

Home Schooling Policy Question and Answer

1. What are the rules for eligibility for instruction in English for home-schooling parents registering their children with the school board?

- Children who are ineligible for instruction in English under the Charter of the French language may receive home schooling in English, as these provisions do not apply to them. Consequently, parents may ask the English school board for their area to exempt their child from compulsory school attendance and to assess their child's learning for the purpose of certification. However, home schooling in English does not make a child eligible for schooling in English in public schools or in private educational institutions accredited for the purposes of subsidies under the Act respecting private education.

2. Why is it indicated in the policy that the school may contact the appropriate authorities?

- As indicated in the Ministry of Education Leisure and Sports Home Schooling Policy Framework, it is the duty of certain school board representatives to report to the director of youth protection (DYP) any parents who refuse to allow an assessment of home schooling and the child's educational experience. Parents whose children fail to qualify for exemption from compulsory school attendance after assessment, but refuse to fulfill this obligation, must also be reported. Conversely, if, after such an assessment, the school board concludes that at home the child receives schooling and benefits from an educational experience equivalent to what is provided or experienced at school, the school board is not required to report this case to the director of youth protection since such a child is excused from attending a school and fulfills the obligation of compulsory school attendance. Generally speaking, the situation should be brought to the attention of the director of youth protection (DYP) as a last resort, when talks between the school board and the parents have broken down indefinitely.

3. What is meant by the term "Equivalent Education Experience"?

- According to the Ministry of Education Leisure and Sports Home Schooling Policy Framework "Equivalent" may be interpreted to mean that the instruction and educational experience must give the child sufficient knowledge and competencies so that the child may enter or re-enter the public or private school system. To this end, parents must ensure that their child achieves the learning objectives set out in the programs in effect in Québec schools, or develops the competencies specified by the Québec Education Program (QEP). However, some variation in instructional methods and in the choice of teaching materials is possible.

- Parents must consider the aims of the QEP. The QEP is competency-based and that assumes students are able to properly use the means at their disposal, not only their scholastic learning, but also their experiences, skills, attitudes and interests as well as various types of human and material resources. The QEP is based on three components that must be addressed in a complementary and interactive manner: broad areas of learning, cross-curricular competencies and subject areas.

4. What are the parental and the school board responsibilities regarding student evaluation?

- The Ministry of Education Leisure and Sports Home Schooling Policy Framework indicates that it is the duty of the school board concerned to determine whether the instruction a child receives would enable the child to enter or re-enter the public or private school system. In this context, it is important for parents to inform the school board as early as possible of their intention to home-school their children and for the school board to inform parents of the requirements of home schooling. In discharging its responsibility to evaluate the instruction and educational experience of home-schooled children, the school board should not rely exclusively on the evaluation provided for in the teaching method used or the parents' curriculum.
- The Policy on the Evaluation of Learning adopted by the MELS in 2003 should be applied to homeschooled students. Evaluators should also use a variety of methods (interviews, portfolios, tests, etc.) that are flexible and adapted to home schooling, and always strive to ensure, as far as possible, that the child does not feel threatened by the exercise. Collaboration between the school board and the parents is absolutely essential, especially in the areas of evaluation and teaching methods used.

5. Are home-schooled students required to take Ministry exams?

- No, home-schooled students are not required to take Ministry exams. However, home-schooled students are required to take mandatory ministerial examinations in order to obtain a Secondary School Diploma (SSD).

6. Why is it indicated in the policy that the addenda may be modified without consultation.

- School board policies are reviewed by the Council of Commissioners approximately every seven years. The forms, web links and information contained in the present addendum may need to change on a more regular basis due adjustments in policies, programs or procedures made by the MELS. Please note, none of the addenda are an integral part of the present policy.

¹ http://www.mels.gouv.qc.ca/fileadmin/site_web/documents/dpse/formation_jeunes/ScolarisationMaison_a.pdf