

HOME SCHOOLING

The Massachusetts General Law requires the School Committee to determine that a Home Schooling program meet with the minimum standards established for public schools in the Commonwealth prior to approving such a program. The Greenfield Public Schools School Committee delegates the approval of home instruction to the Superintendent of Schools. Any approval or rejection of an application by the Superintendent may be subject to review by the School Committee.

The Superintendent will prepare for the School Committee an annual summary of the children who participate in home instruction.

When a parent or guardian of a student below the age of 16 wants to establish a homebased educational program for his/her child, the following procedures shall be followed in accordance with the law:

Prior to removing the child from public school:

The parent/guardian must submit written notification of establishment of the home-based program to the Superintendent's Office 14 days before the program is established, and resubmit notification on an annual basis as long as the child or children are being educated in a home-based environment.

The parent/guardian must certify in writing, the name, age, place of residence, and number of hours of attendance of each child in the program. A home instruction application form will be provided to the parents or legal guardian for their convenience.

The Superintendent shall give the notice to produce records required by law if there is probable cause to believe the program is not in compliance with the law. Factors to be considered by the Superintendent in deciding whether or not to approve a home education proposal may be:

1. The proposed curriculum and the number of hours of instruction in each of the proposed subjects.
2. The competency of the parents to teach the children.
3. The textbooks, workbooks and other instructional aids to be used by the children and the lesson plans and teaching manuals to be used by the parents.
4. Periodic standardized testing of the children to ensure educational progress and the attainment of minimum standards.

If the home education plan is rejected, the Superintendent must detail the reasons for the decision, and allow the parents to revise their proposal to remedy its inadequacies. If a parent begins the home education program without the necessary approval, the School Committee may initiate a truancy proceeding or a care and protection petition, in which the District would have to show that the instruction in the home does not meet the statutory standard for thoroughness, efficiency and educational progress.

~~A student being educated in a home-based program within the District may have access to public school activities of either a curricular or extracurricular nature upon approval of the Superintendent. This could include allowing students learning from a home-based program to attend the public schools on a part-time basis.~~

Within one week of the ending date of the home instruction, as indicated on the home instruction application form, the School District will mail the parents or legal guardian a home instruction summary form. The completed form should be returned to the School District within 30 days. This summary form must be returned to the School District office before annual approval of home instruction can be made for any succeeding years.

~~A student, with the approval of the School Committee, may be awarded a high school diploma if he/she or she has satisfied the Department of Education's competency requirements and has met the District's educational standards for graduation. The School District will make provisions for inclusion of home-taught children in the annual achievement test battery, which is usually administered in the spring of each school year, if the parents would like for their child(ren) to participate in this test.~~

SOURCE: MASC

LEGAL REFS.:

M.G.L. 69:1D; 76:1,

Care and Protections of Charles - MASS. Supreme Judicial Court 399 Mass. 324 (1987)

Adopted: 12-8-04

Revised: