

REGIONAL OFFICE of EDUCATION
Monroe & Randolph Counties

Monroe County Office
107 East Mill Street
Waterloo, IL 62298
Tel: (618) 939-5650
Fax: (618) 939-5332

Randolph County Courthouse
#1 Taylor Street, Rm. 101
Chester, IL 62233
Tel: (618) 826-5471
Fax: (618) 826-5474



KELTON DAVIS
*Regional Superintendent
of Schools*

CHRIS DIDDLEBOCK
*Assistant Superintendent
of Schools*

Dear Parent,

Homeschooling in Illinois is considered to be a form of private education. Parents who choose to educate their children at home are under a legal obligation to meet the minimum requirements stated in Illinois's Compulsory Attendance Law. Parents who choose to educate their children at home are obligated to teach their children "...the branches of education taught to children in corresponding age and grade in the public schools" and they are further obligated to offer instruction in these core courses in the English language. The "branches of education" include language arts; mathematics; biological and physical sciences; social sciences; fine arts; and physical development and health.

In a 1950 decision of the Illinois Supreme Court, *People v. Levisen*, the Court held that homeschooling could be considered private schooling if the teacher were competent, the required subjects were taught, and the student received an education at least equivalent to public schooling.

Parents who permit a child to attend a homeschool that is up to the standard of Section 26-1, as interpreted by *Levisen*, are free to decide the manner, time, and materials that best suit the learning needs of their children. Parents may determine what type of homeschooling curriculum is best for their students, what materials to use, how much homework to assign, how homework is to be assessed, and what records of the student's accomplishments should be kept. Testing is not required in the state of Illinois for homeschoolers. There are private testing resources if parents choose to have their children evaluated.

While the law affords Illinois parents a great degree of latitude in designing and/or choosing a program of home education that best meets the needs of their children, it also has the effect of placing near-total responsibility on parents for their student's education while they are being homeschooled. In a 1974 decision, a federal district court stated that under Illinois law the burden of proof rests with parents to establish that the plan of home instruction that they are providing to their children meets state requirements.

The Regional Superintendent of Schools for the student's county of residence has first-line responsibility for investigating reports of noncompliance with the compulsory attendance laws found in Article 26 of the Illinois School Code. In fulfilling this legal responsibility, regional superintendents may expect the parents who seek to educate their children at home to establish, when necessary, that they are providing instruction that is at least commensurate with the standards established for public schools. With evidence that home instruction in a specific instance does not satisfy the requirements of state law, the regional superintendent may request the regional or school district truant officer to investigate to see that the child is in compliance with the compulsory attendance law. Truant officers are peace officers empowered to conduct investigations, enforce the compulsory attendance law, and refer matters to noncompliance courts. A parent who allows a child to attend a homeschool that does not comply with the standard of Section 26-1, as interpreted by *Levisen*, allows the child to be truant and can be found to have committed a Class C misdemeanor.

For more information, visit the Illinois State Board of Education at
<https://www.isbe.net/pages/homeschool.aspx>

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kelton Davis".

Kelton Davis
Regional Superintendent of Schools
Monroe-Randolph Counties



Illinois State Board of Education

555 W. Monroe St., Suite 900
Chicago, Illinois 60661

HOME SCHOOLING REGISTRATION SCHOOL YEAR BEGINNING IN FALL _____ (Provide Year)

ROE/ISC DEPARTMENT

Directions: Please complete all areas of this form and submit it to the Illinois State Board of Education at the following e-mail address hsregist@isbe.net. This form is electronically fillable and you need to save it prior to submitting it via e-mail.

This completed form shall serve as notice to any school district, Regional Office of Education, or truant officer that the indicated parties have registered with the Illinois State Board of Education as home school students.

Registration is voluntary and is not a requirement to home school students.

NAME(S) OF PARENT(S) OR GUARDIAN(S)	COUNTY	
ADDRESS (Street, City, State, Zip Code)	TELEPHONE (Include Area Code)	FAX (Include Area Code)
	E-MAIL	

Provide the full name of each child being taught and information for the current school year:

NAME	GRADE	GENDER		DATE OF BIRTH
		MALE	FEMALE	
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	____-____-____
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	____-____-____
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	____-____-____
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	____-____-____
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	____-____-____

Provide information on the last public or nonpublic school attended (if applicable):

CHILD	SCHOOL NAME	PUBLIC	NONPUBLIC	DATE OF BIRTH
		(Check only one)		
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	____-____-____
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	____-____-____
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	____-____-____
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	____-____-____
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	____-____-____

Provide the name of the curriculum to be used: _____

Education areas being taught (check all that apply):

