

Administrative Procedures for Home Education Programs (Attachment for Policy No. 137 and 137.1)

Purpose

The purpose of these Administrative Procedures is to establish the School District of Philadelphia's ("District") process for registering and monitoring home education programs in conformity with Board Policy 137 - Home Education Program. These Administrative Procedures also effectuate Policy 137.1 - Extracurricular and Co-Curricular Participation by Home Education Students, which detail the District's responsibility to provide eligible students participating in home education programs with access to co-curricular and extracurricular educational activities.

Definitions

Appropriate education: A program consisting of instruction in the required subjects for the time required by law and in which the student demonstrates sustained progress in the overall program.[2]

Co-curricular activity: For the purposes of these Administrative Procedures, co-curricular activities include Career and Technical Education (CTE), Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (JROTC), and Orchestra/Band.

Compulsory school age¹: The period of a child's life from the time the child enters school (which may be no later than at the age of 6 years), until the age of 18 or graduation from a high school, whichever occurs first. The term does not include a child who holds a certificate of graduation from a regularly accredited, licensed, registered or approved high school.[4]

Evaluation: An annual written evaluation of the student's educational progress.

Evaluator: Licensed clinical or school psychologist, a teacher certified by the Commonwealth, or a nonpublic school teacher or administrator. Such nonpublic teacher or administrator shall have the required experience at the elementary level to evaluate elementary students or at the secondary level to evaluate secondary students. The certified teacher shall have experience at the elementary level to evaluate elementary students or at the secondary level to evaluate secondary students.

Home education program: A program conducted in compliance with law by the parent/guardian or person having legal custody of a child. A home education program shall not be considered a nonpublic school under the provisions of law.[2]

Supervisor: Parent or guardian.

¹ Students who qualify under the law may receive home education until age 21.

Procedures

Eligibility/Affidavits

A notarized affidavit of the parent/guardian or person having legal custody of the child shall be filed prior to commencement of the home education program and annually thereafter by August 1 to homeschooling@philasd.org. The affidavit shall set forth:

1. Name of the Supervisor of the home education program who will be responsible for the provision of instruction.
2. Name and age of each child who will participate in the home education program.
3. Address and telephone number of the home education program site.
4. That subjects required by law are offered in the English language, including an outline of proposed education objectives by subject area.
5. Evidence that the child has been immunized and has received the health and medical services required for students of the child's age or grade level.
6. Certification signed by the Supervisor that the Supervisor, all adults in the home, and persons having legal custody of a child in the home education program have not been convicted of criminal offenses as enumerated in the School Code.

For a sample compliant affidavit, please visit: <https://www.philasd.org/homeschooling/>

Program

The Pennsylvania School Code limits the requirements for a home education program to the following:

1. A student who is enrolled in a home education program shall be deemed to have met the requirements if the program provides a minimum of one hundred eighty (180) days of instruction, or nine hundred (900) hours of instruction per year at the elementary level, or nine hundred ninety (990) hours per year at the secondary level.²
2. At the elementary level, the following courses shall be taught: English, to include spelling, reading, and writing; arithmetic; science; geography; history of the United States and Pennsylvania; civics; safety education, including regular and continuous instruction in the dangers and prevention of fires; health and physiology; physical education; music; and art.
3. At the secondary level, the following courses shall be taught: English, to include language, literature, speech, and composition; science; geography; social studies, to include civics, world history, history of the United States, and Pennsylvania; mathematics, to include general mathematics, algebra, and geometry; art; music; physical education; health; and safety education, including regular and continuous instruction in the dangers and prevention of fires.
4. Courses of study may include, at the discretion of the Supervisor: economics, biology, chemistry, foreign languages, trigonometry, or other age-appropriate courses required by the State Board of Education.

² An instructional level that includes grades seven through twelve.

Requirements Of Supervisor

The Pennsylvania School Code limits the qualifications/requirements for a home education program supervisor to the following:

1. In order to demonstrate that appropriate education is occurring, the Supervisor shall provide and maintain on file for each student enrolled in the home education program a portfolio of records and materials.
2. The portfolio shall consist of a log, made contemporaneously with the instruction, that designates by title the reading materials used; samples of any writings; worksheets, workbooks, or creative materials used or developed by the student; and in grades three, five, and eight results of nationally normed standardized achievement tests in reading, language arts, and mathematics or results of statewide tests administered in these grade levels.

Evaluation Requirements

The Pennsylvania School Code limits the evaluation requirements for a home education program and the qualifications/requirement for an evaluator to the following:

