**Saucon Valley School District**

Policy

Title - 137 Home Education Program

Section – Programs

Adopted - October 24, 2005

Revised – May 14, 2024

Content

## Purpose

The Saucon Valley School District is responsible to certify that each school age resident of the school district is enrolled in a program of instruction which is deemed satisfactory by the district's Superintendent of Schools. Accordingly, the district must be responsible to ensure that instruction provided through a home education program meets standards approved by the Superintendent and complies with state law.

This policy statement shall apply to those instances in which a parent/guardian wishes to provide home education program as an alternative to regular attendance in a public or private school for a child of compulsory school age.

This policy shall not be construed to apply to instances where homebound instruction by school district personnel is required for students unable to attend school.

## Authority

The Saucon Valley School District will permit a home education program after the district Superintendent or his/her designee receives appropriate documentation and assurances that a home education program will occur/is occurring in accordance with state law and regulations. The District authorizes the Superintendent or his/her designee to develop Administrative Regulations to implement this Policy.

## Definitions

**Home Education Program -** a program conducted in compliance with law by the parent/guardian or person having legal custody of a child. A home education program shall not be considered a nonpublic school under the provisions of law.

**Hearing Examiner -** shall not be an officer, employee or agent of the Department of Education or of the school district or intermediate unit of residence of the child in the home education program.

**Appropriate Education -** a program consisting of instruction in the required subjects for the time required by law and in which the student demonstrates sustained progress in the overall program.

**"Supervisor"** shall mean the parent or guardian or such person having legal custody of the child or children who shall be responsible for the provision of instruction, provided that such person has a high school diploma or its equivalent.

## Eligibility/Affidavit

The parent/guardian must submit a written statement to the Superintendent requesting authorization to educate a child or children in the home.

The child's parent/guardian or legal custodian who will provide instruction to the child shall file with the Superintendent or his/her designee a completed notarized affidavit and required documents for his/her review prior to commencing home education and annually thereafter on or before August 1. The affidavit shall address those issues and provide assurances as required by
the Public-School Code and Department of Standards and Regulations. A copy of the affidavit is attached to this policy.

The parent/guardian must adhere to and complete all requirements listed herein and required by law. Signing the affidavit constitutes the parent/guardian acceptance of responsibility for fulfilling these requirements.

The nature, content, and extent of all such home instruction must be reviewed yearly and approved by the Superintendent of the Saucon Valley School District or his/her designee before instruction can begin. Approval will be granted for only one (1) school year.

Home schooling less than one (1) year will not replace a failing grade or average. Students who have a failing grade will not be promoted to the next grade or given credit for course work completed during home schooling for a period of less than one (1) school year. Grade level placement and credits will be reevaluated upon reenrollment and is at the discretion of the building administrator.

## End of Year

At the end of each school year, there will be a review of the year just completed to determine the student's progress by a qualified home education evaluator.

While the school district does not review or collects portfolios, the following is still collected:

1. the affidavit and its accompanying documentation,
2. the evaluation by a qualified home education evaluator, and
3. the name of evaluator for each student.

The evaluation by the home education evaluator is due by June 30th following each school year. Home education programs can be challenged in a hearing initiated by the

school district if there is evidence that an appropriate education is not occurring, which may include, but is not limited to, the failure to submit to the District documents required under this Policy or by law.

## Curriculum

The curriculum must include the planned courses which the district requires students to study in the grade level which will be taught at home.

Educational objectives by subject for each child in home education programs shall be included with each affidavit. All subjects shall be taught in the English language.

At a minimum, the following courses (subjects) shall be taught at the elementary school level: 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.

At a minimum, the following courses (subjects) shall be taught at the secondary level: 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 may include economics; biology; chemistry; foreign languages; trigonometry; or other age appropriate courses required by the State Board of Education.

