

<b>TOPIC:</b>	<b>Optional Attendance – Secondary Schools</b>
<b>EFFECTIVE:</b>	<b>December 2014</b>
<b>CROSS-REFERENCE:</b>	
<b>REVISION DATE:</b>	<b>September 2018</b>
<b>RESPONSIBILITY:</b>	<b>Superintendent of Education (Respective Family of Schools)</b>

**INTENT STATEMENT:**

The Halton District School Board encourages students to attend the school designated for families in their area. The Board, however, provides to students who are residents in the Halton region the opportunity to apply for enrolment in a Halton school outside their regular school attendance area in schools where there are sufficient pupil places to accommodate them. This is referred to as optional attendance. The process for application for optional attendance in Halton Secondary Schools is outlined in this procedure.

Secondary Optional Attendance has two distinct processes:

1. Grades 9 - 12
2. Grade 8 – 9

**APPLICATION FOR OPTIONAL ATTENDANCE – Gr. 9 to 12**

The process for application for optional attendance for grades 9 – 12 occurs through the home school Principal and the Principal of the requested school. This may be initiated by parents/guardians at any time of the year and requires the approval of both Principals. The process can be initiated through informal means (meeting, email or phone call) and does not require a formal application process.

**APPLICATION FOR OPTIONAL ATTENDANCE – Gr. 8 into 9**

There is a specific application form required for Grade 8 to Grade 9 optional attendance in this procedure. Applicants are expected to discuss the programs offered at the home high school with the principal of that school. Generally, decisions will be forwarded to applicants by **the first week of March**; however some decisions may be held pending confirmed enrolments.

**PROCEDURE (GRADE 8 INTO GRADE 9):**

1. During the **second week of January**, elementary schools will communicate to parents regarding optional attendance for Grade 8 to Grade 9 using **Appendix A**. Completed applications are to be returned to the designated home secondary school prior to the second Friday in February.
2. Area meetings, North, East and West, are to be held by the appropriate Superintendent(s) during the **last week of February** and attended by the principals of each of the area secondary schools. Decisions regarding all applications will be made at this meeting. These decisions will be communicated **by the requested secondary school Principal** to: the applicant – **Appendix B and attach Appendix C**, the **home school**, the **requested school Superintendent (denied only)**, and the current elementary school by **the first week of March**.
3. Late and mid-year applications will be considered jointly by the Principals of the home and requested schools subject to available student spaces as with all other Secondary School Optional Attendance requests.
4. Appeals to reconsider an application are permitted in situations where “extraordinary circumstances” need to be assessed. Appeals are to be submitted by parents, in writing, **to the requested secondary school Superintendent of Education** with a copy to the home school Principal. In cases where there is a medical reason for an appeal, the applicant must have their Registered Health Professional complete the “Optional Attendance Health Information Form” (Appendix E). Decisions regarding appeals are made in consultation with the Principals involved and communicated to the applicant by the Superintendent of Education. The decision of the Superintendent is final.

5. The key factor in the consideration of both the applications and the appeals is to ensure that there is no significant negative impact on the enrolments or internal resources of either the home or the requested school or their capacity to provide viable programs (i.e. French Immersion).
6. Teachers and support staff in all schools need to communicate the equality of outcomes of all our Grade Nine programs and the expectation that students attend their designated home schools to all students and parents. **Families inquiring about optional attendance should be directed to the Principal of the designated home secondary school.** Meetings with school personnel in the requested school should be arranged only upon approval of the optional attendance application.
7. Administrative Council may close schools to optional attendance. Closed means no optional attendance would be approved excepting extraordinary circumstances as determined by the appeal process outlined previously.

## **SECONDARY OPTIONAL ATTENDANCE TIMELINES**

<b>2<sup>nd</sup> week of January</b>	Elementary Schools communicate to parents of Grade 8 students information regarding optional attendance – <b>Appendix A</b> Applications distributed by designated home secondary school only – <b>Appendix B</b>
<b>Prior to 2<sup>nd</sup> Friday of February</b>	Completed applications returned to home secondary school
<b>Last Week of February</b>	Area meetings held by Superintendent and Principals. Decisions regarding all applications made at this time and communicated by the first week of March, <b>Appendix B</b> (attach <b>Appendix C</b> )
<b>Prior to end of June</b>	Appeals received and processed by requested school superintendent. Appeal decisions communicated to parents by Superintendent of requested school.



