

FACT SHEET ON HOME SCHOOLING IN ARKANSAS

(501) 682-1874

State law regulates home schooling in Arkansas.

By law, every parent, guardian, or other person residing within the State of Arkansas having custody or charge of any child age five (5) through seventeen (17) years on or before September 15 of that year shall enroll and send the child to a public, private, or parochial school, or provide a home school for the child in accordance with the requirements of the home school law.

1. DEFINITION OF A HOME SCHOOL

A "home school" is a school conducted primarily by parents or legal guardians for their own children.

2. ELIGIBILITY TO PROVIDE A HOME SCHOOL

Parents/legal guardians may provide a home school for their own children. There are no educational requirements for parents/guardians who provide a home school for their child(ren).

3. NOTIFICATION REQUIRED BY LAW

Parents/legal guardians are required to utilize printed, current-year forms that are available from each local school district superintendent's office.

Complete the Notice of Intent to Home School and Waiver forms at the beginning of each school year but no later than August 15; or, subject to the requirements of state law if filing after August 15 or December 15. Return completed, signed forms to the superintendent of the local public school district.

Notice of Intent to Home School forms submitted after the deadlines are subject to a fourteen (14)-calendar day waiting period that the superintendent controls. Call the Home School Office for clarification.

4. NOTICE OF INTENT TO HOME SCHOOL AND WAIVER FORM

Do not file a separate form for each child; file one form per family. **Parents/legal guardians must not leave the required areas blank on the Notice of Intent to Home School and Waiver forms. Incomplete forms do not meet the requirements of state law and will not be accepted.**

Parents/legal guardians will not receive books, curricula, or an approval letter as a result of filing required Notice of Intent to Home School and Waiver forms.

Parents/legal guardians are not required to meet with the local superintendent to discuss their choice of home schooling. The law does not require parents/legal guardians to provide a reason for their choice.

5. STUDENTS UNDER DISCIPLINARY ACTION AT THE PUBLIC SCHOOL

Public school students who are under disciplinary action by the local school district shall be eligible for enrollment in a home school if the superintendent or local school board chooses to allow the child to enroll in a home school; the disciplinary action against the student has been completed or at the end of a school semester, whichever occurs first; or the student has been expelled.

6. CURRICULUM, BOOKS, MATERIALS

Parents/guardians are free to select and purchase their choice of books, curricula, or correspondence programs. Parents/guardians also set their own schedule of instruction for their child(ren).

The Arkansas Department of Education, local school districts, and education service cooperatives are not required to furnish books, curricula, or materials. It is the

parents/guardians responsibility to locate and purchase all books, curricula, or materials.

7. REQUIRED TEST

State law mandates testing of grades 3 through 9; a student that refuses to participate in the testing program or the alternative testing program shall be subject to Arkansas laws regarding truancy. Home school students in grades other than 3-9 will not be tested by the state. Testing occurs in the spring of each year at designated home school test sites. Review test information at: <http://www.arhomeschooltesting.org/>

Tentative test dates will be April 5-16, 2011.

REQUEST FOR TEST MODIFICATION OR EXEMPTION:

A request for test modifications or exemption must be submitted in writing to the Home School Testing Office at least three weeks prior to the test date. A copy of the child's IEP or other acceptable documentation from a physician must be included with the request.

8. TEST NOTIFICATION

The Arkansas Home School Testing Office will notify home school parents by mail. February 2011, letters will be sent out announcing testing dates. Deadline for registering to test is March 1, 2011. You can reach the **Home School Testing Office at 501-354-3136.**

9. TEST RESULTS

Parents/guardians receive the student's original Individual Performance Profile; the original is mailed directly from the test company to the parents address as listed on the Notice of Intent to Home School. There are no copies; therefore, lost or destroyed originals cannot be replaced. A student's Individual Performance Profile returned to the testing company by the postal

service as "undeliverable" will be held for a short period of time and then destroyed.

10. MONITORING OF STUDENT'S WORK

The law does not give the Arkansas Department of Education or the school district the authority to review or monitor a home school student's work. Some parents/guardians may choose to keep the following records: attendance record, a portfolio of student's work at each grade level, grades for each subject, and a transcript for each student. *Records may be very beneficial to a home school student in the future.*

11. HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA

No diploma is provided by school districts, education service cooperatives, or the Arkansas Department of Education for students enrolled in home school.

