

HOME EDUCATION PROGRAM

GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES



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Parents / Guardians:

To fully understand your responsibilities as prescribed by Florida Law, it is strongly recommended that you become familiar with all of the enclosures, as they have been designed to assist you. Review them in the order they appear to properly lead you through the process of Establishing and maintaining a Home Education program.

In this packet, you will find:

1. Florida School Law
2. Florida Virtual School Information
3. Home Education – Frequently Asked Questions
4. Resources
5. Forms
 - Establishing a Home Education Checklist
 - Notification of Intent to Establish a Home Education Program
 - Evaluation Checklist
 - Written Evaluation Form
 - Notification of Termination of a Home Education Program

Florida School Law

1002.01 A “home education program” means the sequentially progressive instruction of a student directed by his or her parent in order to satisfy the attendance requirements of ss. 1002.41, 1003.01(13), and 1003.21(1).

(13) “Regular school attendance” means the actual attendance of a student during the school day as defined by law and rules of the State Board of Education. Regular attendance within the intent of s. 1003.21 may be achieved by attendance in:

- (a) A public school supported by public funds;
- (b) A parochial, religious, or denominational school;
- (c) A private school supported in whole or in part by tuition charges or by endowments or gifts;
- (d) A home education program that meets the requirements of chapter 1002; or
- (e) A private tutoring program that meets the requirements of chapter 1002.

1002.41 Home education programs.—

(1) A “home education program” is defined in s. 1002.01. The parent is not required to hold a valid regular Florida teaching certificate.

(a) The parent shall notify the district school superintendent of the county in which the parent resides of her or his intent to establish and maintain a home education program. The notice shall be in writing, signed by the parent, and shall include the names, addresses, and birthdates of all children who shall be enrolled as students in the home education program. The notice shall be filed in the district school superintendent’s office within 30 days of the establishment of the home education program. A written notice of termination of the home education program shall be filed in the district school superintendent’s office within 30 days after said termination.

(b) The parent shall maintain a portfolio of records and materials. The portfolio shall consist of the following:

1. A log of educational activities that is made contemporaneously with the instruction and that designates by title any reading materials used.
2. Samples of any writings, worksheets, workbooks, or creative materials used or developed by the student.

The portfolio shall be preserved by the parent for 2 years and shall be made available for inspection by the district school superintendent, or the district school superintendent’s agent, upon 15 days’ written notice. Nothing in this section shall require the district school superintendent to inspect the portfolio.

(c) The parent shall provide for an annual educational evaluation in which is documented the student’s demonstration of educational progress at a level commensurate with her or his ability. The parent shall select the method of evaluation and shall file a copy of the evaluation annually with the district school superintendent’s office in the county in which the student resides. The annual educational evaluation shall consist of one of the following:

1. A teacher selected by the parent shall evaluate the student’s educational progress upon review of the portfolio and discussion with the student. Such teacher shall hold a valid regular Florida certificate to teach academic subjects at the elementary or secondary level;
2. The student shall take any nationally normed student achievement test administered by a certified teacher;
3. The student shall take a state student assessment test used by the school district and administered by a certified teacher, at a location and under testing conditions approved by the school district;
4. The student shall be evaluated by an individual holding a valid, active license pursuant to the provisions of s. 490.003(7) or (8); or
5. The student shall be evaluated with any other valid measurement tool as mutually agreed upon by the district school superintendent of the district in which the student resides and the student’s parent.

(2) The district school superintendent shall review and accept the results of the annual educational evaluation of the student in a home education program. If the student does not demonstrate educational progress at a level commensurate with her or his ability, the district school superintendent shall notify the parent, in writing, that such progress has not been achieved. The parent shall have 1 year from the date of receipt of the written notification to provide remedial instruction to the student. At the end of the 1-year probationary period, the student shall be reevaluated as specified in paragraph (1)(c). Continuation in a home education program shall be contingent upon the student demonstrating educational progress commensurate with her or his ability at the end of the probationary period.

(3) A home education program shall be excluded from meeting the requirements of a school day.

(4) Home education students may participate in interscholastic extracurricular student activities in accordance with the provisions of s. 1006.15.

(5) Home education students may participate in the Bright Futures Scholarship Program in accordance with the provisions of ss. 1009.53-1009.539.

(6) Home education students may participate in dual enrollment programs in accordance with the provisions of ss. 1007.27(4) and 1007.271(10).

