



## **Home Education Guide**

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The homeschooling policy is available for review at the District Administration Office.

## Key Dates and Steps to Take

<b><u>August 1<sup>st</sup></u></b>	All applications and affidavits relative to home schooling must be received by the District on or before August 1 <sup>st</sup> for the upcoming school year.
<b><u>Ongoing</u></b>	For individuals new to homeschool the affidavit must be submitted to the superintendent prior to the implementation of a homeschooling program. The superintendent gives homeschooling approval in writing.
<b><u>June 30<sup>th</sup></u></b>	All homeschooled students must submit a home education evaluation form completed by their evaluator.

### **What to do when a student who is currently attending school in the District expresses an interest in beginning a homeschool education:**

If a family chooses to homeschool, the family must submit the following to the superintendent:

- a. Letter to the superintendent requesting homeschooling
- b. Affidavit (notarized) – indicating age of child at the time of the affidavit completion
- c. List of objectives being taught for each subject
- d. Copy of high school diploma or GED for the homeschool supervisor
- e. Immunization record/medical exemption letter
- f. Proof of residency

The student must be instructed through a properly qualified tutor or through a parent or legal guardian with a high school diploma or GED.

## Staff Contacts

The list that follows is to provide you with the proper contact person/office for various requests for information.

### **Home Schooling Approval**

Dr. Nicolas Guarente  
Superintendent of Schools  
45 Mt. Rock Road  
Newville, PA 17241  
717-776-2412  
[nguarente@bigspring.k12.pa.us](mailto:nguarente@bigspring.k12.pa.us)

### **Home Schooling Questions**

Mrs. Nicole Donato  
Director of Curriculum & Instruction  
45 Mt. Rock Road  
Newville, PA 17241  
717-776-2403  
[ndonato@bigspring.k12.pa.us](mailto:ndonato@bigspring.k12.pa.us)

### **Application/Affidavit**

Mrs. Sharon Hoover  
45 Mt. Rock Road  
Newville, PA 17241  
717-776-2414  
[shoover@bigspring.k12.pa.us](mailto:shoover@bigspring.k12.pa.us)

## Home Education Evaluators

The following Home Education Evaluators have provided their credentials to the district and are approved home education evaluators. Supervisors may choose an evaluator of their choice (it does not need to be one listed below) as long as they meet PDE Evaluator requirements. If you would like to have your name added or removed from this list, please contact the Big Spring School District Office of Curriculum and Instruction at 717-776-2000.

Sandy Drexler  
Email: [sdrexler604@gmail.com](mailto:sdrexler604@gmail.com)  
Phone: 352-376-4853

Sandra L. Elliott  
287 Dark Hollow Road  
Shermans Dale, PA 17090  
Phone: 717-580-5206

Karen Epler  
2147A Newville Road  
Carlisle, PA 17015  
Phone: 717-713-9204

Elizabeth Ferry  
717-776-3783

Miranda Luckie  
204 Stonehouse Road  
Carlisle, PA 17015  
Phone: 717-440-3541

Kathy O'Donnell  
625 W. North Street  
Carlisle, PA 17013  
Phone: 717-245-2938

Robert Straughan  
129 E. Main Street  
Walnut Bottom, PA 17266  
Phone: 717-532-3307

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **What subjects are required in a home education program?**

Children are homeschooled for a variety of reasons and some of these reasons may dictate the type of educational materials selected. For example, a family may be interested in a classical education or perhaps a faith-based curriculum.

Some options provide both curriculum and secondary oversight of the work (parents exercise primary oversight); these options are referred to as “umbrella schools.” When using an umbrella school, care must be taken to ensure the mandatory courses and graduation requirements defined by law are met; specific programs may need to be augmented to ensure this.

If a student begins a home education program after having been enrolled in a public or private school, all courses completed also apply to the home education program.

### **Mandatory Courses**

Elementary school level (grades K-6), mandatory courses: English, to include spelling, reading and writing; arithmetic; science; geography; history of the United States and Pennsylvania; civics; safety education, including regular and continuous instruction in the dangers and prevention of fires; health and physiology; physical education; music; and art.

Secondary school level (grades 7-12), mandatory courses: English, to include language, literature, speech and composition; science; geography; social studies, to include civics, world history, history of the United States and Pennsylvania; mathematics, to include general mathematics, algebra and geometry; art; music; physical education; health; and safety education, including regular and continuous instruction in the dangers and prevention of fires. Such courses of study may include, at the discretion of the supervisor of the home education program, economics; biology; chemistry; foreign languages; trigonometry; or other age-appropriate courses as contained in Chapter 5 (Curriculum Requirements) of the State Board of Education

### **What are the standardized test requirements for home school students?**

Homeschooled students in grades 3, 5, or 8 must take, and report in their portfolio, the results of the statewide tests or another nationally normed standardized achievement test in reading/language arts and mathematics ([24 P.S. § 13-1327.1\(e\)\(1\)](#)).

Students may request to take the State’s standardized test (PSSA/Keystone) through the Big Spring School District by contacting the Office of Curriculum and Instruction at 717-776-2000 by March 1 of the school year.

Other standardized test options approved by the PA Department of Education are available on the [Home Education – Standardized Test Page](#) of the PDE website.

**What do I do if I'm transferring from another district?**

When a homeschool family moves from one school district to another in PA, an official letter of transfer is required. This letter substantiates that the home education program is in compliance with the home education law.

**Do I need to submit a portfolio?**

Home education students do not need to submit a portfolio to the District; however one would be needed for the evaluator to review. Students should discuss with their evaluator portfolio expectations and requirements.

**Where can I find more information on Home Education Organizations?**

A list of homeschooling organizations can be found on the PDE website [www.pde.state.pa.us](http://www.pde.state.pa.us)

**What is the difference between Homeschooling and Private tutoring?**

Parents may want to compare the differences between homeschooling and private tutoring to see which best fits the way they would like their children to be educated. There are many similarities, such as in the curriculum requirements, but there also are differences. Here is a brief overview of the structural differences.

*Private tutoring*

- No affidavit required (cost savings)
- In place of affidavit, reporting (1) by tutor of students and (2) of parent that the law's requirements were met
- No evaluation required (cost savings)
- No direct route to a state-recognized diploma (GED tests and Commonwealth Secondary School Diploma are possible, but additional cost and effort may be involved since the GED tests now are based on the PA Core Standards)
- Dual enrollment possible, at the discretion of the school district
- Private tutor must be a PA certified teacher, submitting evidence of their certification and results of their background checks to the school district

*Homeschooling*

- Notarized affidavit required (cost)
- Evaluation required (cost)
- State-recognized diploma available
- Right to borrow textbooks and other curricular materials
- Right to participate in extracurricular activities
- Dual enrollment possible, at the discretion of the school district
- Supervisor of the home education program needs a high school diploma or its equivalent

**What are the requirements to be a home school evaluator?**

There are a number of avenues for individuals to qualify to become home education evaluators ([24 P.S. § 13-1327.1\(e\)](#)).

1. Licensed clinical psychologist
2. School psychologist
3. Pennsylvania certified teacher with two years grading experience at the level they evaluate (K-6 and/or 7-12)
4. Nonpublic school teacher or administrator with two years PA teaching experience within the last 10 years at the level they evaluate (K-6 and/or 7-12)
5. Persons with other qualifications, with the prior consent of the superintendent of the district of residence

***Please see the PA [Home Education and Private Tutoring Guide](#) on the PDE Website for additional evaluator qualification information.***