

# Fairbanks North Star Borough School District



Building Educational Success Together

# BEST Handbook

## 2024-2025

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## Important Dates for 2024-2025

Date	Event
July 1	Beginning of the 2023-2024 School Year
July 4-5	<b>OFFICE CLOSED</b> for Holiday
August 9	<b>OFFICE CLOSED</b> for Professional Development
August 12-13	<b>OFFICE CLOSED</b> for Professional Development
August 15	Area Schools Start
August 28	<b>Day 10 of First Semester, the last day to drop a class.</b>
September 2	<b>OFFICE CLOSED</b> for Holiday
September 27	<b>OFFICE CLOSED</b> for Professional Development
<b>October 1</b>	<b>Last Day to Enroll to Receive Allotment</b>
<b>October 18</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Quarter Ends</b>
Oct 31 & Nov 1	Educational Specialist/Parent Conferences
November 15	<b>OFFICE CLOSED</b> for Professional Development
November 28 & 29	<b>OFFICE CLOSED</b> for Thanksgiving Holiday
<b>December 22</b>	<b>1st Semester/Q2 Ends</b>
<b>December 24 &amp; 25</b>	<b>OFFICE CLOSED</b> for Christmas Holiday
Dec 23 - Jan 3	Area schools closed for Winter Break
January 1	<b>OFFICE CLOSED</b> for New Year holiday
January 7	Students return from winter break
January 20	<b>OFFICE CLOSED</b> for MLK holiday
January 21	<b>Day 10 of 2nd Semester: last day to drop classes at area high schools</b>
February 13 & 24	<b>Educational Specialist/Parent Conferences</b>
February 21	<b>OFFICE CLOSED</b> for Professional Development
<b>March 7</b>	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter Ends</b>
March 10-14	Area Schools Closed for Spring Break
March 13 & 14	<b>OFFICE CLOSED</b> for Spring Break
March 24 - April 25	State Testing Window for all students grades 3 through 10
<b>May 1</b>	<b>FINAL GRADE DEADLINE FOR SENIORS GRADATING MAY 2025-all grades submitted to Brightways by 4 p.m.</b>
<b>May 14</b>	<b>BEST Graduation at Hering Auditorium 7 pm</b>
<b>May 16</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Semester/Q4 Ends</b>
May 26	<b>OFFICE CLOSED</b> for Memorial Day

# Welcome to Fairbanks BEST Homeschool

## What is BEST?

Fairbanks **B**uilding **E**ducational **S**uccess **T**ogether (BEST) is an innovative and flexible educational experience where parents take the lead in shaping their children's learning journey. As a "school without walls," BEST breaks down traditional boundaries, empowering families to create a personalized education tailored to each child's unique needs, passions, and learning styles. At the heart of our program lies a commitment to supporting families in their homeschooling journey. Fairbanks BEST is a non-sectarian community that welcomes students and families from diverse backgrounds and beliefs. We foster a collaborative partnership among students, parents, staff, and community members, who work together to design a meaningful and enriching educational experience for every child.

Families may choose from various curriculum options, including traditional, online, or blended learning. Students can participate in sports or activities and can take up to two classes at their attendance-area school. BEST hosts activities for students throughout the year, such as Lego club, open gym, art classes, Battle of the Books, Science Olympiad, and more! BEST also offers many field trip opportunities throughout the year.

Our students receive an allotment to purchase curriculum and learning materials. The amount is determined by whether a student is enrolled full-time or part-time with BEST.

## What is BEST Homeschool's objective?

Fairbanks BEST seeks to provide an educational alternative for families who want to teach state content and performance standards using the teaching methods and materials of their choice with allotment support from the district.

## What Makes BEST Unique?

- We are the only local homeschool affiliated with the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District. As a school in the FNSBSD, we can access resources that other area homeschool programs may not have.
- As we are part of the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District, BEST students do not have to use their allotment funds to pay for classes at their attendance area school.
- Students may also participate in clubs and activities at their attendance area school with no extra charge other than activities fees charged to other FNSBSD students.
- BEST is your hometown homeschool!

## Fairbanks BEST Staff 2024-2025

Name	Position	Extension	Email
Kara Candelaria	Head Teacher Education Specialist	907-452-2000 X11429	kara.candelaria@k12northstar.org
Steve Brown	Education Specialist	907-452-2000 X11204	steven.brown@k12northstar.org
Robin Feinman	Education Specialist	907-452-2000 X11292	robin.feinman@k12northstar.org
Elizabeth Hilker	Education Specialist	907-452-2000 X11230	elizabeth.hilker@k12northstar.org
Stephen Martin	Education Specialist	907-452-2000 X11405	stephen.martin@k12northstar.org
Ashley Patterson	Education Specialist	907-452-2000 X11211	ashley.patterson@k12northstar.org
Glenda Richard	Education Specialist	907-452-2000 X11216	glenda.richard@k12northstar.org
Roslyn Sandland	Reimbursements, Allotments	907-452-2000 x11209	roslyn.sandland@k12northstar.org
Joni Jackson	Admissions/Transcript Secretary	907-452-2000 x11275	joni.jackson@k12northstar.org
Vacant	BEST Front Desk Secretary	907-452-2000 x11201	catherine.bennett@k12northstar.org
Rachael Peter	Academic Tutor	907-452-2000 x11207	rachael.peter@k12northstar.org
Jamie Jones	Academic Tutor	907-452-2000 x11207	jamie.jones@k12northstar.org
Laurie Beam	Executive Director, Educational Options and Opportunities	907-452-2000 x11452	laurie.beam@k12northstar.org

