Frequently Asked Home School Questions

What Districts Provide

Question: Are school districts required to provide home-schooled students with instructional textbooks and materials?

Answer: State law does not require districts to provide home-schooled students with instructional textbooks and materials. The local school district may, however, provide home-schooled students with materials such as books.

Question: Are home-schooled students allowed to participate in extra-curricular activities such as team sports, football, or school clubs?

Answer: Yes. Act 203, the Equal Access to Interscholastic Activities Act, permits home-schooled students to participate in extra-curricular and interscholastic activities after statutorily required conditions are met.

State Testing for Home-Schooled Students

Question: Are home-schooled students required to participate in statewide testing programs approved by the State Board of Education for their appropriate grade levels?

Answer: Students who are home-schooled under Option One must participate in the annual statewide testing program. The tests must be administered by a certified school district employee either with public school students or by special arrangement at the student's place of instruction, at the parent's option. Students who are not home-schooled in district approved programs are not eligible to take those assessments.

Credit for Courses

Question: Do home-schooled students in grades 7-12 receive high school credit for any courses that they pass?

Answer: Home-schooled students in grades 7-12 receive credits from their home school programs. These credits would show on the transcript that is maintained by the parent or the association. **Those credits, however, are not automatically accepted by other public or private schools.**

Question: Can home-schooled students earn and receive credit for courses taken through the South Carolina Virtual School Program?

Answer: Home-schooled students may earn credit through the South Carolina Virtual School Program if they meet the guidelines of that program.

High School Diplomas

Question: Do students who are home-schooled and complete high school receive a South Carolina High School Diploma?

Answer: No, only accredited public South Carolina high schools issue a South Carolina high school diploma.

Question: Do students who are home-schooled and complete high school receive a "South Carolina Home-Schooled Diploma"?

Answer: There is no "official" home school diploma. Home school "diplomas" are issued by the parent or in some cases, the home school association.

Home-Schooled Students Returns to Public School

Question: If home-schooled students return to public school, will they automatically start in the classes or at grade levels the home school teacher/parents say that they have completed?

Answer: If home-schooled students return to a South Carolina public school district, the district has the right to place the students in classes/grade levels which the district/school deems is instructionally appropriate for the students. In other words, because parents tell the district that the students have completed certain grade levels, does not mean the student will be placed into the next grade level. *(District instructional placement of returning home-schooled students is usually based on some type of test results that the district determines.)*

Other Questions

Question: Does the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) accredit any of the home school associations listed on the SCDE's website?

Answer: No, the SCDE does not accredit any home school association.

Question: Does the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) recommend or endorse any of the home school associations listed on the SCDE's website?

Answer: No, the SCDE does not have the authority to recommend or endorse any of the home school associations listed on the SCDE's website. Each home school association on the website has submitted the Annual Standards Assurance form ensuring, at a minimum, that the association has met the requirements stated in S.C. Code Ann. Sections 59-65-45 and 59-65-47.

Question: Does the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) monitor home schooling?

Answer: No, the SCDE does not monitor home schooling. However, the SCDE requests that home school associations contact Peggy Scott in the Office of Federal and State Accountability at 803-734-4040 to complete the Annual Standards Assurance form required under S.C. Code Ann. Sections 59-65-45 and 59-65-47.

Question: Are Co-ops an approved home schooling option in South Carolina?

Answer: Co-ops are not one of the three approved options defined in Sections 59-65-40, 59-65-45, and 59-65-47. However, Co-ops are allowed to supplement but not replace the instruction by parents in home schooling.

Question: If I enroll my child/children in an online private school and their staff is providing the instruction, am I required to obtain approval to home school under Section 59-65-47 (Option 3)?

Answer: If the instruction is provided by the online private school's staff, the student is enrolled in private school not home schooling. However, if the parent is providing the instruction using the online private school's curriculum, that is considered home schooling, and the parent is required to obtain approval to home school under Section 59-65-47 (Option 3).

Question: Are students who are home-schooled under Sections 59-65-40, 59-65-45, or 59-65-47 eligible for the Education Scholarship Trust Fund Program (ESTF)?

Answer: No, students who are home-schooled under Sections 59-65-40, 59-65-45, or 59-65-47 are not eligible for the ESTF Program.

Question: Who is responsible for maintaining the educational records of home-schooled students?

Answer: The parent-teacher is responsible for maintaining the educational records including transcripts, grades, lesson plans, attendance, and other information as outlined in Sections 59-65-40 (Option 1) and 59-65-47 (Option 3).