

Grand Forks Public Schools

Home Education Handbook *2023-2024*



Foreword

Home education is one of several means by which parents can fulfill their responsibility for educating their children. The North Dakota Legislature has enacted laws to ensure that the state's responsibilities and legitimate interests in this endeavor are also guaranteed and protected. With the combined rights and interests of the state and of parents, the state has delegated certain responsibilities to local school districts to work with home educators to assure that all North Dakota students are receiving a quality education.

The Grand Forks Public School District has prepared this handbook to assist home educators. The handbook provides information, explains procedures, and answers some common questions home educators have regarding home education.

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What is home education?

Defined as a program of education supervised by a child’s parent or legal guardian. “Supervise” means the selection of materials, determination of an educational philosophy, and oversight of the method, manner, and delivery of instruction. Participation in this program legally fulfills the compulsory instruction requirements of state law. (N.D. Century Code 15.1-23-01)

Who can teach a homeschooled child?

A parent is qualified to supervise a program of home education if the parent holds a high school diploma or general education diploma (GED). "Parent" includes a child's legal guardian.

A parent who does not meet the qualifications may supervise home education but must be monitored in accordance with section 15.1-23-07 for the first two years. If the child receives a basic composite test score below the fiftieth percentile nationally, a parent must be monitored for an additional year. If monitoring is required according to section 15.1-23-07, the school district shall assign and compensate an individual to monitor a child receiving home education unless the parent notifies the school district that the parent shall select and compensate an individual to monitor the child. The monitoring individual must be licensed to teach by the education standards and practices board. The monitoring individual shall report the child’s progress twice each school year to the school superintendent.

What are the responsibilities for home educators?

At least five days before beginning instruction or within fourteen days of establishing a child’s residence in a school district, and once each year thereafter, a parent intending to supervise or supervising home education shall file a statement, reflecting that intent or fact, with the superintendent.

The Statement of Intent must include:

- a) The name and address of the child receiving home education;
- b) The child's date of birth;
- c) The child's grade level;
- d) The name and address of the parent who will supervise the home education;
- e) The qualifications of the parent who will supervise the home education;
- f) Any public school courses in which the child intends to participate and the name of the school offering the courses and any extracurricular activities in which the child intends to participate
- g) Proof of immunization record;
- h) Proof of identity (birth certificate) or another identifying official document
- i) Standardized achievement test results, if applicable

A parent supervising home education shall include instruction in those subjects required by law to be taught to public school students. **The instruction must have a duration of at least four hours each day for a minimum of one hundred seventy-five days each year.**

Maintain an annual record (cumulative folder) of courses taken by the child and the child's academic progress assessments, including any standardized achievement test results. If the child transfers to a public school district, the parent shall furnish the record, upon request, to the school district superintendent or other administrator.

It is recommended that a parent maintain meticulous records of both classes taught and standards met during these classes.

These records will be helpful to the parents for multiple reasons, including:

- If the student transfers to a public school;
- Filling out college applications and scholarships; and
- Resources for educating younger children in the household.

Courses required by statute (*N.D. Century Code 15.1-21.0 and 15.1-21-02*). More information on curriculum requirements may be found under Century Code on the North Dakota Legislative Branch website at ndlegis.gov.

Elementary and Middle Schools (Grades 1-8) - Required instruction.

In order to be approved by the Superintendent of Public Instruction, each public and nonpublic elementary and middle school shall provide to students instruction in:

- English language arts, including reading, composition, creative writing, English grammar, and spelling
- Mathematics
- Social studies, including:
 - The United States Constitution
 - United States history
 - Geography
 - Government
 - North Dakota studies, with an emphasis on the geography, history, and agriculture of this state, in the fourth and eighth grades
- Science, including agriculture
- Physical education
- Health, including physiology, hygiene, disease control, and the nature and effects of alcohol, tobacco, and narcotics

High Schools (Grades 9-12) - Required units.

