



CHAP's Homeschooling Briefs

The Bare Bone Details of Home Educating in Pennsylvania

www.chaponline.com

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What is CHAP?

CHAP is an acronym for Christian Homeschool Association of Pennsylvania, a nonprofit corporation founded to encourage and support families interested in home education. CHAP assists parents in understanding and fulfilling the law's requirements and is affiliated with two national organizations: Home School Legal Defense Association and The National Center for Home Education. CHAP provides leadership and direction on issues facing Christian homeschoolers on a national and statewide basis.

CHAP Mission Statement

In order to bring glory to God, the Christian Homeschool Association of Pennsylvania is dedicated to

- Promoting Christ-centered, parent-directed, privately-funded, home-based discipleship.
- Providing resources to inform, encourage and equip homeschool families.
- Protecting the God-given right of parents to homeschool.

CHAP's Goals

- To inform and educate the general public on the benefits of homeschooling.
- To strengthen and equip home educators.
- To foster homeschooling in local churches.
- To inform current and potential homeschoolers of regulations which affect them.
- To strengthen and equip support groups and their leaders.
- To foster homeschooling by educating political leaders on the local, state, and federal levels.

The CHAP Statement of Faith

The Bible is the inspired and infallible Word of God and constitutes His completed and final revelation to man. The Bible, in its original autographs, is without error in whole and in part. God has existed from all eternity in three persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Jesus Christ was God in human flesh being fully God and fully man, except without sin. All men are in violation of God's righteous requirements and His holy character both by nature and act, and are therefore under His wrath and just condemnation. The central purpose of the coming of Jesus Christ was to pay the penalty for man's sin through His substitutionary atoning death on the cross, the successful accomplishment of which was attested to by His subsequent visible, bodily resurrection. Salvation is offered as a gift, free to the sinner. This gift must be responded to by individual faith, not trusting in any personal works whatsoever, but in the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ alone.

Why Homeschool?

The reason many parents home educate (note home education and homeschooling are used interchangeably) is that God gives parents the responsibility to teach their children. A secondary reason is that they believe that they can do a better job of tailoring the educational program to the student than public or private schools can. In Scripture we are commanded to teach our children. Some of the references follow:

Deuteronomy 6: 4-7: "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD [is] one! You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up."

Deuteronomy 11: 18-19: "Therefore you shall lay up these words of mine in your heart and in your soul, and bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall teach them to your children, speaking of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up."

Psalms 78:5: "For He established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which He commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children."

Malachi 4: 6: "And he will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers, lest I come and strike the earth with a curse."

Ephesians 5: 4: "And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord."

In Deuteronomy we are even instructed as to when we are to teach. The inclusiveness of the Deuteronomy 6 reference almost seems to be an advertisement for home education. It would be hard to fulfill the command if your children are out of the house for school. Because the responsibility to teach the children is given specifically to the parents, it is therefore the parents' duty to accomplish it. This does not preclude the delegation of teaching responsibilities to others under the direction of the father and mother. If the teaching of the children in the ways of God is so important to God, can we possibly delegate it to nonbelievers? Can it be delegated to believers working in a system opposed to God?

When Must I Do What?

ITEMS TO DO PRIOR TO STARTING HOMESCHOOL

When do I have to file documents with my school district?

- For a child that has never been in a school situation - Nothing must be done until they turn legal school age, currently age 8 (Philadelphia's compulsory school age is 6. This early age requirement does not apply if you plan to conduct a home education program for your child and file a [notice](#) of this with the superintendent of your local school district.)
- For a child that has been in a public school situation the documents must be filed prior to homeschooling.
- To continue homeschooling after filing once, you must file your new documents each year by August 1st to the superintendent or their designated representative of your local school district.

What documents must I file?

- A completed affidavit that has been notarized (permission is granted to photocopy the enclosed affidavit)
- An outline of proposed educational objectives by subject areas for the level of instruction for each student. (If you have a child that has been labeled as special needs, then the program of a special needs child must address the child's needs and be approved by a certified special education teacher or a licensed clinical or certified school psychologist.)
- Evidence of the child's immunization and health and dental care OR an exemption due to religious beliefs or a medical exemption. (Visit the CHAP webpage for a printable religious exemption form.)

