Greater Essex County District School Board

Policy: Home Schooling

Reference No: P-AD-13

The Greater Essex County District School Board believes that a student's needs are best met in a school setting that offers a full complement of program's services and activities. The Greater Essex County District School Board acknowledges the right of parent(s)/guardian(s) to home school their son(s)/daughter(s) in accordance with Section 21(2) (a) of the Education Act which states that: "A child is excused from attendance at school if, (a) the child is receiving satisfactory instruction at home or elsewhere".

Greater Essex County District School Board

Regulation: Home Schooling

Reference No: R-AD-13

This regulation is in accordance with Ministry of Education "Home Schooling", Policy/Program Memorandum No. 131, dated June 17, 2002. It applies to parent(s)/guardian(s) who wish to instruct their son(s)/daughter(s) at home or elsewhere.

Responsibilities of Parent(s)/Guardian(s)

1. Provide written notification to the Superintendent responsible or designate of their intention to home school their son(s)/daughter(s) who is receiving home school as well as home telephone number and address. The written notification should be signed by parent(s)/guardian(s). Parent(s)/guardian(s) may use the letter provided in **PPM 131 -Notification of Intent to Provide Home Schooling**

2. Notify the school board of any change of home address.

3. Provide written notification each year prior to September 1st to the school board in whose jurisdiction their child last attended school. The letter should contain the same information as **PPM 131 -Notification of Intent to Provide Home Schooling**.

4. Provide instruction that is appropriate to their son(s)/daughter(s) development and intellectual ability and is consistent with the curriculum prescribed by the Ministry of Education.

5. Provide written notification by September 30th of each school year to the Superintendent responsible or designate of their intention to have their son(s)/daughter(s) participate in the EQAO assessments/tests in Grade 3, 6, and 9, and/or the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (normally given to students in Grade 10).

6. Provide transportation for their son(s)/daughter(s) to and from the school where the EQAO assessment/test is being administered.

7. Provide constructive feedback to their son(s)/daughter(s) regarding achievement and future educational planning.

Responsibilities of the Board

Upon receiving written notification of the intent by a parent(s)/guardian(s) to home school their son(s)/daughter(s), the board should:

1. Consider the student(s) to be excused from attendance at school, in accordance with subsection 21(2), clause (a), of The Education Act.

2. Send a letter each year to the parent(s)/guardian(s), acknowledging the notification. The Board may use the letter in **PPM 131 Appendix C: Letter in Response to Parent(s), Guardian(s) Notification**

3. Notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) in writing of their responsibilities and the procedures established by the board.

    - Inform the parent(s)/guardian(s) that their son(s)/daughter(s) may participate in the EQAO assessments/tests in Grades 3,6, and 9 and/or in the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (normally given to students in Grade 10),

    - Inform the parent(s)/guardian(s) that their son(s)/guardian(s) will not be allowed to participate or attend some of the classes on a part-time basis,

    - Inform the parent(s)/guardian(s) that secondary school credits cannot be granted to students who are home schooled, and

    - Inform the parent(s)/guardian(s) that a student(s) enrolled in any e-learning course(s) offered by the board or in partnership with the board is not considered home schooling:

4. If there are reasonable grounds to be concerned that the instruction provided in the home may not be satisfactory, an investigation should be launch. The following is a list of some of the reasons that may give a board cause to investigate a particular instance of home schooling:

    - Refusal of a parent/guardian 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 student 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 student prior to the parent/guardian notifying the board of the intent to provide home schooling.

5. In conducting an investigation, the board may have one of its officials meet with the family or it may request the parent(s)/guardian(s) to submit information about the home schooling in writing.

6. The determination of whether instruction is satisfactory should 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.

7. If the board chooses to have a board official meeting with the family, the following questions may be used as a guide for the discussion:
   - Do you have an instructional plan, regularly planned instructional time, and a daily work schedule?
   - 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 to you use?
   - If you do not use Ontario curriculum documents, please describe the curriculum documents you do use.
   - Please describe the typical kinds of activities that you provide for your child in the subjects you are teaching.
   - Please provide samples of your son(s)/daughter(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 son(s)/daughter(s) learning.
   - Do you use community resources to support your instruction? If so, which ones?
   - Do you network with other parents/guardians who provide home schooling? How?

- Please feel free to provide any other information that would help the board determine whether instruction is satisfactory.

8. When a board official is conducting the investigation, a member of a recognized support group for parent(s)/guardian(s) 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 Schooling Legal Defense of Association of Canada, and the Catholic Home Schoolers' Association – Ontario.

9. If the board chooses to request a written submission from the parent(s)/guardian(s), board officials may ask the parent(s)/guardian(s) to complete **PPP 131 Appendix D: Form for Gathering Information in an Investigation.**

10. If the board is unable to determine from this investigation whether the student(s) is receiving satisfactory instruction at home, it may take further action, in accordance with subsection 24(2) and/or section 30 of the Education Act (Inquiries by the Provincial School Attendance Counsellor). Before requesting an inquiry, the board should ensure that it has:

    - Taken appropriate steps to determine whether the child is receiving satisfactory

    - Retained documentation of its communication with the parent(s)/guardian(s), 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.

    - Retained documentation on the nature of the information and material provided by the parent/guardian 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

1. The board may request that the Provincial School Attendance Counsellor 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.

2. If the inquiry determines that the student is not receiving satisfactory instruction and the Provincial School Attendance counselor orders that the student attend school, the school board must determine the appropriate action to be taken.

PPM 131- Notification of Intent to Provide Home Schooling

PPM 131- Appendix C: Letter in Response to Parent(s), Guardian(s) Notification

PPM 131- Appendix D: Form for Gathering Information in an investigation