

Pittsfield School District

HOME EDUCATION INSTRUCTION

Home Education is an alternative to compulsory attendance at a public or private school and is an individualized form of instruction in accordance with New Hampshire RSA 193-A and Department of Education Rule Part 315 ("Ed. 315"). A parent or guardian may establish a home education program for any child between the ages six and eighteen years of age including one who is an "educationally disabled child" as defined under RSA 186-C:2, I, whether or not such child is previously enrolled in a school of the District.

A. Notices Required for Commencement of Home Education Program.

1. Notice for Students Withdrawing from District. State school attendance laws apply to each student until a parent/guardian commences a home education program. Similarly, the district's attendance policies apply to all students enrolled in schools of the district.

Accordingly, when a parent/guardian of a child who is enrolled in a school of the district wishes to begin a home education program for the child, Ed. Rule 315.04 (e) requires that on or before the date the home education program begins, the parent/guardian must advise the superintendent of the child's withdrawal from the district. The notice of withdrawal may be made in person, via telephone, or in writing, at the parent/guardian's election.

2. Written Notice of Program Required. In addition to the less formal notice required for a child being withdrawn from the district, RSA 193-A and Ed. 315 both require that the parent/guardian provide written notice of the commencement of a home education program either (at the parent/guardian's election) to the New Hampshire Department of Education, the superintendent of the resident district, or to any non-public school principal.

The requirements of the notice are set forth in RSA 193-A:5 and Ed. 315.04, both of which can be accessed through the New Hampshire Department of Education's website.

Upon request, the superintendent shall assist the parent/guardian to assure that the notification complies with the statutory requirements.

3. No Annual Notice Required. Once established, the home education program remains in effect unless terminated pursuant Ed. 315.04 (k). The parent/guardian is not required to provide annual notification of continuation of a home education program.

B. Evaluation and Assessment.

Under RSA 193-A:6, II, parents/guardians are required to provide for an annual educational evaluation for home educated children that documents "educational progress at a level commensurate with the child's age and ability." Both the statute and Ed. 315.07 provide several options for parents/guardians to meet the statutory evaluation requirements. Some of the evaluation options available to parents/guardians under that statute and rules can involve district/superintendent assistance, including, for instance, any state student assessment used by the district or any other valid measurement tool mutually agreed upon by the parent/guardian and the superintendent. Other options are available to parents/guardians as provided under RSA 193-A:6 and/or Ed. 315.07.

Parents/guardians seeking to utilize evaluation services through the superintendent, should contact the superintendent's office as soon as practicable to assure adequate time to prepare any necessary materials and accommodations.

No fee will be required by the district when a parent uses evaluation services provided by the district.

B. Records.

The district shall maintain documents concerning home education programs in a manner consistent with other educational records. Additionally, the superintendent shall maintain a list of all home education programs for which the superintendent, as participating agency, has received notice. On October 1 of each year, the superintendent shall notify the commissioner of the number of children for whom programs were established.

RSA 193-A:6, I requires the parent/guardian to maintain a portfolio of records and materials relative to the home education program. The portfolio shall consist of a log which designates by title the reading materials used and also samples of writings, worksheets, workbooks, or creative materials used or developed by the child. The parent/guardian is required to preserve the portfolio for two years from the date of the ending of the instruction.

For evaluations which are not provided by the district, parents/guardians need only provide copies to the District to the extent necessary to demonstrate proficiency in order to participate in school programs, and co/extra-curricular activities as provided under RSA 193-A:6, III (see below).

C. Re-Enrollment into the School District.

Parents/guardians deciding to re-enroll their children into the district following a period of home education will make arrangements with the director of college and career readiness for an evaluation to determine appropriate placement in the district's

program. Placements will be consistent with the School Board policy governing student placements and are subject to the same appeal process.

Parents/guardians should be attentive that when re-enrolling a student, there may be discrepancies between the home schooling level of achievement and the scope and sequence of the District's curriculum.

E. Graduation/Diplomas.

The School Board will not award certificates or diplomas to home educated students. Students must enter the regular school program and complete all necessary graduation requirements of the district and the state to be eligible for a certificate or diploma.

F. Participation in School Curricular and Co/Extra-Curricular Activities.

Regulations regarding the participation of home education students (as well as students of non-public or of public charter schools) in district curricular and co/extra-curricular programs are established below. The superintendent is charged with establishing such regulations. Consistent with RSA 193:1-c, any regulations shall not be more restrictive for non-public or home educated pupils than they are for students enrolled in the district.

1. Participation in Curricular Courses. Requests by home educated, public chartered school, or nonpublic school pupils for participation in curricular courses shall be made in writing by the parent/guardian to the director of college and career readiness. The following criteria and conditions are established:

- a. The curricular course is developmentally and academically appropriate for the student.
- b. All course prerequisite requirements are met.
- c. Transportation to and from school generally shall not be provided. The director of college and career readiness may make an exception to this condition based on his/her review of all pertinent circumstances.
- d. The director's decision shall be final.
- e. Students participating in curricular courses are expected to maintain punctual attendance and complete all required coursework, homework, assessments, etc. as established by the teacher or instructor.
- f. The parent/guardian may be required to provide proof of prior coursework to establish the academic appropriateness and/or to establish that all academic prerequisites have been met.
- g. If the student is taking the course for credit or grade, such credit or grade will be granted only after the completion of the course.
- h. Requests for participation that are received after course schedules have been made will be granted only if space is available.
- i. Requests for the related services including, but not limited to, physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy, counseling, psychological guidance, and/or special education services shall generally be denied. If a dispute arises between

the parent/guardian and the district as to the student's right to these services, the director of college and career readiness shall inform the superintendent who shall consult with the district's attorney for a legal opinion.

2. Participation in Co/Extra-Curricular Activities. Requests by home educated, public chartered school, or nonpublic school pupils for participation in co/extra-curricular activities shall be made in writing by the parent/guardian to the director of college and career readiness. Co/extra-curricular activities include, but are not limited to field trips, excursions, athletics, band, chorus, clubs, other school organizations, school dances, and others.

The following criteria and conditions are hereby established:

- a. The parent/guardian must provide prior written permission for participation.
- b. The participating student agrees to abide by all Board policies relative to student code of conduct and eligibility.
- c. Participation in the activity is developmentally appropriate for the pupil.
- d. The director of college and career readiness may ask the parent/guardian to chaperone an event.
- e. Coaches, teachers and group/club supervisors may establish their own rules relative to participation, attendance, and expectations, provided such rules are not contrary to this policy. Participating home educated, public charter school, and nonpublic school students are expected to abide by those rules.
6. Home educated, public chartered school, or nonpublic school students may be required to provide proof of a recent physical examination from their physician for participation in athletic activities, consistent with other Board policies relative to athletic participation.

3. Use of School Texts and Library Materials. Home educated, public chartered school, and nonpublic school students will be permitted to use the school library, borrow school texts, and borrow library materials under the same conditions and rules as pupil enrolled in the District.

Reading: November 5, 1992
Adopted: February 18, 1993
Reviewed: January 8, 2009
Amended: January 22, 2009
Amended: February 23, 2012
Amended: October 16, 2014
Amended: September 20, 2018