

HOME EDUCATION INSTRUCTION & ACCESS TO CURRICULAR AND CO-CURRICULAR PROGRAMS

Parents wishing to home educate their children will either use Berlin Public Schools as their participating agency or provide documentation of having a participating agency for students under age 18.

Home Education is an alternative to compulsory attendance at a public or private school and is an individualized form of instruction in accordance with NH RSA 193-A and Department of Education Rule Part 315. A parent or guardian may establish a home education program for any child between the ages six (6) and eighteen (18) years of age including one who is an “educationally disabled child” as defined under RSA 186-C:2,I, whether or not such child is previously enrolled in a school of the District.

Home-educated/Non-Public School students who reside in the City of Berlin shall have access to in-school courses or programs (including extra curricular programs) in the Berlin Public Schools if they have chosen to use Berlin Public Schools as their participating agency in the same manner and on the same conditions as other full-time students.

Home-educated/Non-Public School students who reside outside of the City of Berlin and whose district ~~has an AREA or~~ tuition agreement shall have access to in-school courses or programs (including extra curricular programs) in the Berlin Public Schools in the same manner and on the same conditions as other full-time students from those districts. Tuition will be prorated for the part-time participation. Students who are non-resident home schoolers should declare the school district of choice prior to the opening of school year. A student falling under the provisions of this section is eligible to represent only one (1) school in any academic year.

A. Notices Required for Commencement of Home Education Program.

1. Notice For Students Withdrawing from District.

State School attendance laws apply to each student until a parent/guardian commences a home education program. Similarly, the District’s attendance policies apply to all students enrolled in schools of the District.

Accordingly, when a parent/guardian of a child who is enrolled in a school of the District wishes to begin a home education program for the child, Ed. Rule 315.04(e) requires that on or before the date the home education program begins, the parent/guardian must advise the Superintendent of the child’s withdrawal from the District. The notice of withdrawal may be made in person or in writing.

2. Written Notice of Program Required.

In addition to the less formal notice required for a child being withdrawn from the District, RSA 193-A and Ed. 315 both require that the parent/guardian provide written notice of the commencement of a home education program *either* to the Superintendent of the resident district, to the NH Department of Education, or to any non-public school principal.

The requirements of the notice are set forth in RSA 193-A:5 and Ed. 315.04, both of which can be accessed through the NH Department of Education's website.

Upon request, the Superintendent shall assist the parent/guardian to assure that the notification complies with the statutory requirements.

3. No Annual Notice Required.

Once established, the home education program remains in effect unless terminated pursuant Ed. 315.04 (k). The parent/guardian is not required to provide annual notification of continuation of a home education program.

B. Evaluation & Assessment.

Under RSA 193-A:6, II, parents/guardians are required to provide for an annual educational evaluation for home educated children that documents "educational progress at a level commensurate with the child's age and ability." Both the statute and Ed. 315.07 provide several options for parents/guardians to meet the statutory evaluation requirements. Some of the evaluation options available to parents/guardians under that statute and rules can involve District/Superintendent assistance, including for instance, any state student assessment used by the District, or any other "valid" measurement tool mutually agreed upon by the parent/guardian and the Superintendent. Other options are available to parents/guardians as provided under RSA 193-A:6 and/or Ed. 315.07.

No fee will be required by the District when a parent uses evaluation services provided by the District.*

*NOTE: RSA 193-A:7, II(a), and Ed. 315.07 (c) each allow a parent/guardian to enter into an agreement for evaluation services with a certified teacher or a teacher teaching in non-public school. When a parent/guardian chooses to independently contract with an individual teacher to perform evaluation services, the teacher may charge any fee agreed upon by the teacher and the parent/guardian, notwithstanding whether the teacher is also employed by the District. The District shall not be responsible for the evaluation services, nor providing the evaluation tools, nor shall the District receive any part of the fee agreed to between the teacher and the parent/guardians.

C. Records.

The District shall maintain documents concerning home education programs in a manner consistent with other educational records. Additionally, the Superintendent shall maintain a

list of all home education programs for which the Superintendent, as participating agency, has received notice. On October 1 of each year, the Superintendent shall notify the Commissioner of the number of children for who programs were established.

RSA 193-A:6, I, requires the parent/guardian to maintain a portfolio of records and materials relative to the home education program. The portfolio shall consist of a log which designates by title the reading materials used, and also samples of writings, worksheets, workbooks, or creative materials used or developed by the child. The parent/guardian is required to preserve the portfolio for 2 years from the date of the ending of the instruction.

For evaluations which are not provided by the District, parents/guardians need only provide copies to the District to the extent necessary to demonstrate proficiency in order to participate in school programs, and co/extra-curricular activities as provided under RSA 193-A:6, III. (see Policy IHBG-R).

D. Re-enrollment into the School District.

Parents/Guardians deciding to re-enroll their children into the District following a period of home education will make arrangements with the Principal for an evaluation to determine appropriate placement in the District's program. Placements will be consistent with the School Board policy governing student placements (see Policy JG), and are subject to the same appeal process.

Parents/Guardians should be attentive that when re-enrolling a student, there may be discrepancies between the home schooling level of achievement and the scope and sequence of the District's curriculum.

E. Graduation/Diplomas.

The School Board will not award certificates or diplomas to home educated students. Students must enter the regular school program and complete all necessary graduation requirements of the District and the State to be eligible for a certificate or diploma.

F. Participation in school curricular and co/extra-curricular activities.

Regulations regarding the participation of home education students (as well as students of non-public or of public charter schools) in District curricular and co/extra-curricular programs are established in Policy IHBG-R. The Superintendent is charge with establishing such regulations. Consistent with RSA 193:1-c, any regulations shall not be more restrictive for non-public or home educated pupils than they are for student enrolled in the District.

Home-educated/Non-Public School students will not be denied the opportunity to participate in extracurricular activities if the student fulfills the following conditions.

1. The student must meet all school district and state eligibility requirements as outlined by the NHIAA with the exception of school attendance.
2. The student shall be required to fulfill the same responsibilities and standards of behavior and performance, including related calls or practice requirements, of other students participating in the interscholastic activity of the team and shall be required to meet the same standards for acceptance on the team. The student must also comply with all public school requirements during participation.
3. The student may not be enrolled in another public school.

Only students enrolled full-time in the Berlin Public Schools are eligible to participate in graduation exercises and are eligible for a diploma.

First Reading – September 11, 2003

Second Reading – October 9, 2003

Adopted – October 9, 2003

Revised: First Reading – December 2, 2009

Second Reading – January 13, 2010

Adopted: January 13, 2010

Revised: October 4, 2018