(7) Home education students are eligible for admission to ¹community colleges in accordance with the provisions of s. 1007.263.

(8) Home education students are eligible for admission to state universities in accordance with the policies and guidelines of the Board of Governors.

(9) Home education program students may receive testing and evaluation services at diagnostic and resource centers, in accordance with the provisions of s. 1006.03.

1003.26 Enforcement of school attendance.—The Legislature finds that poor academic performance is associated with nonattendance and that school districts must take an active role in promoting and enforcing attendance as a means of improving student performance. It is the policy of the state that each district school superintendent be responsible for enforcing school attendance of all students subject to the compulsory school age in the school district and supporting enforcement of school attendance by local law enforcement agencies. The responsibility includes recommending policies and procedures to the district school board that require public schools to respond in a timely manner to every unexcused absence, and every absence for which the reason is unknown, of students enrolled in the schools. District school board policies shall require the parent of a student to justify each absence of the student, and that justification will be evaluated based on adopted district school board policies that define excused and unexcused absences. The policies must provide that public schools track excused and unexcused absences and contact the home in the case of an unexcused absence from school, or an absence from school for which the reason is unknown, to prevent the development of patterns of nonattendance. The Legislature finds that early intervention in school attendance is the most effective way of producing good attendance habits that will lead to improved student learning and achievement. Each public school shall implement the following steps to promote and enforce regular school attendance:

(1) **CONTACT, REFER, AND ENFORCE.**—

(a) Upon each unexcused absence, or absence for which the reason is unknown, the school principal or his or her designee shall contact the student's parent to determine the reason for the absence. If the absence is an excused absence, as defined by district school board policy, the school shall provide opportunities for the student to make up assigned work and not receive an academic penalty unless the work is not made up within a reasonable time.

(b) If a student has had at least five unexcused absences, or absences for which the reasons are unknown, within a calendar month or 10 unexcused absences, or absences for which the reasons are unknown, within a 90-calendar-day period, the student's primary teacher shall report to the school principal or his or her designee that the student may be exhibiting a pattern of nonattendance. The principal shall, unless there is clear evidence that the absences are not a pattern of nonattendance, refer the case to the school's child study team to determine if early patterns of truancy are developing. If the child study team finds that a pattern of nonattendance is developing, whether the absences are excused or not, a meeting with the parent must be scheduled to identify potential remedies, and the principal shall notify the district school superintendent and the school district contact for home education programs that the referred student is exhibiting a pattern of nonattendance.

(c) If an initial meeting does not resolve the problem, the child study team shall implement the following:

1. Frequent attempts at communication between the teacher and the family.
2. Evaluation for alternative education programs.
3. Attendance contracts.

The child study team may, but is not required to, implement other interventions, including referral to other agencies for family services or recommendation for filing a truancy petition pursuant to s. 984.151.

(d) The child study team shall be diligent in facilitating intervention services and shall report the case to the district school superintendent only when all reasonable efforts to resolve the nonattendance behavior are exhausted.

(e) If the parent refuses to participate in the remedial strategies because he or she believes that those strategies are unnecessary or inappropriate, the parent may appeal to the district school board. The district school board may provide a hearing officer, and the hearing officer shall make a recommendation for final action to the district school board. If the district school board's final determination is that the strategies of the child study team are appropriate, and the parent still refuses to participate or cooperate, the district school superintendent may seek criminal prosecution for noncompliance with compulsory school attendance.

(f)1. If the parent of a child who has been identified as exhibiting a pattern of nonattendance enrolls the child in a home education program pursuant to chapter 1002, the district school superintendent shall provide the parent a copy of s. 1002.41 and the accountability requirements of this paragraph. The district school superintendent shall also refer the parent to a home education review committee composed of the district contact for home education programs and at least two home educators selected by the parent from a district list of all home educators who have conducted a home education program for at least 3 years and who have indicated a willingness to serve on the committee. The home education review committee shall review the portfolio of the student, as defined by s. 1002.41, every 30 days during the district's regular school terms until the committee is satisfied that the home education program is in compliance with s. 1002.41(1)(b). The first portfolio review must occur within the first 30 calendar days of the establishment of the program. The provisions of subparagraph 2. do not apply once the committee determines the home education program is in compliance with s. 1002.41(1)(b).

