

SUMMARY DESCRIPTION OF
WASHINGTON STATE'S LAWS
REGULATING HOME-BASED EDUCATION

Compulsory Attendance (28A.225 RCW) All children between the ages of 8 and 18 are required to attend the public school of the district in which the child resides for the full time when the school is in session, unless:

- *The child is attending an approved private school or extension program
- *The child is receiving home-based instruction
- *The child is physically or mentally unable to attend
- *The child is fifteen years of age or older and:
 - 1) The district superintendent determines such a child has attained ninth grade proficiency, or
 - 2) The child is regularly and lawfully engaged in a useful or remunerative occupation, or
 - 3) The child has met graduation requirements of the State, or
 - 4) The child has received a certificate of educational competence by the State

Family rights - "The State recognizes that parents who are causing their children to receive home-based instruction under RCW 28A.25.010(4) shall be subject only to those minimum state laws and regulations necessary to ensure that a sufficient basic educational opportunity is provided to the children receiving such instruction. Therefore, all decisions relating to philosophy or doctrine, selection of books, teaching materials and curriculum, and methods, timing, and place in the provision or evaluation of home-based instruction shall be the responsibility of the parent except for matters specifically referred to in Chapter 28A.225 RCW."

Washington's Home-based Instruction Law explains parental duties and options for providing home-based instruction through independent study or enrollment in a private school extension program.

Independent Home-based instruction must:

A. be planned and supervised by parent(s) and include . . .

. . . instruction in occupational education, science, mathematics, language, social studies, history, health, reading, writing, spelling and the development of an appreciation of art and music provided for an "equivalent" time to the number of hours for private schools. Further, the legislature recognizes that home-based instruction is less structured and more experiential than classroom education, therefore, it has been declared that these provisions of the nature and quantity of instruction shall be liberally construed.

B. be provided by the child's parent(s), who:

1. is supervised by a certified teacher who has contact with the child 1 hour/week or an average of 4 hours per month, OR
2. has earned the equivalent of 45 college level quarter credit hours, OR
3. has taken a course in home-based instruction at a post-secondary institute or voc-tech institute, OR
4. has been deemed qualified by the local district superintendent.

Duties of parent(s)

Parents providing home-based instruction have the duty to:

A. File a declaration of intent annually which must:

1. Give the child's name and age, and
2. State if a teacher will be supervising, and
3. Be filed by September 15th or within two weeks of the beginning of any quarter or semester, and
4. Use the format prescribed by the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI)

B. Ensure that an annual standardized achievement test (those approved by the State Board of Education) **is administered to the child by a well qualified individual, or an academic progress assessment of the child's written by a Washington State certified teacher currently employed in the field of education.** Assessment or test results are the property of the parent only. These records are to be kept and given to the public or private school upon request should re-entry be desired.

Parents who comply with these duties shall be presumed to be providing home-based instruction.

Other choices and options:

Homeschooling may take place in conjunction with part-time attendance in the local public school.

Private School Extension Home-based Instruction must:

A. be provided through enrollment in an approved private school and include . . .

B. be supervised by a teacher of the private school

C. hold student records

Duties of the teacher:

Teacher may not supervise more than 30 students

A. Plan curriculum and objectives with the parent(s)

B. Meet with student a minimum average of 1 hour per week

C. Evaluate student progress

Note: Parents choosing this option for home education should find an extension program that is provided by an institution that is knowledgeable about the various methods and styles of homeschooling. Some extension programs may make most of the choices regarding curriculum and materials and set specific requirements regarding hours, testing, etc.

Also, schools not approved by WA State Board of Education, correspondence courses or other out-of-state programs do not constitute an approved private school in Washington State. Thus, parents using such courses must send in their Declaration of Intent to Homeschool and annually assess student.

Ancillary services (non-basic education, i.e. band, shop, speech therapy, most high classes) are available through public schools.