



# HOMESCHOOLING IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

## An Informational Guide for LEAs

In the District of Columbia (DC), parents and legal guardians may elect to homeschool their children at any point during the school year. The Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) provides information, resources and monitoring to families that choose to homeschool. This informational guide for local education agencies (LEAs) outlines the roles and responsibilities of OSSE, the school and the parent/legal guardian when a parent/legal guardian elects to administer a homeschooling program in the District of Columbia.

### What are homeschooling requirements in the District of Columbia?

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Homeschooling is a private, parent/legal guardian-directed education program for children who are subject to the compulsory education laws in their state. Compulsory education requires that all children between the ages 5 and 17 who reside in DC receive an education. Eligible parents/legal guardians may choose to begin a homeschooling program at any point during the school year and must notify OSSE if choosing to homeschool.

In the District of Columbia, homeschooling programs must provide thorough and regular instruction of sufficient duration and, at a minimum, include language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, art, music, health, and physical education. Parents/legal guardians are required to maintain a portfolio of the student's education materials, which includes evidence of the student's current work in a range of subjects (e.g., writing, completed work in mathematics, and assessments). This portfolio must be maintained for at least one year and be available to OSSE for review, upon request.

To administer a homeschooling program in the District of Columbia, parents/legal guardians must have a high school diploma or its equivalent, or they may petition OSSE for a waiver by providing evidence that they can provide the student with a thorough and regular education. Parents/legal guardians may not provide home instruction to the students of other parents, are not required to use a specific curriculum, and may include the use of an online curriculum, administered by a third party provider.

To homeschool, parents/legal guardians must complete a [Notification of Intent to Homeschool](#) at least **15 business days** prior to the first date of home instruction. Additionally, for any year the parent/legal guardian chooses to continue a homeschooling program, they must

complete a [Notification of Homeschool Continuation](#) by **Aug. 15**. Parents/legal guardians may choose to discontinue a homeschooling program at any time and, to do so, must complete a [Notification to Discontinue Homeschooling](#) and email it to [OSSE.Homeschool@dc.gov](mailto:OSSE.Homeschool@dc.gov) at least 15 business days prior to discontinuation.

### Must an LEA or school withdraw a student when a parent/guardian elects to homeschool?

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Yes. When transitioning a student from public schooling to homeschooling, parents/legal guardians must notify their student's school of their intention to withdraw the student. OSSE provides parents/legal guardians with a verification letter after approving their [Notification of Intent to Homeschool](#). This letter should be given to the school to begin the official withdrawal process. If the parent/legal guardian is unable to locate a copy of their verification letter, they may request a copy at [OSSE.Homeschool@dc.gov](mailto:OSSE.Homeschool@dc.gov). A student may not be registered to homeschool while concurrently attending a public or public charter school and OSSE notifies parents that, until the student has been officially withdrawn, their child will remain registered in the school, accrue unexcused absences, and are subject to the school's truancy reporting requirements.

### Are homeschool students eligible for Special Education Accommodations?

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Students who receive specialized instruction and/or related services while enrolled in public school are no longer eligible to receive those services once the student has been withdrawn from public school. The right to receive specialized education and related services (otherwise known as a free and appropriate public education (FAPE)) applies only to students who are enrolled in a District of Columbia public school. Once a child has been withdrawn to participate in a homeschooling program, the provisions of FAPE will no longer apply.

## Are homeschool students eligible to participate in the statewide assessment?

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Homeschooled students are eligible to participate in regularly scheduled statewide assessments administered throughout DC's public schools. Homeschooled students may participate in these assessments free of charge, and assessment results are available to families to provide information on student progress. To register a student for participation in statewide assessments, including obtaining information on annual testing schedules, parents/legal guardians are directed to contact their neighborhood District of Columbia Public School (DCPS).

## Can students reenroll in public school after a homeschooling program has ended?

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Yes. Parents/legal guardians may choose to discontinue a homeschooling program at any time by submitting a [Notification to Discontinuation Homeschooling](#) to [OSSE.Homeschool@dc.gov](mailto:OSSE.Homeschool@dc.gov) at least 15 business days prior to discontinuation. Once the discontinuation notification has been processed, OSSE will provide the parent/legal guardian with a discontinuation letter. Each local education agency (LEA) will establish its own criteria for reenrolling a homeschooled student into a public or public charter school. This may include administration of assessments, review of the student's homeschool portfolio, and/or interviews with the student.

## How does OSSE monitor and provide technical assistance to homeschooling programs?

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At any time, OSSE may request to review the portfolio of educational materials for each student in a parent/guardian's homeschooling program. These requests are made by OSSE in writing at least 30 days prior to the date of review. Portfolio reviews may be conducted online or in-person at a mutually agreeable location (e.g., OSSE's offices or your local library). OSSE will provide the parent/legal guardian with written feedback on portfolio materials shared during the review, including areas where additional support is needed. When needed, OSSE will also provide the parent/legal guardian with a corrective action plan to help improve outcomes of their homeschooling program. Corrective action plans are designed to provide specific action steps that the parent/legal guardian, as the program administrator, can take to enhance outcomes in their homeschooling program. OSSE staff is also available to provide technical assistance to navigate families through the corrective action plan.

## For More Information

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For more information on homeschooling in the District of Columbia, including [homeschooling regulations](#), please visit OSSE's [homeschooling website](#).