

# Frequently Asked Questions about Homeschooling in Oregon



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## 1. Notification

- Who do I need to notify?
  - Notification goes to your local Education Service District (ESD). If you are unsure which ESD is yours, please see [this interactive map](#).
- How do I find my ESD?
  - Go to the [OAESD website](#) and look for your county.
- When do I need to notify?
  - If you start homeschooling at the beginning of a school year, you must notify within 10 days of the start of the school year. If you are starting sometime during the school year, you must notify within 10 days of withdrawing your child from school.
- I tried to register my child and it didn't work, what do I do?
  - Contact your local ESD.
- What if I move?
  - If you move within your school district boundary, you do not need to do anything, however, if you move outside of the district boundary, even if you are in the same ESD region, please notify your ESD.
- What if I stop homeschooling?
  - Notify your ESD.

## **2. Curriculum**

- Is there an approved curriculum for homeschooling?
  - No, families may choose what works best for their children.
- What curriculum is available?
  - An internet search will yield many results, which may be overwhelming; check in with homeschool groups in your area to learn about what kinds of curriculum are available. Or create your own!
- Where can I find state standards?
  - State content standards are listed on [ODE's Standards and Instruction](#) website.
- How do I know if we are covering the appropriate subjects and topics?
  - "Appropriate" depends on the educational goals of the family. If interested in state content standards, those are available [here](#).
- How do I know if my children are learning anything?
  - Required testing at the end of grades 3, 5, 8, and 10 will provide a baseline for that grade level, and families may have children tested at other grade levels as well.

## **3. Testing**

- What do I need to do?
  - Find an approved homeschool tester in your area (ODE maintains a list on the [Homeschooling in Oregon website](#)) and schedule the test(s).
- What is covered on the test?
  - All of the approved tests are nationally-normed achievement tests that are designed to assess general grade-level knowledge and skills. The test publisher's websites should have more information.
- How can my child prepare?
  - Look to the test publisher's websites for test prep materials, or sample questions.
- Who can administer the test?
  - An approved tester, one who is neutral (not related to the student by marriage or blood) and who meets the qualifications. ([Information about testing](#))
- How do I find a tester?
  - The [ODE Homeschool Tester List](#) can be sorted by county.
- What if my child has an IEP/PDP or testing issues (anxiety, etc)?
  - If your child has an IEP or a PDP (Privately Developed Plan, the homeschool version of an IEP) and testing accommodations are written into the plan, those

accommodations will be honored for homeschooled students. If your child has test anxiety, the family can negotiate where the test will be administered with the tester and find a place that will be less anxiety-inducing for the student.

- Why is testing required?
  - Because homeschooling families have complete autonomy in how and what they teach, and because there are no standards for homeschooling in Oregon, the State Legislature wanted to have some points at which families could check to see how their children are doing, and whether or not they are on a similar track with other children their age.
- Are there resources for free testing?
  - None that ODE is aware of.
- My homeschool program offers testing, can I have my child test with them?
  - So long as the tests are on the list of those approved by the State Board of Education, and the person administering the test is qualified under Oregon law (neutral - not related by marriage or blood, and qualified)
- Can I go to a testing center / testing group?
  - Yes, as long as the tests are on the list of those approved by the State Board of Education, and the person administering the test is qualified under Oregon law (neutral - not related by marriage or blood, and qualified)
- What happens if we miss a year of testing?
  - Violations of homeschool law may result in a Class C misdemeanor and a fine. Please check in with your local ESD and make a plan to test.
- What happens if my child doesn't test well?
  - So long as your child tests above the 15th percentile, your local ESD will not intervene. If your child tests below the 15th percentile, the ESD will ask that you have your child tested the following year.
- What do I do with the test scores when I receive them?
  - Please retain for your records, and submit to your local ESD when they are requested.
- If public school testing is suspended, will homeschool testing be suspended as well?
  - No. Homeschool testing is written into state law. Only the Legislature can change homeschool law.
- How do I opt out of homeschool testing?
  - There is no opt-out for homeschool testing.

