

INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUBMITTING A PROPOSAL FOR HOME SCHOOLING

The Acton Public Schools and Acton-Boxborough Regional Schools recognize the right of parents/guardians to educate their children at home as an alternative to public school enrollment. Parents/guardians planning to educate their child at home must notify the Superintendent of Schools before removing their child from public school. The home schooling program cannot begin unless and until the Superintendent approves the parents'/guardians' home school proposal. Consequently, the school districts urge parents/guardians who wish to home school their children to submit their home school proposals no later than August 1st.

Parents/guardians bear the responsibility of demonstrating that their home school proposal will provide their child with instruction that is equal to public schooling in its "thoroughness and efficiency, and in the progress made therein." Care and Protection of Charles, 399 Mass. 324, 337-338 (1987). To determine whether the proposed plan meets this standard, the Acton Public Schools and the Acton-Boxborough Regional Schools require that parents/guardians complete a proposal for home schooling and submit it for the Superintendent's consideration. Please organize your proposal as follows:

1. Teacher Qualifications

The Superintendent has the right to inquire about the competency of the person who will teach the child. The individual teaching the child must be shown to be capable of providing basic instruction for the proposed level. The teacher, however, is not required to have attained a certain educational level or to have obtained a teaching certificate. Please provide the name of the proposed teacher(s) and attach a statement describing the teacher or teachers' academic credentials or other qualifications.

2. Proposed Curriculum

For each proposed subject area, please list on the attached forms:

- (a) The curricular objectives,
- (b) Hours of instruction, and
- (c) Texts or other instructional materials.

3. Students with Special Needs

Parents/guardians of a home-schooled child who believe their child may need a special education evaluation and/or special education services should notify the Director of Pupil Services.

Parents/guardians of home-schooled students with identified special education needs also may be required to provide information about how they plan to meet their child's special education needs.

4. Evaluation of Student Progress

The Acton Public Schools and the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District require periodic standardized testing to ensure that home-schooled students are making educational progress and attaining minimum standards. Please identify:

- The type of standardized tests you plan to use,
- The subjects in which your child will be tested,
- When, where and by whom the testing will be administered, and
- The date when the results of these tests will be shared with the Superintendent.

If you would like the Superintendent to consider an alternative method of evaluating progress (such as periodic progress reports, portfolios, or dated work samples), please detail your proposed alternative method, along with the date(s) when the results of the assessments will be shared with the Superintendent.

5. Any requests to participate in schools' extra-curricular activity programs

If you would like your child to participate in any of the districts' instructional or extra-curricular programs, please detail your request(s). Home-schooled children are welcome to participate if:

- Their home school plans have been approved,
- Requests to participate are submitted in writing in a timely fashion,
- Space is available,
- School officials determine that the program requested is appropriate for the child,
- The home-schooled student agrees to follow all rules and regulations applied to all students while involved in the activity,
- Proof of requisite immunizations and, where required, timely physical examination, have been provided (subject to the provisions of C. 76, § 15, and C. 71, §57 of Massachusetts General Laws, these requirements may be waived if they conflict with a person's sincere religious beliefs),
- Required fees are paid, and
- Where applicable, the Chemical Health agreement has been signed. In the case of participation in interscholastic athletics, the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District Principal(s) must indicate that the junior-high or high-school-aged home-schooled student is eligible to participate in the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District athletic program on the annual MIAA membership form. Determinations regarding eligibility will be made on the basis of MIAA rules governing transfers, academic eligibility, age requirements, and the number of consecutive seasons of athletic eligibility beyond grade six Principals must include the names of all home-schooled students in the annual MIAA report.