

Washington State's Homeschool Law

Homeschooled students are legally defined as those receiving 'home-based instruction.'

Note: These regulations only apply to students ages 8-18. The Declaration of Intent also applies to younger students who have previously been enrolled in a public school in the state of Washington.

Only through private school extension program are the students names never registered with OSPI.

Though records are not specifically required, by the state, documentation = attendance record and may be necessary to distinguish between home-based instruction and truancy. If there is a non-custodial parent, records may be subpoenaed if the home-schooling is being contested.

Any standardized test with national norms is typically acceptable. Information on approved standardized tests is available from OSPI (see note below).

For further information see: RCW [Revised Code of Washington] 28A225.010 (basic homeschool law), 28A195.010 (private school extension programs), 28A150.350 (part-time attendance); also see www.k12.wa.us (from "Programs" drop down menu, select "Continued" and then "Home-Based Instruction")

Independent Home Schooling

1. Counted by public school
2. Must file annual "Declaration of Intent" with local superintendent; must be filed by Sept. 15th or within 2 weeks of any quarter/trimester break.*
3. The parent must meet one of the following qualifications:
 - one year (45 quarter credits) at a post-secondary institution
 - hire a teacher (current certificate not required) to work with student 1 hour/week (min.)
 - take a course in home-based instruction from a post-secondary institution
 - obtain a waiver by the local superintendent
4. Subjects to be taught: reading, writing, spelling, language, math, science, PE/health, social studies, history, occupational education, and art and music appreciation, (curriculum/total hours per subject not dictated).
5. "School" is to be held over 180 days/equivalent hours (approx. 1000 hours/ year) although this is to be liberally construed as the legislature recognizes that the form of home-based instruction may be "less structured and more experiential in nature" (documentation = attendance record and may be necessary to distinguish between home-based instruction and truancy).
6. Part-time enrollment is an option (funding is proportionate to actual time on campus)
7. Annual assessment of student progress in math and reading is required to be administered by teacher w/current certification – achievement test or narrative evaluation. Parent must make effort to address problem areas.
8. Home-based instruction records held by parent until enrolled in school; previous school records held by local district.
9. Addresses K-8 only, 9-12 credit issues defined by local school district.
10. No tax money is involved unless the student is doing part-time attendance/ ancillary services (see # 6 above). Note: "Part-time attendance is not 90-99% enrolled/funded by tax money. Anything over 4 classes is fully funded.

Private School Extension Program

1. Counted by private school
2. Must be enrolled in an approved (by WA State Board of Education) private school (in WA) offering an extension program (**no** Declaration of Intent needed).
3. The teacher of the private school must:
 - plan objectives with parent
 - meet with student a minimum of 1 hour/week
 - evaluate student progress
 - Student to teacher ratio is 30:1
6. Ancillary services through the public schools are available (non-basic education i.e. band, shop, speech therapy, most high school classes).
7. Teacher evaluates progress (see #3 above bullet 3). The state does not require testing, though the private school may.
8. School records held by private school.
9. Credit/transcript/diploma earned through private school requirements.

What you need to know about: Public School at Home (Alternative Education Programs), Virtual Schools & "Homeschool" Centers

Issues	Homeschooling	Alternative Education & Virtual Public Schools (Public School at Home)
What laws regulate the programs?	RCW 28A225.010 (basic homeschool law), 28A195.010 (private school extension programs).	WAC 392-121-182, Public School Alternative Learning Experience
Who has control and is accountable for the education of the child?	The parents have control on what, when, where, why, and how their children will learn. The parents are accountable.	Certificated staff is in control, responsible and accountable for the ALP (Alternative Learning Plan) and student assessments.
What about curriculum?	Parents have complete control over curriculum content, level, presentation, etc. Parents provide their own curriculum.	School district may allow parental input. Districts provide curriculum and sometimes purchase orders for curriculum purchases.
Is a faith-based curriculum OK?	Absolutely. All decisions relating to curriculum and philosophy or doctrine are the responsibility of the parent.	No. It is against the law for WA state public school programs to use religious curriculum. Even the instruction at home is to be religious-free.
What are the testing requirements?	There are two testing options - standardized achievement test or non-test-based assessment; the results remain in the home.	All students take the state-mandated WASL (Washington Assessment of Student Learning).
What are the requirements for student progress?	It is the parents' responsibility to see that the child's progress is appropriate for the student's age or stage of development.	The student's performance is evaluated every 45 school days and if not progressing, the ALP is revised.
What are the record keeping requirements?	Parents keep the health, testing and educational records of their child at home.	ALP records, evaluations, grades, credits, WASL scores, etc. are kept at the school.
What about Education Reform?	Homeschooled students are exempt from public school's latest "standards".	The student's ALP must support the state and federal goals and objectives.

Adapted from "WHO Wants You to Know" www.washhomeschool.org

