

# Your Guide to the School System

## As a parent you will get the most from the school system if you:

- are informed about what your child is learning;
- are involved with the school, and work with the school to resolve conflicts;
- know your rights;
- promote learning in your home;
- know whom to contact to get information.

## “How do I find out what my child is learning?”

- The expectations for each grade are kept at the school; ask to see them.
- Or you can read them for yourself on the web -page of the Ministry of Education and Training: [www.edu.gov.on.ca](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca)
- Attend Meet the Teacher nights, interview days, and Open Houses and observe and ask questions.
- Volunteer in the school. Contact the school principal about how to do this.
- Your child’s report card comes home three times a year: it is a summary of information the teacher has on your child, and you can ask for more details.
- Look at your child’s home-work and text books.
- Read the school newsletter.

You can also ask to see the Education Quality Assessment Office’s (**EQAO**) results of your child’s school and the plan the school has made to deal with them.

## “What do I do if there are problems?”

- First ask to see your child’s teacher.
- If you are not satisfied after speaking to the teacher, ask for an interview with your principal.
- Has the school all the information about your child that would help them understand your child’s needs better? Don’t forget to pass on any medical information or other matters that you wish to share that may be upsetting your child at this time.
- Each school has a **Learning Resource Teacher (LRT)** who can assist children who have learning difficulties.
- The school system has resources and support staff such as speech and language pathologists, social workers, and psychologists, who may assist your child.
- If you continue to feel that problems have not been addressed you can ask that an **In School Team** meeting take place to problem-solve about your child’s needs.
- If you continue to feel dissatisfied you can call the Superintendent of Schools.

## Other Useful Information

Each school has a **School Discipline Policy** and a **Safe School Committee** with parental membership.

## **YOUR RIGHTS THROUGH THE EDUCATION ACT:**

You may remove your child from school

- for religious holidays
- for up to one half -day a week for music lessons;
- for home schooling.

### **Discipline:**

- Parents must be contacted if their child commits a serious breach of discipline at school.
- Parents have the right to appeal suspensions of their child.
- If the police wish to interview a child during school hours, parents must be informed.

### **Ontario Student Record (OSR)**

Parents may view their child's student record (OSR) in the school office. You may request to have information removed or changed if you feel it is inaccurate or not conducive to improving the instruction of your child.

### **Special Education**

Parents have the right to request that their child appear before an **Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC)** to determine if there are special needs, which make their child **exceptional**. The process is explained fully in **A Guide to Special Education for Parents and Pupils**, available in every school and on the web site: [www.hwdsb.on.ca](http://www.hwdsb.on.ca). **A parent has the right to:**

- request an IPRC by writing to the school principal;
- attend the IPRC and the following annual IPRC meetings and bring your representative;
- request a placement in a regular class;
- appeal the IPRC decision;
- request in writing a review of your child's identification or placement after three months;
- receive a copy of your child's **Individual Education Plan (IEP)** within 30 days;
- request an application for School Health Support Services.

The **Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)** is a mandated committee of representatives from parent and community associations that hold public meetings most fourth Wednesdays in the evening at the Education Centre. Chair: Judy Collantino Contact through 905 527 5092 #2273

**Parents Influence the School Board by:**

- speaking or writing to their trustee and other trustees;
- joining their **School Council** and or **Home and School Association**; their advice is sought by the Board.
- asking a question at the public session of Board meetings held on Mondays.
- making a presentation to the Committee of the Whole.

**Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board**

The Board was formed in 1998 from the former Wentworth County Public Board of Education and the Public Board of Education for the City Of Hamilton.

Information about the **Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board and its services** is posted on their web page. See **[www.hwdsb.on.ca](http://www.hwdsb.on.ca)**

**A list of superintendents can be found at [www.hwdsb.on.ca](http://www.hwdsb.on.ca)**

**Trustees are public officials elected to serve you, students and the school system. Trustees can help parents by:**

- providing information;
- advocating for children;
- working to change policies;
- helping parents access the system.

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