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GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING



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SUPERINTENDENT OF
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

October 25, 2010

MEMORANDUM

TO: State Board of Education

FROM: Michael Flanagan, Chairman

SUBJECT: Discussion Regarding Home Schooling

In order to facilitate discussion regarding home schooling the following documents are provided. Attachment A is a Home Schooling in Michigan fact sheet. Attachment B is a summary of home schools meeting reporting requirements in Michigan from 1989 through 2010. Attachment C is a summary of home school regulations in the United States.

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HOME SCHOOLING IN MICHIGAN

The section of the *Revised School Code* that addresses Home Schools is contained in the Michigan Compiled Laws under MCL 380.1561.

Right to Home School

Michigan parents have the right to home school their children. The law requires a parent or legal guardian of a child from the age of six to sixteen to send his or her child to school during the entire school year, except under certain limited circumstances (MCL 380.1561). The exceptions include, but are not limited to, sending a child to a state-approved nonpublic school or educating a child at home in an organized educational program.

Who May Home School

Home school education is the responsibility of the parent or legal guardian. The parent assigns homework, gives tests and grades these tests. The issuance of report cards, transcripts, and diplomas are the responsibility of the home school family (based on internal standards). If home schooling continues through grade 12, the parent issues a high school diploma to the graduate.

Reporting Process

The annual registering of a home school to the Michigan Department of Education is voluntary. It is not required unless the student has special needs and is requesting special education services from the local public school or intermediate school district. It is recommended that if special education services will be requested, the parent first submit a completed Nonpublic School Membership Report to the Department. This form is available on www.michigan.gov/homeschool. Before special education services are established, the school will contact the Department for verification that this process is complete. A list of registered home schools is provided to intermediate school district superintendents each December and February.

It is not required that a parent inform their local school of the decision to home school, however, it is suggested. Failure to do so may result in the student being marked absent and the involvement of the truancy officer. Notification may be a phone call or a written note to the district. Keep in mind that a written note can be placed in the student's school record indicating when the student has withdrawn from the school district.

Teacher Requirement

A parent or legal guardian that has registered with the Department is qualified to teach their child if they have a teaching certificate or a bachelor's degree. However, if they claim an objection to teacher certification based upon a sincerely held religious belief, the minimum education requirement of a teaching certificate or a bachelor's degree is waived.

Course of Study

Instruction must include mathematics, reading, English, science, and social studies in all grades; and the Constitution of the United States, the Constitution of Michigan, and the history and present form of civil government of the United States, the State of Michigan, and the political subdivisions and municipalities of the State of Michigan in grades 10, 11, 12.

Home school students may enroll in nonessential elective classes at the resident public school. Nonessential elective classes may include, but are not limited to, band, drama, art, physical education, music, computer, and advanced placement courses.

Textbooks

Home school families may purchase the textbooks and instructional material of their choice. School districts are not required to provide curriculum, textbooks, and materials to home school families. Textbooks and curriculum materials may be purchased from a teacher bookstore. Information regarding home school support services and materials can be found on the Internet.

Student Records

Parents are encouraged to maintain student records of progress throughout the year. These records will assist school personnel with placement should the student enroll in a public or nonpublic school. The granting of credits and placement of students is solely determined by the receiving school. If a student attends a home school and returns to a public school, the public school generally reevaluates the students for grade placement and the transfer of credit.

Required Testing

There are no required tests for a home school student. The parent is responsible for administering tests based upon the curriculum they use. A home school student may (it is not required) participate in the Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) testing and the Michigan Merit Examination (MME) at their local public school. The MEAP test and the MME are managed by the Department and are administered at no cost to a home school student. For further information, please contact your local public school.

Athletics

The supervision and control of interscholastic athletics are the responsibility of each local board of education. Most local boards have adopted policies as proposed by the Michigan High School Athletic Association. Please contact the appropriate local school district or the Michigan High School Athletic Association at (517) 332-5046 or www.mhsaa.com.

Work Permits

Home school students may obtain a work permit through their local public school.

