



Start a School

AN EDUCATION FREEDOM FOUNDATION INITIATIVE

Georgia

Home School

Steps to Start a Home School

Starting a homeschool in Georgia involves several steps, but the process is relatively straightforward. Here's a general guide:

- 1. Review Georgia's Homeschool Laws:** Familiarize yourself with the homeschooling laws in Georgia. In Georgia, homeschooling is governed by the Georgia Department of Education (DOE). Make sure you understand the legal requirements and obligations for homeschooling families in the state. 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 [Guidance for the Dexter Mosely Act](#)
 - Review [Complete State Law 20-2-319.6 \(Dexter Mosely Act\)](#)
- 2. Choose a Homeschooling Method:** Decide on the educational approach you want to take for homeschooling. There are various methods, such as traditional, Charlotte Mason, Montessori, unschooling, etc. Choose one that aligns with your child's learning style and your teaching philosophy.
- 3. Notify the Georgia Department of Education:** According to Georgia law, parents or guardians who plan to homeschool must submit a [Declaration of Intent \(DOI\)](#) to the Georgia DOE. This document notifies the state that you intend to homeschool your child. You can find the Declaration of Intent form on the Georgia DOE website.
 - The Declaration of Intent is the only official document a parent/guardian submits to the Georgia Department of Education to begin or continue a home school program.
 - Completing the Declaration of Intent:
 - The Declaration of Intent is the only official document a parent/guardian submits to the Georgia Department of Education to begin or continue a home school program.

- The Declaration of Intent must be submitted within 30 days of beginning a home school program, and by September 1 annually thereafter if you continue home schooling.
 - This document may be submitted electronically, by fax, or US Mail.
 - If you submit electronically, you will be provided an opportunity to print the form before submitting or have a copy of the completed form sent to your email for your records at the end of the process to submit the Declaration of Intent.
 - Please note when mailing, emailing, or faxing a Declaration of Intent, it may take several days to input the information into our database.
4. **Compile Required Documentation:** Along with the Declaration of Intent, you may need to provide additional documentation, such as an outline of your educational plans, a list of intended textbooks or instructional materials, and proof of academic achievement for the parent(s) who will be instructing the child (such as a high school diploma or GED).
 5. **Maintain Records:** Georgia law requires homeschooling families to keep records of attendance and academic progress. This includes maintaining a portfolio of your child's work and keeping track of the subjects covered and the time spent on each subject.
 6. **Participate in Standardized Testing:** Homeschooled students in Georgia are required to take standardized tests in certain grades (typically 3rd, 6th, and 9th). The results of these tests must be submitted to the Georgia DOE.
 7. **Consider Joining a Homeschooling Support Group:** Joining a homeschooling support group can provide valuable resources, advice, and social opportunities for both you and your child. These groups often organize field trips, co-op classes, and other activities.
 8. **Stay Informed:** Stay updated on any changes to homeschooling laws and regulations in Georgia. This ensures that you remain in compliance with state requirements.
 9. **Create a Curriculum and Schedule:** Develop a curriculum and schedule that meets your child's educational needs and interests. Be flexible and willing to adjust your approach based on your child's progress and feedback.
 10. **Stay Connected with the Homeschooling Community:** Networking with other homeschooling families can provide support, ideas, and encouragement throughout your homeschooling journey.

Remember that homeschooling laws and requirements can vary by state and may change over time, so it's essential to regularly check with the Georgia Department of Education for any updates or changes to the regulations.

Dexter Mosely Act

The links below provide information regarding the state law that authorizes home study students in grades six through 12 to participate in extracurricular and interscholastic activities in the student's resident public school system.

Georgia Cyber Academy & Georgia Connections Academy

Please note that the [Georgia Cyber Academy](#) and the [Georgia Connections Academy](#) are not home study programs.

If your student is enrolled in one of these public online schools, they are considered public school students and you are not required to submit a declaration of intent to home school. Enrollment and attendance for students enrolled in these schools are reported directly to the Department of Education by these schools.

These public charter schools are not affiliated with the home study program. If you are interested in enrolling your child in either of these schools, you must contact them directly.

Home School Curriculum

- After you decide to begin a home study program, the most difficult decision is deciding which curriculum to use.
- While the Georgia Department of Education does not endorse, promote or provide a curriculum for your home study program these links may be helpful while deciding on or constructing a curriculum for your home study program.
 - [Graduation and course requirements for Georgia public high school students](#)
 - [Georgia Virtual School – Digital Learning Resources](#)
 - [Georgia Virtual School](#)
 - [GeorgiaStandards.org](#)
- Each parent/guardian must decide which curriculum is best for their child and then create or purchase the curriculum on their own.
- You may search the Internet for “homeschool curriculum reviews” and read what other people are saying about each curriculum so you can make an informed decision.
- It is advisable to choose your home study curriculum prior to registering your child/children by submitting the "Declaration of Intent" online. You must submit a declaration of Intent by September 1st or within 30 days after a home study program is established. You may employ a tutor. Parents must have a high school diploma or GED.