12. RE-ENTERING PUBLIC SCHOOL

- a) Students transferring from a home school to a school that is accredited by the Arkansas Department of Education shall be evaluated by the staff of the accredited school to determine proper placement.
- b) Home schools are not accredited by the Arkansas Department of Education. *There are no grades, credits, transcripts, or diplomas provided by the Arkansas Department of Education, education service cooperative, or by the local school district for students enrolled in home school.*
- c) Any home school student who re-enters a local school district must attend classes for at least nine (9) months immediately prior to graduation before the student can become eligible to receive a high school diploma from the local school district.

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PUBLIC SCHOOL POLICY REGARDING CREDITS FOR GRADUATION:

It is possible that a home school student who returns to a public high school may not be eligible to receive a diploma. School districts may or may not give credit for a student's work during the time they were home schooled. All requirements of the local school district policy regarding credits for graduation must be met before a student is eligible to receive a diploma. Call the local high school for requirements.

13. STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Parents/guardians may home school a student with disabilities. Home school students will be given the same consideration for special education services as private school students in Arkansas; this does not guarantee an individual student services. There are no certification requirements for parents/guardians who teach their special needs child(ren).

14. CLASSES AT PUBLIC SCHOOLS

School districts are not required to accept part-time students from home schools or private schools; however, there is a funding mechanism in place for school districts that allow home school students to enroll in academic classes as part-time students.

15. SPORTS IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Questions regarding participation in sports and extra curricular activities at public schools should be referred to:

Arkansas Activities Association
3920 Richards Road
North Little Rock, AR 72117
(501) 955-2500
www.ahsaa.org/

16. AGE TO DROP OUT OF SCHOOL

A student is required to attend school until they are eighteen (18) years of age, or meet other requirements specified by state law.

17. GED PROGRAM

Parents may contact the state GED office for enrollment requirements:

Adult Education
GED Program
Department of Workforce Education
3 Capitol Mall
Little Rock, AR 72201
(501) 682-1980
<http://dwe.arkansas.gov/ged.htm>

20. MOVE DURING SCHOOL YEAR

A move to a new school district requires that new Notice of Intent to Home School and Waiver forms be submitted to the superintendent of the new district within thirty-(30) calendar days of establishing residency within the district.

21. PRIVATE SCHOOL/CURRICULUM SUPPLIER/UMBRELLA SCHOOL

A curriculum supplier may state that they are a "private school" or "umbrella school." *The supplier may state that if parents' enroll or purchase curriculum from them, the parents will not have to file Notice of Intent to Home School and Waiver forms each year in Arkansas. THIS INFORMATION IS FALSE.*

The obligation to file Notice of Intent to Home School and Waiver forms does not depend on the source of the material used but rather on the location of the student's instruction.

Contact the Home School Office if there are questions regarding maintaining legal home school status.

22. ARKANSAS SUPPORT GROUPS

The support groups listed below may provide information on the following:

Local support groups
Home school conventions
Newsletters
New/used book fairs
Organized activities for students
Curriculum suppliers
Test companies for off year testing

Family Council/Education Alliance

414 S. Pulaski, Suite 2
Little Rock, AR 72201
(501) 978-5503
Fax: (501) 375-7040
edu@familycouncil.org
www.arkansashomeschool.org

Central Arkansas Homeschoolers (CARH)

<http://www.centralarhomeschoolers.org/>

NATIONAL SUPPORT GROUPS

National Black Home Educators Resource Association

13434 Plank Road, PMB 110
Baker, Louisiana 70714
E-mail: contact@nbhera.org
Eric and Joyce Burges, Founders
<http://www.nbhera.org>

Network of Black Homeschoolers

P. O. Box 28325
Richmond, Virginia 23228
Phone: (804) 562-2684
E-mail: NBH4@yahoo.com
<http://www.blackhomeschoolers.homestead.com>

- **The Home School Office will NOT accept forms from home school parents. Forms must be filed with parent/legal guardian's local superintendent's office.**

- In order to maintain legal home school status, file **each year** no later than **August 15**, or meet other requirements of state law. **One form per family.**
- **SUBMIT ONLY CURRENT YEAR FORMS WHICH ARE AVAILABLE FROM SCHOOL DISTRICTS IN LATE MAY OF EACH YEAR.**
- **It is to the parents/students benefit to ensure that the information entered on the required forms is legible.**

ACCURATE HOME SCHOOL INFORMATION AND ASSISTANCE MAY BE OBTAINED BY CONTACTING:

Arkansas Dept. of Education
Home School Office
Four Capitol Mall – Room 105 C
Little Rock, AR 72201
(501) 682-1874

<http://arkansased.org/>

<http://arkansased.org/about/schools/home.html>

Information about home schools may be accessed on the Department's Web page by selecting the site's "Schools" link. Once on the "Schools" page, select the phrase "Home School" from the left side of the page.