

DIVISION: PROGRAMS

PROG-312

POLICY NAME

HOME SCHOOLING

POLICY STATEMENT

The Newfoundland and Labrador English School District (“NLESD”) 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 Early Childhood Development (“DEECD”), and the criteria outlined in this policy and accompanying regulations.

BACKGROUND

In accordance with the *Schools Act, 1997*, the NLESD permits parents to educate their child in a home environment subject to approval of the instructional program by the Director of Education. Parents who wish to educate their child in a home school setting are bound by the provisions of the *Schools Act, 1997*, Sections 3 - 7, and 15, and must receive written approval for home instruction from the Director of Education annually. While the Act makes provision for parents/guardians to exercise that right in a setting other than the formal school system, it also mandates that the Director of Education is responsible for receiving and considering applications from parents/guardians for home schooling. This policy establishes guidelines for the application process for Home Schooling.

SCOPE

This policy is applicable to all schools under the jurisdiction of the NLESD and applies to students of mandatory school age attendance, as per the *Schools Act, 1997*.

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Effective: September 1, 2014

AMENDED: June 16, 2015

DEFINITIONS

Zoned School

A school zone is "the geographical boundary associated with a particular school, encompassing all residences within, for the purposes of student registration and attendance." For the purposes of this policy the Zoned School is the school under the jurisdiction of the NLESD to which a home school student is assigned and which carries certain responsibilities in connection with that student.

Home school or home schooling

For the purposes of this policy Home School or home schooling is defined as an educational program administered by a parent/guardian outside school, using the provincially authorized curriculum or a recognized alternate curriculum.

Parent(s)/Guardian(s)

The person(s) having care of a child and applies to both parents of a child. Where the child is in the care or legal custody of one parent or a person other than the child's natural parent, then this applies to that person only.

POLICY DIRECTIVES

1. Approval for home schooling will take into account the criteria outlined in the administrative procedures/regulations for this policy.
2. Parents/Guardians who wish to educate their child in a home school setting are required to make application to the Director of Education, requesting that the child be excused from attendance at school by reason of being "... under satisfactory instruction at home or elsewhere, for a period specified by the Director..." in accordance with the Schools Act, 1997, Section 5(c).
3. In accordance with Section 7 of the *Schools Act, 1997*, the Director shall approve home school instruction for a period no longer than a school year and may renew approval upon application each school year.
4. The Director shall consider all requests for home schooling and determine whether the proposed educational plan constitutes satisfactory instruction and is in the best interest of the child.

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5. The Director will approve for home schooling only those curricula that have been approved by the DEECD.
6. The Director shall revoke the authorized approval for home schooling if it becomes evident that the best interest of the child is no longer being served by the home school process.
7. The Director shall oversee a home school program for a student who is five years of age or older before January 1 in that school year and until a student is 16 years old as of August 31 of that school year.
8. A child who is five years old as of December 31 of a school year is eligible for kindergarten. However, kindergarten is not compulsory in Newfoundland and Labrador. A child must start a school year when s/he is six years of age as of December 31, but a child who is five years of age as of December 31 can be kept home for one more year at the discretion of the parent/guardian. Such a decision will not be considered home schooling unless a parent/guardian has received written approval for home schooling from the Director.
9. When the home schooling program is the provincially authorized curriculum, parents shall receive the teaching resources for the courses from the Department of Education, and student resources will be available from the school that the student is registered in.
10. Given the District's responsibility to monitor student learning, home schooled students will be required to complete assessments at various times as required by the Director.

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