Important Information about Withdrawing from a Georgia Public School

- Local school systems in Georgia are required to have proof of a student's enrollment in a home school program within 45 days of withdrawal from a Georgia public school. If the school system is not able to obtain this proof, they are to refer the matter to the Division of Family and Children Services of the Department of Human Services to conduct an

assessment.

Role of the Department of Education

Pursuant to [state law 20-2-690](#) the Georgia Department of Education only has authority to collect and manage the declaration of intent to home school.

- In regards to home school programs operating in this state, the Georgia Department of Education is not authorized or responsible for providing instructional and supplemental items for a home school program including, but not limited to: text books, computers, school supplies, instructional materials, tutoring services or other incidental materials or items needed to enact and maintain a successful home school program.

Subjects Required

Georgia's home study law ([O.C.G.A. § 20-2-690](#)) requires homeschool parents/guardians to provide a basic academic educational program which includes the five content areas below, at a minimum. You may also teach other content areas.

- Mathematics,
- English Language Arts,
- Science,
- Social Studies, and
- Reading

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

- Students in home study programs must take an appropriate nationally standardized test administered in consultation with a person specifically trained in administration and interpretation of norm reference tests, at least every three years beginning at the end of third grade, and the program must retain the results of these tests, although they are not required to be submitted to the local superintendent. [O.C.G.A. §20-2-690\(c\)\(7\)](#).
- The home study program instructor must write an annual progress assessment report to include the instructor's individualized assessment of the student's academic progress in each required subject area and the parents or guardians must retain the reports for a period of at least three years. [O.C.G.A. §20-2-690\(c\)\(8\)](#).

Curriculum and Instruction

- Parents may teach their own children if they hold at least a high school diploma or GED, or may employ a tutor who holds at least a high school diploma or [GED. O.C.G.A. §20-2-690\(c\)\(3\)](#).
- The home study program must include, but is not limited to, reading, language arts, mathematics, social studies, and science. [O.C.G.A. §20-2-690\(c\)\(4\)](#).
- The home study program must provide instruction each 12 months equivalent to 180 school days with each consisting of at least four and one-half school hours. [O.C.G.A. §20-2-690\(c\)\(5\)](#).
- Students in home study programs are eligible to participate in dual credit courses at eligible postsecondary institutions. Participating eligible postsecondary institutions must enter into a participation agreement with the commission that includes providing course books and accepting the amount paid by the commission as full payment for the high school students participation. The commission shall be funded in Fiscal Year 2016, which begins July 1, 2015. [O.C.G.A. §20-2-161.3](#).

Education Savings Accounts (ESAs)

- Education Savings Account (ESA) program that allows eligible students (including those home-schooled) to receive up to \$2,000/year for home-schooling expenses. Homeschoolers must meet eligibility requirements. [O.C.G.A. § 20-2B-30](#) and [O.C.G.A. § 20-2B-21](#).

Home Education Programs

- The parent or guardian has the authority to execute any document required by law, rule, regulation, or policy to evidence the enrollment of a child in a home study program or any other required educational information. Included are documents for purposes of verification of attendance by the Department of Driver Services and documents relating to employment of minors. [O.C.G.A. §20-2-690\(c\)\(6\)](#).

Initial and Renewal Applications

- Parents and guardians must submit within 30 days after the establishment of a home student program and by September 1 annually thereafter a [declaration of intent](#) to utilize home study to the superintendent of schools of the local district in which the home study program is located. [O.C.G.A. §20-2-690\(c\)\(1\)](#).
- The submission must include in the declaration a list of the names and ages of the students who are enrolled, the address where the home study program is located, and a statement of the 12-month period being considered the school year for this program. [O.C.G.A. §20-2-690\(c\)\(2\)](#).

Public School Access

- No state policy pertaining to public school access for students participating in home study programs currently exists.

Special Education

- Home school students that meet the requirements of [O.C.G.A. §20-2-690](#) will be considered private school students for the purposes of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 20 U.S. Code Annotated (USCA) Section 1400, et seq. They will be provided with the same special education and related services as students enrolled in private schools. [O.C.G.A. §20-2-159](#).

Resources

Contact Information--State and Federal Departments of Education

- Policy Division
Email: homeschool@doe.k12.ga.us
Phone: (404) 656-3083
Fax: (770) 344-4623
- Georgia Dept of Education Homeschool Division
1562 Twin Towers East
205 Jesse Hill Jr. Drive
Atlanta, GA 30334
- Georgia Department of Education
205 Jesse Hill Jr. Drive SE
Atlanta, GA 30334-5001
Phone: (404) 656-2800
Fax: (404) 651-8737
Website: <http://www.gadoe.org/Pages/Home.aspx>
- U.S. Department of Education, [Georgia](#)

Information and Legislation

- [Georgia Department of Education: State Education Rules](#)
- [Georgia Department of Education: Home School](#)
- [Georgia Department of Education: Online Declaration of Intent Form](#)
- [Official Code of Georgia](#)