



Start a School

AN EDUCATION FREEDOM FOUNDATION INITIATIVE

New Jersey

Home School

In New Jersey, the Legislature under the compulsory education law ([N.J.S.A. 18A:38-25](#)) has permitted children to receive “equivalent instruction elsewhere than at school,” including the home. The following homeschooling questions and answers are intended to assist a parent/guardian and public school district(s) in dealing with issues that frequently arise in this context.

Steps to Start a Home School

Starting a homeschool in New Jersey involves navigating state regulations and establishing an effective educational environment for your children. Here's a guide to help you get started:

1. **Understand New Jersey's Homeschooling Laws:** Familiarize yourself with the homeschooling laws in New Jersey. In New Jersey, homeschooling is considered private schooling. Parents are required to provide "equivalent instruction" to that provided in public schools, but there are no specific requirements for curriculum or instructional hours. However, you must notify the local school district of your intent to homeschool. 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 \(HSLDA\)](#).
 - [Homeschooling Frequently Asked Questions](#)
2. **Notify the Local School District:** Submit a letter of intent to homeschool to your local school district. Include basic information such as your name, address, and the names and ages of the children you'll be homeschooling. You must submit this letter annually.
3. **Choose a Homeschooling Method:** Decide on the homeschooling method or curriculum that aligns with your educational philosophy and your children's learning styles. New Jersey offers flexibility in homeschooling approaches, allowing parents to tailor education to their children's needs.

4. **Develop a Curriculum:** Based on your chosen method, create a curriculum for each child. While New Jersey doesn't mandate specific subjects or instructional hours, it's important to provide a well-rounded education that covers core subjects like math, language arts, science, social studies, and health.
5. **Gather Necessary Materials:** Purchase or gather the materials and resources you'll need for homeschooling, such as textbooks, workbooks, educational games, art supplies, and science equipment. Consider your children's interests and learning styles when selecting materials.
6. **Establish a Schedule:** Set a schedule for homeschooling activities that works for your family. Determine the best time of day for learning, incorporate breaks and outdoor activities, and allow flexibility to accommodate your children's interests and needs.
7. **Keep Records:** Keep detailed records of your homeschooling activities, including attendance, academic progress, and any assessments or evaluations. While New Jersey doesn't require specific record-keeping, maintaining thorough records can help track your children's progress and fulfill any future requirements.
8. **Participate in Assessments (Optional):** New Jersey doesn't require homeschooling students to participate in standardized testing or assessments. However, some parents choose to administer tests or assessments to gauge their children's academic progress. Consider your educational goals and preferences when deciding whether to participate in assessments.
9. **Stay Informed and Connected:** Stay informed about homeschooling resources, support groups, and events in your area. Joining homeschooling organizations or online forums can provide valuable support, resources, and networking opportunities for you and your children.

Starting a homeschool in New Jersey offers flexibility and autonomy in designing an educational experience tailored to your children's needs and interests. By understanding state regulations, developing a curriculum, and staying connected with other homeschooling families, you can create a rewarding homeschooling journey for your 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.

- If a parent or guardian does not appeal a school's refusal to enroll a student, or if a parent or guardian removes a student from his or her school in order to homeschool

that child, then the parent or guardian is required to inform the local board of education per the [NJDOE's Frequently Asked Questions: Homeschooling](#).

- The NJDOE encourages parents or guardians to notify the local boards of education of the intent to homeschool a student so that questions do not arise about compliance with the compulsory education law per the [NJDOE's Frequently Asked Questions: Homeschooling](#).
- Responsibility for enforcing the compulsory education law rests with the local board of education. When a school board has reason to believe that a parent or guardian is not complying with the compulsory education law, the local board of education can initiate truancy proceedings in municipal court, requiring parents or legal guardians to document their activities in providing "equivalent instruction." Per the [NJDOE's Frequently Asked Questions: Homeschooling](#).
- The provision, "to receive equivalent instruction elsewhere than at school" in [N.J.S.A. 18A:38-25](#), permits a parent/guardian to educate the child at home. Statutes requires that "every parent, guardian or other person having custody and control of a child between six and 16 to ensure that such child regularly attends the public schools of the district or a day school in which there is given instruction equivalent to that provided in the public schools for children of similar grades and attainments or to receive equivalent instruction elsewhere than at school." [N.J.S.A. 18A:38-25](#)

A parent or guardian or other person having charge and control of a child between the ages of 6 and 16 years, who shall fail to comply with any of the provisions of the article (N.J.S.A. 18A:38-25) relating to his/her duties, shall be deemed to be a disorderly person and shall be subject to a fine of not more than \$25.00 for the first offense and not more than \$100.00 for each subsequent offense, in the discretion of the court. [N.J.S.A. 18A:38-31](#)

Assessment and Diplomas

- A homeschooled student may obtain a New Jersey state high school diploma by passing the General Educational Development test; or by completing 30 general education credits leading to a degree at an accredited institution of higher education and meeting current state assessment graduation requirements per the [NJDOE's Frequently Asked Questions: Homeschooling](#).

Curriculum and Instruction

- New Jersey's compulsory education law states that "every parent, guardian or other person having custody and control of a child between the ages of six and 16 years shall cause such child regularly to attend the public schools of the district or a day school in which there is given instruction equivalent to that provided in the public schools for children of similar grades and attainments or to receive equivalent instruction elsewhere than at school." [N.J. Rev. Stat. §18A: 38-25](#).

Public School Access

- Per the [NJDOE's Frequently Asked Questions: Homeschooling](#), a local board of education has no obligation to allow a home-schooled student to participate in regular school curriculum or in extracurricular or sports activities. Such determinations are at the discretion of the school board.

Resources

Information and Legislation

- [New Jersey Department of Education: Frequently Asked Questions: Homeschooling](#)