Guelph Line, Burlington, Ontario L7P 5A8

Mailing Address: J.W. Singleton Education Centre • P.O. Box 5005, Stn. LCD 1, Burlington, Ontario L7R 3Z2

Phone: 905-335-3663 | 1-877-618-3456 Fax: 905-335-9802

www.hdsb.ca

