



Start a School

AN EDUCATION FREEDOM FOUNDATION INITIATIVE

Alabama

Home Schools

Steps to Start a Home School

Starting a home school in Alabama can be an exciting endeavor! Here's a general guide to help you get started:

- 1. Familiarize Yourself with Alabama Homeschooling Laws:** Alabama has fairly lenient homeschooling laws compared to some other states, but it's important to understand the legal requirements. You'll need to notify the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) of your intent to homeschool. You can find detailed information on the ALSDE website or through homeschooling associations in Alabama or through homeschooling advocacy groups such as [Home School Legal Defense Association \(HSLDA\)](#).
 - Review [Non-public School Act](#)
 - Review [Mandatory Attendance – Reporting Requirements](#)
 - Review [Requirement for Certification of Private Tutors](#)
- 2. Review the CHOOSE Act:** The Creating Hope and Opportunity for Our Students' Education ([CHOOSE Act](#)) was approved in 2024. This law introduces state-funded Education Savings Accounts (ESAs) that homeschooling families can use for qualified educational expenses, marking the first time Alabama has provided direct financial support to homeschoolers. Eligible homeschool families receive \$2,000 per participating student, capped at \$4,000 per family.
- 3. Choose a Homeschooling Method:** There are various homeschooling approaches, such as traditional, classical, unschooling, Montessori, etc. Research different methods and choose the one that aligns with your child's learning style and your educational philosophy.

4. **Develop a Curriculum:** Decide what subjects you want to teach and gather appropriate materials and resources. You can purchase pre-packaged curricula or create your own based on state standards and your child's interests.
5. **Set Up a Homeschooling Schedule:** Determine how many hours per day and days per week you'll devote to homeschooling. Remember to include breaks and extracurricular activities in your schedule.
6. **Create a Learning Space:** Designate an area in your home specifically for homeschooling. Make sure it's free from distractions and has all the necessary supplies.
7. **Connect with Other Homeschooling Families:** Join homeschooling groups or associations in your area to connect with other homeschooling families. These communities can provide support, resources, and opportunities for socialization for both you and your child.
8. **Keep Records:** Alabama requires homeschooling parents to maintain attendance records and submit them to the ALSDE upon request. Keep detailed records of your child's progress, including grades, standardized test scores, and any other relevant documentation.
9. **Stay Flexible and Adjust as Needed:** Homeschooling allows for flexibility, so don't be afraid to adjust your approach if something isn't working. Pay attention to your child's needs and adapt your teaching methods accordingly.
10. **Stay Informed:** Keep yourself updated on homeschooling laws and regulations in Alabama, as they may change over time. Stay connected with homeschooling organizations and online forums to stay informed about any developments.
11. **Enjoy the Journey:** Remember that homeschooling is a unique opportunity to tailor your child's education to their individual needs and interests. Embrace the journey and enjoy watching your child learn and grow!

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.

- A home school can seek qualification as a private school, church school, or under the private tutor option. [Code of Alabama 1975 §§16-28-1\(1\), 16-28-1\(2\), 16-28-5](#).
 - Private schools must hold a certificate issued by the state superintendent of education that shows the following requirements are being met: 1) any teachers

are state certified; 2) subjects mandated by the state are included; 3) instruction is in English; and 4) regular attendance is kept. [Code of Alabama 1975 §16-28-1\(1\)](#).

- A K-12 school or school with any combination of these levels "operated by a local church, group of churches, denomination, and/or association of churches on a nonprofit basis which do not receive any state or federal funding" is defined as a church school. [Code of Alabama 1975 §§16-28-1\(2\), 16-46-1\(3\)](#).
- Instruction as a private tutor is defined as instruction by a state certified teacher who teaches in English state required courses between 8:00 a.m. and 4 p.m. for a minimum of three hours per day over the course of at least 140 days during the calendar year. [Code of Alabama 1975 §16-28-5](#).

Assessment and Diplomas

- High school graduation examinations, though not required by the state for homeschooled students, are available to nonpublic school students in the state. Interested students who seek this option may contact the local school district for timeframes and any reasonable fees associated with covering the costs of providing the examination. [Code of Alabama 1975 §16-3-40](#).

Curriculum and Instruction

- A private tutor (holding a state superintendent of education issued certificate) offers instruction in the several branches of study required to be taught in the public schools of this state; for at least three hours a day for 140 days each calendar year, between the hours of 8:00 A.M. and 4:00 P.M., and who uses English language in giving instruction. The tutor shall keep a register of work that includes attendance and hours of instruction. [Code of Alabama 1975 §16-28-5](#).
- If a home school is qualified as a private school, the school must provide a physical education program that conforms to the program outlined by the Alabama Department of Education. [Code of Alabama 1975 §16-40-1](#).
- A church school includes only such schools that offer instruction in grades K–12, or any combination thereof including the kindergarten, elementary, or secondary level and are operated as a ministry of a local church, group of churches, denomination, and/or association of churches on a nonprofit basis and which do not receive any state or federal funding. [Code of Alabama 1975 §16-28-1](#).
- If a home school is operated as a ministry of a local church, there are no legal requirements for instructors. [Code of Alabama 1975 §§16-28-1, 16-28-5](#).
- No teacher or school administrator employed by a nonpublic school is excluded from participating in in-service teacher education institutes or curriculum development programs for drug abuse prevention provided under Chapter 41, Drug Abuse Education. [Code of Alabama 1975 §16-41-5](#).

Health

- A certificate of immunization or testing for the prevention of communicable diseases designated by the state health officer is required prior to admittance to a private school. [Code of Alabama 1975 §16-30-4](#).

Initial and Renewal Applications

- Documentation of the enrollment and attendance of a child in a church school must be filed with the local public school superintendent by the parent or guardian on a form provided by the superintendent. [Code of Alabama 1975 §16-28-7](#).
- By the end of the first week of instruction for a new school year, the principal private school teacher of a home school qualified as a private school or any state certified private tutors who are working within a home school setting must submit paperwork with the county superintendent of education. The paperwork states the child or children to be instructed, the subjects to be taught and the period of time instruction is to be given. In addition, throughout the compulsory attendance period a register of attendance shall be kept on each child. [Code of Alabama 1975 §16-28-7](#).
- The registry of attendance for any church school or private tutor in compliance with the provisions of law or any rule and regulation promulgated by the State Board of Education is admissible as evidence in compulsory attendance hearings. [Code of Alabama 1975 §16-28-23](#).
- At church schools, enrollment and attendance must be reported to the local public school superintendent by the parent or guardian on a form provided by the superintendent. The administrator of the church school countersigns the enrollment form. If a child leaves the church school, the church school will notify the local public school superintendent, by prior consent of the parent or guardian. [Code of Alabama 1975 §16-28-7](#).

Public School Access

- There is no state policy at this time. If a homeschooled student seeks to participate in public school classes or activities, the student can seek permission through an individual school or school district.

Resources

- [Non-public School Act 2014-245](#)
- [Alabama Code Title 16. Education § 16-28-7 Mandatory Attendance – Reporting Requirements](#)
- [Alabama Code Title 16. Education § 16-22A-5 Requirement for Certification of Private Tutors](#)