

Grand Forks Public Schools

Home Education Handbook



2018-2019 School Year

Foreward

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. 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 home-schooled 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).

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.

A home-school child must be taught by one of the child's parents. State Attorney General Wayne Stenehjem's opinion of February 1, 2007, states, "In conclusion, it is my opinion that only a parent, qualified under N.D.C.C. §§ 15.1-23-03 and 15.1-23-06, may provide home-based instruction to that parent's child. With respect to home-based instruction, North Dakota law does not permit a parent to supervise the education of that parent's child by any other individual."

Can I home-school my child with a disability?

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.

If a multidisciplinary assessment team, using eligibility criteria established by the superintendent of public instruction, 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 with the school district superintendent a services plan 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.

Services Plan

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. 2. 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.

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 services 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 child who was once evaluated by a multidisciplinary assessment team need not be re-evaluated for a potential learning problem upon scoring below the thirtieth percentile on a subsequent standardized achievement test unless the re-evaluation is performed pursuant to the child's services plan.

What are the responsibilities for home-school educators?

1. File a Statement of Intent annually with the Office of the Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning, Grand Forks Public Schools, 2400 47th Avenue S., Grand Forks, ND 58201. This form must be sent in at least 14 days prior to the beginning of the program or within 14 days of establishing residence in the school district.

The Statement of Intent must include:

- The name and address of the child receiving home education;
- The child's date of birth;
- The child's grade level;
- The name and address of the parent who will supervise the home education;
- The qualifications of the parent who will supervise the home education;
- Any public school courses in which the child intends to participate and the school district offering the courses; and
- Any extracurricular activities in which the child intends to participate
- Proof of immunization record.
- Proof of identity (birth certificate) – or other identifying official document.

2. 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.

Courses required by statute (*N.D. Century Code 15.1-21.0 and 15.1-21-02*)

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
- Four units of mathematics

- Four units of science
 - Four units of social studies, including one of world history and one of United States history
 - 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 language
 - Two units of career and technical education
3. Conduct classes for at least four hours per day for a minimum of 175 days per year.
 4. A parent is qualified to supervise a program of home education if the parent holds a high school diploma or general education diploma (GED)

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.

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 for home-school 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). A parent supervising home education shall file the results of the child's standardized achievement test with the superintendent of the

district. 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. Results must be filed with the Office of Assistant Superintendent Teaching and Learning.

The requirement of subsection 1 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.

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 school after they have been home educated?

The parent of any student seeking to transfer from home education to the Grand Fork Public Schools will provide the district with all records concerning the courses taken by the child and the child's academic progress assessments that the parent has maintained according to law. These records, along with those of the standardized achievement tests that have been filed with the district, will be considered in placing the child in appropriate classes. Students who arrive without transcripts or other educational records which would indicate proper placement, will be given standardized tests in the basic skills areas to facilitate proper placement.

Can my home-school student enroll in classes at the Grand Forks Public School?

Home-school students can choose to enroll in any classes that are offered within the Grand Forks Public Schools. Registration/Placement in a class that requires a pre-requisite will require a review by the school counselor of home school educational records. The student must enroll at their attendance area school.

Home school students attending public school class must adhere to the student code of conduct and follow our attendance expectations.

Can my home-school student participate in extracurricular activities at the Grand Forks Public School?

Home school students may participate in extracurricular activities that are offered by the Grand Forks Public Schools at the school in the child's attendance area. Home School students must meet regular eligibility requirements to participate.

Can home-school students receive a high school diploma?

Grand Forks Public Schools grants diplomas only to those students who have completed all North Dakota and Grand Forks Public Schools requirements for a high school diploma. In addition, to be eligible for a Grand Forks Public Schools diploma, the student must be enrolled in a minimum of six (6) classes at the high school during their last semester prior to graduation.

To receive credits for courses completed through home education, the student's parent must provide the Office of Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning at the Grand Forks Public Schools with the following:

- An outline of the course material covered in each subject,
- A list of the course objectives,
- A written description on how the course objectives were met, and
- A transcript of the student's performance in grades.

If any of the four items of required documentation is unavailable, the administration of the Grand Forks Public Schools may evaluate whether other reasonable proof is acceptable for the student to meet applicable requirements for high school graduation.

The granting of course credit towards attaining a Grand Forks Public Schools diploma rests with the administration of the Grand Forks Public Schools.

Students working towards a Grand Forks Public Schools diploma need to consult with a Grand Forks Public Schools high school counselor to assure that they have included all the necessary course work in their course of study to entitle them to earn a Grand Forks Public Schools diploma.

How do home-school educators get curriculum materials?

Parents are responsible for purchasing all materials. School district textbooks may be borrowed by home-school educators if the district has extra copies available.

If you are interested in using the school district textbooks, please contact the Assistant Superintendent's office at 701-746-2205, ext. 7115. A deposit of \$50.00 per textbook (not to exceed \$200.00) will be required at the time of check-out. The full deposit is mailed to the parent after the books have been returned. If textbooks are not returned, the family will be billed for the full cost of the textbook.

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

The Grand Forks School District would like to take this opportunity to inform you about the federally-funded educational opportunities available to home educators and home-school children. The school district would like to invite you and your child to participate in any of these programs. The school district receives funds under the Every Student Succeeds Act which provides our district with additional resources to implement effective programs and practices.

Below is a description of the federal programs and the contact person for each.

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 funds, please contact the Office of the Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning at (701) 746-2200.