2. If the parent fails to provide a portfolio to the committee, the committee shall notify the district school superintendent. The district school superintendent shall then terminate the home education program and require the parent to enroll the child in an attendance option that meets the definition of "regular school attendance" under s. 1003.01(13)(a), (b), (c), or (e), within 3 days. Upon termination of a home education program pursuant to this subparagraph, the parent shall not be eligible to reenroll the child in a home education program for 180 calendar days. Failure of a parent to enroll the child in an attendance option as required by this subparagraph after termination of the home education program

pursuant to this subparagraph shall constitute noncompliance with the compulsory attendance requirements of s. 1003.21 and may result in criminal prosecution under s. 1003.27(2). Nothing contained herein shall restrict the ability of the district school superintendent, or the ability of his or her designee, to review the portfolio pursuant to s. 1002.41(1)(b).

(g) If a student subject to compulsory school attendance will not comply with attempts to enforce school attendance, the parent or the district school superintendent or his or her designee shall refer the case to the case staffing committee pursuant to s. 984.12, and the district school superintendent or his or her designee may file a truancy petition pursuant to the procedures in s. 984.151.

(2) GIVE WRITTEN NOTICE.—

(a) Under the direction of the district school superintendent, a designated school representative shall give written notice that requires enrollment or attendance within 3 days after the date of notice, in person or by return-receipt mail, to the parent when no valid reason is found for a student's nonenrollment in school. If the notice and requirement are ignored, the designated school representative shall report the case to the district school superintendent, and may refer the case to the case staffing committee, established pursuant to s. 984.12. The district school superintendent shall take such steps as are necessary to bring criminal prosecution against the parent.

(b) Subsequent to the activities required under subsection (1), the district school superintendent or his or her designee shall give written notice in person or by return-receipt mail to the parent that criminal prosecution is being sought for nonattendance. The district school superintendent may file a truancy petition, as defined in s. 984.03, following the procedures outlined in s. 984.151.

(3) RETURN STUDENT TO PARENT.—A designated school representative may visit the home or place of residence of a student and any other place in which he or she is likely to find any student who is required to attend school when the student is not enrolled or is absent from school during school hours without an excuse, and, when the student is found, shall return the student to his or her parent or to the principal or teacher in charge of the school, or to the private tutor from whom absent, or to the juvenile assessment center or other location established by the district school board to receive students who are absent from school. Upon receipt of the student, the parent shall be immediately notified.

(4) REPORT TO APPROPRIATE AUTHORITY.—A designated school representative shall report to the appropriate authority designated by law to receive such notices, all violations of the Child Labor Law that may come to his or her knowledge.

(5) RIGHT TO INSPECT.—A designated school representative shall have the right of access to, and inspection of, establishments where minors may be employed or detained only for the purpose of ascertaining whether students of compulsory school age are actually employed there and are actually working there regularly. The designated school representative shall, if he or she finds unsatisfactory working conditions or violations of the Child Labor Law, report his or her findings to the appropriate authority.

Florida Virtual Flex Home School (FLVS)

FS 1002.455 Student eligibility for K-12 virtual instruction.—All students, including home education and private school students, are eligible to participate in any of the following virtual instruction options:

- (1) School district operated part-time or full-time kindergarten through grade 12 virtual instruction programs under s. [1002.45](#)(1)(b).
- (2) Full-time virtual charter school instruction authorized under s. [1002.33](#) to students within the school district or to students in other school districts throughout the state pursuant to s. [1002.31](#).
- (3) Virtual courses offered in the course code directory to students within the school district or to students in other school districts throughout the state pursuant to s. [1003.498](#).
- (4) Florida Virtual School instructional services authorized under s. [1002.37](#).

A home school student may take up to 6 classes.

To register in FLVS Flex: (Home School)

1. Go to: www.flvs.net
2. Choose sign up, from options on top of page
3. Pick the first choice FLVS FLEX (this is for homeschool students) and click the box next to it with your grade
4. Continue
5. Click on the orange New Students Start Here arrow
6. Click on I live in Florida
7. Choose Holmes County
8. Choose Home School Student
9. Continue
10. Start Choosing courses (select them) and if you need Segment 1 or 2 or All Segments
11. Choose your start date (make it the next day as it takes time to contact you)
12. Choose the virtual school you would like to take CHOOSE Florida Virtual School only
13. Continue, answer questions, continue, pick next course, etc. until finished
14. After courses are chosen, the student and guardian must set up account.
15. Guardian must log in to their account to Verify courses (click blue verify box)

It may take 5-10 business days to receive a welcome call from all your teachers so keep checking your email and text messages.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is a home education program? As stated in Florida Statutes 1002.01, it is the planned sequential instruction of a student directed by his or her parent or guardian in order to satisfy the requirements of Florida Statutes.