# What BEST Homeschool Offers Students

Fairbanks BEST is an innovative program where the structure of the accredited Fairbanks North Star Borough School District (FNSBSD) meets the creativity and customization of homeschooling. Our mission is to build a collaborative partnership between homeschooling parents and the FNSBSD, providing students with a unique learning experience tailored to their needs, interests, and strengths.

## 2024-2025 Allotments

Grade Level	Student Funding
K - 12	\$3,000
Preschool	\$250*

\*Scholarship with an older sibling enrolled in BEST full-time. Students must be 3 or 4 years old by Sept 1.

**To receive the allotment, students must be enrolled in BEST Homeschool and have completed their ILP on or before October 1.**

See page 19, purchasing guidelines, for information on how to use your allotment.

## Technology

It is recommended that students have the technology (e.g., computers, Wi-Fi, cameras, etc.) needed to support their learning experience. The education specialist can help identify any specific technology needs.

Students can purchase technology equipment (including computers or Chromebooks) and receive a reimbursement from BEST for **up to \$499** from their allotment. Please see the purchasing guidelines for more information.

Additionally, BEST has district Chromebooks for students to check out and use.

## The Education Specialist Role

Each student is assigned to a certified education specialist knowledgeable about various curricula, courses, and resources, as well as BEST policies, FNSBSD, state, graduation, and NCAA requirements. They provide information about applying for college scholarships, qualifying for the Alaska Performance Scholarship, high school internships, and access to skilled trade union apprenticeships. The education specialist is a valuable resource in helping families develop and carry out their Individual Learning Plans and academic goals.

## Local School Classes

BEST students can take up to two classes at their attendance area school at no cost. It is important to request classes before the semester begins. Area schools may not always have availability in a requested class or specific class period. Please discuss this option with your education specialist if you want to enroll in any in-person classes.

**Please Note:** Local classes are not required for BEST enrollment or sports and activity participation.

## Withdrawal From In-Person or eLearning Classes

Students may add/drop classes from their attendance area school and eLearning courses within the first 10 days of the semester with no penalty. Students will let their Ed Specialist know if they wish to withdraw from a class so the proper paperwork can be submitted. ***If a student withdraws after the first 10 days, a WF (Withdraw Fail) grade may be given.***

## Athletics/Activities

According to district and state guidelines, BEST students can participate in extracurricular activities at their attendance area school. ASAA rules apply to high school students. See eligibility requirements on page 11 of this handbook.

## Special Activities and Events

Certified educators and local experts partner with BEST to provide superior educational opportunities through classes, mini-courses, and private tutoring. Choices change yearly but typically include field trips to performing arts shows, local attractions, science seminars, and art workshops.

## Dual High School/College Credit

High school students may be eligible to earn college credit while fulfilling high school requirements through programs such as Alaska Advantage from UAF <https://ecampus.uaf.edu/advantage/>

Pre-approved courses may be found at: [Pre-approved UAF Outside Credit Courses](#)

North Star College eligibility is available only to full-time students with a minimum 2.5 GPA. BEST sophomores and juniors will be eligible to apply in the spring. Please see the district website for details regarding the lottery and application dates. If BEST students are accepted to North Star College, they will be transferred to that school and no longer be a students in BEST Homeschool.

## Library Media Services

This program, located on the second floor of the FNSBSD office building on Fifth Avenue, offers an excellent resource of materials available on a check-out basis and numerous online subscriptions. Speak with your education specialist to set up an account to view available materials online or in person, or contact Library Media Services at 452-2000 ext. 11241.



## **Tutoring**

BEST offers free tutoring for our students. Our tutor is available Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Please contact us if your student is struggling with a class assignment or homework or needs assistance reviewing for a test. Call 907-452-2000 x11207 to schedule a Zoom tutoring session or to make an appointment to work with the tutor one-on-one. Additionally, our tutor is available to proctor exams by appointment.

# Enrollment with Fairbanks BEST Homeschool

## Who is Eligible?

Any student residing in the State of Alaska who does not have a high school diploma may apply to enroll. FNSBSD accepts enrollment from students who have turned five years old by September 1<sup>st</sup> and are under 20 years old before the start of the school year.

## Grade Level Placement Determination

- Kindergarten students must be at least five years old by September 1<sup>st</sup>.
- Grade-level placements will be based on the last report card or transcript.
- High school students will be placed according to Class Standings – Policy 983.5.