Secure an evaluator that will be willing to do your child's evaluation at the end of the year.

- Make sure he/she is in agreement with your philosophy of home education.

WHAT YOU MUST DO DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR

- Keep a contemporaneous log - "A log, made contemporaneously with the instruction, which designates by title the reading material used" - Put simply: a listing of the titles of reading materials used and samples of work should be included as part of the portfolio.
- Keep track of EITHER the number of hours spent in schooling time (900 hours elementary - 990 hours secondary) OR the days spent in schooling (Must meet 180 days). You are required to complete either the hours requirement OR the days requirement, not both.

WHAT YOU MUST DO AT THE END OF THE SCHOOL YEAR BY JUNE 30.

- Have a qualified evaluator of your choice give written substantiation that appropriate education is occurring. "Appropriate education" is defined in the law as "a program consisting of instruction in the required subjects for the time required in this act and in which the student demonstrates sustained progress in the overall program."
- Submit an evaluator's certification* stating that an appropriate education is occurring for the school year under review to the superintendent of your school district by June 30:

*CHAP recommends submitting your evaluation letter to the school district in person and obtaining a receipt, or submitting the evaluation letter by certified mail with a return receipt.

For more detailed information about homeschooling in Pennsylvania, teaching methods, curriculum ideas, and much more see the *Keys to Homeschooling in the Keystone State* -available on the CHAP website.

The CHAP Homeschool Convention

The CHAP Homeschool Convention is one of the largest in the United States with an attendance of over 4,500 home educators, offering about 200 different vendors and 100+ seminars and lectures on topics of interest to homeschoolers. For information on how to register visit www.chaponline.com. We encourage you to attend the CHAP Homeschool Convention. The Convention will be one of the best opportunities you will have to see a wide variety of educational materials and obtain information about home educating.

List of contacts for additional information:

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HSLDA - Home School Legal Defense Association

www.hslda.org
Offensively and defensively protecting our God-given responsibility to homeschool our children.

NATHHAN-National Challenged Homeschoolers Associated Network

www.nathhan.com
To encourage homeschooling families with special needs children, in ways that glorify the Lord Jesus Christ and to find Christian homes for children with special needs.

NHERI - National Home Education Research Institute

www.nheri.org
Research on how homeschoolers are doing during homeschool and after graduation.



Pennsylvania Homeschooling Law

as of October 2014

www.chaponline.com

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Compiled by Christian Homeschool Association of Pennsylvania (CHAP)

These are the sections of the law which comprise the Pennsylvania Homeschooling Law. The first is the actual law as passed in October of 2014. The other two sections are from other parts of the law pertaining to education and relate to special needs and the private tutor option. Suzanne Tallman, the person handling home education for the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE), provided us with the first section as a cleaned up copy of the law which includes the new amendments. She directed us to the place to find the other two sections, which we have included here.

From: 24 P.S. § 13-1327.1 Home education program

(a) The following words and phrases when used in this section shall have the meanings given to them in this subsection:

“Appropriate education” shall mean a program consisting of instruction in the required subjects for the time required in this act and in which the student demonstrates sustained progress in the overall program. “Department” shall mean the Department of Education of the Commonwealth.

“Hearing examiner” shall not be an officer, employee or agent of the Department of Education or of the school district or intermediate unit of residence of the child in the home education program.

“Home education program” shall mean a program conducted, in compliance with this section, by the parent or guardian or such person having legal custody of the child or children.

“Supervisor” shall mean the parent or guardian or such person having legal custody of the child or children who shall be responsible for the provision of instruction, provided that such person has a high school diploma or its equivalent.

(b) The requirements contained in sections 1511 and 1511.1, except as provided for in this section, and section 1605 shall not apply to home education programs. A home education program shall not be considered a nonpublic school under the provisions of this act.