(Section 26-1 of the School Code states that areas of education must be taught in the English Language)

- | | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Language Arts | <input type="checkbox"/> Mathematics | <input type="checkbox"/> Biological and Physical Sciences |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Social Sciences | <input type="checkbox"/> Fine Arts | <input type="checkbox"/> Physical Development and Health |

Other (please specify): _____

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Homeschool Frequently Asked Questions & Links

1. What authorization is required to make a home school legal in Illinois?

The Illinois School Code (105 ILCS 5/26-1 et seq.) states that children between the ages of 6 (on or before September 1) and 17 must attend public school; however, an exception is made for **“any child attending a private or parochial school where children are taught the branches of education taught to children of corresponding age and grade in the public schools, and where the instruction of the child in the branches of education is in the English language.”** Based on this law, the Illinois Supreme Court held in 1950 that the phrase “private school” included homeschooling if the teacher (either the parent her or himself or a private tutor) were competent, the required subjects were taught, and the student received an education at least equivalent to public schooling. (People v. Levisen, 404 Ill. 574 (1950)).

2. What subjects must be covered in my home school?

Language arts; Mathematics; Biological and physical sciences; Social sciences; Fine arts; and Physical development and health.

3. How much time must the student spend on homeschooling?

Illinois law does not set any minimum number of hours per day, or days of instruction per year, for students in private schools. However, the Illinois courts have ruled that homeschooling must provide an education that is equivalent with the standards set for public schools. (e.g. *Scoma v. Chicago Board of Education*, 391 F.Supp. 452 (N.D. Ill. 1974)).

4. Am I required to register my home school?

No. In Illinois, registration of homeschooled students is not required. Parents may choose to notify their regional superintendent of education and/or the State Board of their intention to homeschool.

- [ISBE Home Schooling Registration Form](#)

5. Are there any testing requirements for students enrolled in an Illinois home school?

There is no requirement that students in a home school be tested. If parents choose to administer tests to their children to assess their progress, they are not required to submit the results to any school official.

6. May a homeschooled student take assessment tests through his/her district of residence?

The public school may choose to allow a homeschooled student to participate in some assessment tests. However, state assessments such as the Illinois Standards Achievement Test (ISAT) are not considered appropriate tests for students in nonpublic schools, since the content of such assessments was designed specifically for the Illinois public school curriculum.

7. *My child is currently attending a public school. Is there a formal procedure I must follow to withdraw him from school to begin homeschooling?*

It is highly recommended that you give the public school a dated letter (keeping copies for your records) that states you will be withdrawing your student to place him/her in a private school. Such a letter indicates your intent to continue your student's education and will make it less likely that the school reports your student to county officials as truant after a prolonged absence. Homeschooling organizations provide samples of this type of letter.

8. *Does the State Board of Education give advice to parents on effective homeschooling?*

No. The State Board of Education's jurisdiction generally does not extend to private or parochial schools and for most purposes, a home school is regarded as a private school. We give basic (legal) information to parents and others interested in homeschooling, including references to private education in Illinois law or in court cases. In addition, we have provided links to some state and national websites of possible interest (see below).

9. *Where can I find information on how to begin a homeschooling program?*

Here are some of the resources available to parents and others interested in homeschooling:

- Your public library should have information on homeschool groups in your area as well as statewide national homeschooling associations. Some or all of these contacts may share information on homeschooling textbooks, study guides, homework materials, and curricula. Your library would also have information on homeschooling magazines and books.
- The Internet has thousands of links to homeschooling information ranging from suppliers of homeschooling materials to homeschooling "ezines" and support groups to research studies and legal analyses. Parents interested in purchasing homeschooling or related materials through the Internet are advised to first research the products, and their claims, as they would do before making other types of online purchases.
- Your Regional Office of Education may have information on local homeschooling organizations as well as links to state and/or national organizations. View the [Directory of Regional Offices of Education and Intermediate Service Centers](#).
- You may have friends, neighbors and/or relatives who are homeschooling their children and would be willing to share their experiences with you.

10. *Are any home school programs accredited by the State Board of Education?*

The State Board does not accredit any nonpublic schools. There is a voluntary process for private schools located in Illinois that wish to pursue registration and/or recognition through this agency; however, the law excludes home-based schools from this process (105 ILCS 5/2-3.25o(e)).

11. *Is there financial assistance available to help with the costs of homeschooling?*

The State Board of Education is not aware of any financial resources designed to help parents meet homeschooling expenses.

