

Policy IHBG: 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). Parents/guardians may establish a home education program for any child, including one who is an educationally disabled child as defined under RSA 186-C:2, I.

This policy is intended to help clarify the role of the Surry School District regarding home education instruction dependent upon the choices that families may make when following applicable statutes, NH Education Department rules, and receiving school district policies. Nothing in this policy is intended to infringe upon parent/guardian rights.

The Surry School District is a sending district and does not operate any schools. Residents of the Surry School District are directed to refer to the administration of receiving school or district where Surry resident students are in attendance to review the receiving district's policies and procedures relative to home education instruction and access to curricular courses and cocurricular programs. The following outlines the responsibilities of the Surry School District relative to home education instruction.

1. Notice.

- a. Notice For Students Withdrawing from the Receiving District. The receiving district's attendance policies apply to all Surry resident students enrolled in the receiving schools. When a parent/guardian of a child who is enrolled in a receiving school wishes to begin a home education program for the child, the parent/guardian must advise the administration of the receiving district of the child's withdrawal from the receiving district. As a sending district, the Surry School District is notified by the receiving district of resident student withdrawals.
- b. Written Notice of Homeschool Instruction. The parent/guardian is required to select a participating agency for home education program notification and support. The parent/guardian may select the Commissioner of the Department of Education; the Surry Superintendent (for Surry resident students); or the head of a nonpublic school. Written notice of this selection is required. The written notice requires the names, addresses, and birth dates of all children who are participating in the home education program. The parents/guardians shall also provide contact information and update the notification information as necessary. "A student's parent or guardian must notify the Surry Superintendent if the student no longer resides in Surry. Notification must also be made to the new participating agency (new resident district).
- c. Surry School District as the Participating Agency. The Surry School District receives written notice of the commencement of a home education program. If selected by the parent/guardian as the participating agency, the Surry Superintendent shall acknowledge receipt of the notification of commencement of home education within 14 days of receiving such notification.
- d. Changing Participating Agency. The parent/guardian may select a different, valid, participating agency. To do so, the parent/guardian must provide written notice to the new participating agency and notify the Surry Superintendent of the change.
- e. No Annual Notice Required. Once established, the home education program remains in effect unless terminated pursuant New Hampshire Education Department Rules. The parent/guardian is not required to provide annual notification of continuation of a home education program.

2. Annual Evaluation.

- a. 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 315.08 provide several options for parents/guardians to meet the statutory evaluation requirements, and the parents/guardians are free to select their preferred method.
- b. Evaluation with Assistance from the District. If the Surry School District is selected as the participating agency, the District must provide evaluation services upon request of the parent/guardian. If the District is not selected as the participating agency, the District may aid in evaluation but is not required to do so. Parents/guardians seeking to utilize evaluation services through the District should contact the Surry Superintendent as soon as practicable to ensure adequate time to prepare any necessary materials and accommodations. The evaluation results/portfolio may also be requested to determine whether a child has an educational disability under federal and state law.
- c. State or Local Assessment. If the selected evaluation method is a state or local assessment provided by the receiving district, the parent/guardian must notify the Surry Superintendent in writing as soon as practicable to provide adequate time to prepare and obtain the testing materials and prepare any necessary accommodations. Under this election, the District will not charge a fee for providing or administering the test. Reasonable academic proficiency is deemed demonstrated if the composite results place the child at or above the fortieth percentile.
- d. Portfolio Review. If the Surry School District is the selected participating agency, the parent/guardian may request the District to perform a portfolio review, for which the District may charge a fee.
- e. Other "Valid Measurement Tool". When the Surry Superintendent is the participating agency, the parent/guardian and Superintendent may mutually agree upon any other valid measurement tool(s). A non-exclusive list of examples may be found in Ed 315.08(e).
- f. Evaluation Independent of the District. As outlined in RSA 193-A:6, II, the parent/guardian may collaborate with the participating agency to find a mutually agreed upon method of evaluation as described in Ed 315.08(d)-(f).

3. Other Considerations.

- a. RSA 193-A:6, I, require 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, writing samples, worksheets, workbooks, or creative materials used or developed by the child. Such portfolio remains the property of the parent and shall be preserved by the parent for two years from the date of the ending of the instruction.
- b. Parents/guardians need only provide the evaluation results/portfolio to the receiving district to the extent necessary to demonstrate proficiency to participate in the receiving school programs, and co/extra-curricular activities per receiving school board policy.
- c. Parents deciding to re-enroll their children into the receiving district following home education will make arrangements with the receiving school for an evaluation to determine appropriate placement in the receiving school's program per receiving school board policy.

- d. If a parent/guardian terminates a home education program, the parent/guardian is required under RSA 193-A:5, III to provide written notice within 15 days of the termination to the Commissioner of Education and the participating agency selected by the parent or guardian, while also satisfying any one of the alternatives for compulsory attendance listed in RSA 193:1.
- e. The Surry School District does not award diplomas to any students. The receiving 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 receiving school board and the state to be eligible for a certificate or diploma.

Surry resident families may contact the Surry Superintendent or the Surry School Board with questions or concerns regarding home education.

Legal References: RSA 193-A, Home Education
RSA 193:1, Duty of Parent; Compulsory Attendance by Pupil
RSA 193:1-a, Dual Enrollment
RSA 193:1-c, Access to Public School Programs by Nonpublic or Home Educated Pupils
NH Dept. of Education Rules, Section Ed 315, Procedures for the Operation of Home Education Programs

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