



Council for Lifelong Learning  
**Home Education**

**Fact  
Sheet**

September 2001

1. What is home education?	Home education is "sequentially progressive instruction of a student in his or her home by his or her parent or guardian" (s. 228.041(34), F.S.). Current law does <i>not</i> prescribe a curriculum or course of study for home education programs.
2. Who can teach in a home education setting?	Any parent who complies with the reporting, record keeping, and student evaluation requirements of s. 232.0201, F.S., may conduct a home education program. The parent/guardian is not required to be a certified teacher. A parent may <i>not</i> provide home education to the children of other parents.
3. What records are parents of home education students required to maintain?	A parent who conducts a home education program must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• provide written notice to the district superintendent of his or her intent to establish a home education program;</li><li>• maintain a portfolio of records and materials that contains a log of educational activities and reading materials used, writing samples, worksheets, workbooks, and any other materials used or created by the child; and</li><li>• provide an annual educational evaluation of the child's educational progress.</li></ul>
4. How is the educational process of home education students evaluated?	The parent or guardian may select the method of evaluation from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• a review of the portfolio and discussion with the student by a Florida certified teacher chosen by the parent or guardian;</li><li>• a nationally normed student achievement test administered by a certified teacher;</li><li>• a state student assessment test administered by a certified teacher, at a location and under testing conditions approved by the school district;</li><li>• an evaluation by a psychologist holding a valid, active license; or</li><li>• an evaluation by any other valid measurement tool that is mutually agreed upon by the superintendent and the parent or guardian.</li></ul>

<p>5. What oversight does the state or the school district have over home education programs?</p>	<p>A copy of the child's annual education evaluation must be filed in the superintendent's office. If the child does not demonstrate progress commensurate with his or her abilities, based on the evaluation, the superintendent is required to notify the parents that they have one year to provide remedial instruction. At the end of that year, the child will only be allowed to continue in a home education program if re-evaluation shows acceptable educational progress. The district superintendent <i>may</i> inspect a home education student's portfolio upon 15 days written notice, but is not required to do so.</p>
<p>6. Can home education students attend public school part-time or for selected courses?</p>	<p>Students with identified disabilities who qualify for exceptional student education classes may participate in those classes for exceptional students offered in the public schools. School districts are <i>not</i> required to provide course work or instruction on a part-time basis for gifted or regular home education students who do not have identified disabilities. School districts may choose to do this as part of their policy, but such policies are not mandated by the state.</p>
<p>7. Can home education students participate in interscholastic extracurricular activities?</p>	<p>Yes. An eligible home education student may participate in interscholastic extracurricular activities at the public school to which the student would be assigned according to district school attendance area policies or which the student could choose to attend pursuant to district or interdistrict controlled open enrollment provisions, or may develop an agreement to participate at a nonpublic school. Eligibility is based on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the student must attend a home education program which meets the requirements of Florida law;</li> <li>• during the period of participation, the student must demonstrate educational progress in all subjects by a method of evaluation mutually agreed upon by the student's parent or guardian and the principal of the school;</li> <li>• the student must meet the same residency requirements as other students in the school at which he or she participates; and</li> <li>• the student must register his or her intent to participate with the school before the beginning date of the season for the activity in which he or she wishes to participate.</li> </ul> <p>A public school student who has not maintained academic</p>

	<p>eligibility may not participate in interscholastic extracurricular activities as a home education student until he or she successfully demonstrates educational progress in a home education program for one grading period.</p>
<p>8. What type of diploma do home education students receive?</p>	<p>A home education student may take the General Educational Development (GED) test and be awarded a GED diploma by the State of Florida if the student receives a passing score. Some parents choose to utilize a curriculum provider (e.g., a correspondence school) that offers a credential to the student. School districts, adult high schools, and community colleges may not provide regular high school diplomas to those students who complete a high school course of study as home education students.</p>
<p>9. Are home education students eligible for Bright Futures Scholarships?</p>	<p>Yes. Home education students may be eligible for a Bright Futures Scholarship if they are registered as home education students during the 11th and 12th grades. Documentation of appropriate SAT or ACT test scores as determined by the Department of Education is required <b>(See the Florida Academic Scholars Award Fact Sheet, the Florida Gold Seal Vocational Scholars Award Fact Sheet, and the Florida Merit Scholars Award Fact Sheets for specific Bright Futures eligibility criteria.)</b></p>
<p>10. Can a public school student identified as exhibiting a pattern of non-attendance enter a home education program?</p>	<p>Yes. Once a student is identified as exhibiting a pattern of non-attendance, the principal must notify the superintendent of schools and the school district contact for home education programs that the referred student is exhibiting a pattern of non-attendance. Students identified in public school as exhibiting a pattern of nonattendance as defined in s. 232.0201, F.S., can enroll in a home education program. However, a Home Education Review Committee must review the portfolio of such students every 30 days during the district's regular school terms until the committee is satisfied that the home education program is in compliance with s. 232.0201(1)(b), F.S.</p>
<p>11. What is a Home Education Review Committee?</p>	<p>A Home Education Review Committee is composed of the district contact for home education review programs and at least two home educators selected by the parent from a district list of all home educators who have conducted a home education program for at least three years and who have indicated a willingness to serve on the committee.</p>

<p>12. How many students in Florida are registered in home education programs?</p>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th><u>School Year</u></th> <th><u># of families statewide*</u></th> <th><u># of students statewide**</u></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1997-1998</td> <td>21,507</td> <td>31,440</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1998-1999</td> <td>21,881</td> <td>33,219</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1999-2000</td> <td>26,656</td> <td>37,196</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2000-2001</td> <td>27,792</td> <td>41,128</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>* - # of families which registered their intent to establish home education programs.  ** - # of children which participated in home education programs.</p>	<u>School Year</u>	<u># of families statewide*</u>	<u># of students statewide**</u>	1997-1998	21,507	31,440	1998-1999	21,881	33,219	1999-2000	26,656	37,196	2000-2001	27,792	41,128
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<p>13. What are the applicable statutes and rules?</p>	<p>Section 228.041(34), F.S. -- Definitions of Home Education Program  Section 232.0201, F.S. -- Home Education  Sections 240.40202, 240.40205, 240.420206, and 240.40208, F.S. -- Bright Futures  Section 232.425, F.S. -- Extracurricular Activities  Section 232.17(1)(f), F.S. -- Home Education Review Committee</p>															
<p>14. Where can I get additional information?</p>	<p>Florida Department of Education  Choice Office/Home Education  (850) 488-5011 or DOE Hotline 1-800-447-1636  <a href="http://www.floridaschoolchoice.org">www.floridaschoolchoice.org</a></p> <p>The Florida House of Representatives  Committee on Education Innovation  (850) 488-7451</p> <p>The Florida House of Representatives  Council for Lifelong Learning  (850) 414-6694</p>															