FAQ: Part Time Programs for Families

If I want to join a new part-time public-school program in 2026-27 for homeschool students, how can I do that?

You can contact your local school district or local charter schools to ask if they intend to offer any part-time programs for homeschool students in the 2026-27 school year.

Can a homeschool student join more than one part-time program?

Colorado only funds one part-time program for a homeschool student. Because of this rule, a part-time program for homeschool students will typically ask during enrollment whether the student is enrolled in any other public-school programs or schools. This is to ensure that the student is eligible to be counted for funding.

What is a Notice of Intent to Homeschool?

Under longstanding Colorado laws, all children under the age of 17 must meet compulsory education requirements. To meet this requirement, children must generally be enrolled in public school, or a private school, or must be participating in a home-based educational program provided by the parent.

When a child is meeting compulsory education requirements through a home-based education program, the parent must provide an annual written notification to a school district. There is no standard template for the notice, but it must certify the name, age, place of residence, and number of hours of attendance of each child enrolled in the home-based program. A nonpublic home-based educational program must include no less than one hundred seventy-two days of instruction, averaging four instructional contact hours per day.

What if I don't submit a Notice of Intent to Homeschool regarding my child?

Going forward, submitting an annual Notice of Intent to Homeschool will be required in order to take part in a public part-time program for homeschool students. **Click here for a template you can use for this notice of intent.**

Can parents still provide a Notice of Intent to Homeschool to any school district?

Yes, a parent can still submit the notice to any district. However, if they submitted it to District A, they would need to provide a copy upon enrollment to District B in order to enroll in District B's part-time program for homeschool students.

If my child is enrolled in an "umbrella school," can they still participate in part-time public-school programs for homeschool students?

An "umbrella school" is not a concept that is recognized in Colorado laws. However, CDE is aware that some "umbrella schools" have offered supportive services to homeschool families, such as transcripts and records retention, under the label of being a "private school." When a student is enrolled in an umbrella school that is **not** providing private school instruction to satisfy the students' compulsory school attendance requirements, the student remains eligible to enroll in a public-school part-time program for homeschool students. However, to confirm eligibility for public school enrollment, the student's family will need to submit

a Notice of Intent to Homeschool to a school district in the state and provide a copy of that notice to the local education provider enrolling the student in the part-time program.

I pay for my child to receive some instruction each week from a private entity. Can my child still participate in part-time public-school programs for homeschool students?

Yes. The student would still be eligible if they are a homeschool student for purposes of compulsory school attendance laws and are only supplementing their homeschool education with private services. However, to confirm eligibility, the parent must submit the Notice of Intent to Homeschool to a school district in the state and a copy of that notice to the local education provider enrolling the student in the part-time program.

If the student is enrolled in a private school full-time, the student is not eligible to participate in a part-time public-school program for homeschool students.

With the passage of SB26-023, what are the requirements for part-time programs that serve homeschool students?

There are four primary requirements in the legislation:

1. Students who attend a private school are **not** eligible to enroll part-time in a public school or in part-time public-school programs for homeschool students.
2. A part-time public-school program for homeschool students cannot – directly or indirectly – fund, reimburse, or subsidize a private activity or private purchase for a student or a student's parent or legal guardian.
3. A part-time public-school program for homeschool students must follow the same laws as the local education provider that authorizes the program. *For example, they must follow the same requirements around licensed teachers and background checks.*
4. A local education provider cannot operate a part-time public-school program for homeschool students outside the geographic boundaries of the local education provider unless they follow a process to get authorized to do so by the state or the local board of education where they will operate.

What drove these changes from the Colorado State Legislature?

In January 2026, CDE gave a presentation to the State Board of Education about part-time public-school programs that serve homeschool and private school students. The presentation included information about part-time programming and the respective roles of the board and department in these programs. It clarified that CDE does not have authority to approve the programs being offered; rather the department becomes aware of them during the audit process after funding has already been distributed. Based on increasing enrollment numbers, the department estimated that these programs would cost more than $100 million statewide in FY 2025-26.

During the state budget development process, the Joint Budget Committee (JBC) expressed interest in taking action to support balancing the state budget by reviewing the department's anticipated cost of $100 million+ for part-time enrichment programs. More information is available on pages 6 -10 of the JBC Staff Comeback Memos. The memo includes examples of part-time enrichment programs identified through CDE's School Finance Audit Team that are noted as "concerning." The memo included the following examples:

- One-time classes and field trips being used to calculate 90 hours of instructional time;
- Evening and weekend events are being used to calculate 90 hours of instructional time;

- Submitted time that appears to be extracurricular or athletics - particularly where the programs look like something that public school families and many homeschool families pay for on their own;
- Courses that are integrated into the private school day - and that may result in an offset in private school tuition for the family; and
- Several schedules that primarily consisted of after-school sports, field trips, one-time classes, and courses such as "Experiential Education - Team Building - Communication Skills."

While those discussions were happening in the JBC, the State Board took up this topic again in early April and **voted** to move forward a legislative proposal to address this topic. The board's discussion included that boards of cooperative services (BOCES) had opened these part-time programs in more than 100 school districts without seeking permission from those local boards of education.

The Colorado State Legislature ultimately passed the 2026 Colorado School Finance Act establishing a new framework and requirements for part-time programs for homeschool students. All statutory references in these FAQs can be found on pages 35-43 of the **School Finance Act**.

What does it mean that part-time programs for homeschool students can't fund private activities or private purchases?

A part-time program for homeschool students may not–directly or indirectly–fund, reimburse, or subsidize a private activity or private purchase for a student or a student's parent or legal guardian. Under the new statutory definition in section 22-33-104.3(3)(a), a private activity or purchase includes, but is not limited to:

- activities, supplies, items, or materials of personal value
- that are generally not available to students in a local education provider's regular full-time programs or schools.

An example of a **non-fundable activity** would be to fund or subsidize something for a part-time homeschool student that a full-time public-school student or the student's family would need to pay for with private funds.

- For example, assume a private entity offers an activity that is advertised to the public as costing a particular fee, tuition, or rate such as: $200 for a five-week painting class every Wednesday; $250 per month in fees to play lacrosse on a club team; or $500 for 12 weeks of jujitsu classes. It would not be allowable for the local education provider to fund these private activities of personal value for homeschool students when these activities are not funded for full-time students in the local education provider's full-time schools.

An example of a **fundable activity** would be if a local school district contracts with an equine therapy program to provide equine therapy in the full-time program, the local school district could also offer that opportunity in a part-time program for homeschool students. Another example would be if a charter school contracts with a local welding shop to offer off campus CTE courses to its full-time students, it can offer those same CTE courses to students in a part-time program for homeschool students.

Supplies, items, or materials of personal value covers items that are purchased for and retained by the student or the student's family that are not normally purchased and retained by full-time public-school students. Examples of **non-fundable supplies, items, or materials of personal value** are ski passes, museum memberships, a computer that becomes the student's personal computer without an expectation of return to the public-school program, funds to cover the family's curriculum materials of choice etc. These would be

supplies, items, or materials of personal value that are not available to full-time students and cannot be offered in part-time programs for homeschool students.