When should notice be given to the county school district? Notice of Intent should be filed within 30 days of the establishment of a home education program. Parents should begin teaching their child(ren) as soon as they withdraw them from school, but should not withdraw students from school until they are ready to begin instruction.

Do I need to submit a Notice of Intent each year? No. The student is enrolled in Home School until terminated by parent or HCSD. If you choose not to continue to home school for the next school term, you are required by statute to submit a Notification of Termination. If no notice of termination is received, the student's file will remain active as a Home School student and an evaluation will be expected by the anniversary date on the intent form.

May someone other than a parent/guardian, including a properly certified private tutor, meet the requirements of the compulsory attendance law by teaching a child at home? Yes. Private tutoring programs must be operated in accordance to Florida Statute 1002.43. The tutor must hold a valid Florida certificate to teach the subjects or grades in which instruction is given; must keep all records and reports as required by the state and district school board and must make regular reports on the attendance of students in accordance with Florida Statute 1003.01(13).

Will instructional materials, books or curriculum be available to home school parents? No. School districts are under no obligation to supply books, materials and/or curriculum to parents wishing to home school their children.

What records must be maintained in the portfolio? A chronological log which identifies, by title, the reading material used; samples of writings, worksheets, workbooks, and creative materials used for development by the student. The portfolio must be preserved by the parent for two years and shall be made available for inspection by the superintendent, or his/her designee, upon fifteen days written notice.

Will the State of Florida provide a diploma for the Home Education Program student? No. Home education is provided in the private sector. Neither the State of Florida nor Holmes County Schools will issue a high school diploma to the student. This includes the Florida Virtual School. In order to receive a diploma, the home school student must return to a public school no later than the beginning of the senior year.

Will the school district provide nationally normed testing? No. This is not required by law.

What if a student does not demonstrate educational progress at a level commensurate with his/her ability? The superintendent or his/her designee, notifies the parent, in writing, that such progress had not been achieved. The parent has one year from the day of receipt of the written notification to provide remedial instruction to the student. At the end of the one year probationary period, the parent shall arrange for the student to be reevaluated. Continuation of the home education program shall be contingent upon the student's demonstrating educational progress at his/her own ability level at the end of the probationary period.

What happens if I decide to re-enroll my child in public school in the future after home-schooling for a while? You must submit a Notification of Termination of Home Education program, then enroll your child into school. The public-school principal determines grade placement based on age and maturity; academic skills and abilities; previous record in public and private schools; and evidence of work and achievements while in home education. In no instance shall the placement be automatic, based solely on recommendation of the home educator.

Forms

Establishing a Home Education Program Checklist

This checklist is intended to assist you in the basic process of establishing a Home Education Program within the Holmes County School District. Please refer to the Florida School Law section for further detail and requirements.

- ☐ Review Home Education Guidelines and Procedures
- ☐ Complete a Notice of Intent to Establish a Home Education Program
- ☐ Withdraw from school currently attending
- ☐ Submit Notice of Intent and Withdrawal forms to current school Holmes County School District in person
- ☐ Determine curriculum to be utilized

Yearly Requirements

Florida Statutes require Home Education students be evaluated yearly and submit a written Evaluation Form.

- ☐ Review Annual Evaluation Checklist
- ☐ Submit Annual Evaluation (*required by state statute 1002.41*)

Terminating a Home Education Program

If you are not going to continue to home school for the next school term, you are required by statute to submit a Notification of Termination. If no notice of termination is received, the student's file will remain active and an evaluation will be expected by the anniversary date on the intent form.

- ☐ Submit Notification of Termination form to Holmes County School District (*required by state statute 1002.41(1)(9)*)
- ☐ Enroll student in school

NOTICE OF INTENT TO ESTABLISH A HOME EDUCATION PROGRAM

Please complete one form for each student and submit it in person at the Holmes County School District Office

In compliance with section 1002.41 (1)(a), Florida Statutes this is written notice from the parent/guardian to establish and maintain a home education program for the following student.

