

IHBG - Home Schooling

Parents/guardians who wish to have their children fulfill the compulsory school attendance law through equivalent education by home schooling must comply with the provisions of 20-A MRSA § 5001-A(3)(A)(4).

A. The student's parent/guardian must provide a written notice of intent to provide home instruction simultaneously to the Superintendent of Schools in RSU1 and to the Commissioner of the Department of Education within ten calendar days of the beginning of home instruction. The notice must contain the following information:

1. The name, signature and address of the student's parent/guardian;
2. The name and age of the student;
3. The date the home instruction program will begin;
4. A statement of assurance that indicates the home instruction program will provide at least 175 days annually of instruction and will provide instruction in: English and language arts, math, science, social studies, physical education, health education, library skills, fine arts, and, in at least one grade from grade 6 to 12, Maine studies. At one grade level from grade 7 to 12, the student will demonstrate proficiency in the use of computers; and
5. A statement of assurance that indicates that the home instruction program will include an annual assessment of the student's academic progress that includes at least one of the forms of assessment described in 20-A MRSA § 5001-(A)(4)(b) and paragraph B below.

B. On or before September 1 of each subsequent year of home instruction, the student's parent/guardian must file a letter with the Superintendent of the administrative unit in which the student resides and to the Commissioner stating the intention to continue providing home instruction and enclose a copy of one of the following forms of annual assessment of the student's academic progress:

1. A standardized achievement test administered by RSU1 or through other arrangements approved by the Commissioner. If the test is administered through the administrative unit in which the student resides, that administration must be agreed to by the Superintendent of the administrative unit prior to submission of the written notice of intent to provide home instruction;
2. A test developed by the Superintendent or designee of the administrative unit in which the student resides appropriate to the student's home instruction program, which must be agreed to by the Superintendent of RSU1 prior to submission of the written notice of intent to provide home instruction;

3. A review and acceptance of the student's progress by an identified individual who holds a current Maine teacher's certificate;

4. A review and acceptance of the student's progress based on, but not limited to, a presentation of an educational portfolio of the student's academic work to a local area home schooling support group whose membership for this purpose includes a currently certified Maine teacher or administrator; or

5. A review and acceptance of the student's progress by a local advisory board selected by the Superintendent of Schools for RSU1 that includes one administrative unit employee and two home instruction tutors. A "home instruction tutor" means the parent/guardian or other person who acts or will act as a primary teacher of the student in the home instruction program. This provision must be agreed to by the Superintendent of the administrative unit in which the student resides prior to submission of the written notice of intent to provide home instruction.

C. Dissemination of any information filed under 20-A MRSA § 5001-A(3)(A) (which applies to alternatives to attendance at public day school, including home schooling) is governed by the provisions of 20-A MRSA § 6001 (dissemination of information); the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, 20 USC § 1232g (2002); and the federal Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975, 20 USC § 1401-1487 (2002), except that "directory information" as defined by the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is confidential and is not subject to public disclosure unless the parent/guardian specifically permits disclosure in writing or a judge orders otherwise. Copies of any information filed under 20-A MRSA § 5001-A(3)(A) must be maintained by the student's parent/guardian until the home instruction program concludes. The records must be made available to the Commissioner upon request.

D. If the home instruction program is discontinued, students of compulsory school age must be enrolled in a public school or an equivalent instruction alternative as provided for by law. The receiving school shall determine the placement of the student which may entail formal assessment and/or portfolio review. At the secondary level, the principal of the receiving school shall determine the value of the prior educational experience toward meeting the standards of Maine's system of Learning Results and award appropriate high school credit.

The Board accepts no responsibility for RSU1 in the application, review, approval, or oversight of home instruction programs except as provided for by law or this policy.

Participation by home-schooled students in RSU1 schools and programs is permitted as described elsewhere in Board policy (IHBGA). A student, once approved for an equivalent instruction program, can participate in regular instructional or extra-curricular programs with the approval of the Superintendent of Schools. Public school resources, such as, library books, textbooks, academic courses, vocational training programs, special education services, and extracurricular activities will be made available to students in equivalent instruction programs on a mutually agreeable basis consistent with Board policy and the law.

It is the intent of RSU1 to inform every parent who elects to educate their child/children in a home schooled program that the school system is willing and able to provide additional educational

support for them through direct participation in instructional, co-curricular, and extra-curricular programs offered in the RSU1 schools. The Board wants to cooperate in the home instruction of any child who resides in RSU1 to the degree that the level of cooperation does not interfere with its responsibilities to students enrolled full-time in regular school programs.

The Superintendent shall maintain a roster of all students eligible to attend school within the school unit who are receiving equivalent instruction, as provided in Department of Education rules.

Legal Reference: 20-A MRSAS 5001-A

Cross Reference: JEA -- Compulsory Attendance

IHBGA -- Home Schooling---Participation in School Programs

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