(1) A notarized affidavit of the parent or guardian or other person having legal custody of the child or children, filed prior to the commencement of the home education program and annually thereafter on August 1 with the superintendent of the school, district of residence and which sets forth: the name of the supervisor of the home education program who shall be responsible for the provision of instruction; the name and age of each child who shall participate in the home education program; the address and telephone number of the home education program site; that such subjects as required by law are offered in the English language, including an outline of proposed education objectives by subject area; evidence that the child has been immunized in accordance with the provisions of section 1303(a) and has received the health and medical services required for students of the child’s age or grade level in Article XIV; and that the home education program shall comply with the provisions of this section and that the notarized affidavit shall be satisfactory evidence thereof. The required outline of proposed education objectives shall not be utilized by the superintendent in determining if the home education program is out of compliance with this section and section 1327. The affidavit shall contain a certification to be signed by the supervisor that the supervisor, all adults living in the home and persons having legal custody of a child or children in a home education program have not been convicted of the criminal offenses enumerated in subsection (e) of section 111 within five years immediately preceding the date of the affidavit.

(2) In the event the home education program site is relocating to another school district within this Commonwealth during the course of the public school term or prior to the opening of the public school term in the fall, the supervisor of the home education program must apply, by registered mail, thirty (30) days prior to the relocation, to the superintendent of the district in which he or she currently resides, requesting a letter of transfer for the home education program to the district to which the home education program is relocating. The current superintendent of residence must issue the letter of transfer thirty (30) days after receipt of the registered mail request of the home education program supervisor.

(i) If the home education program is not in compliance with the provisions of this section, the superintendent of the current district of residence must inform the home education supervisor and the superintendent of the district to which the home education program is relocating the status of the home education program and the reason for the denial of the letter of transfer.

(ii) If the home education program is in hearing procedures, as contained in this section, the superintendent of the current district of residence must inform the home education supervisor, the assigned hearing examiner and the superintendent of the district to which the home education program is relocating the status of the home education program and the reason for the denial of the letter of transfer.

(3) The letter of transfer, required by clause (2), must be filed by the supervisor of the home education program with the superintendent of the new district of residence. In the case of pending proceedings, the new district of residence superintendent shall continue the home education program until the appeal process is finalized.

(c) A child who is enrolled in a home education program and whose education is therefore under the direct supervision of his parent, guardian or other person having legal custody shall be deemed to have met the requirements of section 1327 if that home education program provides a minimum of one hundred eighty (180) days of instruction or nine hundred (900) hours of instruction per year at the elementary level, or nine hundred ninety (990) hours per year at the secondary level:

(1) At the elementary school level, the following courses shall be taught: English, to include spelling, reading and writing; arithmetic; science; geography; history of the United States and Pennsylvania; civics; safety education, including regular and continuous instruction in the dangers and prevention of fires; health and physiology; physical education; music; and art.

(2) At the secondary school level, the following courses shall be taught: English, to include language, literature, speech and composition; science; geography; social studies, to include civics, world history, history of the United States and Pennsylvania; mathematics, to include general mathematics, algebra and geometry; art; music; physical education; health; and safety education, including regular and continuous instruction in the dangers and prevention of fires. Such courses of study may include, at the discretion of the supervisor of the home education program, economics; biology; chemistry; foreign languages; trigonometry; or other age- appropriate courses as contained in Chapter 5 (Curriculum Requirements) of the State Board of Education.

(d) The following minimum courses in grades nine through twelve are established as a requirement for graduation in a home education program:

- (1) Four years of English.
- (2) Three years of mathematics.
- (3) Three years of science.
- (4) Three years of social studies
- (5) Two years of arts and humanities.

(d.1)

(1) Notwithstanding any provision of this act or any other law or regulation to the contrary, a high school diploma awarded by a supervisor or an approved diploma-granting organization shall be considered as having all the rights and privileges afforded by the Commonwealth, a Commonwealth agency, including, but not limited to, the Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency, a political subdivision, a local agency and an authority or instrumentality of the Commonwealth or a political subdivision to a high school diploma awarded under this act, subject to subparagraphs (i) and (ii):

(i) In the case of a diploma awarded by a supervisor the following shall apply:

(A) The student receiving the diploma shall have completed all the requirements in subsection (d) while enrolled in a home education program that is in compliance with this section.

(B) The diploma shall be awarded to the student on a standardized form to be developed by the department and which shall be made available on the department's publicly accessible Internet website. (C) The diploma shall be signed by the student's twelfth grade evaluator in confirmation of the student's suitability for graduation.

(ii) In the case of a diploma awarded by an approved diploma-granting organization the following shall apply:

(A) The student receiving the diploma shall have completed all the requirements in subsection (d) while enrolled in a home education program that is in compliance with this section.

