

HOME STUDY PROGRAM

Students of the St. Mary Parish School District may be permitted to have their educational skills developed through a home study program, or in an in-home private school program, if such a program offers a sustained curriculum of quality at least equal to that offered by public schools at the same grade level. The parent or legal guardian shall submit an application to the Louisiana Department of Education for approval together with a copy of the child's birth certificate. An initial application shall be made within fifteen (15) days after commencement of the home study program. A renewal application shall be submitted to the Louisiana Department of Education by October 1 of the school year, or within twelve (12) months of approval of the initial application, whichever is later.

Any child eligible by law to attend elementary or secondary school shall be eligible to participate in a home study program.

Secondary students who are home schooled shall not earn a regular high school diploma unless they return to an approved school and meet all the necessary credits and requirements needed for high school graduation. Home study students shall be eligible to take the high school equivalency test upon completion of the home study program, upon proper application.

TEXTBOOKS

The School Board shall supply textbooks and other instructional materials, as available, to children enrolled in a state-approved home study program. Textbooks and any materials supplied shall be returned when the student has completed the applicable coursework. A deposit equal to one hundred percent (100%) of the replacement costs shall be required. Such deposit shall be returned when the books are returned. No refunds shall be made for lost or damaged textbooks. If books are not returned or paid for, the parent or legal guardian shall not be eligible to continue participation in the textbook rental program until all textbook debts have been cleared.

Textbooks should be issued from the school of the student's assigned attendance zone for no longer than the length of the current school term. Principals may require periodic inspection of the textbooks.

READMISSION

Students seeking admission or readmission to the St. Mary Parish public schools shall be required to fulfill such screening and evaluation requirements as the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) and/or the School Board may establish, including the taking of tests and diagnostic instruments used to determine appropriate grade levels or Carnegie units. The requirements and procedures for admission or readmission shall be made a part of the School Board's *Pupil Progression Plan*. In addition, students in grades

5 and 9 transferring to the public school system shall be required to take the 4th and 8th grade LEAP tests in order to determine the appropriate grade levels.

ACHIEVEMENT TESTING

A parent of a child in home study may request the Superintendent to permit the child to be administered the LEAP tests. Such tests shall occur on the date of the test as determined by the Superintendent. The examination shall be administered with the same restrictions and under similar conditions as provided to students enrolled in public schools with a certified teacher administering the test. The parent shall be provided the student's score and whether the student passed the examination and met the state performance standards.

A testing fee of up to thirty-five dollars (\$35) may be charged to cover actual costs of administering, scoring, and reporting the results of the tests.

PARTICIPATION IN EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES OR INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS

A public school shall not disqualify a student from participating in extracurricular activities or interscholastic athletics solely because the student is enrolled in an approved home study program, so long as the student lives in the attendance zone of the public school.

A student who is enrolled in an approved home study program shall try out or apply for extracurricular activities or interscholastic athletics at the public school in the same manner, time, and place as the students who attend the public school.

After the try out or application, should the approved home study student meet the qualifications for an extracurricular activities club or an interscholastic athletics team, the approved home study student shall be required to maintain all requirements for participation that a public school student would have to meet in order to participate in the extracurricular activity or the interscholastic athletics activity, including but not limited to maintaining a minimum grade point average and complying with disciplinary standards. Failure to meet the requirements with respect to a minimum grade point average or failure to adhere to the disciplinary standards shall be grounds for the school to remove the approved home study student from participation in the extracurricular activities club or the interscholastic athletics team.

Notwithstanding any other law to the contrary, no public school may be a member of, or participate in any competition sponsored by any interscholastic extracurricular athletic association or organization that denies eligibility to a student solely on the basis of the student's enrollment in an approved home study program.

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Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. "17:176.2, 17:236, 17:236.1, 17:236.2, 17:351.1; Louisiana Handbook for School Administrators, Bulletin 741, Louisiana Department of Education; Board minutes, 6-12-08, 12-10-15, 7-14-16, 8-8-24.