



Request to be Exempt from the Minimum Requirements of Synchronous (Live, Interactive) Learning

Through [Policy/Program Memorandum No. 164](#), (PPM 164) the Ministry of Education has provided direction to school boards on the requirements of remote learning. Included in these requirements is a mandatory expectation that school boards develop a process that would allow students engaged in remote learning to apply for an exemption from the minimum requirements of synchronous (live, interactive) learning (see table below). Individual requests for an exemption from the minimum requirements for synchronous (live, interactive) learning will be made to superintendents (or their designate) through the [online form](#) or by submitting a hard copy form (see pages 4-5) to the homeschool. Superintendents (or their designate) will then review all requests, make a decision about individual exemption requests and respond in writing to all exemption requests. Approved exemptions will be stored in the student’s Ontario Student Record. Applicants will now have the option to extend existing previously approved exemption requests or to select an expiration date that could extend to the end of the 2020/2021 school year.

Expectations for Synchronous (Live, Interactive) Learning by Grade

Division	Grade Level of Students	Daily Minimum Synchronous (Live, Interactive) Learning Time Requirement*
Elementary	Kindergarten	180 minutes
	Grades 1 to 3	225 minutes
	Grades 4 to 8	225 minutes
Secondary	Grades 9 to 12	The higher of 60 minutes for each 75-minute class period** or 225 minutes per day for a full course schedule

* This is in addition to asynchronous (independent) learning time.

** The synchronous (live, interactive) learning time requirement for any period that is not 75 minutes should be adjusted to reflect this ratio.

Exemptions from synchronous (live, interactive) learning may be requested by parents/guardians or by students who are 18 years of age or older, or students who are 16 or 17 years of age but have withdrawn from parental control. In accordance with [Policy/Program Memorandum No. 164](#), this form is applicable to students enrolled in a virtual learning option with the TDSB (e.g., the [TDSB Virtual School](#), secondary home school Virtual Learning Option, Learning Network Virtual Learning Hub, as well as secondary students enrolled in the [Adapted In-school Day Model](#)). This exemption process is not available to students that opted for physical (in-person) elementary school nor [homeschooling](#). A separate application must be submitted for each student requesting an exemption.

For secondary students registered in the Adapted In-school Day Model, a full exemption from the minimum requirements of synchronous (live, interactive) learning applies only to the online synchronous (live, interactive) portion of the school day. Exemptions do not apply to the in-person portion of the Adapted In-school Day Model of instruction. Attendance in the in-class instructional component of this model is mandatory for secondary students.

To support meaningful access to education, alternative learning approaches will be put in place for all exempted students. Exempted students will be provided with a daily schedule or timetable in accordance with the 300-minute instructional day.

Expectations for Exempted Students

- **Daily Schedule:** Exempted students must follow the daily schedule or timetable provided by their teacher in accordance with the 300-minute instructional day. This would require students to independently access and complete work provided by the classroom teacher within Brightspace, Google Classroom or another agreed upon method based on extenuating circumstances, and where there are special education needs, medical reasons, and other reasons not limited to sensory, vision, visible and invisible disabilities, developmental reasons, mental health, trauma, religion/creed, family status etc. While teachers will provide the same daily

schedule or timetable to students enrolled in a specific program of study, it will be the responsibility of students that have opted for an exemption to increase their engagement in asynchronous (independent) learning accordingly.

- **Learning Materials:** Students will be provided with programming based on the full Ontario curriculum and will follow the expectations the teacher has set out for the class. These materials will be provided through the Brightspace Learning Management System, Google Classroom or another agreed upon method (e.g., phone conferences, e-mails) that is based on the individual student's needs and circumstances.
- **Daily Attendance:** See below for further details on the attendance procedures for students that have been granted partial and full exemptions from the minimum requirements of synchronous (live, interactive) learning. When full exemptions from the minimum requirements of synchronous (live, interactive) learning have been granted, teachers will use their professional judgment, and work with students and their parent(s)/guardian(s), (where applicable) to maintain ongoing contact.
 - **Partial Exemptions:** Attendance will be taken twice daily at the elementary level and per course at the secondary level, in accordance with TDSB [elementary](#) and [secondary](#) attendance procedures.
 - **Full Exemptions:** Attendance will be recorded twice weekly on Tuesdays (for Monday and Tuesday) and Fridays (for Wednesday to Friday). Students with a full exemption may be marked present if they have been engaged with their teacher in one or more of the following ways: submission of work at least once weekly, phone conferences, or other communications such as Brightspace, Google Classroom, emails, etc.
- **Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting:** While the policy outlined in [Growing Success: Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting in Ontario Schools](#) (2010) continues to apply to all TDSB students who have been approved for an exemption from the minimum requirements of synchronous (live, interactive) learning, [Growing Success: The Mathematics Addendum, Grades 1 to 8, 2020](#) will supersede the instructions on completing the provincial report card for mathematics in Grades 1 to 8. Teachers will clearly outline to students the assessment expectations at the start of each program of study. This will be posted in an Assessment and Evaluation folder within the Brightspace classroom or Google Classroom (where applicable). Teachers will continue to provide differentiated support to all students, including English and French as a Second Language Learners and students with special education needs who have an Individual Education Plan (IEP). Students will complete and submit within Brightspace or Google Classroom the assignments and assessments required for successful completion of the program of study or courses in which they are enrolled.

