



# Start a School

AN EDUCATION FREEDOM FOUNDATION INITIATIVE

## New Mexico

### Home Schools

The New Mexico Public Education Department's [Options for Parents & Families Division](#) supports a full range of educational options for New Mexico's families. In addition to traditional public schools, public charter schools, online public schools, and non-public schools, home schooling has long been a legal choice in our state.

### Steps to Start a Home School

Starting a homeschool in New Mexico involves several steps, but it can be a rewarding journey. Here's a general guide to get you started:

1. **Familiarize Yourself with State Laws:** New Mexico has specific homeschooling laws and regulations. Familiarize yourself with these laws to ensure compliance. In New Mexico, homeschooling falls under the category of "home schools" and is regulated by the New Mexico Public Education Department (PED). 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 \(HSLDA\)](#).
  - [Frequently Asked Questions](#)
  - [Notification of a Home School form](#)
  - [NM Health Form 454](#)
2. **Understand Requirements:** In New Mexico, there are two ways to notify the NMPED of your intent to operate a home school:
  - Register through our online database, the [NMPED Home School System](#)
  - Send a paper [Notification of a Home School form](#) to the NMPED.

Review the following:

- Review [Frequently Asked Questions](#) about home schooling in New Mexico

- Review [The NMPED Home Schooling Annual Report 2023](#)
  - Review [Understanding Home Schools: Guidance for School Districts from the NMPED 2024](#)
3. **Choose a Curriculum:** Decide on the curriculum you'll use for your homeschool. You can choose from pre-packaged curricula, online programs, or design your own curriculum based on your child's needs and interests.
  4. **Create a Learning Environment:** Designate a space in your home for learning. It should be free from distractions and equipped with necessary materials like books, supplies, and educational resources.
  5. **Develop a Schedule:** Create a schedule for your homeschool. Consider your child's learning style, your family's routine, and any extracurricular activities. Flexibility is one of the benefits of homeschooling, so feel free to adjust your schedule as needed.
  6. **Keep Records:** In New Mexico, homeschoolers are required to keep attendance records and submit them annually to the PED. Though not a legal requirement, home school operators are encouraged to maintain thorough and accurate records of their notifications of enrollment, instructional hours, and educational materials, and to keep portfolios of student work. These records will aid students who transfer to a traditional school or who pursue post-secondary education or training.
  7. **Stay Connected:** Join homeschooling groups or co-ops in your area to connect with other homeschooling families. These groups can provide support, resources, and opportunities for socialization for you and your child.
  8. **Stay Informed:** Stay updated on homeschooling laws and regulations in New Mexico. The PED website and homeschooling organizations can be valuable sources of information.
  9. **Evaluate and Adjust:** Regularly evaluate your homeschooling approach and make adjustments as needed to meet your child's changing needs and interests.

Starting a homeschool in New Mexico requires careful planning and adherence to state regulations, but with dedication and effort, you can create a fulfilling educational experience for your child.

## 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.*

## **Assessment and Diplomas**

- The board of regents, governing board, or community college board of a public post-secondary educational institution may not require proof of a high school equivalency credential from an applicant who has completed all requirements of a home-based education program and has submitted the test scores that otherwise qualify the student for admission to the institution. [NMSA 1978, §21-1-1.1.](#)

## **Curriculum and Instruction**

- A "home school" is a home study program of instruction operated by a parent, guardian, or other person having custody and control of a school-age person that provides a basic academic educational program, including reading, language arts, mathematics, social studies, and science. [NMSA 1978, §22-1-2 E and J.](#)
- Any person operating or intending to operate a home school shall provide instruction by a person possessing at least a high school diploma or its equivalent. [NMSA 1978, §22-1-2.1.](#)
- A school-age person is subject to the provisions of the Compulsory School Attendance Law and must attend school for at least the length of time of the school year that is established in the school district in which the person is a resident. [NMSA 1978, §22-12A-2.](#)

## **Initial and Renewal Applications**

- Any person operating or intending to operate a home school must submit a home school registration form made available from the public education department or posted on its website within 30 days of the home school's opening. The person must also notify the public education department on or before August 1 of each subsequent year of operation of the home school. Additionally, the operator of the home school must maintain records of student disease immunization. [NMSA 1978, §22-1-2.1.](#)

## **Public School Access**

- A homeschooled student is eligible to enroll for free in the statewide cyber academy by enrolling for one-half or more of the minimum courses required within the local public high school curriculum. Alternatively, the student may enroll and pay 35 percent of the value per curricular unit if enrolled for less than half of the minimum courses required. [NMSA 1978, §22-30-6.](#)
- Per the New Mexico activities association guidelines, a homeschooled student is eligible to participate in their local school district athletics, co-curricular and extracurricular activities. [NMSA 1978, §22-8-23.8.](#)
- Homeschooled students may take one or more local public school class. [NMSA 1978, §22-8-23.9.](#)

## Special Education

- No state policy currently exists.

## Resources

### Contact Information--State and Federal Departments of Education

- Contact the Home School Department at [Info.HomeSchool@ped.nm.gov](mailto:Info.HomeSchool@ped.nm.gov)
- New Mexico Public Education Department  
300 Don Gaspar  
Santa Fe, NM 87501-2786  
Phone: (505) 827-5800  
Fax: (505) 827-6725  
Website: <http://www.ped.state.nm.us/ped/index.html>
- U.S. Department of Education, [New Mexico](#)

### Information and Legislation

- [New Mexico Public Education Department: New Mexico Home Schools](#)
- New Mexico Administrative Code. Primary and Secondary Education, Alternative Education – Nonpublic Schools [Title 6, Chapter 81, Part 2](#)
- [Access to Unannotated NMSA](#)