## Textbooks, Workbooks, And Supplies

The district will, at the request of the supervisor, lend to the home education program copies of the school district's planned courses, textbooks, and other curriculum materials, appropriate to the student's age and grade level. To receive such materials, the parent/guardian must pay a deposit of fifty dollars ($50.00) per grade level and sign out all such materials. All materials shall be returned to the building principal one (1) week after the close of the school year and/or prior to withdrawal from the program and/or prior to relocation out of the district. When the materials are returned, the fifty dollar ($50.00) deposit will be refunded. A supervisor borrowing materials pursuant to this section shall agree prior to receipt of any materials to reasonable conditions established by the district for the use of materials which require their return in good condition, reasonable wear and tear excepted. There will be a charge for reusable materials not returned and/or damaged.

## Instruction level

The district reserves the right to have the student evaluated by the school psychologist or other trained personnel to determine the student’s mental ability and achievement levels.

## Qualification of Supervisor

Supervisor shall be the parent/guardian or such person having legal custody of the child or children who shall be responsible for the provision of instruction, provided that such person has a high school diploma or its equivalent.

## Minimum Instruction Period

Home education instruction must take place a minimum of one hundred eighty (180) days each school year. Instruction must be conducted for a minimum of five (5) hours each school day for
the elementary level in compliance with the state minimum of nine hundred (900) hours per year. Secondary level students must receive instruction for a minimum of five and one-half (5 ½) hours each school day in compliance with the nine hundred ninety (990) hour minimum for that
level.

## Attendance

A daily attendance register (log) shall be maintained by the supervisor of the home education program. It shall reflect the days and/or hours of instruction and specific activities used in
instruction. The attendance register is to be included in the portfolio.

## Students with A Disability

Section 1327 provides that a home education program meets the compulsory attendance requirement for students identified as handicapped only when the program addresses the specific needs of the student with a disability and is approved by a licensed clinical or certified psychologist or a teacher with a valid certificate from the Commonwealth to teach special education. Written notice of such approval must be submitted with the notarized affidavit.

The supervisor may request that the school district or intermediate unit of residence provide services that address the specific needs of a student with a disability.

When the provision of services is agreed to by both the supervisor and the school district or intermediate unit, all services shall be provided in the public schools or in a private school licensed to provide such programs and services.

## Health/Medical Requirements

The parent/guardian must comply with all Department of Health regulations and requirements regarding immunizations and dental, physical, vision, hearing, etc.,

examinations. The parent/guardian is responsible for assuming the costs incurred through completing these requirements, or for bringing the student to school to receive these services. Documentation is to be included with affidavit.

**Testing**

Results of standardized tests for each child in grades three, five, and eight –

Achievement tests are mandatory for students at those grade levels where PSSA tests are given, except for grade 11, and may include public state-wide administered tests or the results obtained on one of the "nationally normed standardized tests" approved by the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

Approved tests are:

1. Iowa Test of Basic Skills.
2. California Achievement Test.
3. Stanford Achievement Test.
4. Metropolitan Achievement Test.
5. Science Research Associates.
6. Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills.

The supervisor shall ensure that the nationally normed standardized tests or state-wide tests are not administered by the child's parent/guardian. Requests by a home education supervisor to have children tested with students within Saucon Valley School District shall be made in a separate letter and forwarded with the affidavit.

Parents/Guardians will be responsible for transporting their child to the public school of residence on the days when standardized testing is being administered. Dates of these tests will be provided by the building principal upon request. Under no circumstances shall the Saucon Valley School District release the test for private administration.

**Credit and Graduation**

The school district will not grant credit for courses completed at home and will neither promote, advance, nor graduate students who complete a series of courses through home education. If such credit is requested upon return to Saucon Valley School District, student(s) may be required to take any and all examinations normally administered by the teachers of such courses as part of an evaluation process. Credit may be full, partial, or withheld for student(s), as determined by the Superintendent, and based upon these evaluations.

## Diploma

A Saucon Valley School District diploma will also be issued if a home education student returns for both junior and senior years and successfully completes the core curriculum requirements of math, English, science and physical education for both years, and a total of sixteen (16) credits.

Returning students must have successfully met all home education requirements prior to request for enrollment.

