

POLICY

SOMERSET COUNTY
BOARD OF EDUCATION

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Subject: Home Instruction	Date Approved: September 20, 1988 September 18, 2012 Date Revised: December 13, 2005 December 9, 2011 May 29, 2012 Date Effective: September 20, 1988 September 18, 2012

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines and procedures for evaluating home instruction programs and to insure that the child is receiving regular, thorough instruction during the school year in studies that are usually taught in Somerset County Public Schools to children of the same age or grade placement. The criteria established by the State Board are designed to provide minimum requirements which will assist local school systems in evaluating home instruction programs. (COMAR 13A.10.01, Subtitle 10-Home Instruction)

2. REQUIREMENTS

A. A Parent or guardian who chooses to teach a child at home must complete and sign the Home School Application form prescribed by the State Board of Education which indicates consent to the requirements set forth in COMAR 13A.10.01 (Home Instruction). The form must be submitted to the Somerset County Board of Education Student Services department at least fifteen (15) days prior to the beginning of the Home Instruction Program.

- (a) **Annual Verification.** Annually, thereafter, before the beginning of the school year, a parent or guardian shall verify the continuation of home schooling for his or her child with the Somerset County Board of Education, Student Services department.
- (b) **Change in Status.** A parent or guardian shall notify the Somerset County Board of Education if a change occurs in the home school status of a child during the school year.

B. The Home instruction Program shall:

- (a) Provide regular, thorough instruction in the studies usually taught in the Somerset County Public Schools to children of the same age;
- (b) Include instruction in English, mathematics, science, social studies, art, music, health and physical education; and
- (c) Take place on a regular basis during the school year and be of sufficient duration to implement the instructional program.

C. Educational Materials.

- (1) Parents or guardians who choose to teach their child(ren) at home shall maintain a portfolio of materials which:
 - (a) Demonstrates the parent or guardian is providing regular, thorough instruction in the areas specified in section (1)(a) and (b) above;
Includes relevant materials such as instructional materials and reading materials
 - (b) examples of the child(ren)'s writings, worksheets, workbooks, creative materials and tests;
 - (c) Parents using the Somerset County Public Schools as the Home Instruction monitors shall agree to meet with designated Instructional Supervisors at the Somerset County Public Schools Board of Education at least once during each semester for portfolio reviews. The purpose of the review is to ensure that their child is receiving regular, thorough instruction as set forth above. The reviews will be at times that are mutually agreeable to all parties.

D. Home Instruction Under Supervision of a Nonpublic School

- (1) A parent or guardian may provide instruction for a child at home without compliance with "portfolio" requirements of this policy if:
 - (a) Instruction is offered through correspondence courses and is under the supervision of a school approved by the Maryland State Dept. of Education;
or
 - (b) Operated by a bona fide church organization; or
 - (c) Be a nonpublic school with a certificate of approval from the Maryland State Department of Education; however, the parent or guardian must complete and submit to the Supervisor of Student Services the Home Schooling application form as required in COMAR 13A.10.01 and in 2A of this policy.

3. Noncompliance with Requirements.

- (1) If a parent or guardian does not agree to the requirements for a Home Instruction program as set forth I COMAR 13A.10.01 and this policy and if it is determined by a review of the home instruction program or inspection of the portfolio that a child(ren) is not receiving a regular, thorough instruction program, the Superintendent or designee shall notify the parent or guardian in writing of assessment of the program and of any deficiencies which may exist. Suggestions for improvement of the program are forwarded at this time.
 - (a) Within thirty (30) days of receipt of notification of any deficiencies, the parent or guardian shall provide evidence to the Superintendent of Schools or designee that any deficiencies have been or are being corrected. All deficiencies must be completed before the next review.
 - (b) If the deficiencies are not corrected as specified, the Superintendent or designee shall notify the parent or guardian, in writing, that the child(ren) must be enrolled promptly in a public or nonpublic school as defined in (COMAR 13A.09.09.02B (4)(a) , Nonpublic Nursery Schools, Kindergartens, and Elementary, Middle, and Secondary Schools.

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- (c) A parent who fails to enroll a child in a public or nonpublic school will be referred to the State's Attorney's office for further action in accord with the age for compulsory attendance.
- (d) Attendance is required of each child who is 5 years old or older and under 16, who is not in an approved home instruction program or in a private school, must be enrolled in Somerset County Public Schools according to placement determined by admission standards and/or examination.

E. Voluntary Participation in Standardized Testing.

- (1) If the parent/guardian requests that their child(ren) participate in the school's standardized testing program, the Supervisor of Student Services will:
 - (a) Notify the Principal and the Local Accountability Coordinator (LAC) of the appropriate school;
 - (b) Notify the parent/guardian of the date, time and place of the tests as well as any materials which the child(ren) should take to the testing site;
 - (c) Make the test results available to the parents or guardians.

F. Enrollment In Somerset Public Schools

- (1) Upon application in writing to the Superintendent of Schools, a parent or guardian may enroll their child(ren) who has/have been on a Home Instruction program in a Somerset County Public School. The Superintendent or designee shall determine by an evaluation, the placement of the child(ren) and any credits to be awarded toward high school graduation.
 - (a) The evaluation may include one or more of the following:
 - § standardized tests and examinations
 - § subject area examinations
 - § diagnostic tests
 - § interviews with the child
 - (b) Assessments and interviews will be conducted by appropriate system level and school level administrative and instructional staff.
- (2) Students who desire to receive a Maryland High School Diploma or certificate must meet the requirements as set forth in COMAR 13A.02.03, Graduation Requirements for Public High Schools in Maryland and Somerset County Public School requirements.
- (3) A student must be enrolled in the public school system during the semester immediately prior to graduation to be eligible for participation in graduation.
- (4) Students who have been receiving home instruction must be in compliance with the immunization requirements of the State of Maryland when enrolling in a public school.