

# Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:  <b>Review: Annually, in March</b>	Descriptor Term:  <h2 style="margin: 0;">Home Schools</h2>	Descriptor Code: <b>6.202</b>	Issued Date: <b>12/13/21</b>
		Rescinds: <b>6.202</b>	Issued: <b>01/09/95; 07/08/13</b>

## *General*

A home school is a school conducted or directed by parent(s)/guardian(s) for their own children. Home schools which teach grades K-12 where the parent(s)/guardian(s) are associated with an organization that conducts church-related schools<sup>1</sup> are exempt from the following provisions but shall follow procedures issued by the State Department of Education.

A parent/guardian wishing to conduct a home school shall meet the following requirements:<sup>2</sup>

1. Provide annual notice to the Director of Schools before the commencement of each school year of the intent to conduct a home school;
2. Submit to the Director of Schools the name, number, age, grade level of children involved, location of the school, curriculum to be offered, proposed hours of instruction, and qualifications of the parent-teacher;
3. Maintain attendance records, subject to inspection by the Director of Schools;
4. Submit attendance records to the Director of Schools at the end of each school year;
5. Provide instruction for at least four (4) hours per day for the same number of instructional days as are required by state law;<sup>3</sup>
6. Possess a high school diploma, GED, or HiSET;<sup>4</sup>
7. Cooperate in the administration to home school students of appropriate tests by the Commissioner of Education/designee or by a professional testing service in grades five (5), seven (7), and nine (9);
8. Take actions according to state law if home school student falls behind appropriate grade level;
9. Submit proof to the Director of Schools that the home school student has been vaccinated as required by state law;<sup>5</sup>
10. Submit proof to the Director of Schools that other health services and examinations as required by state law have been received by the home school student; and
11. In the event of illness or inadequacy of the home school parent-teacher to teach a specific subject, employ a tutor having the same qualifications as required of parent-teacher.

If one or more of these requirements are not met, the Board authorizes the Director of Schools to take formal action to bring the child into compliance with the compulsory attendance law (until the child has reached age seventeen (17), either in the home school or in a public, private, or church-related school).

### **FACILITIES USE**

School facilities shall be available for home school instruction only when *all* of the following conditions exist:

1. Special needs courses are being taught which require services unavailable to the home school student;
2. These services cannot be provided through any means other than the schools;
3. Requests for services are made known by the home school parent when notice is given to the Director of Schools of the intent to conduct a home school;
4. The Director of Schools investigates the request and makes recommendations to the Board;
5. No overcrowding, additional expenses, including providing transportation, or other special situations which interfere with the normal operation of the school district shall be incurred; and
6. Approval by the Board shall be on a case-by-case basis.

### **RECORD ACCESS**

The Director of Schools, through the Attendance Supervisor, shall have the attendance records of the home school inspected at least two (2) times each school year in order to provide assistance in implementing the compulsory attendance law.

### **STUDENT PERFORMANCE<sup>6</sup>**

If a home school student fall more than one (1) year behind the home school student's appropriate grade level in the home school student's comprehensive test score for two (2) consecutive tests based on the tests required in #7 above, and if the child is not learning disabled in the opinion of a teacher licensed to teach at the child's grade level, the local Director of Schools may require the parents to enroll the child in a public, private, or church-related school.

The Director of Schools shall develop administrative procedures regarding necessary consultations with home school parents in regard to student performance.

### **HOME SCHOOL PARTICIPATION IN INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS<sup>7</sup>**

Home school students are eligible to participate in interscholastic athletics at the public school to which the student would be assigned or authorized to attend according to the Board if the student:

1. Registers with the Director of Schools by August 1<sup>st</sup> of the school year in which the student desires to participate in athletics.

2. Meets the same academic and conduct standards required of other participants on the school's athletic teams. The Director of School or designed must confer with the parent or legal guardian conducting the home school to determine that the student is academically eligible, and
3. Registers with the school the student's intent to participate in athletics prior to August 1<sup>st</sup> of the school year.

If an organization or an associate that regulates interscholastic athletics (TSSAA) adopts rules establishing minimum eligibility requirements for participation by home school students in interscholastic athletics at the organization's or association's member schools, then the Board shall permit participation by home school students in accordance with such rules. **This provision does not guarantee that a home school student trying out for an interscholastic sport will make the team, but only that the home school student will not be prohibited from trying out for a sport team if the student is eligible under the rules of the organization or association and the Board.**

Any student who is ineligible for participation in interscholastic athletics at the time of the withdrawal from a public or private school to enroll in a home school would remain ineligible to participate in such activities as a home school student until the student has successfully completed one grading period and reestablished eligibility. Any insurance provided by the Board for participants in interscholastic athletics must cover any participating home school student. If there is an additional premium for such coverage, the participating home school student must pay the premium. The Board may not charge a home school student a participation fee for participating in an interscholastic sport that is not charged to students enrolled in Houston County public schools who participate in the same sport.

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Legal References

1. TCA 49-50-801(a)
2. TCA 49-6-3050(b)
3. TCA 49-6-3004(a)
4. Public Acts of 2021, Chapter No. 493
5. TCA 49-6-5001
6. TCA 49-6-3050(b)(6)
7. TCA 49-6-3050(e)

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Cross References

Compulsory Attendance Ages 6.201