Please Print:

STUDENT INFO			
First	Middle	Last	
DOB: <i>mm/dd/yyyy</i>	Gender:	Grade:	Last School Attended:
	Male ☐ Female ☐		

Home Address:	City	Zip

Mailing Address:	City	Zip

Parent/Guardian Name:	Email Address:	Phone #:

- I currently reside at the above Holmes County address. I understand this is subject to verification.
- I have withdrawn the student from the current school and I am establishing a Home Education program.
- I understand that the received date of Notice of Intent will be the Annual Evaluation Date.
- I understand that I am responsible for submitting an Annual Evaluation on or before the due date.
- I understand the Home Education Office does not issue a high school diploma, books, curriculum, or materials.

Signature of Parent/Guardian

Date

Holmes County School District
Student Services
Home Education
307 West North Avenue
Bonifay, Florida 32425
Telephone: (850) 547-9341
www.hdsb.org

This form must be submitted in person and a Home Education meeting must be held before enrollment into Home Education.

FOR HCSD OFFICE USE ONLY:		
Date Received:	W/D from HCSD School ☐	Entered into FOCUS ☐

HOME EDUCATION EVALUATION CHECKLIST

Month Due: _____

Student:		DOB:	Grade Level Evaluated:
Parent/Guardian:	Address		Phone:

Please check the requirement which satisfies the evaluation required by s. 1002.41(1)[c]. The Evaluation Date is determined from the date of Intent to Establish a Home Education Form. Send this Evaluation Checklist, along with the evaluation, to:

Holmes County School District
Student Services
Home Education
307 West North Avenue
Bonifay, Florida 32425
Telephone: (850) 547-9341
www.hdsb.org

- ☐ 1. A teacher selected by the parent shall evaluate the student's educational progress upon review of the portfolio and discussion with the student. Such teacher shall hold a valid regular Florida certificate to teach academic subjects at the elementary or secondary level.
- ☐ 2. The student shall take any nationally normed student achievement test administered by a certified teacher.
- ☐ 3. The student shall take a state student assessment test used by the school district and administered by a certified teacher, at a location and under testing conditions approved by the school district.
- ☐ 4. The student shall be evaluated by an individual holding a valid, active license pursuant to the provisions of s. [490.003](#)(7) or (8).
- ☐ 5. The Holmes County School District accepts an official transcript or final grade report provided from Florida Virtual School.

Signature of Parent/Guardian

Date

FOR HCSD OFFICE USE ONLY:	
Date Received:	☐ Compliance for 20____

WRITTEN EVALUATION FORM

Student:		DOB:	Grade Level Evaluated:
Parent/Guardian:	Address		Phone:

Upon review of the portfolio of, and discussion with, the student named above, I have found:

- ☐ Student **has** demonstrated progress at a level commensurate with his/her ability.
- ☐ Student **has not** demonstrated progress at a level commensurate with his/her ability.

Date of Evaluation:	Printed Name of Florida Certified Teacher:	Florida Teacher Certificate #:	Date Certificate Expires:

Signature of Florida Certified Teacher/Evaluator

Submit to:
Holmes County School District
Student Services
Home Education
307 West North Avenue
Bonifay, Florida 32425
Telephone: (850) 547-9341
www.hdsb.org

FOR HCSD OFFICE USE ONLY:	
Date Received:	☐ Compliance for 20____

NOTIFICATION OF TERMINATION OF A HOME EDUCATION PROGRAM

In compliance with Section 1002.41(1)(a), Florida Statute, this is written notice of intent to terminate a home education program for my child.

Please Print:

STUDENT INFO		
First	Middle	Last
DOB: <i>mm/dd/yyyy</i>	Phone #:	Parent/Guardian Name:
Mailing Address:	City	Zip

The reason for termination is:

- ☐ Return to public, parochial, or private school _____
(Name of School)
- ☐ Moving from the district
- ☐ GED (provide copy of GED)
- ☐ Other (please specify) If enrolled in PEP, please attached PEP award notification with ID#:

Signature of Parent/Guardian

Date

Submit to:
Holmes County School District
Student Services
Home Education
307 West North Avenue
Bonifay, Florida 32425
Telephone: (850) 547-9341
www.hdsb.org

FOR HCSD OFFICE USE ONLY:		
Date Received:	W/D from HCSD Home School ☐	Entered into FOCUS ☐