

Chicago Public Schools Policy Manual

Title: HOMESCHOOLING POLICY

Section: 601.6

Board Report: 21-0324-PO1

Date Adopted: March 24, 2021

Policy:

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER RECOMMENDS THE FOLLOWING:

That the Chicago Board of Education (“Board”) amend Board Report 05-1116-PO2 Policy on Home-Schooling and rename to Homeschooling Policy. The policy was posted for public comment from January 24, 2021 to February 27, 2021.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to provide processes and procedures to:

(1) determine and monitor, with the parents/legal guardians’ cooperation, the presence of homeschooled students residing within District 299;

(2) determine and monitor, with the parents/legal guardians’ cooperation, the compliance of parents/legal guardians of homeschooled students residing within District 299 with the Illinois Compulsory School Attendance Law, 105 ILCS 5/26-1 et seq.; and

(3) provide with the parents/legal guardians’ cooperation educational assistance to the parents/legal guardians of homeschooled students residing within District 299 in accordance with the Illinois School Code, case law, and this policy.

TEXT OF POLICY:

I. LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

Parents/Legal guardians who choose to educate their children at home are subject to requirements of the Illinois School Code. These requirements include the Compulsory School Attendance Law, 105 ILCS 5/26-1 et seq. That law requires children between the ages of 7 and 17 years to attend a public school unless they attend a private or parochial school where they are taught in the English language the branches of education taught to children of corresponding age and grade in the public schools. 105 ILCS 5/26-1.

To comply with these requirements of the Illinois School Code, parents/legal guardians who choose to educate their children at home must provide an education “at least commensurate with the standards prescribed for the public schools.” *People v. Levisen*, 404 Ill. 574, 90 N.E.2d 213 (1950). To satisfy the “commensurate education” standard, among other things, “there must be an organized, coherent plan for educating the children in a homeschool using appropriate materials and teaching methods.” 1991 Ill. Atty. Gen. Op. 92. And as with public school instruction, homeschool instruction must include the language arts, mathematics, the biological, physical and social sciences, the fine arts and physical development and health. 105 ILCS 5/27-1.

II. NOTIFICATION AND DOCUMENTATION OF HOMESCHOOLED STUDENTS

A. Parents/Legal guardians may request information about the process and resources regarding homeschooling from the Department of Policy and Procedures. Information on the process and resources for homeschooling is also available on the CPS website on the [Homeschooling page](#).

B. Parents/Legal guardians who choose to educate their children at home are encouraged to notify their District school of their intention to homeschool.

C. Parents/Legal guardians may request appropriate grade-level curriculum materials and textbooks from the neighborhood school. If the school provides grade-level curriculum materials and textbooks, the parents/legal guardians will be required to pay all school fees related to the curriculum materials and textbooks received from the neighborhood school unless they qualify for and obtain a waiver of the fees pursuant to the Policy Regarding [Waiver of School Fees](#).

D. Additional Documents from Parents/Legal Guardians. Parents/Legal guardians are requested to submit the following documents annually:

1. The "Statement of Assurance for Parent-Taught Home Instruction" form to the Department of Policy and Procedures. This form is available from the Department of Policy and Procedures or online at the CPS website on the [Homeschooling page](#).

2. A letter indicating the manner in which the child will be instructed at home to the Department of Policy and Procedures.

3. The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) "Home Schooling Registration" form to the Department of Policy and Procedures and ISBE to serve as notice that the indicated parties have registered with ISBE as homeschool students. Parents/Legal guardians may submit this document to ISBE via email to hsregist@isbe.net. Confirmation of receipt will be provided by both the Department of Policy and Procedures and ISBE. Registration is voluntary and is not a requirement to homeschool students. This form is available from the Department of Policy and Procedures or online at the CPS website on the [Homeschooling page](#).

4. It is highly recommended that parents/legal guardians provide their District school with a copy of the documentation (keeping a copy for their records).

III. ASSESSMENT OF COMPLIANCE WITH COMMENSURATE EDUCATION STANDARDS

A. The Chief Education Office or designee within the Chicago Public Schools ("CPS") may, with the cooperation of the parents/legal guardians, determine whether the homeschool provides an education at least commensurate with the standards prescribed for the public schools. Parents/Legal guardians may be asked to cooperate with this determination process annually.

