



# Indiana Department of Education

Dr. Katie Jenner, Secretary of Education

To: Superintendents, Principals, Charter School Directors

From: Kimb Stewart, Homeschool Specialist

Date: September 10, 2021

Subject: Students Withdrawing to Homeschool

The Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) understands that school corporations and charter schools are working diligently to create and maintain safe environments as students continue to return to the classroom. IDOE also understands that some parents and guardians may choose other educational options, including homeschooling, for their students this fall. This memo answers a few questions that typically arise when parents decide to homeschool.

**Q: Are parents and guardians required to register their homeschool?**

A: No. Registration in Indiana is left up to the discretion of the parents or guardians.

**Q: Are parents and guardians required to sign the Withdrawal to Non-Accredited Nonpublic School Located in Indiana form?**

A: Parents or guardians of students in high school must sign the *Withdrawal to Non-Accredited Nonpublic School Located in Indiana* form in order for their child to be removed from the graduation cohort. The withdrawal form is not a homeschool registration. Per IC 20-33-3-28.6, if a parent or guardian decides not to sign the form, their student is considered to be a dropout, and the principal should report the student to the Bureau of Motor Vehicles to revoke or refuse to issue a driver's license or learner's permit for the student.

**Q: Are there requirements or deadlines parents must meet in order to return to public school?**

A: No. Parents and guardians may decide to homeschool and return to public school as they see fit. Public schools must enroll students returning from a homeschool environment right away, without waiting for the end of a grading period or other event. Charter schools that are fully enrolled should add students returning from homeschool to their waiting list.

**Q: Is there a difference between homeschooling and other learning from home options?**

A: Yes. Homeschooling is the term used when parents or guardians withdraw from public and non-public accredited school options in order to educate their students themselves. Although homeschool parents and guardians may participate in co-ops or other options, the education is based in the home with the parents making the decisions about curriculum and instructional matters. Homebound instruction and virtual schools, including virtual charter schools, accredited and located in Indiana, are examples of home-based programs that are not homeschools.



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### **Q: What are the requirements for parents who decide to homeschool?**

A: Attendance: IC 20-33-2-20 and IC 20-33-2-28 require a non-accredited nonpublic school, including homeschool, to maintain an accurate daily record of attendance to verify the enrollment and attendance of a student upon the request of the Secretary of Education or the public school superintendent. There is no specific form required for these attendance records. Parents should ensure that homeschooled students receive at least 180 days of instruction.

Instruction: IC 20-33-2-27 and IC 20-33-2-28 provide that it is unlawful for a parent to fail, neglect, or refuse to send their child to a public school for a full term unless the child is being provided with instruction equivalent to that given in the public schools. State law does not define “instruction equivalent to that given in public schools,” however, IC 20-33-2-12 provides that a non-accredited nonpublic school is not bound by any legal requirements set forth in IC 20 or IC 21 with regard to curriculum or the content of educational programs offered by the school.

### **Q: What should school personnel do if they feel a parent or guardian is not providing 180 days of instruction or equivalent instruction in a homeschool?**

A: School personnel should contact the Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) if they feel that the parent or guardian is not meeting the requirements of the law. School personnel may contact their local DCS office or call the Indiana Child Abuse Hotline at 1-800-800-5556.

### **Q: Are homeschools accredited?**

A: No. Indiana homeschools are nonpublic non-accredited schools.

### **Q: Do schools have the authority to approve parents for homeschooling or to approve the curriculum and instructional materials the parents use to homeschool?**

A: No. When a parent or guardian decides to homeschool, all educational decisions regarding the withdrawal and subsequent curriculum and instruction are left up to the parents or guardian.

### **Q: How are students placed in classes when they return from homeschooling?**

A: Schools retain right of placement for students returning from homeschool and may place them in the grade level or classes where they believe the students will be most successful. Schools may use placement tests, final exams, or other methods, including homeschool academic records, if appropriate, to determine where the student should be placed.

Additional questions about homeschooling should be directed to Kimb Stewart at [kstewart@doe.in.gov](mailto:kstewart@doe.in.gov) or 317-232-0957.