In order to be approved by the Superintendent of Public Instruction, each public and nonpublic high school shall make available to each student:

- Four units of English language arts from a sequence that includes literature, composition, and speech;
- Four units of mathematics, including:
 - One unit of algebra II; and
 - One unit for which algebra II is a prerequisite;
 - Four units of science, including:

- Four units of science, including
 - One unit of Physical Science; and
 - One unit of biology;
- Four units of social studies, including:
 - One unit of world history;
 - One of United States history, including Native American tribal history;
- and
 - One unit of problems of democracy; or
 - One-half unit of United States government and one-half unit of economics;
- One-half unit of health;
- One-half unit of physical education during each school year, provided that once every four years the unit must be a concept-based fitness class that includes instruction in the assessment, improvement, and maintenance of personal fitness;
- Two units of fine arts, at least one of which must be music;
- Two units of the same foreign or Native American language;
- One unit of an advanced placement course or one unit of a dual-credit course; and
- Two units of career and technical education from a coordinated plan of study recommended by the department of career and technical education and approved by the superintendent of public instruction.

What are the responsibilities of the School District?

- Inform the parent about parental responsibility to maintain the student’s academic record for each home-educated student.
- Explain resources and support for students who are experiencing learning difficulties and who may need special education and related services, as well as the responsibility of the local school district to identify and appropriately serve such students.
- Provide the local school district’s expectations for each student at the appropriate grade level in the subjects required by statute.
- Provide information regarding the standardized achievement test administered by the district and the parent’s options regarding the test.
- Provide a copy of the state law on home education.

What are the testing responsibilities of home educators?

Standardized achievement tests shall be given to each child receiving home education in grades four, six, eight, and ten (N.D. Century Code 15.1-23-09).

The requirement of this subsection does not apply if the parent notifies the school district in which the child resides that the parent has a philosophical, moral, or religious objection to the use of standardized achievement tests or the parent:

1. Is licensed to teach by the education standards and practices board or approved to teach by the education standards and practices board;
2. Holds a baccalaureate degree; or
3. Has met or exceeded the cutoff score of a national teacher examination

given in this state or in any other state if this state does not offer such an examination.

The parent shall file the notification and necessary documentation required by this subsection with the school district at the same time that the parent files the statement of intent to supervise home education required by section 15.1-23-02.

Towards meeting this requirement, the Grand Forks Public Schools provides, at no cost, a nationally normed test. Specific testing instructions and dates will be mailed to home education families. Parents will be responsible to inform the Grand Forks Public Schools if they are interested in having the school district administer the test.

If the parent wants to select a qualified individual (teacher licensed by the Education Standards and Practices Board) to administer the test, the cost is the responsibility of the child's parent. The test needs to be a nationally-normed achievement test which provides a basic overall composite score. **A parent supervising home education shall file the results of the child's standardized achievement test with the superintendent of the district.**

If a child's basic composite score on a standardized achievement test is less than the thirtieth percentile nationally, the child will be assessed for a potential learning problem by a multidisciplinary assessment team according to guidelines by the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

What does a parent need to provide the Grand Forks Public Schools if they want their child to enroll in a Grand Forks Public School after they have been home-educated?

Homeschooled students transferring into district schools will be required to produce documentation containing a list of courses taken, grades earned, and the results of standardized achievement tests unless the student is exempt from such testing under law. Placement will be determined in accordance with district placement standards.

Students without records or whose records do not indicate proper placement shall be subject to placement testing. Students believed to have a disability impairing learning shall be tested and placed in accordance with law and applicable policy.

May my homeschooled student enroll in classes and participate in extracurricular activities at the Grand Forks Public School?

Homeschooled students are eligible to transfer into the Grand Forks Public School District and / or participate in individual district classes and / or extracurricular activities on the same basis as students already enrolled. The student must enroll at the school in their attendance area. Homeschooled students must meet regular eligibility requirements to participate and are subject to the same standards for participation as the full-time enrolled students. Homeschooled students attending public school classes must adhere to the student code of conduct and follow our attendance expectations.