## Enrollment Dates

Regular enrollment for the upcoming school year will begin in March. Enrollment with an allotment will remain open until October 1. *Late enrollments are not eligible for allotments.*

## Enrollment Process

- Contact the BEST office to request enrollment information at (907) 452-2000 ext. 11201
- Complete all ONLINE enrollment forms located on our website at <https://register.k12northstar.org/>
- Upload the required enrollment documents, including immunization records and birth certificates. *Immunization records that meet state requirements or an acceptable waiver must be on file for students to enroll in school.*
- Set up an electronic account through Brightways before meeting with your assigned education specialist. [best.brightwayslearning.com](http://best.brightwayslearning.com)
- The student, parent or guardian, and education specialist will collaborate to develop an Individual Learning Plan (ILP). At the ILP meeting, the curriculum and materials will be approved for ordering.

## The Individual Learning Plan (ILP)

The parent/guardian and education specialist collaborate to design an Individual Learning Plan for the student. The ILP outlines the courses, goals, and objectives and lists instructional materials and methods to be used throughout the school year for each BEST Homeschool student. *All reimbursements are based on ILP content.* Each full-time student must have a minimum of four core classes.

- **Amending the ILP**

The ILP may be revised during the academic year, depending on the student's needs. Students are responsible for completing the classes listed on their ILP. Students who wish to drop courses from their ILP must promptly contact their education specialist before the end of the first grading period to which the class applies or speak with their education specialist for special consideration.

## Eligibility for School Activities and Sports

This section refers to ASAA-sanctioned activities. Full-time BEST students must provide proof of physical residence to determine their attendance-area school for activity purposes. A minimum of **5** courses for ASAA-sanctioned activities is required. Some courses do not meet ASAA guidelines, such as Work for Credit. Students must complete all coursework within the semester enrolled, show adequate progress, and earn a minimum GPA to maintain eligibility. Transferring in or out of BEST **may** affect eligibility. [Please see the ASAA website for more information.](#)

**Please note:** Missing or late progress reports **will** impact a student's ability to participate in activities and sports at the middle and high school levels. If students are participating in ASAA-sanctioned activities, it is the parent and student's responsibility to ensure grades are up-to-date and students are current in their classes. Schools frequently check for eligibility before all games and travel, as well as before competitions such as All-State Music and Solo and Ensemble, sometimes on the day of the event. If a student is found to be ineligible, they will be denied participation by the school, which is outside of BEST's control.

## Re-enrollment

To be eligible for re-enrollment for the next school year, students must live within Alaska and be in good standing with BEST. Good standing refers to making adequate progress and submitting grades/progress reports on time. Students who move outside Alaska must follow district policy.

## Student Withdrawal

Students withdrawing from Fairbanks BEST will receive a withdrawal grade based on work completed and records submitted per school district policy. **Students withdrawing before November 1 of the current school year must reimburse FNSBSD for the portion of the educational allotment they have used.** Elementary students wishing to transfer to an in-district school may do so at the end of a quarter and after speaking with the education specialist to help provide a smooth transition. High school and middle school students wishing to transfer may do so at the end of the semester. All mid-semester transfer requests must be made to the Assistant Superintendent of Secondary Schools. *(Please refer to AR 972.2, 973.1, 974.1)*

Students who live or move outside of Alaska are not eligible for enrollment with BEST Homeschool. Under special circumstances, such as a military-based move (PCS), limited extension periods may be pre-approved as long as the student maintains Alaska residency, maintains monthly contact, and submits progress reports. The extension period will not extend beyond the end of the current semester.

## Involuntary Withdrawal

Students must make adequate progress in their content areas as determined by the education specialist. Families may be withdrawn/exited at any time during the year based on any of the following situations:

- An extended period of noncompliance to school requirements.

- Lack of response to contact attempts.
- Lack of adequate progress in courses.
- Failure to turn in the required paperwork.
- Failure to provide progress reports and work samples quarterly.
- Failure to abide by any policies or procedures outlined in the BEST Homeschool Handbook.

## Academics

### Pre-Approval for Curriculum

All curricula must be aligned to Alaska state standards and listed in the student's ILP with an education specialist's approval. When necessary, supplemental materials may be needed to ensure all standards are addressed. The Department of Education & Early Development website explains the key elements of Alaska's performance and content standards and grade-level expectations: <http://www.eed.state.ak.us/standards/>.

### Art, Music, & Physical Education

Fairbanks North Star Borough School District will reimburse fine arts and physical education instruction that identifies a specific course of study and where the instructor provides direct instruction that leads to measurable growth.

### Faith-Based Curriculums

Faith-based curricula and materials cannot be purchased or reimbursed by BEST. However, parents or guardians may privately obtain textbooks or curriculum material not provided by BEST. Programs like Abeka and others are acceptable, and credit can be awarded for these courses as long as the education specialist reviews the courses, they are included in the ILP, and quarterly work samples are received. **At least two courses of the student's core classes** must be identified as a non-faith-based curriculum as the primary source of instruction.

### Parent-Designed Courses

All parent-designed courses in all grade levels require approval from your education specialist. This approval will occur during the planning process of the ILP. The course should be aligned with the Alaska State Standards. Parents should include the tests and materials used for the course in the ILP. Education Specialists are happy to help parents design courses that align with state standards. High school AP courses must be taught by College Board-approved instructors.

