

# Home School Requirements

North Carolina law defines a home school as a non public school consisting of the children of not more than two families or households, where the parents or legal guardians or members of either household determine the scope and sequence of the academic instruction, provide academic instruction, and determine additional sources of academic instruction. [General Statute 115C-563\(a\)](#) as amended changes the definition of a home school to allow parents to hire tutors, let their children participate in group settings where they receive instruction (co-ops, 4-H classroom instruction, etc.) and be instructed by an expert that is not a part of the household in the established homeschool (apprenticeships, a homeschool doctor teaching biology, etc.) This will allow homeschool parents more freedom to choose what is best for the education of their children.

The North Carolina Division of Non-Public Education (DNPE) is authorized by state law to receive home school notices of intent to begin initial operation and to terminate operation, and to annually inspect the school's student attendance and nationally standardized achievement test result records. Chief Administrators of home schools should anticipate receiving a request(s) to meet with a DNPE representative at a public location in close proximity to the home school while the home school is in operation

## Requirements

Parents/guardians residing in North Carolina and desiring, in lieu of conventional school attendance, to home school their school-age children must:

- Hold at least a high school diploma or its equivalent.
- Send to DNPE a Notice of Intent to Operate a Home School. The notice must include the name and address of the school along with the name of the school's owner and chief administrator.
  - Instructions for Selecting a Home School Name:
    - When selecting your school name, choose a simple name appropriate for inclusion on the student's future high school diploma and transcript (which will be issued by your individual school). DNPE will not be able to accommodate requests to change the school name once your file is opened.

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- The School Name must not exceed 30 characters in length (including spaces and punctuation).
  - Do not use the following words in your school name: Charter, college, elementary, grade, grammar, high, incorporated (or Inc.), junior, kindergarten, lower, middle, primary, public, residence, schooling, secondary, seminary, senior, the, university or upper.
  - Do NOT use the name of your curriculum in your school name, even if you are registered with an accredited distance learning program. Example of names NOT allowed: ABEKA, BJU, Bob Jones, Keystone, Liberty, Time for Learning, James Madison, Penn Foster, etc.
  - Do not use A or THE at the beginning of your school name.
  - Any school submitting its Notice of Intent without providing a school name will automatically be assigned a school name as follows: Last name of Chief Administrator + School (Example: Smith School).
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- Elect to operate under either [Part 1](#) or [Part 2 of Article 39](#) of the North Carolina General Statutes as a religious or as a non-religious school.
  - Operate the school "on a regular schedule, excluding reasonable holidays and vacations, during at least nine calendar months of the year."
  - Maintain at the school [disease immunization](#) and annual [attendance](#) records for each student.
  - Have a [nationally standardized achievement test](#) administered annually to each student. The test must involve the subject areas of English grammar, reading, spelling, and mathematics. Records of the test results must be retained at the home school for at least one year and made available to DNPE when requested. The first standardized test must be administered within one year of the home school start date, and then annually thereafter.
  - Notify DNPE when the school is no longer in operation.

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## Reminders

- 1 To avoid needless delays, always use this [Notice of Intent](#) form when sending your notice of intent.
- 2 Please DO NOT send a Notice of Intent to DNPE for the present school year if the only students to be enrolled in your home school: (a) are currently under age 7 and will not turn age 7 in the present/current school year, or (b) are currently 18 years of age or older.
- 3 Please send your Notice of Intent a month in advance of your home school's initial opening date. If any of your children will turn age 7 before this coming June 1, please send your Notice of Intent at least 30 days before the child's 7th birthday. One Notice of Intent per school, please -- not per student.
- 4 No Notices of Intent are accepted in June. If your home school will operate only during the summer months, DO NOT send a Notice of Intent to DNPE.
- 5 The State of North Carolina home school statistical year begins each July 1 and concludes the following June 30. Therefore, do not file your Notice of Intent until after July 1 of the home school statistical year in which your home school will begin initial operation.
- 6 In continuing your school from year to year, do not again send a Notice of Intent to DNPE unless you have previously notified DNPE that your school was terminated. IF it was previously terminated and you are now re-opening it, answer "Yes" to question 1 and then, on that same line, give the former county if it will now be in a different one. Give the current county on line 2.
- 7 When selecting your school name, choose an academic name appropriate for inclusion on the student's future high school diploma which would be provided by your school. Keep in mind that DNPE will NOT be able to accommodate requests later for a change of school name in the division's files.
- 8 A reminder that the State of North Carolina has no legal authority outside of its geographical borders. Consequently, if the student is living outside of the geographical borders of the State of North Carolina, DO NOT send a Notice of Intent form to DNPE.

# Home School Requirements

- 9 In order to expedite the processing of Notices of Intent, please do not submit your Notice of Intent until you are certain that your home school will definitely begin operation. Sending a Notice of Intent and then withdrawing it several days/weeks later creates an unnecessary additional workload for our office staff.
- 10 If a home school does not meet all legal requirements for such a school, DNPE notifies the local public school superintendent that the North Carolina compulsory school attendance law is not being satisfied. The local public school superintendent then takes appropriate action.
- 11 A home school that has met the legal requirements for such a school is a non-public school. Consequently, a photocopy of the student's cumulative record from his/her previous school may be obtained and kept at the site of the home school if the parent so desires. The last public or private educational institution which the student attended should retain the original record.
- 12 DNPE suggests that before finalizing plans for establishing a home school, you first consult with the chief administrator of the local conventional school (public or private) which your child would otherwise be attending. Ask him/her how he/she would handle the grade placement of your child should you decide later to terminate your home school and enroll your child in that school. The initial point of student entry into the North Carolina public school system is the kindergarten level.
- 13 When sending your Notice of Intent to DNPE, always include diploma documentation for all persons named as a provider of academic instruction. Be sure to include the name of the parent/legal guardian who is usually with the student during the day while other area children are normally attending local schools.
- 14 Do not withdraw your child from his/her present school or begin your school until you have received written acknowledgment from DNPE that your completed Notice of Intent to Operate a School form has been received.