12. May a student attend public school part-time while being home-schooled?

Yes, students may attend their local public school part-time under the following conditions set forth in the School Code (Section 10-20.24):

- there is sufficient space available in the school;
- you have submitted your request (on behalf of the student) to the school principal by May 1 for the following school year; and
- the course or courses you have requested are part of the school's regular curriculum.

13. May a homeschooled student take driver's education through his local public school?

Yes. Illinois school law requires that school districts maintaining grades 9 through 12 shall provide the classroom course in driver's education, and an approved course in practice driving, to eligible students who are attending a non-public school in the district. Home-schooled students may take driver's education under the following conditions set forth in the School Code (Sections 27-24.2 and 27-24.4):

- The chief administrator of the home school must notify the local public district by April 1 of the name of the homeschooled student who wishes to take the driver's education course during the next school year.
- The chief administrator of the home school must provide evidence to the public school that the student has received a passing grade in at least eight courses during the previous two semesters.

14. May a homeschooled student participate in interscholastic athletics through his/her district of residence?

Public schools have no obligation to make extracurricular activities, including athletics, open to students attending private schools. In addition, many Illinois public elementary and high schools belong to intramural sports organizations, i.e., the Illinois Elementary School Association (IESA) or the Illinois High School Association (IHSA). Both organizations have specific bylaws that limit the conditions under which home-schooled students may participate in interscholastic athletics.

- Illinois Elementary School Association
- Illinois High School Association

15. My homeschooled student is completing the equivalent of 8th grade. Is he entitled to receive an 8th grade diploma from his local public school and/or take part in the graduation program?

No. Since your student is attending private school full-time he has no legal right to participate in public school graduation ceremonies.

16. My student receives special education services at his public school. Will there be any change in services if he withdraws to enter homeschooling? What changes might be expected?

This is a complex issue and will differ markedly from student to student. Therefore, statements on this website should be taken as guidelines only.

In general, a student with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) will not have the right to the same range of services available through his public school if he chooses to withdraw to attend a private school.

A portion of the funding public schools receive for special education services must be earmarked for non-public schools, and public schools must provide timely and meaningful consultation (TMC) to private schools concerning this funding allocation. The public schools are not required to distribute these funds so that each eligible student receives an equal share. Depending on several

factors (including the student's IEP; the categories of disabilities that can be covered by the public school's funding allocation; and the location of services to be offered), a student with an IEP who chooses to withdraw from public school may not receive services as comprehensive as those available to him while attending a public school full-time.

Parents of students with IEPs should also bear in mind that, due to a change in legislation enacted in 2005, it is now the student's district of attendance (not his district of residence) that holds financial responsibility for that student. See the [IDEA Proportionate Share Services for Parentally Placed Nonpublic Students with Disabilities](#).

17. *May a student in a private school who receives some special education services also attend a public school on a part-time basis? If so, what services will the student receive?*

The School Code does permit private school students who are eligible to receive special education services to attend a public school on a part-time basis (see Section 14-6.01 of the School Code).

Students who are eligible to receive special education may attend public schools in their districts of residence and receive services through an IEP offered by the district. In order to qualify for an IEP, students must attend the public schools for a minimum of one instructional subject. Students who meet this requirement are eligible to receive IEP services to the extent they are actually in attendance in the public school setting. However, parents should realize that the extent of services their children may receive may not be the same amount of service they would receive as full-time public school students.

For more information on part-time attendance in public schools, please review the [Supplemental Guidance Information document](#).

18. *I am ready to enroll (or re-enroll) my student in public school after a period of homeschooling or other private schooling. How will his work be evaluated by the public school?*

Your public school will determine grade placement for the student based on an evaluation of his work and pursuant to its policies. Given the wide variety of homeschooling curricula available in Illinois, public schools may prefer to focus on appropriate grade placement for the student rather than assigning individual course credits. However, the district may not make a placement decision that is unreasonable or arbitrary. (For example, a public school cannot require a home school program to be "registered" or "recognized" through the State Board of Education since the School Code excludes home schools from this voluntary process.) A method of grade placement (such as the use of competency testing) that treats all students entering from nonpublic schools in Illinois, or from public and nonpublic schools in other states, in the same way would be a reasonable policy for a district to adopt.

19. *Can a home-schooled student return for the 12th grade and graduate?*

Yes, if the public school determines that the combination of credits awarded for work done at the home school and credits earned in an accredited private or public school meet state graduation requirements and if the student passes any other reasonable requirements after re-enrolling in the public school.

20. *How do colleges evaluate the work of a student whose high school diploma was received through a private home school?*

Many colleges and universities have procedures for admitting homeschooled students and for assessing their background. See the [University of Illinois Home-Schooled Applicant FAQ page](#)