### Special Education

Students enrolled in BEST who have an Individualized Education Program (IEP) for special education may receive their services in a variety of ways, as determined by the IEP team. FNSBSD encourages students to participate in their services at their attendance area school but parents may choose to provide the IEP services themselves in the home setting. Parents also have the right to revoke or decline consent for special education services altogether. If you

suspect that your student may have a disability, please contact your BEST education specialist to discuss your concerns.

### **Records/Transcripts**

If you are transferring to a new school, your new school will request student records as part of the registration process. Once we have received a "Request for Records," we will forward records to the receiving school. Parents may ask for an unofficial copy of transcripts to take with them if they are moving out of the district.

If you would like to receive an unofficial/official copy of your transcript, please contact the Enrollment and Records Secretary, Joni Jackson, at 452-2000 x11275, or email your education specialist.

### **AKCIS**

The Alaska Career Information System (AKCIS) is a free resource for Alaska residents. AKCIS is a comprehensive career guidance system that provides information and career exploration tools for people throughout Alaska. AKCIS provides resources to assist your child to engage in education and career exploration to prepare them to be successful in the workforce. The program helps to identify your student's interests, abilities, and lifestyle goals. Students will build a career portfolio, take career assessments, research career options, find colleges and universities, learn about financial aid, and more. For an [AKCIS login](#), please speak with your educational specialist for more information.

### **Challenge Exams**

Students entering grades 9 - 12 who are currently enrolled in the FNSBSD may challenge courses for high school credit. This option is designed to allow students to demonstrate mastery through examination. **It is not a process for credit recovery or course retakes.** Students may not take a challenge exam for a course they have previously taken or an exam for a course that has already been challenged.

Students may take up to two separate challenge exams on each testing date. Challenge exams are only available for core courses and some world languages. Please contact the Teaching & Learning department for specific course and challenge options. [Click here to go to the website](#)

## FNSBSD Graduation Requirements

Class of 2025	Class of 2026 -2027	Class of 2028 & Beyond
<b>English (4 Credits, 8 Semesters)</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• English 9 (2 Semesters)</li> <li>• English 10 (2 Semesters)</li> <li>• American Lit (1 Semester)</li> <li>• Other Lit (1 Semester)</li> <li>• Writing Intensive (1 Semester)</li> <li>• English Electives (1 Semester)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• English 9 (2 Semesters)</li> <li>• English 10 (2 Semesters)</li> <li>• American Lit (1 Semester)</li> <li>• Other Lit (1 Semester)</li> <li>• Writing Intensive (1 Semester)</li> <li>• English Electives (1 Semester)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• English 9 (2 Semesters)</li> <li>• English 10 (2 Semesters)</li> <li>• American Lit (1 Semester)</li> <li>• Other Lit (1 Semester)</li> <li>• Writing Intensive (1 Semester)</li> <li>• English Electives (1 Semester)</li> </ul>
<b>Health (0.5 Credits, 1 Semester)</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health (1 Semester)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health (1 Semester)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health (1 Semester)</li> </ul>
<b>Mathematics (3 Credits, 6 Semesters)</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Algebra 1 (2 Semesters)</li> <li>• Additional Math (4 Semesters)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Algebra 1 (2 Semesters)</li> <li>• Statistics (1 Semester)</li> <li>• Additional Math (3 Semesters)</li> </ul> <p><i>Students must earn 3 credits of math in high school*</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Algebra 1 (2 Semesters)</li> <li>• Statistics (1 Semester)</li> <li>• Additional Math (3 Semesters)</li> </ul> <p><i>Students must earn 3 credits of math in high school*</i></p>
<b>PE (1.5 Credits, 3 Semesters)</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PE (3 Semester)</li> </ul> <p><i>Students may earn ¼ credit of the PE requirement for each full season of participation in approved interscholastic or intramural athletic competition to not exceed 1.0 credits.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PE (3 Semester)</li> </ul> <p><i>Students may earn ¼ credit of the PE requirement for each full season of participation in approved interscholastic or intramural athletic competition to not exceed 1.0 credits.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PE (3 Semester)</li> </ul> <p><i>Students may earn ¼ credit of the PE requirement for each full season of participation in approved interscholastic or intramural athletic competition to not exceed 1.0 credits.</i></p>
<b>Science (3 Credits, 6 Semesters)</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical Science (2 Semesters)</li> <li>• Biological Science (2 Semesters)</li> <li>• Additional Science (2 Semesters)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical Science (2 Semesters)</li> <li>• Biological Science (2 Semesters)</li> <li>• Additional Science (2 Semesters)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical Science (2 Semesters)</li> <li>• Life Science (2 Semesters)</li> <li>• Additional Science (2 Semesters)</li> </ul>
<b>Social Students (3.5 Credits, 7 Semesters)</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alaska Studies (1 Semester)</li> <li>• World Studies (2 Semesters)</li> <li>• U.S. Studies (2 Semesters)</li> <li>• Government (1 Semester)</li> <li>• Economics (1 Semester)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alaska Studies (1 Semester)</li> <li>• World Studies (2 Semesters)</li> <li>• U.S. Studies (2 Semesters)</li> <li>• Government (1 Semester)</li> <li>• Economics (1 Semester)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alaska Studies (1 Semester)</li> <li>• World Studies (2 Semesters)</li> <li>• U.S. Studies (2 Semesters)</li> <li>• Government (1 Semester)</li> <li>• Economics (1 Semester)</li> </ul>
<b>General Electives (7 Credits, 14 Semesters)</b>		
<b>TOTAL CREDITS REQUIRED: 22.5 Credits</b>		

