



Start a School

AN EDUCATION FREEDOM FOUNDATION INITIATIVE

Illinois

Home School

The Illinois State Board of Education's webpage on homeschooling is where you will find information on registration, requirements, resources, and more. The information is divided into several topics, which you can click on to learn more. If you prefer, you can view all of the information in a [printable document](#).

Steps to Start a Home School

Starting a homeschool in Illinois involves several steps to ensure compliance with state regulations. Here's a general guide to help you get started:

- 1. Familiarize Yourself with State Laws:** Understand the homeschooling laws and regulations specific to Illinois. As of my last update, Illinois requires parents to provide instruction in specific subjects, including language arts, mathematics, biological and physical sciences, social sciences, fine arts, and physical development and health. However, there is flexibility in how these subjects are taught. You can find detailed information on your state's Department of Education website or through homeschooling advocacy groups such as [Home School Legal Defense Association \(HSLDA\)](#).
 - Review [Home School document](#).
 - Review all sections of [HOW CAN WE HELP TODAY?](#)
- 2. Notify the School District:** According to Illinois law, parents or guardians who choose to homeschool are not required to notify the regional superintendent of their intent to homeschool.

However, the agency recommends that you notify your child's current school, preferably in writing, that you are withdrawing them to homeschool or enroll in an online school. Your child's school may have a withdrawal form that needs to be signed. You may also choose to write a letter to the school stating your intent to homeschool, but this is not mandatory. The key point is to make sure your child's current school knows they will not be showing up for class so that they are not reported missing or truant. You may begin homeschooling after you have organized your homeschool program or enrolled your

child in an online school and have withdrawn your child from their current school. There are no other forms, licenses, approvals, etc. that are required. ISBE no longer collects homeschool forms. Your [Regional Office of Education](#) may have a voluntary form available to notify their office that you intend to homeschool. Chicago Public Schools has a [voluntary form](#) available for residents of Chicago.

3. **Choose a Homeschooling Method:** Select a homeschooling method that aligns with your child's learning style and your educational philosophy. Options include traditional curriculum-based homeschooling, unschooling, eclectic homeschooling, and more.
4. **Develop a Curriculum:** Design a curriculum tailored to your child's needs and interests. You can create your own curriculum or purchase pre-packaged curricula from homeschooling publishers. Make sure to cover the required subjects outlined in the state regulations.
5. **Gather Necessary Resources:** Gather textbooks, workbooks, educational materials, and other resources to support your chosen curriculum. You can also utilize online resources, libraries, museums, and community programs for additional learning experiences.
6. **Keep Records:** Maintain records of your homeschooling activities, including attendance, academic progress, and samples of your child's work. These records may be required by the state or requested by colleges or universities if your child plans to continue their education beyond homeschooling.
7. **Stay Connected:** Join homeschooling support groups or online communities to connect with other homeschooling families for advice, resources, and socialization opportunities for your child.
8. **Stay Informed:** Stay informed about any changes to homeschooling laws or regulations in Illinois. Subscribe to newsletters from homeschooling organizations or check the Illinois State Board of Education website for updates.
9. **Assess Progress:** Regularly assess your child's progress to ensure they are meeting educational goals and objectives. Adjust your curriculum and teaching methods as needed to address any areas of concern or areas where your child excels.
10. **Graduation and Transcripts:** When your child reaches high school age, plan for their graduation and create transcripts documenting their coursework and achievements. This will be important if they plan to attend college or pursue further education or employment opportunities.

Remember to consult with the Illinois State Board of Education or a local homeschooling organization for specific guidance and support tailored to your situation. Each family's homeschooling journey is unique, so feel free to adapt these steps to best meet the needs of your child and family.

Home School Statutes

The Education Freedom Foundation has relied on the [U.S. Department of Education's State Regulation of Private and Home Schools Map](#) for relevant statutes. Over time, the state pages on this map have been updated since their initial creation. In some cases, states have changed their laws without these updates being reflected on the map. Given the various methods each state uses to publicize changes to its laws, the most recent information for the Start-A-School project was often obtained directly from the U.S. Department of Education website. Users are encouraged to verify any information before making decisions based on it.

- Homeschooling in Illinois is considered to be a form of private education, used to apply to a student who, under the terms of the compulsory attendance law, is "attending a nonpublic or parochial school where children are taught the branches of education taught to children of corresponding age and grade in the public schools, and where the instruction of the child in the branches of education are in English." The term "private school" includes homeschooling if the teacher (parent or private tutor) is competent, the required subjects are taught, and the student receives an education at least equivalent to public schooling. *People v. Levisen*, 404 Ill. 574, 90 N.E. 2d 213 (1950) and [105 ILCS 5/26-1 et seq.](#)

Assessment

- Illinois does not require homeschooled students to participate in standardized testing or reporting of standardized testing scores.
- A public school may choose to allow a homeschooled student to participate in some assessment tests.

Initial and Renewal Applications

- Parents are not required to register with the state but may voluntarily notify the ISBE and regional superintendent.
- The regional superintendent has the responsibility for monitoring compliance with the compulsory attendance law. In so doing, the regional superintendent may expect the parents who seek to educate their children at home to establish that they are providing instruction that is at least commensurate with the standards of the public schools. The burden of proof rests with the parents. The parents may be expected to document the subjects taught which must include "branches of learning" taught in the public school, the time frame in which instruction will be offered, and the competency of the parent or other instructor(s). It is not necessary for the instructor to have a teacher's certificate. The parents may also be expected to establish by written examinations or by some other method that the child's achievement is comparable to that of the child's peers of corresponding age and grade level. *Scoma v. Chicago Board of Education*, 391 F. Supp. 452 (N.D. Ill. 1974).

Public School Access

- Homeschooled students may attend a public school part-time if there is sufficient space available, the request is submitted to the school principal no later than May 1 for the following year school year, and the course requested is part of the school's regular curriculum. [105 ILCS 5/10-20.24](#).
- Homeschooled students may take driver's education courses with the local school district if the chief administrator of the home school informs the local public school district of the student's name and evidence the student passed a minimum of eight courses during the previous two semesters no later than April 1 for the following school year. [105 ILCS 5/27-24.2](#) and [27-24.4](#).
- Public schools have no obligation to make extracurricular activities, including athletics, open to students attending private schools.

Special Education

- Under Section D, Proportionate Share Services, of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), public districts have two primary obligations to students in private schools; this includes all students in home schools: 1) timely and meaningful consultation, and 2) Child Find. ISBE Memorandum 06-3 (July 25, 2006).

Resources

Contact Information

ROE/ISC Department, N-250
(217) 785-9998

Information and Legislation

- [ISBE: Home School Resources](#)
- [ISBE: Home-Schooling Q&As to Know in Illinois](#)
- [Illinois Compiled Statutes \(ILCS\)](#)
- [ISBE: Home Schooling](#)