

Policies

Westerly Public Schools Home School Instruction

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The Westerly School Committee will approve home instruction that meets the requirements of Rhode Island law (Section 16-19-1, 16-19-2, 16-22-2; and 16-22-4). In addition, the School Committee requires some type of evaluation component, which will accommodate the preferences of parents for certain mechanisms for measurement and may take the form of a report card, written evaluations, dated work samples, or other means of evaluation. Annual testing or standardized testing is not required by Rhode Island General Law; home school parents may request to participate in state assessments by indicating their request in their letter of intent to home school.

The following guidelines shall be adhered to in requesting and approving home instruction:

1. The parent(s) or guardian(s) will submit written notification to the Superintendent of their intent to instruct their child or children at home on a yearly basis. This letter shall be termed the "Letter of Intent." For each child, the letter will state the date of birth or age as of September 1 and grade-level and shall confirm that all subjects required under Rhode Island General Laws will be taught. The Letter of Intent will reflect that the parent(s) or guardian(s) shall comply with applicable Rhode Island laws governing home schooling.

RIGL 16-19-2 requires that "reading, writing, geography, arithmetic; history of the United States, history of Rhode Island, and principles of American government be taught in the English language substantially to the same extent as these subjects are required to be taught in the public Schools, and that the teaching be thorough and efficient." Sections 16-22-2 and 16-22-4, respectively, require instruction in State and federal government and health and physical education "substantially equivalent" to that required in the public schools. School committees do not have legal authority to approve home instruction that do not meet these standards.

2. The parent(s) or guardian(s) may begin home instruction immediately after submittal of the Letter of Intent to home school to the Superintendent (or his/her designee).
3. The Superintendent (or his/her designee) will submit a recommendation for home school approval to the Westerly School Committee. Within approximately 30 days from the date the Letter of Intent is submitted to the Superintendent, the parent(s) or guardian(s) will receive a letter of acceptance or denial for their home instruction. If the School Committee denies parents the right to home School, the parents may appeal the action to the Rhode Island Department of Education (16-19-2).
4. The parent(s) or guardian(s) may request an informational meeting with the Superintendent (or his/her designee) to review the requirements of home instruction.

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5. Attendance of students engaged in home instruction must be substantially equal to that required of students in the Westerly Public Schools (16-19-2). The parent(s) or guardian(s) shall maintain an attendance register, which shall be provided to the School Committee Upon request. The School Department will provide a standard attendance register logbook for the keeping of this information.
6. Parent(s) or Guardian(s) will submit annually, upon request, a record of progress to the Superintendent that shows the instruction is thorough and efficient. This evaluation component will accommodate the preferences of parents for certain mechanisms for measurement which may take the form of a report card, written evaluations, dated work samples, or other means of evaluation.
7. The School Committee relies on the Superintendent (or his/her designee) to assess whether home instruction meets the legal requirements.
8. Upon written notification to the Superintendent's office, the district will provide support to homeschoolers, including (but not limited to) the following:
 - a. Facilitate participation in Westerly Public School curricular and extracurricular activities.
 - b. Student use of Media Center resources.
 - c. Provide current textbooks, from public school and state adopted private school textbook listing, to supplement the home instruction.
 - d. Facilitate participation in Westerly Public School's standardized testing program.
 - e. Provide course outlines, syllabi, course curriculum guides, and or outcomes for specific grades and/or subjects.
 - f. Student participation in Rhode Island Interscholastic League (RIIL) in accordance with RIL Rules and Regulations, Article 3 Eligibility and any other applicable regulation. (www.riil.org/index.php/resources/rules-and-regulations)

Adopted: October 1, 2014