(B) The diploma shall be awarded to the student on a standardized form to be developed by the organization.

(2) The department shall establish eligibility criteria and an application process for approving diploma-granting organizations to award high school diplomas to students enrolled in home education programs. The department shall maintain a list of approved diploma-granting organizations and post the list on the department's publicly accessible Internet website.

(e) In order to demonstrate that appropriate education is occurring, the supervisor of the home education program shall provide and maintain on file the following documentation for each student enrolled in the home education program:

(1) A portfolio of records and materials. The portfolio shall consist of a log, made contemporaneously with the instruction, which designates by title the reading materials used, samples of any writings, worksheets, workbooks or creative materials used or developed by the student and in grades three, five and eight results of nationally normed standardized achievement tests in reading/language arts and mathematics or the results of Statewide tests administered in these grade levels. The department shall establish a list, with a minimum of five tests, of nationally normed standardized tests from which the supervisor of the home education program shall select a test to be administered if the supervisor does not choose the Statewide tests. At the discretion of the supervisor, the portfolio may include the results of nationally normed standardized achievement tests for other subject areas or grade levels. The supervisor shall ensure that the nationally normed standardized tests or the Statewide tests shall not be administered by the child's parent or guardian.

(i) A teacher or administrator who evaluates a portfolio at the elementary level (grades kindergarten through six) shall have at least two years of experience in grading any of the following subjects: English, to include spelling, reading and writing; arithmetic; science; geography; history of the United States and Pennsylvania; and civics.

(ii) A teacher or administrator who evaluates a portfolio at the secondary level (grades seven through twelve) shall have at least two years of experience in grading any of the following subjects: English, to include language, literature, speech, reading and composition; science, to include biology, chemistry and physics; geography; social studies, to include economics, civics, world history, history of the United States and Pennsylvania; foreign language; and mathematics, to include general mathematics, algebra, trigonometry, calculus and geometry.

(iii) As used in this clause, the term “grading” shall mean evaluation of classwork, homework, quizzes, classwork-based tests and prepared tests related to classwork subject matter.

(2) An annual written evaluation of the student’s educational progress as determined by a licensed clinical or school psychologist or a teacher certified by the Commonwealth or by a nonpublic school teacher or administrator. Any such nonpublic teacher or administrator shall have at least two years of teaching experience in a Pennsylvania public or nonpublic school within the last ten years. Such nonpublic teacher or administrator shall have the required experience at the elementary level to evaluate elementary students or at the secondary level to evaluate secondary students. The certified teacher shall have experience at the elementary level to evaluate elementary students or at the secondary level to evaluate secondary students. The evaluation shall also be based on an interview of the child and a review of the portfolio required in clause (1) and shall certify whether or not an appropriate education is occurring. At the request of the supervisor, persons with other qualifications may conduct the evaluation with the prior consent of the district of residence superintendent. In no event shall the evaluator be the supervisor or their spouse.

(f) The school district of residence shall, at the request of the supervisor, lend to the home education program copies of the school district’s planned courses, textbooks, and other curriculum materials appropriate to the student’s age and grade level.

(f.1)

(1) Beginning January 1, 2006, the school district of residence shall permit a child who is enrolled in a home education program to participate in any activity that is subject to the provisions of section 511, including, but not limited to, clubs, musical ensembles, athletics and theatrical productions provided that the child:

(i) Meets the eligibility criteria or their equivalent for participation in the activity that apply to students enrolled in the school district;

(ii) Meets the tryout criteria or their equivalent for participation in the activity that apply to students enrolled in the school district; and

(iii) Complies with all policies, rules and regulations or their equivalent of the governing organization of the activity.

(2) For the purposes of this subsection, the school district of residence’s program of interscholastic athletics, including varsity sports, shall be considered an activity and shall include all activities related to competitive sports contests, games, events or exhibitions involving individual students or teams of students whenever such activities occur between schools within the school district or between schools outside of the school district.

(3) Where the activity requires completion of a physical examination or medical test as a condition of participation and the school district of residence offers such physical examination or medical test to students enrolled in the school district, the school district shall permit a child who is enrolled in a home education program to access such physical examination or medical test. The school district shall publish the dates and times of such physical examination or medical test in a publication of general circulation in the school district and on its publicly accessible Internet website.