May I home educate my child who has a disability?

If a multidisciplinary assessment team determines that the child is disabled, that the child requires specially designed instruction due to the disability, and that this instruction cannot be provided without special education and related services, the parent may continue to supervise home education, provided that:

1. The parent files a service plan with the school district's superintendent that was developed privately or through the school district; and
2. The services plan demonstrates that the child's special needs are being addressed by persons qualified to provide special education or related services.

Annually, the superintendent of the child's school district of residence shall determine reasonable academic progress based on the child's services plan.

If a parent fails to file a Service Plan as required by this section, the parent is deemed to be in violation of the compulsory school attendance provisions and may no longer supervise the home education of the child.

A parent may supervise home education for a child with a developmental disability if:

1. The child has been determined to have a developmental disability by a licensed psychologist;
2. The child's parent is qualified to supervise home education under this chapter; and
3. The child's parent files with the superintendent of the child's school district of residence:
 - a. A notice that the child will receive home education;
 - b. A copy of the child's diagnosis of a developmental disability prepared and attested to by a licensed psychologist; and
 - c. A services plan developed and followed by the child's school district of residence and the child's parent; or, after providing written notice to the superintendent of the child's school district of residence, a substitute services plan, developed and followed, according to section 15.1-23-15, by a services plan team selected by and compensated by the child's parent.

Child with a Development Disability Progress Reports

On or before November first, February first, and May first of each school year, a parent supervising home education for a child with a developmental disability under section 15.1-23-14 shall file with the superintendent of the child's school district of residence progress reports prepared by the services plan team selected under section 15.1-23-14.

If at any time the services plan team agrees that the child is not benefiting from home education, the team shall notify the superintendent of the child's school district of residence and request that the child be evaluated by a multidisciplinary team appointed

by the superintendent of the child's school district of residence. The superintendent of the child's school district of residence shall forward copies of all documentation required by this section to the superintendent of public instruction.

May homeschool students receive a high school diploma?

Grand Forks Public School (GFPS) District does not award diplomas to homeschooled students. Students must enroll full-time in the regular GFPS District educational program and complete all the necessary requirements to be eligible for a diploma.

How do home educators get curriculum materials?

Parents are responsible for purchasing all materials. School district textbooks may be borrowed by home educators if the district has extra copies available. This does not include kits or consumables (science kits, benchmark, workbooks, etc.). If you are interested in using the school district textbooks, please contact the Assistant Superintendent office at (701) 746-2205, ext. 7115. A deposit of \$50.00 per textbook (not to exceed \$200.00) will be paid at the time of check-out. The full amount of the deposit will be refunded to the parent after the books have been returned. The books must be returned by June 15th. If textbooks are not returned, the family will be billed for the full cost of the textbook less the deposited amount paid.

What federally-funded educational opportunities are available for home educators and homeschooled children?

Below is a description of the federal programs available to home educators and homeschooled children.

Title I – Improving the Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged

Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act provides financial assistance to state and local educational agencies to meet the needs of educationally-deprived, at-risk children. The goal of Title I program is to provide instructional services and activities to meet the needs of disadvantaged children identified as failing or most at risk of failing the state's challenging performance standards. Title I programs in the Grand Forks Public Schools provide children with extra educational assistance beyond the regular classroom. Your child will be served if they meet objective criteria established by your school.

Title II A – Teacher and Principal Training and Recruitment Fund

The Title II, Part A program is to increase academic achievement of all students through strategies such as improving teacher and principal quality, increasing the number of highly-qualified teachers in the classroom and highly qualified principals and assistant principals in schools, and reducing class size especially in the primary grades. Title II Part A also helps hold school districts accountable for improvements in student academic achievement.

If you would like more information on how you and your child may benefit from any of the services provided with Title I or Title II A funds, please contact the Assistant Superintendent Office at (701) 746-2200 ext. 7115.