

**Proposed Public Schools of Brookline Home Instruction Policy
May 10, 2018 School Committee 1st Reading**

I 1 d. Home Instruction: (Voted 9/24/91, #91-353; 12/17/91, #91-441; _____)

INTRODUCTORY PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT

The Brookline School Committee recognizes that parents are their children's first teachers. When children reach school age, parents continue to play a vital and crucial role in their children's formal education.

The School Committee recognizes that parents may wish, under certain conditions, to educate their children at home. The Massachusetts General Law requires the School Committee to determine that a homeschooling program meet with the minimum standards established for public schools in the Commonwealth prior to approving such a program.

When a parent or guardian of a student below the age of 16 wants to establish a home-based educational program for his/her child, the following procedures shall be followed in accordance with the law.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

Parent(s) or guardian(s) will register their children (see brookline.k12.ma.us/Page/2172) at the Office of Student Affairs. Registration will require the presentation of a birth certificate, evidence of prior school achievement, if any, as well as appropriate health records.

Prior to removing the child from public school:

The parent/guardian must submit written notification of establishment of the home-based program to the appropriate administrator 14 days before the program is established, and re-submit notification on an annual basis, by July 1 for the following school year, as long as the child or children are being educated in a home-based environment. Such plans must be approved prior to removing the student from public school and implementing home education, or the School Committee may initiate a truancy proceeding or a care and protection action. If a family does not re-submit a homeschool plan prior to the upcoming school year, the School Committee may initiate a truancy proceeding or a care and protection action which may include a home visit.

Parents or guardians will apply for home education through the office of the Deputy Superintendent of Teaching and Learning, who will serve as the agent of the Superintendent. The Deputy Superintendent of Teaching and Learning or designee, will inform parent(s)/guardian(s) of the application procedure, provide criteria for the development of home education plans, and require plan revision as necessary to reach the academic standards of the Public Schools of Brookline and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education of Massachusetts, as outlined in the *requirements* section of this policy.

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REQUIREMENTS

Such plans must be approved prior to removing the student from public school and implementing home education, or the School Committee may initiate a truancy proceeding or a care and protection action.

Application for home education must include written documentation of the educational/training background of all persons who will be responsible for the instruction of the child. Individual plans must be submitted for each child in a family.

The plan must demonstrate that the home education proposed will equal or go beyond that provided in the Public School of Brookline with respect to thoroughness, efficiency, and progress expected to be made. The home education plan must include the following information:

- 1) Number of hours per day or per week to be spent in each subject area must meet minimum state requirements which are currently 900 (elementary) and 990 (secondary) hours per school year;
- 2) Names of all persons who will be responsible for the instruction of the child in each subject area, and each person's qualifications;
- 3) Outline of the course content for each subject area covered by the plan, such plan to be designed to achieve the instructional goals established by the Public Schools of Brookline;
- 4) List of text books, materials, resources and/or academic programs to be used for instruction in each subject area;
- 5) Plan for periodic standardized assessment of the child's progress in each subject area to ensure educational progress and the attainment of minimum standards.

The development of the home education plan is the sole responsibility of the parents or guardians. Access to those educational materials in general use in the Public Schools of Brookline will be provided to assist in plan development. The Deputy Superintendent of Teaching and Learning reserves the right to require revisions, modifications, additions, or deletions to any proposed plan.

Parents or guardians may be required to appear before the Superintendent to present their home education plan. In the case of rejection of a plan, by the Superintendent, reasons for the decision shall be set forth in writing. Parents have the right to appeal the decision in a public hearing before the School Committee, should they so desire.

STUDENT PROGRESS/ASSESSMENT

The School Department will maintain permanent student record folders which will contain work samples, assessments, and other records provided by parent(s)/guardian(s). Progress will be provided to the office of the Deputy Superintendent of Teaching and Learning annually and prior to the beginning of the new school year. The evidence of progress should be included with the annual resubmission of the homeschooling application for the subsequent year. Families will decide how to show student academic progress.

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EXPECTATIONS AND ACCESS

Parents or guardians are requested to maintain routine compliance with Massachusetts regulations governing student health. Please see <https://www.mass.gov/files/documents/2018/03/12/guidelines-ma-school-requirements.pdf> for more information.

School day activities and academic programming that take place as part of the school day instructional program are not accessible to homeschool students. Furthermore, families cannot request to attend school for a portion of the day or week while homeschooling nor can families of enrolled students request partial homeschooling during the school day. Access to extracurricular activities in a homeschool student's neighborhood school is on a space available basis and must be approved by the Deputy Superintendent of Teaching and Learning.

A homeschool student shall not sit for any district or school assessments and are not entitled to a high school diploma according to The Education Reform Act of 1993.

A homeschool student requiring special education services should work directly with the Deputy Superintendent of Student Services.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. 69:1D; 76:1, Care and Protection of Charles – MASS. Supreme Judicial Court 399 Mass. 324 (1987), Brunelle v. Lynn Public Schools - MASS. Supreme Judicial Court 433 Mass. 479 (1998), The Education Reform Act of 1993