# Program Requirements

## Required Assessments

Per Alaska State Law, all public school students must participate in required assessments, including:

- **AK STAR**
  - As a public school, BEST is required to have a 95% participation rate.
  - Grades 3 - 9 will be assessed in English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics
  - Grades 5, 8, 10 will be assessed in Science
  
  - **What data is collected from AK Star**
    - Basic student information and student assessment scores are reported to the Alaska Department of Education & Early Development (DEED). DEED does not collect any sensitive information.
    - Individual student data is not reported publicly. DEED collects and summarizes the data for public reporting purposes.
  
- **Alaska Developmental Profile (ADP)**
  - Kindergarteners and new 1st graders participate.
  - The Alaska Developmental Profile (ADP) is to be completed for each child entering kindergarten as required by state law as part of the statewide comprehensive system of student assessments.
  - The purpose of the ADP is to identify, record, and summarize the skills and behaviors students demonstrate at the beginning of their kindergarten year based on teacher/parent observations.
  
- **MAP (Measure of Annual Progress) Grades 3 - 9 (twice a year)**
  - Reading
  - Language
  - Math
  
- **M-Class**
  - Grades K-3
  - Screenings up to three times per year
  - Screening tool to identify students who may need additional reading instruction support

## Quarterly Progress Reports & Work Samples

Parents must submit progress reports (grades) and upload work samples to Brightways Learning at the end of each quarter. Samples must include work from each class listed on the ILP. Samples may not be e-mailed. If you have problems uploading work samples, please contact your education specialist. Grade reports serve as the historical record of your student's academic progress and, as such, should be completed promptly. If we do not receive the grade report, BEST is mandated by state law to mark failing grades for the quarter, and no

credit will be recorded on the student's transcript. Grading guidelines can be found on Brightways under the Resources tab, or click here: [BEST Progress Report Requirements](#).

- **Incomplete grades**
  - An Incomplete (Inc) may be issued during a quarter if the grade is unavailable.
  - An "Inc" will be changed to an "F" after 10 days if the grade has not been updated.
- **Fairbanks North Star Borough School District Grading Scale**

### **Kindergarten**

C=Consistent P=Progressing N=Needs Practice

### **Grades 1-3:**

H=Honors S=Satisfactory N=Needs Improvement

### **Grades 4-12:**

A	=	90-100%	-Excellent
B	=	80-89%	-Above Average
C	=	70-79%	-Average
D	=	60-69%	-Below Average
F	=	0-59%	-Failing

### **PE:**

Elementary and Middle School: A-F

High School: P/F (unless in a graded, accredited course)

- **Quarter Grade Due Dates for 24-25 school year**
  - **Quarter 1: October 23rd, 2024**
  - **Quarter 2/Semester 1: January 8th, 2025**
  - **Quarter 3: March 19th, 2025**
  - **Quarter 4/Semester 2: May 21st, 2024 (Graduating Seniors are due May 1st)**

### **Monthly Contact**

Fairbanks BEST Homeschool requires monthly contact between the parent/guardian and their educational specialist. This contact ensures progress is being made and students have the materials needed for their classes. Contact may take place by telephone, email, in person, or via Zoom.

### **Academic Honesty**

Fairbanks BEST expects all students to demonstrate academic honesty. If a parent or student is found to submit work that is not the student's own, no credit will be given, and the student will receive a failing grade. The expectation is that all work and grades should result from the student's effort and understanding. Parents should discuss plagiarism at the beginning of each school year and explain the importance of creating and submitting original work.

**FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH B.E.S.T. HOMESCHOOL POLICIES MAY RESULT IN AN ALLOTMENT FREEZE, AND YOUR STUDENT(S) MAY BE WITHDRAWN FROM BEST.**



## Acellus Grading Guidelines

Please see the charts below for grading guidelines (ONLY for those students using Acellus online courses).