Funding

There are no public funds available for home schooling.

Additional Information

The Department's website provides additional information on home schooling that includes legislation and the registration form and instructions. You may access this information at www.michigan.gov/homeschool. For additional information on home schooling, please contact Tami Feldpausch at (517) 373-1833 or email Nonpublicschool@michigan.gov.

This information is provided as a service of the Michigan Department of Education and is distributed with the understanding that the Department is not engaged in rendering legal advice. Those individuals desiring or requiring advice should seek the services of an attorney.

July 2010

**Michigan Department of Education
Grants Coordination and School Support**

HOME SCHOOLS MEETING REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

School Year	Home Schools	Students
1989-90	454	887
1990-91	435	822
1991-92	431	798
1992-93	464	867
1993-94*	648	1,183
1994-95	1,076	1,937
1995-96	1,645	2,980
1996-97**	1,279	2,361
1997-98	1,298	2,269
1998-99	1,269	2,140
1999-00	1,183	1,953
2000-01	1,182	1,914
2001-02	1,088	1,817
2002-03	1,033	1,738
2003-04	989	1,659
2004-05	943	1,566
2005-06	847	1,426
2006-07	797	1,328
2007-08	789	1,320
2008-09	757	1,266
2009-10	684	1,123

* In May of 1993, the Michigan Supreme Court ruled in the DeJonge case that religious nonpublic schools that claim an objection to teacher certification based upon a sincerely held religious belief are exempt from the minimum teacher education requirement.

** In July of 1996, the Michigan Legislature amended the Compulsory School Attendance Law with the following language, "A child shall not be required to attend the public schools in the following cases: (f) The child is being educated at the child's home by his or her parent or legal guardian in an organized educational program in the subject areas of reading, spelling, mathematics, science, history, civics, literature, writing, and English grammar". Exemption (f) home schools have no relationship with the Michigan Department of Education, so, are not included in this data.

SUMMARY OF HOME SCHOOL REGULATIONS IN THE UNITED STATES

The level of involvement of the State with home school families differs across the country. A review of the regulations (or lack thereof) of each of the 50 states has been conducted by the Home School Legal Defense Association, which categorizes the states in groupings as follows:

States requiring NO NOTICE: No state requirement for parents to initiate any contact with the State. [Alaska, Connecticut, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Missouri, New Jersey, Oklahoma, Texas]

States with LOW regulation: State requires parental notification only. [Alabama, Arizona, California, Delaware, Kansas, Kentucky, Mississippi, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah, Wisconsin, Wyoming]

States with MODERATE regulation: State requires parents to send notification, test scores, and/or professional evaluation of student progress. [Arkansas, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Iowa, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Minnesota, North Carolina, New Hampshire, Ohio, Oregon, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia]

State with HIGH regulation: State requires parents to send notification or achievement test scores and/or professional evaluation, plus other requirements (e.g. curriculum approval by the state, teacher qualification of parents, or home visits by state officials). [Massachusetts, North Dakota, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont]

The types of regulations and requirements within the LOW, MODERATE, and HIGH regulation states also differ. The table below provides some examples of common requirements and the number of states that have adopted them.

TYPE OF REQUIREMENT	# of STATES	COMMENTS
No requirements	10	
Home school family must notify the district or the state	40	In many instances, the home school must also submit a copy of the children's birth certificates and proof of immunization.
Home school family must submit curriculum and/or schedule of instruction	12	Many states have required subjects that must be taught; many states require that the length of the school day and year must be equivalent to the local district or the state.
Parents must meet certain minimum teacher qualifications	9	For those that have minimum qualifications, the most common are high school diploma or GED. Some states require a bachelor's degree to teach high school grades.
Annual assessment required	24	There are usually several options in addition to a state standardized test, including an evaluation by a licensed psychologist, for example.
Assessment results must be submitted to the district or the state	18	In some states, the results of the assessments can influence greater oversight by the district or the state and may also lead to the family being denied the ability to home school.
Local district or state may deny request to home school	12	In these cases, there are procedures for the home school families to appeal.

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