Date

Surname, Name

Home address

Caroline Kelly, Dimitri Pantelakis, tous les agents administratifs,

Direction de l’enseignement à la maison

Ministère de l’Éducation

600, rue Fullum 8e étage

Montréal (Québec) H2K 4L1

**Re: Complaint regarding the mandatory writing of Ministerial exams**

To whom it may concern,

Our child (or children), NAME, is (are) currently homeschooling at a \_\_\_\_\_ grade level, signifying he/she will be required to take the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(subject) exam(s) instituted by Quebec’s Ministry of Education.

We are writing to appeal for exemption from the Ministry examination process on the grounds of inequitable application of exam procedure for children who are home-educated. For the reasons listed below, we feel it is in the best interest of the home-educated child to be granted exemption from Ministerial exams until Provincial Advisory Panel on Homeschooling discussions have been reinstituted, and a reasonable agreement can be achieved by the Ministry of Education, the DEM ***and*** homeschooling representatives.

Insufficient Support for Parent Educators

* As the Ministry of Education has yet to define uniform guidelines related to exam procedure, the school service centres which have jurisdiction over homeschooling families vary significantly in their protocol. Parent educators are currently unable to access essential information, resources and services related to exam preparation, and are ill-equipped to adequately prepare our children for the exams.

Unequal access to information pertaining to Ministerial exams

* If homeschooled students are required to achieve the same academic objectives as their school-attending counterparts, and they are to be tested on this knowledge, there must be equal access to information pertaining to evaluation content and procedure.
* If homeschooled students are required to write Ministerial exams, there must be equal access to support services and exam preparation as those which are available to school students.

*School Service Centres currently offer homeschooled children a single familiarization session just weeks prior to the Ministerial exam. In many cases, parent educators are prohibited from attending, and children are forbidden from taking notes. The parent-educator remains uninformed, and the child is burdened with identifying exam requirements without personalized guidance. Conversely, students who attend an educational institution receive extended guided preparation from instructors who are informed of exam requirements. In a school setting, instructors are informed, students are guided, and even parents are equipped to prepare the schoolchild for their Ministerial exams. This disparity signifies inequity in the Ministerial exam procedure when comparing a home-educated student to a school student in matters related to accessibility of information, support and preparatory resources.*

Same exam, different application of procedure and grading

* If homeschooled students are required to write Ministry exams, the exams should be administered in an environment which relates to the child’s habitual learning environment: a neutral environment or a location which is deemed appropriate by governing officials AND by the parent educator.
* (only include for sec 4 & 5) If homeschooled students are required to write Ministry exams, the students should have equal access to the same grading procedure which is afforded to school students. Equivalent to the school student, the homeschooled student should have the option of weighting their Ministry exam marks with work they have completed throughout the year.

Incongruity With a Homeschooler’s Right to Select Their Pedagogic Program

* Per the Homeschooling Regulation, home educators have the right to select the appropriate instructive approach for their child. While we are legally required to address the specific academic objectives (competencies) of the Quebec Education Program itemized by the Ministry of Education, we are not legally required to adopt the QEP as our predominant pedagogic approach. Throughout the year, homeschooling families submit several reports and an end-of-year evaluation which attest to the achievement of the specified QEP competencies. These evaluations are appropriate in the sense they are in accordance with our legal right to select our own academic program. An imposed method of examination such as the Ministerial exam is not an appropriate method of evaluation, however; the exam process exceeds the purview of the legislation if it requires knowledge that extends beyond the specified competencies, and it disregards the panoply of approaches selected by homeschooling families to offer our children an enriched educational experience.

**We advocate for Ministerial exams to remain optional for home-educated students.** We feel exemption from Ministerial exams is justified until the following conditions have been fulfilled:

* Improved support from the Ministry of Education, School Boards and School Service Centres
* The Ministry to define uniform protocol to all School Boards and School Service Centres
* Attendance of parent educators at Ministerial exam information sessions
* Provide homeschoolers with exam preparatory resources equivalent to those offered in a school setting
* Option of weighting Ministerial exam marks, equal to the grading procedure applied in a school setting
* Ministerial exams to be administered in a safe and familiar environment for home-educated students

Sincerely/ Regards/ Respectfully,

Your signature

Parent educator

c. c.  plaintes@aqed.qc.ca