# Halton District School Board

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David Euale, *Director of Education*

Kelly Amos, *Chair of the Board*

## **INFORMATION TO PARENTS RE: SECONDARY OPTIONAL ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES**

The Halton District School Board encourages Elementary and Secondary students to attend the school designated for families in their area. The Halton Board, however, provides to students who are residents in the Halton region the opportunity to apply for enrolment in a Halton school outside their regular school attendance area in schools where there are sufficient pupil places to accommodate them. This is referred to as optional attendance.

### **Optional Attendance for Grade Eight to Grade Nine Students**

All students are expected to attend grade nine at the **home secondary school** designated for their community. However, in exceptional circumstances, optional attendance to an alternative secondary school can be considered. If you wish to apply for optional attendance you may obtain the appropriate application at your child's designated home secondary school. The completed form must be returned to the principal of the home secondary school prior to **the second week of February**. The principal may wish to consult with you directly regarding your application. Decisions will be communicated to you by **the first week of March**.

**Note:** All optional attendance requests granted, are for **one year only**. They may be renewed annually at the discretion of the principal in consideration of the school's projected enrolment and the availability of pupil places (Ministry Rated Capacity).

**Transportation is NOT provided for students who are accepted under Optional Attendance.**



# Halton District School Board

APPENDIX B

## Application for Grade 8 into Grade 9 Optional Attendance

### Procedures and Conditions

It is a general expectation that students attend the secondary school designated for their attendance area for their Grade 9 year.

1. Application forms are to be obtained from, and returned to, the **home secondary school** by the parent or student prior to the **second Friday** in February.
2. Consideration for placement in the requested school is based on:
  - a) Availability of student spaces; b) maintenance of program viability; c) reasons for the request; d) order in which applications are received, e) availability of internal resources.
3. It is understood that:
  - a) **Approval of this request is for one year only**, and is subject to annual renewal at the discretion of the principal.
  - b) Parents requesting optional attendance will speak with the **home secondary school** principal prior to submitting an Optional Attendance application form to the **home secondary school**. Upon receipt, the home school principal will discuss and forward the application to the principal of the requested school.
  - c) If the request is granted, **the Board will not provide transportation for the student.**
4. The requested school principal will contact the applicant regarding the decision by **the first week of March**

<i>Student I.D. #</i> _____ <i>E.S.L.: Yes ___ No ___</i>	<i>Exceptional (I.P.R.C.): Yes ___ No ___</i> <i>French Immersion: Yes ___ No ___</i>
Student's Name: _____ Application Date: _____ <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; font-size: small;"> <span>Given Names                      Surname</span> <span>Day            Month            Year</span> </div>	
Student's Address: _____ Telephone (____) _____ <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; font-size: small;"> <span>Street                      Town/City                      Postal Code</span> <span>area code</span> </div>	
Birth Date: _____ Designated Home Secondary School _____ <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; font-size: small;"> <span>Day            Month            Year</span> </div>	
Present School: _____ Requested School: _____ <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; font-size: small;"> <span>Open _____ Closed _____</span> <span>Open _____ Closed _____</span> </div>	
Present Grade: _____ Grade Level: _____	
If granted, placement to commence _____	
<i>Date / Time Received:</i> _____ <i>Signature of Home School Principal</i> _____	
<b>Reason for Request</b>  _____ <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; font-size: small;"> <span>Name of Parent or Guardian (please print)</span> <span>Signature of Parent or Guardian</span> </div>	
<b>To be Completed by the Requested School (Attach Appendix C to Parent's copy of Decision)</b>	
Date Received _____ Approved <input type="checkbox"/> Not Approved <input type="checkbox"/> Complete one: A. Student has been accepted at _____ in _____ <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; font-size: small;"> <span>Name of School</span> <span>Program/Year/Grade</span> </div>	
Special Conditions: _____	
B. Student has not been accepted because _____  <div style="text-align: center;"> <i>Signature of Requested School Principal</i> _____         </div>	

