

## Fact Sheet Regarding Home Instruction in Maryland

### **Does Maryland law permit a student of mandatory school age to be home schooled instead of attending a public or a nonpublic school?**

**Yes.** Maryland law, Education Article, §7-301, Annotated Code of Maryland, Compulsory Attendance, states that each child who resides in Maryland and is 5 years old or older and under 17 shall attend a public school regularly during the entire school year unless the child is otherwise receiving regular, thorough instruction during the school year in the studies usually taught in the public school to children of the same age. Maryland recognizes nonpublic schools and home instruction as alternatives to public school enrollment as a means for students to receive regular, thorough instruction.

### **Are there regulations that govern home instruction in Maryland?**

**Yes.** COMAR 13A.10.01 Home Instruction, are the regulations that govern home instruction in Maryland. The purpose of COMAR 13A.10.01 is to establish a procedure to be used by the superintendent of each local school system to determine if a child participating in a home instruction program is receiving regular, thorough instruction during the school year in the studies usually taught in the public schools to children of the same age.

### **What must a parent do before beginning home instruction?**

At least 15 days before the beginning of a home instruction program, a parent or guardian who chooses to teach a child at home must sign a written statement on a form prescribed by the State Department of Education. The parent should contact their local school system for a copy of the consent form and COMAR 13A.10.01.

### **Does the local school system or the Maryland State Department of Education provide a curriculum to parents to use for the purpose of home schooling?**

**No.** A parent or guardian who elects to provide instruction to his/her child (ren) must select the curriculum to be used. The home instruction regulation does, however, specify the subjects that must be taught by the parent or guardian.

### **What subject areas of home instruction are mandatory?**

English, mathematics, science, social studies, art, music, health, and physical education are the subject areas that parents or guardians must teach their child (ren) who are home schooled. [COMAR 13A.10.01.01C.(2).]

### **Must home instruction be supervised in Maryland?**

**Yes.** Home instruction must be supervised in Maryland by one of the following entities:

1. The local school system.
2. A nonpublic school that holds a Certificate of Approval from the Maryland State Board of Education.
3. A church-exempt nonpublic school.
4. An education ministry of a bona fide church organization.

**What must a nonpublic school or education ministry of a bona fide church organization do before beginning to supervise home instruction of Maryland students?**

Before beginning to supervise home instruction, the head of the legal authority of a nonpublic school or the chief officer of a bona fide church organization that elects to supervise home instruction must contact the Maryland State Department of Education for registration procedures. Registration procedures include the completion of an official registration form that can be obtained by calling the Nonpublic School Approval Branch at the Department at (410) 767-0407.

**Can a tutor or someone other than the parent or guardian be hired to teach a child who is home schooled?**

**No.** The Home Instruction regulations (COMAR 13A.10.01) are clear that the parent or guardian is to be the primary provider of the home instruction. Other adults may assist with a special area of interest but such adults are not permitted to replace the parent or guardian as the primary provider of instruction.

**Is a home schooled student prohibited from being tutored?**

**No.** A home-schooled student may be tutored in a particular subject just as a student enrolled in a public or nonpublic school may be tutored. Regardless of whether a student is enrolled in home schooling or in a public or nonpublic school, tutoring is supplemental to each of these primary forms of instruction. Tutoring may not be substituted for the instruction that is provided by the parent or legal guardian to his/her home schooled student or the instruction provided by a public or nonpublic school to students enrolled.

**Must the parent/guardian be a certified teacher?**

**No.** Present regulations do not require parents/guardians to have teacher certification in order to home school their child(ren). [COMAR 13A.10.01.]

**Can a student who is home schooled participate in other aspects of the instructional or extracurricular programs that are offered by a Maryland public school?**

**No.** Present regulations indicate no provision which allow homeschooled students to participate in courses or activities that are offered by a Maryland public school other than the standardized testing program. [COMAR 13A.10.01]

**May a home-schooled student participate in the standardized testing program that is offered by the student's local school system?**

**Yes.** A child receiving home instruction may participate in the regularly scheduled standardized testing programs that are administered in the student's assigned school. It is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to contact the public school that the child is eligible to attend to find out the testing schedule and to make arrangements for participation prior to the testing date. [COMAR 13A.10.01.01.02]

## **What are the procedures for a home-schooled student to return to a public school?**

The parent must contact the local school for procedures regarding returning from home instruction to enrollment in a public school. The local superintendent of schools or designee shall determine the placement of the child and any credits to be awarded toward high school graduation. The evaluation may include administration of standardized tests, examinations, and interviews with the student. [COMAR 13A.10.01.04]

## **How can a home-schooled student receive a diploma?**

If the home-schooled student returns to a public school and meets their secondary school graduation requirements, yes, the student may receive a Maryland issued state diploma.

If the home-schooled student returns to a nonpublic or church-exempt school and meet's that school's secondary school graduation requirements, the student may receive a diploma issued by that school's legal authority. Note: COMAR 13A.09.09.09E states that the diploma of a nonpublic secondary school may not imply that the requirements for graduation from a Maryland public secondary school have been met.

Another alternative for the home-schooled student is to successfully complete the General Educational Development (GED) test and be issued a GED by the Maryland State Department of Education. For more information regarding GED contact the [General Educational Development office](#) at (410) 767-0538.

## **Does the Maryland State Department of Education provide information about home instruction support groups?**

**No.** The Maryland State Department of Education does not collect information about home instruction support groups. The Department, however, maintains the names and addresses of the nonpublic schools and bona fide church organizations that are registered to supervise home school instruction.

## **Whom should I call if I have more questions?**

For questions about filing the consent form with the local school system, curriculum, portfolio reviews, standardized testing, special education services, returning to the public school system, contact the Pupil Personnel Office of your local school system.

For questions about the requirements of the home instruction regulations and other matters of concern pertaining to home instruction, contact the Student Services and Alternative Programs Branch of the Maryland State Department of Education in Baltimore at (410) 767-0311.

For questions about nonpublic entities that are registered to supervise home instruction, contact the Nonpublic School Approval Branch of the Maryland State Department of Education in Baltimore at (410) 767-0407