### Year-Long Courses

Date	Progress through Acellus	Action to be taken by the teacher
<b>Quarter 1 Midterm Progress</b>	12% or more	No action is needed
	Less than 12%	Alert the parents and provide more monitoring/coaching
<b>End of Quarter 1</b>	20% or more	Acellus grade remains as is
	15% - 19%	Acellus grade is reduced by one letter grade
	10% - 14%	Acellus grade is reduced by two letter grades
	Less than 10%	Acellus grade is reduced to an F
<b>Quarter 2 Midterm Progress</b>	35% or more	No action is needed
	Less than 35%	Alert the parents and provide more monitoring/coaching
<b>End of Quarter 2 (Semester 1)</b>	45% or more	Acellus grade remains as is
	40% - 44%	Acellus grade is reduced by one letter grade
	30% - 39%	Acellus grade is reduced by two letter grades
	Less than 30%	Acellus grade is reduced to an F
<b>Quarter 3 Midterm Progress</b>	60% or more	No action is needed
	Less than 60%	Alert the parents and provide more monitoring/coaching
<b>End of Quarter 3</b>	65% or more	Acellus grade remains as is
	60% - 64%	Acellus grade is reduced by one letter grade
	55% - 59%	Acellus grade is reduced by two letter grades
	Less than 54%	Acellus grade is reduced to an F
<b>Quarter 4 Midterm Progress</b>	85% or more	No action is needed
	Less than 85%	Alert the parents and provide more monitoring/coaching
<b>End of Quarter 4 (Semester 2)</b>	90% or more	Acellus grade remains as is
	85% - 89%	Acellus grade is reduced by one letter grade
	80% - 84%	Acellus grade is reduced by two letter grades
	Less than 80%	Acellus grade is reduced to an F

### Semester-long Courses

Date	Progress through Acellus	Action to be taken by the teacher
Quarter Midterm Progress	20% or more	No action is needed
	Less than 20%	Alert the parents and provide more monitoring/coaching.
End of Quarter 1	45% or more	Acellus grade remains as is
	35% - 44%	Acellus grade is reduced by one letter grade
	30% - 34%	Acellus grade is reduced by two letter grades
	Less than 30%	Acellus grade is reduced to an F
Quarter Midterm Progress	70% or more	No action is needed
	Less than 70%	Alert the parents and provide more monitoring/coaching
End of Quarter 2 (Semester)	90% or more	Acellus grade remains as is
	85% - 89%	Acellus grade is reduced by one letter grade
	80% - 84%	Acellus grade is reduced by two letter grades
	Less than 80%	Acellus grade is reduced to an F

# Purchasing Guidelines

*All purchases must be justified within the Individual Learning Plan (ILP) and be an economical use of district funds.*

## **Purchase Requests must follow these steps:**

- First, discuss the purchase with your education specialist to ensure it is appropriate.
- Complete the Purchase Requisition Form, which can be found on Brightways under the Resources tab, or [click here](#).
- Forward the completed order form to your education specialist at the BEST office.
- Funds are not available until July 1st of the academic year and after your ILP has been approved and signed by both education specialist and parent.

## **Reimbursement for Lessons or Courses must follow these steps:**

- First, discuss the purchase with your education specialist to ensure it is appropriate.
- You can purchase the service(s) or course(s) with your money or get approval for a Purchase Order.
- Keep your receipts until they total a minimum amount of \$75.00 for submission to request reimbursement.
- Attach the **original receipt(s)** to the Reimbursement Request Form and submit it to your education specialist.

## **Supplies/Materials Covered**

BEST can pay for a wide range of curricular supplies that are educational in nature and complement the student's goals and Individual Learning Plan. Curricular materials may include textbooks, workbooks, CDs or DVDs of an educational nature, art materials, science kits, general and consumable school supplies, online courses, college courses, community-based learning opportunities, performing arts experiences, computer games of an educational nature, and other materials or resources that meet the student's needs. Please discuss this with your education specialist.

## **Supplies/ Materials Not Covered**

BEST cannot purchase or reimburse for any faith-based curriculum. If you are uncertain whether something may or may not be covered, you are strongly encouraged to consult your education specialist *before* purchasing.

- 4 AAC 33.421 (h) A correspondence study program may not pay for or provide money for services or materials that do not reasonably relate to the delivery of the student's instructional needs (i.e., Repair to any curriculum materials, supplies, or technology)
- 4 AAC 33.422 (d) The fund account may not be used by the district or parent to supplant district funds or obligations for IEP services.

## **Computer/Technology Reimbursement**

Students can purchase their technology equipment and receive reimbursement from BEST for up to \$499 per device per student. For example, if you purchase a laptop for school use and it costs \$899, \$499 from your allotment funds will be reimbursed, which would make your cost for the

laptop equal \$400. This technology reimbursement can be used for computers, printers, digital cameras, or other computer equipment with the approval of your education specialist. It is understood that students who purchase computer equipment will own that equipment and assume responsibility for maintaining it. Funds will come out of your student allotment.

### **Internet Access**

BEST will reimburse monthly internet costs while a student is enrolled with BEST if using an online learning program in the ILP. Parents are responsible for finding an internet provider and maintaining connectivity. Funds will come out of student allotment

# Reimbursement Procedures

- Discuss the purchase with your education specialist to ensure it is an appropriate purchase and aligned with the ILP.
- Purchase the item(s) using your own money.
- Do not highlight or cross-through items on receipts.
- Attach the original, itemized receipt(s) from the vendor to the Request for Reimbursement Form from Brightways under the resources tab or [Click Here](#). Complete the form and submit/email it to your education specialist **and** the BEST administrative secretary, [Roz Sandland](#)
- **Please note:** canceled checks and credit card statements cannot be accepted as receipts.
- If the receipt does not list items, please identify specific titles on a separate sheet of paper.
- **We are not able to reimburse without receipts or receipts that are not legible.**
- *Please allow a minimum of 4-6 weeks for payment reimbursement.*
- **Please be aware if you are refunded for a dropped class or any other education expenses paid for by your allotment, you will be required to pay that money back to your BEST allotment account.**

## Receipt Requirements

- Must be an original receipt, not a copy.
- The vendor's name must be on the receipt.
- How was it paid? (ie. cash, credit card, or check).
- Date of purchase.
- The receipt needs to be itemized.
- Must show the balance has been paid.
- Credit card statements are not receipts.
- Handwritten receipts have the same requirements.
- Do not highlight or mark through line items.