## **4. Interscholastic Activities**

Students who are home schooled may participate in interscholastic activities with their neighborhood school district, so long as they test annually, by August 15, and score above the 25th percentile.

- What kinds of activities are available for children in elementary school?
  - For elementary school students, interscholastic activities are those that take place before or after school.
- What kinds of activities are available for students in middle school?
  - For middle school students, interscholastic activities are those that take place before or after school.
- What kinds of activities are available for students in high school?
  - For high school students, interscholastic activities are band, orchestra, choir, athletics, speech, drama, and the like. These activities may be held after school, or have classes during the day.

## **5. Special Education**

- My child has a learning disability, what do I need to do to have them exempt from testing?
  - If your child has an IEP (Individualized Educational Plan) or a PDP (Privately Developed Plan - the homeschool version of the IEP), and the IEP/PDP team has identified that testing is not an appropriate measure for progress, then your child will be exempt from required testing. Please share this information with your local ESD.
- My child has a diagnosis (dyslexia, ASD, anxiety, ADHD, etc) and I wonder what this means for testing.
  - If your child has an IEP (Individualized Educational Plan) or a PDP (Privately Developed Plan - the homeschool version of the IEP), and the IEP/PDP team has identified that testing is not an appropriate measure for progress, then your child will be exempt from required testing. Please share this information with your local ESD.
- My child used to have an IEP, but then we switched to homeschooling. Is the IEP still valid?
  - Yes. You may continue to follow the IEP, or have a PDP created.
- What is a PDP, and does my child need one?
  - A Privately Developed Plan, this is the homeschool version of an IEP. If your child has a disability, learning difficulties, or a diagnosis that can interfere with

learning, a PDP may make sense. Consult with your child's doctor, counselor, or therapist.

- Is my resident school district obligated to provide the services listed on my homeschooled student's IEP?
  - No. School districts are obligated to identify and assess every child who lives within their boundaries who qualifies for special education services, however, they are not required to provide those services.

## **6. High School Credit/Diploma**

- How can my child earn high school credit while homeschooling?
  - Some school districts have a policy to not accept any homeschool coursework. Check with your resident school district.
- What if my child wants to transfer to school, after homeschooling, will the school accept our homeschool coursework?
  - Some school districts have a policy to not accept any homeschool coursework. Check with your resident school district.
- Can my homeschooled child earn a diploma?
  - There is not an official homeschool diploma in Oregon at this time. For a universally recognized credential, the GED is an option for homeschooled students.
- Can my child skip a grade/be held back on home school? What does that entail?
  - When a family notifies their local ESD of their intent to homeschool, grade is determined by age (6 on September 1 = kindergarten, and so on). Required testing (grades 3, 5, 8, and 10) will follow that schedule. Families may certainly accelerate their child's learning and advance to the next grade level as appropriate.
  - If you feel that your child should be retained (repeat a grade), there is likely to be a learning difficulty or diagnosis causing the need for retention. If that is the case, an IEP or PDP can help clarify approaches and strategies to help your child thrive.

## **7. Resources**

- Is there any money for homeschooling families to help with materials and testing?
  - Not at this time.
- Can I divert my tax dollars so that they do not go to public schools?
  - Not at this time.

- Who else can help me?
  - A variety of homeschool networks throughout the state
  - Connect with other homeschoolers in your area through social media, your local public library, or other organizations.

### **Additional information:**

- School districts each have their own policies regarding how they connect with homeschooling students and families (i.e. the extent to which homeschooling students interact with their neighborhood school during the school day).
- Notification of intent to home school is also an opting out of the public system and public system supports, which include IEP/SpEd services, instructional supports, curriculum, ceremonies, etc.
- The Oregon Department of Education serves as a liaison for homeschooling students, much like the ESD liaison, not as a responsible entity, per se, not as a body that provides oversight. There is no oversight for homeschooling.
- Parents/Guardians are responsible to provide all educational material utilized in a homeschool.

### **Questions?**

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