

REGIONAL OFFICE of EDUCATION

Monroe & Randolph Counties

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KELTON DAVIS
*Regional Superintendent
of Schools*

CHRIS DIDDLEBOCK
*Assistant Superintendent
of Schools*

Dear Parent,

ILLINOIS HOME SCHOOLING¹

Home-schooling 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' 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 of 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 home-schooling 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 home school that is up to the standard of Section 26-1, as interpreted by *Levisen*, are free to decide the manner, time and materials which best suit the learning needs of their children. Parents may determine what type of home-schooling 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 (see resources below).

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 home-schooled. 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 which 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 to refer matters of noncompliance to the courts. A parent who allows a child to attend a home school 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.

The Regional Office of Education (ROE) #45 requests you contact our Homeschool Liaison at our Waterloo office to discuss your child's education. Please complete the optional registration form and submit it to the ROE.

1. www.isbe.net/Pages/Homeschool.aspx, 08/02/2018 – for more information and resources

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kelton Davis". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line at the end.

Kelton Davis
Regional Superintendent of Schools
Monroe-Randolph Counties #45