1. A teacher or administrator who evaluates a portfolio at the elementary level or secondary level shall meet these requirements: licensed clinical or school psychologist, a teacher certified by the Commonwealth, or a nonpublic school teacher or administrator. Any such nonpublic teacher or administrator shall have at least two years of teaching experience in a Pennsylvania public or nonpublic school within the last ten years. Such nonpublic teacher or administrator shall have the required experience at the elementary level to evaluate elementary students or at the secondary level to evaluate secondary students. The certified teacher shall have experience at the elementary level to evaluate elementary students or at the secondary level to evaluate secondary students.
2. An annual written evaluation of the student's educational progress as determined by a licensed clinical or school psychologist, a teacher certified by the Commonwealth, or a nonpublic school teacher or administrator is required. The evaluation shall also be based on an interview of the child and a review of the portfolio and shall certify whether or not an appropriate education is occurring. At the request of the Supervisor, persons with other qualifications may conduct the evaluation with the prior consent of the Superintendent. In no event shall the evaluator be the Supervisor or their spouse.
3. Documentation required by this policy shall be provided to the District at homeschooling@philasd.org by June 30 of each school year.
4. If the Superintendent or designee has a reasonable belief that, at any time during the school year, appropriate education may not be occurring in the home education program, they may require documentation pertaining to the portfolio to be submitted to the District by certified mail with return receipt requested within fifteen (15) days, and the evaluation to be submitted within thirty (30) days.
5. If the Superintendent or designee determines, based on documentation, that appropriate education is not occurring, they shall send a letter to the Supervisor stating that in their opinion appropriate education is not occurring in the home education program and shall return all documentation, specifying what aspect(s) of the documentation are inadequate.

6. The Supervisor of the program shall have twenty (20) days from receipt of the certified letter to submit additional documentation demonstrating that appropriate education is taking place. If documentation is not submitted within that time, the home education program shall be out of compliance, and the student shall be promptly enrolled in the public or a nonpublic school.

Right Of Hearing

1. If the Superintendent or designee determines that the additional documentation submitted still does not demonstrate that appropriate education is taking place in the home education program, notification of such shall be sent to the Supervisor by certified mail, return receipt requested.
2. The Board of Education (“Board”) shall provide for a proper hearing by a duly qualified and impartial hearing examiner within thirty (30) calendar days. The examiner shall render a decision within fifteen (15) calendar days of the hearing, except that they may require the establishment of a remedial education plan, mutually agreed to by the Superintendent and Supervisor of the home education program, which shall continue the home education program. The decision of the examiner may be appealed by either the Supervisor or the Superintendent to the Secretary of Education or Commonwealth Court. The hearing examiner is not to be an officer, employee, or agent of the Department of Education or District.
3. If the hearing examiner finds that the documentation does not indicate that appropriate education is taking place in the home education program, the home education program shall be out of compliance, and the student shall be promptly enrolled in a public or nonpublic school.
4. Where a home education program has been determined to be out of compliance and where the students affected are not properly re-enrolled in a public or nonpublic school, the District shall file a truancy complaint or dependency petition.

Loan Of Instructional Materials

1. The District shall, at the request of the Supervisor, lend to the home education program textbooks appropriate to the student's age and grade level. Other instructional materials, such as technology resources (i.e. online assessments, chromebooks, etc.) are not included in such loans.

Graduation Requirements

The Pennsylvania School Code defines the graduation requirements for a home education program to the following:

1. The following minimum courses in grades 9 through 12 are established as a requirement for graduation in a home education program: four (4) years of English, three (3) years of mathematics, three (3) years of science, three (3) years of social studies, and two (2) years of arts and humanities.
2. The District shall not award a diploma or acknowledge completion of a student's education in a home education program. The students involved may take a General

Educational Development (“GED”) examination or apply to the Pennsylvania Board of Education for a special diploma.

Re-Enrollment In District Schools

1. Any child re-enrolling in a District school following a home education program will have to make up any course work required of a District school student by state law and regulations.
2. The District only accepts High School credits and transcripts from approved Pennsylvania Homeschool Diploma programs. The District does not accept transcripts issued by a non-approved Pennsylvania Home Diploma program (i.e. one issued by a supervisor).

Students With A Disability

1. A home education program shall meet compulsory attendance requirements for a student with a disability only when the program addresses the specific needs of the student and is approved by a teacher with a valid education certificate from the Commonwealth to teach special education, or a licensed clinical or certified school psychologist. Written notice of such approval must be submitted with the required affidavit.
2. The Supervisor may request that the District or intermediate unit of residence provide services that address the specific needs of a student with a disability.
3. When the provision of services is agreed to by both the Supervisor and the District or intermediate unit, all services shall be provided in the public schools or in a private school licensed to provide such programs and services. Testing, evaluating, and planning shall be completed in accordance with regular District procedures.
 - a. The District is not required to agree to provide special education services to students enrolled in a home education program.

Participation in Extracurricular and Co-Curricular Activities by Home Education Students

Responsibilities of Program Coordinators

Program Coordinators shall be responsible for collecting and maintaining eligibility requirements for students participating in their program.

Transportation to and from Career and Technical Education Activities

The parent or legal guardian of the child shall be responsible for transportation of the child to and from school for selected extracurricular and co-curricular activities, except that a home education student may utilize District transportation to or from school during the times a bus is otherwise already operating and space is available for CTE programs, exclusively.

Resources

<https://www.philasd.org/homeschooling/>

<https://www.philasd.org/athletics/>

<https://www.philasd.org/collegeandcareer/resources/military-opportunities/jrotc/>
<https://www.philasd.org/cte/>

For any questions regarding home education programs or participating in extracurricular and co-curricular activities, please contact homeschooling@philasd.org.

Maintenance Schedule

These Administrative Procedures will be reviewed upon review of the Policy, or upon the occurrence of a triggering event.

Related Information:

School Code – 24 P.S. §§ [111](#), [1327](#), [1327.1](#), 511

Philadelphia Home Rule Charter - 12-300

State Board of Education Regulations – [22 PA Code §11.31a](#)