**Any time you are in doubt and have questions about your allotment or any reimbursement procedures, please contact Roslyn Sandland at 452-2000 ext. 11209 or via email at [roslyn.sandland@k12northstar.org](mailto:roslyn.sandland@k12northstar.org).**

# Student Immunizations

Alaska State Law requires that schools receive a current copy of every child's immunization record **before** the first day of school. Please obtain these records and bring a copy to your first meeting or upload them to PowerSchool when completing registration.

These shots should include:

- 4 or 5 DtaP, depending on spacing and age
- 3 or 4 Polio, depending on age
- 3 Hepatitis B
- 2 Hepatitis A
- 2 MMR (Measles, Mumps, Rubella)
- 2 Varicella (Chicken Pox) required for grades K through 6 only

The Director of Nursing Services will review your child's record to determine if any immunizations are needed.

To attend school, the state requires that all students are appropriately immunized or have a valid medical or religious exemption on file with the school district. All FNSB Schools strictly enforce a "No Shots – No School" policy following state regulations.

## Public Notice of Non-Discrimination

The Fairbanks North Star Borough School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, ethnicity, color, religion, creed, sex, age, national origin, physical or mental disability, marital status, changes in marital status, pregnancy, parenthood, sexual orientation, gender identity, veteran status, or any other basis prohibited by local, state, or federal law.

The Fairbanks North Star Borough School District does not discriminate on the basis of sex in violation of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 in the educational programs or activities in which it operates.

The Fairbanks North Star Borough School District does not discriminate on the basis of disability in violation of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. This includes admission or access to, or treatment or employment in its programs, services, and activities.

Individuals requiring further information should contact the designated compliance director:

Michelle Pippin, Employment and Educational Opportunity Officer

520 Fifth Avenue,  
Third Floor, Suite A  
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701  
(907) 452-2000 x11466  
Fax (907) 451-6008

[Public Notice of Nondiscrimination](#)

# BEST Frequently Asked Questions

## How is BEST different from other homeschools?

- BEST offers resources from the second-largest school district in the state.
- Up to two free classes at your neighborhood school.
- Sports eligibility at attendance-area schools without having to take a class there.
- Access to Library Media's resources, including hundreds of educational kits, books, puppets, and DVDs.
- Free eLearning courses for high school students.
- Discounted Acellus courses for K-12. \$300 for unlimited classes/year.
- Ability to check out a Chromebook for each student that has [Securly](#) to keep students safe online.

## How do I get started at BEST?

There are three steps:

1. Register at the district website: <https://www.k12northstar.org/enrollment>.
2. Fill out your student's demographic information and learning plan in BEST's online platform: <https://best.brightwayslearning.com/programs/1/signups/new>
3. Schedule a telephonic, Zoom, or in-person meeting with an educational specialist.

## What are the allotment amounts?

- K-12 \$3,000
- Pre-K w/older sibling \$250
- Pre-K w/IEP approved by the district \$3,000

## I have a child who is too young to attend school but participates in some of our family's educational activities. Are there any funds for him/her? Yes.

- Younger siblings of BEST enrolled students who are at least 3 years old may be eligible for a \$250 stipend
- Otherwise, students can enroll with BEST as a kindergartener if they are 5 years old on or before September 1st. See also.: <https://www.k12northstar.org/kindergarten>

## I am attending a private school. Can I enroll? Yes.

- Private school students can enroll part-time (2 classes) and get half the allotment.
- Or private school students can attend full-time (minimum of 4 classes) and get the full allotment.
- The classes must be listed on the Individual Learning Plan and be secular.
- Students must complete school district enrollment forms, submit immunization records, and enroll in BEST's online platform, Brightways Learning.

### **What can I use the allotment for?**

- Most purchases can be reimbursed as long as the expense can be linked to the student's Individual Learning Plan (ILP).
- Typical expenses include curriculum, educational apps and games, music lessons, musical instruments, tutoring, sports equipment, sports instruction, lab equipment, educational kits, and museum/zoo entries.

### **Can I buy a computer with my allotment? Yes.**

- BEST reimburses for up to \$499 on any one item (excluding curriculum). The student's family is responsible for making up the difference in the cost of the item.
- This allows the student to become the purchase owner instead of returning it at the year's end.

### **Can I homeschool and take some classes at my Fairbanks neighborhood school as well? Yes.**

- Students may take up to 2 courses for free at their local FNSBSD school if space is available.
- An education specialist will make the arrangements with the school.