## Grade Point Average and Class Rank

Grade Point Average of home education students who return for both junior and senior year will not be calculated for class rank or salutatorian/valedictorian status.

## Use of School Facilities

Part-time participation in in-school activities outside of the basic skill area and use of school instruction program will be allowed on the same basis and subject to the same conditions as those students in full-time attendance in the district. Participation in such activities will be scheduled by the principal. The parent/guardian shall provide any transportation required for such participation.

## Costs of Home Education

All direct and indirect costs of home instruction will be borne by the parent/ guardian.

## Termination of Home Education

Either the parent/guardian or the school district may terminate the in-home instruction if it is determined that the student is not making reasonable learning progress. Should the home education program be terminated by the District over the Parents'/Guardians objection, the Parent/Guardian shall be provided a hearing before a Hearing Examiner before the program is terminated, as required by the School Code.

## Homeschool and Vocational Education

High School students that are home-schooled under the School Code Section 13-1327.1 may attend the vocational-technical school at District expense under the following guidelines:

1. Interested students must be complete an enrollment request form that shall be available at the High School building and meet the eligibility criteria or their equivalent. In addition, interested students must meet the prerequisite criteria or their equivalent and, if accepted into said program, agree to comply with all policies, rules, and regulations as other district students participating in said program.
2. Enrollment shall be contingent upon available space at the vocational- technical school.
3. In the event space is available and student completes the necessary enrollment documents, transportation shall be available from the high school to the vocational-technical school based on a pre-established bus schedule as determined by Administration if space is available.

**Homeschool and Participation in Extracurricular Activities**

Students who are enrolled in a home school program and District residents shall be permitted to participate in any activity open to district students, including, but not limited to, clubs, musical ensembles, athletics, and theatrical productions, provided that the Student (1) meets the eligibility criteria required for students enrolled in the District, (2) meets the tryout criteria for participation in the activity applicable to students enrolled in the district, and (3) complies with all policies, rules, and regulations governing the organization of the activity.

**Homeschool and Participation in Cocurricular Activities and Academic Courses**

Students who are enrolled in a home school program and District residents shall be permitted to participate in any cocurricular activity that merges extracurricular activities with a required academic course, including band, orchestra, or choir, and/or academic courses provided that the Student (1) meets the eligibility criteria for students enrolled in the District for the class, (2) Student meets prerequisite criteria applicable to students enrolled in the District for the class, (3) Student complies with all policies, rules, and regulations of the District applicable, and (4) the total number of classes shall not exceed one-quarter of the school day for full-time students. For any student who participates in a cocurricular activity and/or academic course, Student shall be provided a grade for said class and the grade shall be provided to the Supervisor. Parent/Guardian shall be responsible for transporting said students to school, except that Students shall be permitted to utilize an already operating bus route, provided that space is available. To the extent that a student takes more than one class during the school day, the classes must be consecutive, or Parent/Guardian must agree to supervise the child between classes.

**Homeschool and Participation in Other Activities**

Nothing in this Policy shall permit students who are enrolled in a home school program to participate in school sponsored field trips, unless that field trip is part of an academic course or extracurricular activity for which the student is eligible and enrolled as provided

for by this Policy or it is a trip that students in academic course or extracurricular activity who are enrolled in the District for all classes are permitted to attend. In addition, nothing in this Policy shall permit students who are enrolled solely in a home school program to participate in other school activities, such as dances, to the extent participation in the same is limited to students who are enrolled in the District.

**Change of School District**

When home school students moving in to the District during the school year from another district, the parent must request a letter of transfer from the district they are moving from and present it to the district to show that their program of studies had been approved and they are in compliance with mandatory education and attendance laws and regulations. The parents must also submit all of the necessary paperwork to the District required by this Policy for their home school program, such as the affidavit, curriculum, appropriate medical/dental paperwork unless exempt then a letter by the parent should be written stating reason for exemption.

References:

School Code -24 P.S. Sec. 111, 1327, 1327.1

State Board of Education Regulations - 22 PA Code Chapter 4, Sec.

11.31a Board Policy - 203, 209