Requests for Synchronous (Live, Interactive) Learning Exemptions

The intent of accommodating students through exemptions is to allow for flexibility in addressing the varied needs of school communities and greater support for the overall mental health and well-being of TDSB staff, students and families. While synchronous (live, interactive) learning exemptions offer some flexibility to individual students, they also require an increase in the number of asynchronous (independent) minutes in which each exempted student engages daily. In accordance with the teacher's professional judgement, this may involve watching pre-recorded video lessons, completing assigned tasks, or contributing to online discussion boards. In some cases, access to asynchronous (independent) learning opportunities may be delivered through emails or telephone calls.

Ensuring that the student maintains contact with the classroom teacher and completion and submission of instructional and assessment tasks as assigned are essential components of a synchronous (live, interactive) exemption. Attendance for students of compulsory school age is required under the Education Act. In order to maximize opportunities for student success, student absences will be addressed in accordance with the Education Act, and related Ministry of Education policies as outlined by the TDSB in [Policy P085 - Student Attendance and Safe Arrival](#) and the Ministry of Education [Enrolment Register Instructions for Elementary and Secondary Schools](#) document. Therefore, absences of 15 consecutive school days without supporting documentation could result in a student being retired from the attendance register.

Failure to meet the mandatory attendance, work completion and assessment expectations is inconsistent with an exemption from the minimum requirements of synchronous (live, interactive) learning and align instead with an intent for homeschooling as outlined in the [TDSB Homeschooling Policy](#). Parents/guardians wishing to homeschool a child must submit a [Notice of Intent to Home School \(Form 553A\)](#) to the Family of Schools Superintendent for their homeschool.

Fully Exempted Students and Access to Learning Materials

All students that have been granted a partial or full exemption from the minimum requirements of synchronous (live, interactive) learning will continue to be provided equity of access within Brightspace or Google Classroom to the instructional and assessment materials for the grade/courses in which they are enrolled. Learning activities and asynchronous (independent) learning opportunities will be posted online for submission to the teacher for assessment and evaluation purposes. This is an important prerequisite in supporting students to fulfill the requirements of their program of study. All students that have been granted an exemption from the minimum requirements of synchronous (live, interactive) learning will be responsible for maintaining contact with their teachers as well as making arrangements with their teachers to complete and return tasks and assessments as assigned.

Application Deadline

Exemption requests must be submitted one week following the start of each reporting period by 4 p.m. on the following dates:

Elementary application deadlines are: October 20, November 30, and February 23.

Secondary application deadlines are: October 20, November 30, February 15, and April 30.

Renewals/extensions: if your previously approved exemption request has expired or is approaching its expiry date, please submit a new exemption request as soon as possible through the same online form linked above.



Request to be Exempt from the Minimum Requirements of Synchronous (Live, Interactive) Learning

This form is to be completed if you or your child would like to be exempted from the minimum requirements of synchronous (live, interactive) learning as defined from the Ministry of Education.

I have read and understand the above expectations for attendance, assessment, evaluation and reporting. The student agrees to follow the daily schedule or timetable provided in accordance with the 300-minute instructional day.
 I agree

Student Legal First Name: _____ Student Legal Last Name: _____

Student Ontario Education Number (this can be found on the student report card): _____

Student Birth Date (mm/dd/yyyy): _____

Student Grade: _____

Name of student's home school: _____

Which TDSB Virtual School does the student attend?

- TDSB Virtual Elementary School LC1
- TDSB Virtual Elementary School LC2
- TDSB Virtual Elementary School LC3
- TDSB Virtual Elementary School LC4
- TDSB Virtual Secondary School
- Student does not attend a TDSB Virtual School

Reason for Exemption Request:

How many minutes of synchronous (live, interactive) learning are you requesting to be engaged in daily?

- Level 1 - 180 minutes
- Level 2 - 150 minutes
- Level 3 - 120 minutes
- Level 4 - 60 minutes
- Full Exemption

Please indicate how many weeks you are requesting the student to be exempt from the minimum requirements of synchronous (live, interactive) learning or if you are requesting an exemption for the remainder of the 2020-21 school year?

If the student is in secondary school, please indicate the course(s) in which you would like to receive an exemption from the minimum requirements of synchronous (live, interactive) learning.

First and Last Name of person completing this form: _____

Who is completing this application?

- Student 18 years of age or older
- Student who is 16 or 17 years of age but have withdrawn from parental control
- Parent, guardian or other. Please indicate relationship to student: _____

Contact information of parent/guardian or student (if student is 18 years of age or older or if student is 16 or 17 years of age but have withdrawn from parental control):

(Please note that when the request is submitted online, a confirmation email will be sent to the email address provided below.)

Home Address: _____
Number Street Apt/Unit/Suite Number

City/Town Province Postal Code

Phone number: _____

Email address: _____

Date of application (today's date in mm/dd/yyyy): _____

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Exemption Request Decision:

- Approved
- Not Approved

Date of Decision (mm/dd/yyyy): _____

Signature of Superintendent or Designate: _____

Expiration Date of Exemption (mm/dd/yyyy): _____

TDSB Notice of Collection

Personal information on this form is collected under the authority of Education Act, R.S.O. 1990, c.E.2 and will be used by Toronto District School Board ("TDSB") to review exemption requests for synchronous (live, interactive) learning. This information is retained in accordance with the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. M. 56 and will be disclosed to authorized TDSB staff in order to administer the above purpose. For general questions related to this form please contact your local school principal; for specific questions about the collection and retention of the information provided please contact research@tdsb.on.ca.