### **How does the allotment work?**

- An account is created for each student and/or family at BEST.
- Education Specialists can order curriculum and classes for the student and have the money deducted from the student's account.
- Or, the family can purchase a curriculum or supplies and submit a reimbursement form.
- The remaining balance is displayed on the parent dashboard of the Brightways Learning Account.
- There is no deadline to request reimbursements from your allotment, provided money remains, and your student is still enrolled in BEST.
- Any remaining allotment funds roll over yearly until a student graduates or is no longer enrolled in BEST.

### **What do I need to submit a reimbursement?**

- All financial forms are accessible in the Brightways Platform under "Resources."
- You will need a W-9 form on file so BEST can reimburse you.
- Complete an Electronic Funds Transfer form to have reimbursements directly deposited into your bank account.
- Complete the reimbursement form and submit original receipts.
- Allotments are reimbursed by family, so you may combine purchases on the same reimbursement request. Simply put each expense on separate lines of the form.
- Documents and digital copies of receipts can be submitted via email to [roslyn.sandland@k12northstar.org](mailto:roslyn.sandland@k12northstar.org).
- You may also mail them to BEST Homeschool, 397 Hamilton Ave, Fairbanks 99701



- BEST mails reimbursement checks and makes EFT deposits directly to the family. The name listed on the W-9 must be either printed on the check or listed on the bank account into which allotment funds are being transferred.

**Can I use faith-based curricula? Yes.**

- Families can use religious curricula, but a non-religious curriculum must be identified as the primary source of curriculum for at least two core subjects.
- Core subjects are Language Arts, Math, Social Studies, Science, Technology, and Foreign Language.
- BEST cannot pay or reimburse for any religious materials.

**How do I choose a curriculum for my student(s)?**

Parents may choose curriculum from various sources depending upon age and ability/interests. Most curricula fall into 4 basic categories:

- Online
- Book-based
- Combination of the above
- Enrichment/extracurricular activities

To explore some of the many possible options for a homeschool curriculum, click on the following link: [Curriculum Options with BEST](#)

However, your educational specialist is the best resource for helping you choose a curriculum. They are familiar with various curricula and will help you select one or more that will work best for your child and you.

**What goes in an Individual Learning Plan (ILP)?**

Once you start working on putting together your child’s Individual Learning Plan (ILP), please consider the following subjects. Full-time homeschool students must have at least four subjects (including at least two core classes) on their ILP. However, six subjects would be considered best practice. For example, an elementary student’s ILP could include the following subjects.

- English Language Arts (core)
- Math (core)
- Science (core)
- Social Studies (core)
- World Language (optional core)
- Technology (optional core)
- PE/Health; optional but best practice.
- Art Exploration (this could include music, performing, and visual arts); optional.

**I am new to BEST, and I want to get a headstart. When can I start summer courses? In July.**

- The allotment period begins July 1st.
- If parents/students want to start before that, they can.
- They need to have registered with Brightways and the PowerSchool parent portal.

- Keep receipts of materials and curriculum purchased.
- **If the student withdraws from BEST before the end of October, the family will need to re-pay BEST for any portion of the allotment used.**

**I am moving out of Fairbanks but am staying in Alaska. Can we enroll? Yes.**

- BEST serves all of Alaska.
- BEST will ask students to participate in state-mandated testing.

**I am moving out of state. Can we enroll part-time or full-time? No.**

No, BEST cannot enroll students who do not have an Alaska residence and do not reside within the state. We must follow district policy regarding students who move out of state.

**My child has an IEP. Are they able to attend BEST Homeschool? Yes.**

Yes, your child is welcome to attend BEST Homeschool. Your student's IEP services will be provided at their attendance area school unless more specialized services through district-wide special education programs in a different district-assigned school location are required.

While the school district encourages students to participate in their special education and related services at their attendance area school building, the home educator may choose to deliver some or all of their child's special education and related services themselves. Alternatively, it is always your option to revoke or decline consent for special education.

**How would it work if I choose to have my child receive services in their attendance area school building?**

You will collaborate with the attendance area school building staff and special education providers to establish a schedule for service delivery. You will be responsible for transporting your child to and from any agreed-upon services.

**What are my responsibilities if I choose to deliver IEP services myself?**

As the home educator, you will be responsible for attending IEP meetings, planning and providing home instruction, collecting data on your child's progress on IEP goals and objectives, and reporting progress data to BEST's special education advisor on a quarterly basis. The BEST special education advisor will receive and compile progress data you provide into quarterly progress reports.

**In regards to special education, what are the responsibilities of BEST Homeschool staff?**

If your student is participating in special education services at their neighborhood school the BEST special education advisor can help you begin that process.

If you are choosing to provide home instruction for special education rather than access through a neighborhood school location, the BEST special education advisor will maintain and manage all IEP paperwork. They will conduct special education evaluations and hold eligibility meetings. The

BEST special education advisor will schedule and hold annual IEP meetings with the parents, education specialist, district representative, and related service providers (as needed).

**There are so many curriculum choices out there. How will I know what homeschool curriculum to choose for my special needs child?**

As with any student, BEST's education specialists will meet with families to develop a learning plan. That is a home educator's opportunity to ask questions and get information on appropriate and approved curriculum choices based on a child's individual needs.