B. Parents/Legal guardians of homeschooled students are not required to cooperate with the Chief Education Office's or designee's determination process.

C. CPS is not obligated to determine whether homeschools comply with the Compulsory School Attendance Law if parents/legal guardians do not cooperate with the determination process.

D. If CPS is making the determination of commensurate education standards, with cooperation of the parent/legal guardian of the homeschooled student, CPS may employ any appropriate means to make that determination, including site visits, standards, and assessments.

IV. PARTICIPATION IN CPS CURRICULAR AND EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES OR COURSES

A. Curricular Activities.

1. Except as described in this policy, homeschooled students are entitled to participate in curricular activities or courses offered by the district at their neighborhood school; however, the student's participation may be limited by the availability of an activity or course.

2. If a homeschooled student seeks to participate in a curricular course or activity that is not available at their neighborhood school but is available at another neighborhood school nearby, then the homeschooled student may participate in the curricular course or activity at that school.

3. The homeschooled student seeking to participate in curricular activities at their neighborhood school must comply with CPS enrollment requirements.

B. Extracurricular Activities.

1. Homeschooled students may also participate in extracurricular activities. If the extracurricular activity involves interscholastic high school athletics or activities, participation requirements will be determined pursuant to the By-laws of the Illinois High School Athletic Association and pursuant to the eligibility guidelines set forth by the Office of Sports Administration.

2. Request to Participate Required. All requests to participate in curricular activities or courses or extracurricular activities must be submitted to and approved by the neighborhood school principal. The principal must then submit the approved request to the Department of Policy and Procedures for approval.

3. Deadline to Submit a Request. Homeschooled students must submit the Homeschool Request to “Participate in CPS Curricular and Extracurricular Activities or Courses” form by **May 1** to be eligible for the next school year.

C. Science Fair. For science fair participation, homeschooled students may register with, and participate in, the Illinois Junior Academy of Science (IJAS) Region 2 Science Fair. This fair has been established specifically to accommodate non-public school students residing in the City of Chicago, including homeschooled students. The CPS Student Science Fair is exclusively for students enrolled in Chicago Public Schools.

D. Drivers Education. If a homeschooled student wishes to take the drivers education course during the next school year at a district school, the parents/legal guardians of the homeschooled student must notify the District school by **April 1**. The parents/legal guardians of the homeschooled student must provide evidence to the public school 2 weeks before the start of instruction in the course that the student has received a passing grade in at least eight courses during the previous two semesters prior to the start of the course.

V. SPECIAL EDUCATION

Students with disabilities who are homeschooled may receive proportionate share special education and related services under a Service Plan. For information regarding development of a Service Plan, parents/legal guardians may send an email to cpsgma-privateschools@cps.edu. If a parent suspects that a student who is homeschooled may have a disability, they may send an email to privateschoolevals@cps.edu to request an evaluation for special education and related services.

VI. ENROLLMENT/RE-ENROLLMENT OF STUDENTS IN CPS

Students previously homeschooled are entitled to enroll or re-enroll in the CPS. The determination of grade placement of previously homeschooled students who enroll or re-enroll in the CPS is within the exclusive authority and discretion of the administrators of the District school using methods or assessments they deem appropriate. It is strongly recommended that parents/legal guardians keep track of coursework completed at home to provide evidence when requested to aid the administrators’ assessment of the appropriate grade placement.

| | |
|--------------------------|---|
| Amends/Rescinds: | Amends 05-1116-PO2 [Adopted: December 21, 2005] |
| Cross References: | 02-0227-PO2; 96-0828-PO5 |
| Legal References: | 105 ILCS 5/26-1 et seq.; 105 ILCS 5/27-1 et seq.; People v. Levisen, 404 Ill. 574, 90 N.E.2d 213 (1950); 1991 Ill.Atty.Gen.Op. 92 |
| Public Comment: | Pursuant to Board Rule 2-6 this Policy was subject to Public Comment from 1/24/21 – 2/27/21. |