

Policy Statement: The Western School District shall review and consider requests for home schooling within the context of the *Schools Act 1997*, the guidelines established by the Department of Education, and criteria outlined in this policy.

1. Application

This policy applies to all schools under the Western School District, and to all parents/guardians requesting and/or providing home schooling to their child(ren).

2. Rationale

The Western School District recognizes that the Schools Act 1997 provides for a parent to have their child educated in a home school environment subject to the written approval of the Director, if the child is under instruction satisfactory to the Director. Parents who wish to educate their child in a home school are bound by the provisions of the *Schools Act 1997*, Sections 3-7, and 15, and must receive approval for home instruction from the Director (Appendix A). The *Schools Act 1997* also mandates that school districts establish policies and procedures that regulate home schooling.

3. Procedures

Parents who wish to educate their child in a home school shall apply to the Director, using the application in Appendix B, requesting that the child be exempt from regular attendance at school by reason of receiving appropriate instruction at home.

3.1 Consideration of Requests

- a) The Director (or designate) shall consider all requests for home schooling, and shall determine whether the proposed educational plan constitutes appropriate instruction and whether it is in the best interest of the child.
- b) The Director (or designate) shall determine that the curriculum to be followed meets with the guidelines as set out in Appendix C.
- c) The Principal, in consultation with the Director (or designate), shall arrange a meeting, prior to the beginning of the school year, with the parent(s) and the student to review the details of the home schooling plan if the provincial

curriculum is being used, and to review the monitoring and evaluation procedures to be used.

- d) The Director (or designate) will communicate the decision regarding the approval of the educational plan in writing to the parents and provide a copy of the letter to the school. Home schooling shall not occur in the absence of an approved educational plan.
- e) In accordance with the *Schools Act 1997* (Sec. 7), approval for a home school will be granted for only one school year at a time, and will in all cases be conditional upon the continued satisfactory progress of the student.
- f) Parents wishing to begin or continue home schooling in September of the upcoming year shall apply/re-apply to the District by May 15 of the current school year.

3.2 School Assignment

- a) Each child approved for home schooling shall be assigned to a school. The assigned school shall be determined by the child's residential address in accordance with established school attendance zones.
- b) The Principal of the assigned school shall assign the home-schooled child to an in-school classroom. The child's attendance each school day will be recorded on the class register under the code "H" ("home school - excused").
- c) When using the provincial curriculum, the Principal (or designate) of the assigned school will provide course outlines, free curriculum guides, and/or student textbooks to the home school. Textbooks are to be provided on the same basis as if the students were in regular classes. In addition, the principal (or designate) shall provide copies of teacher editions to parents which are to be returned to the school at the conclusion of the course/program.
- d) A home schooled student may avail of any regular school services and extra-curricular activities at the assigned school.
- e) Where it does not create problems for the school, and where no special transportation demands are made upon the system, the principal will endeavor to accommodate home schooled students in selected elective courses at the school if requested to do so.

3.3 Student Evaluation

- a) Upon approval of the home schooling application, parents accept the responsibility of providing sufficient information to the school/district to indicate the child is making adequate progress.
- b) Home schooled students who are following a District approved alternative curriculum will be evaluated as follows:
 - i. Progress in the alternative curriculum will be assessed by instruments provided in the alternate curriculum package. No school-based examinations will be administered.
 - ii. In home schools or home school courses which are following an alternative curriculum which includes structured formal evaluation by a professional educator, the filing of copies of these evaluation reports with the assigned school or District Office shall meet the evaluation requirements.
- c) Students with special needs whose curriculum may be defined by an Individual Education Plan (IEP) will be evaluated based on the goals and objectives in the IEP. Parents shall work in collaboration with the Program Specialist for Student Support Services in developing the program as outlined in the IEP, and provide an anecdotal summary of the program based on the goals in the IEP.
- d) All students enrolled in any home school program utilizing Newfoundland and Labrador curriculum in Grade 3 or higher, are required to write all Criterion Referenced Testing and standardized testing administered to in-school counterparts, unless exempted under the same guidelines as apply to their counterparts. These tests must be written at the school.
- e) In those courses or programs which are school-evaluated, the school shall report the results of the student's academic evaluation to the child's parent(s).
- f) The parent shall submit a copy (or summary) of the mid-year (due no later than January 31) and year-end (due on the last day of the school) evaluation to the Director of Education (or designate). See Appendices D and E for reporting templates.

3.4 High School Credit for Home Schools

- a) In Newfoundland and Labrador, the Department of Education establishes the requirements for high school graduation.
- b) In completing high school courses for credit, all evaluation or marks will need to be verified by the high school to which the student has been assigned. Home schooled students who are completing the provincial curriculum with the intention of earning a Newfoundland and Labrador high school graduation certification, shall complete regular evaluation processes in each subject as determined by the school (if the school is to submit marks to the Department on the student's behalf). These students must adhere to all common and in-school examination regulations.
- c) High schools shall not award any credits or certificates of graduation other than those approved through the Department of Education.
- d) In responding to an application for home schooling of a high school student, parents will be notified it is their responsibility to determine if a proposed program meets the standard for high school credit in Newfoundland and Labrador.

3.5 Age of Student Requirements / Limitations

- a) Home schooled high school students are exempted from the supervision of the Western School District at the end of the school year in which the student turns 16 years of age on or before the 31st August of that year..
- b) Until a home schooled student has reached the legal age of school leaving, the student shall be subject to the regulations and procedures outlined in this policy.
- c) The Director (or designate) shall revoke the authorized exemption for home schooling when, after due process, it becomes evident that the best interest of the child is no longer being served by the home school.

3.6 Student File

The file for home schooled students will be maintained at the applicable Western School District Office.

Approved: March 19, 2012	Review Date: March 2015	Updated:
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