

Iroquois School District

Home Schooling Policy

(Revised: 11/16/99)

(Effective: 07/01/00)

Purpose:

The Board shall approve a program of home instruction, pursuant to the School Code, permitting students to study at home in accordance with the following regulations.

Definition:

Home Schooling Program - a program conducted in compliance with this section, by the parent or guardian or such person having legal custody of the child or children. A home schooling program shall not be considered a nonpublic school under the provisions of this Act.

Supervisor - the parent or guardian or such person having legal custody of the child or children, who shall be responsible for the provision of instruction, provided that such person has a high school diploma or its equivalent.

Hearing Examiner - shall not be an officer, employee or agent of the Department of Education or of the School District or intermediate unit of residence of the child in the home schooling program.

Appropriate Education - a program consisting of instruction in the required subjects for the time required in this Act and in which the student demonstrates sustained progress.

Eligibility:

A notarized affidavit of the parent or guardian or other person having legal custody of the child or children shall be filed prior to the commencement of the home schooling program and annually thereafter on August 1 with the Superintendent of the school district. The affidavit shall set forth:

- the name of the supervisor of the home schooling program who shall be responsible for the provision of instruction;
- the name and age of each child who shall participate in the home schooling program;
- the address and telephone number of the home schooling program site;
- that such subjects as required by law are offered in the English language, including an outline of proposed education objectives by subject area; and
- evidence that the child has been immunized and has received the health and medical services required for students of the child's age or grade level.

The affidavit shall contain a certification to be signed by the supervisor that the supervisor, all adults in the home, and persons having legal custody of a child or children in the home schooling program has not been convicted of criminal offenses as enumerated in Sec. 111 of the School Code.

In the event of the home schooling program relocating to another school district, the supervisor must apply, by registered mail, to the Superintendent of the district in which she/he currently resides, requesting a letter of transfer for the home schooling program is relocating. The letter of transfer must be filed by the supervisor of the home schooling program with the Superintendent of the new district of residence. The letter of transfer shall be issued no later than thirty (30) days, after receipt of the registered mail request of the home schooling program supervisor.

Program:

A child who is enrolled in a home schooling program and whose education is therefore under the direct supervision of his/her parent, guardian or other person having legal custody shall be deemed to have met the requirements if the program provides a minimum of one hundred eighty (180) days of instruction or nine hundred (900) hours of instruction per year at the elementary level, or nine hundred ninety (990) hours per year at the secondary level.

At the elementary level, the following courses shall be taught:

- English, to include spelling, reading and writing;
- mathematics;
- geography;
- history of the United States and Pennsylvania;
- civics;
- safety education, including dangers and prevention of fires;
- health and physiology;
- physical education;
- music; and
- art

At the secondary level, the following courses shall be taught:

- English, to include language, literature, speech and composition;
- science;
- geography;
- social studies, to include civics, world history, history of the United States and Pennsylvania;
- mathematics, to include general mathematics, algebra and geometry;
- art;
- music;
- physical education; and

- health and safety education, including regular and continuous instruction in the dangers and prevention of fires.

Such courses of study may include, at the discretion of the supervisor, economics; biology; chemistry; foreign languages; trigonometry; or other age appropriate courses as contained in Chapter 4 curriculum requirements of the State Board of Education. The school district will not grant “credit” for courses completed at home and will neither “promote”, “advance” nor “graduate” students who complete a series of courses through in-home instruction. If such “credit” is required to return to Iroquois School District, students may be required to take any and all examinations normally administered by the teacher of such courses as part of an evaluation process. “Credit” may be full, partial, or withheld for student(s), as determined by the Superintendent, and based upon these evaluations.

Graduation Requirements:

The following minimum courses in Grades 9 through 12 are established as a requirement for graduation in a home schooling program:

- four (4) years of English;
- four (4) years of mathematics;
- four (4) years of science;
- four (4) years of social studies;
- two (2) years of arts and humanities

Requirements of Supervisor:

In order to demonstrate that appropriate education is occurring, the supervisor shall provide and maintain on file the following documentation for each student enrolled in the home schooling program: a portfolio of records and materials. The portfolio shall consist of a log, made contemporaneously with the instruction, which designates by title the reading materials used; samples of any writings, worksheets, workbooks or creative materials used or developed by the student; and in grades three, five and eight the results of nationally-normed standardized achievement tests in reading/language arts and mathematics or results of statewide tests administered in these grade levels. The supervisor shall ensure that the nationally-normed standardized tests or the statewide tests not be administered by the child’s parent or guardian.

Evaluation Requirements:

1. A teacher or administrator who evaluates a portfolio at the elementary level shall have at least two (2) years of experience in grading any of the following subjects;
 - English, to include spelling, reading and writing;
 - mathematics;
 - science;
 - geography;
 - history of the United States and Pennsylvania

2. A teacher or administrator who evaluates a portfolio at the secondary level shall have at least two (2) years of experience in grading any of the following subjects:
 - English, to include language, literature, speech, reading and composition;
 - science, to include biology, chemistry and physics;
 - social studies, to include economics, civics, world history, history of the United States and Pennsylvania;
 - foreign language; and
 - mathematics, to include general mathematics, algebra, trigonometry, calculus and geometry.
3. An annual written evaluation of the student's educational progress as determined by a licensed clinical or school psychologist or a teacher certified by the Commonwealth or be a nonpublic school teacher or administrator is required. The evaluation shall also be based on an interview of the child and a review of the portfolio and shall certify whether or not an appropriate education is occurring. At the request of the supervisor, persons with other qualifications may conduct the evaluation with the prior consent of the Superintendent. In no event shall the evaluator be the supervisor or his/her spouse.
4. Documentation required by this policy shall be provided to the school district Superintendent or designee at the conclusion of each school year. If the Superintendent or designee has a reasonable belief that at any time during the school year appropriate education may not be occurring in the home schooling program, she/he may require documentation pertaining to the portfolio. Such documentation shall be submitted to the district by certified mail (with return receipt requested) within fifteen (15) days, and the evaluation shall be submitted within thirty (30) days.

If the Superintendent or designee determines, based on documentation, that appropriate education is not occurring, the Superintendent or designee shall send a letter to the supervisor stating that in his/her opinion appropriate education is not occurring in the home schooling program. She/he shall return all documentation, specifying what aspect or aspects of the documentation are inadequate.

The supervisor of the program shall have twenty (20) days from the receipt of the certified letter to submit additional documentation demonstrating that appropriate education is taking place. If documentation is not submitted within that time, the home schooling program shall be out of compliance, and the student shall be enrolled promptly in a public or nonpublic school.

Right of Hearing:

The Board shall provide for a proper hearing by a duly qualified and impartial hearing examiner within thirty (30) days. The examiner shall render a decision within fifteen (15) days of the hearing, except that she/he may require the establishment of a remedial education plan mutually agreed to by the Superintendent and the supervisor of the home schooling program which shall continue the home schooling program. The decision of the examiner may be appealed by either the supervisor or the Superintendent to the Secretary of Education or Commonwealth Court.

If the hearing examiner finds that the documentation does not indicate that appropriate education is taking place in the home schooling program, the home schooling program shall be out of compliance, and the student shall be enrolled promptly in a public or nonpublic school.

Loan of Instructional Materials:

The district shall, at the request of the supervisor, lend to the home schooling program copies of the school district's planned courses, textbooks, and other curriculum materials appropriate to the student's age and grade level.

Activities:

Any student enrolled in an approved home-instruction program shall not be eligible to participate in extra-curricular activities or any school sponsored PIAA athletic program.