**When complete forward copies to: Applicant and Home School .**

## Application for Secondary Optional Attendance Procedures and Conditions

### Optional Attendance Granted

- If you have not done so already, please contact requested school in order to register and complete an option sheet.
- Transportation to and from (school) will be your responsibility as a parent. Our Board does have a Courtesy Seat policy whereby those students who are not normally eligible for bussing can apply for school buses with empty seats. If there is a bus route that is close to your house and **(Name of student)** would like to apply for a seat as a Courtesy Seat Rider on that bus, please contact the main office at **(Name of school)** at the end of September. Forms and information will be available at that time.

### Optional Attendance Denied

- If you wish to appeal this decision, please do so in writing **within 10 days** of receipt of notification. Send your appeal to the Superintendent of the **requested school** with a copy to the Principal of the **home and requested** secondary schools. Appeals are considered according to extraordinary circumstances.
- A review of student enrolment and class organizations will be completed in June. At that time space availability will be determined. Those who have appealed will be contacted with a decision in late June. The decision of the Superintendent is final.



# Halton District School Board

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(School Letterhead - Gr 8 - 9 Applications)

[Date]

[Name & Address]

**Re: Gr 8 - 9 Optional Attendance Application**

Dear [Name]

This letter is to acknowledge receipt of your application for [Student's Name] to attend [Name of School], under optional attendance for September. [We have received your Gr 8 - 9 application.] or [We have received your application after February timeline]. However, we will review your application at a later date.

Decisions may not be made nor communicated until after the third week in September. Students are to register and attend their home school pending a decision.

Sincerely,

[Name]  
Principal

cc: [Name], Principal, [Name Requested School]  
file



THE HALTON DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
OPTIONAL ATTENDANCE HEALTH INFORMATION FORM

Parent/Guardian/Adult Student's Consent & Authorization

I consent to the collection, use and disclosure of personal health information from my Registered Health Professional to the Halton District School Board pursuant to the Personal Health Information Protection Act and Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act for the purposes of providing educational programming and services pursuant to the Education Act. I authorize the Registered Health Professional involved with my son's/daughter's treatment to provide to me this form when completed, containing information about any health related needs/symptoms/limitations/ restrictions requiring accommodation for attendance at a school other than the student's home school. I acknowledge and accept that the Halton District School Board will not be responsible for any costs associated with the completion of this form.

Form with fields: Name of parent/guardian, Signature of parent/guardian, Date, Initial Form, Follow-up Form, Student's Last Name, First Name, Date of Birth, Full Address, Postal Code, Telephone No., Student Grade, Student's Home School, Name of School Being Requested Through Optional Attendance

The following information should be completed by the Registered Health Professional

Form with fields: Date of Examination, Is health treatment currently being provided?, Date of last treatment provided, Other Comments

The Halton District School Board endeavors to provide a safe environment/ workplace for all students while meeting our mandate under the Education Act. In the present case, the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) or adult student is requesting permission to attend a school other than the student's home school in order to accommodate the student's needs.

Please complete the following:

Diagnosis:

Does the student have a medical diagnosis or condition that might impact academic performance and/or safety and wellbeing at school? If yes, please describe how academic performance and/or safety and wellbeing might be impacted:

Horizontal lines for text entry under the diagnosis question.

Optional Attendance

Please describe how optional attendance at a school that is not the student's home school will address the student's needs identified above and/or diagnosis:

Horizontal lines for text entry under the optional attendance question.

Please describe how refusal to provide optional attendance at a school that is not the student's home school will impact the student's needs identified above and/or diagnosis and/or well-being:

Horizontal lines for text entry under the refusal to provide optional attendance question.

Form with fields: Name of Health Care Professional, Date, Full Address, City, Postal Code, Phone Number, Signature