(4) A board of school directors may adopt a policy to implement the requirements of this subsection. Such policy shall only apply to participation in activities and shall not conflict with any provisions of this section.

(g) When documentation is required by this section to be submitted to the hearing examiner, the hearing examiner shall return, upon completion of his review, all such documentation to the supervisor of the home education program. The hearing examiner may photocopy all or portions of the documentation for his files.

(h.1) An evaluator’s certification stating that an appropriate education is occurring for the school year under review shall be provided by the supervisor to the superintendent of the public school district of residence by June 30 of each year. If the supervisor fails to submit the certification due on June 30 to the superintendent, the superintendent shall send a letter by certified mail, return receipt requested, to the supervisor of the home education program, stating that the certification is past due and notifying the supervisor to submit the certification within ten (10) days of receipt of the certified letter. If the certification is not submitted within that time, the board of school directors shall provide for a proper hearing in accordance with subsection (k).

(i.1) If the superintendent has a reasonable belief, at any time during the school year, that appropriate education may not be occurring in the home education program, he may submit a letter to the supervisor, by certified mail, return receipt requested, requiring that an evaluation be conducted in accordance with subsection (e)(2) and that an evaluator's certification stating that an appropriate education is occurring for the school year under review, be submitted to the district by the supervisor within thirty (30) days of the receipt of the certified letter. The certified letter shall include the basis for the superintendent's reasonable belief. If the tests, as required in subsection (e)(1), have not been administered at the time of the receipt of the certified letter by the supervisor, the supervisor shall submit the other required documentation to the evaluator and shall submit the test results to the evaluator with the completed documentation at the conclusion of the school year. If the certification is not submitted to the superintendent within thirty (30) days of receipt of the certified letter, the board of school directors shall provide for a proper hearing in accordance with subsection (k).

(j.1) If the superintendent has a reasonable belief that the home education program is out of compliance with any other provisions of this section, the superintendent shall submit a letter to the supervisor by certified mail, return receipt requested, requiring a certification to be submitted within thirty (30) days indicating that the program is in compliance. The certified letter shall include the basis for the superintendent's reasonable belief. If the certification is not submitted within thirty (30) days of receipt of the certified letter, the board of school directors shall provide for a proper hearing in accordance with subsection (k).

(k) If a hearing is required by the provisions of subsection (h.1), (i.1) or (j.1), the board of school directors shall provide for a proper hearing by a duly qualified and impartial hearing examiner within thirty (30) days. The examiner shall render a decision within fifteen (15) days of the hearing except that he may require the establishment of a remedial education plan mutually agreed to by the superintendent and supervisor of the home education program which shall continue the home education program. The decision of the examiner may be appealed by either the supervisor of the home education program or the superintendent to the Secretary of Education, Commonwealth Court or Court of Common Pleas.

(l) If the hearing examiner finds that the evidence does not indicate that appropriate education is taking place in the home education program, the home education program for the child shall be out of compliance with the requirements of this section and section 1327, and the student shall be promptly enrolled in the public school district of residence or a nonpublic school or a licensed private academic school. The home education program may continue during the time of any appeal.

(m) At such time as the child's home education program has been determined to be out of compliance with the provisions of this section and section 1327, the supervisor or spouse of the supervisor of the home education program shall not be eligible to supervise a home education program for that child, as provided for in subsection (b)(1) of this section, for a period of twelve (12) months from the date of such determination.

(n) Nothing in this section shall be construed to affect Federal or State law relating to special education for students with disabilities in home education programs.

From: 24 P.S. § 13-1327 Compulsory school attendance (as related to Special Needs Students)

(d) Instruction to children of compulsory school age provided in a home education program, as provided for in section 1327.1 of this act, shall be considered as complying with the provisions of this section, except that any student who has been identified pursuant to the provisions of the Education of the Handicapped Act (Public Law 91-230, 20 U.S.C. § 1401 et seq.) as needing special education services, excluding those students identified as gifted and/or talented, shall be in compliance with the requirements of compulsory attendance by participating in a home education program, as defined in section 1327.1, when the program addresses the specific needs of the exceptional student and is approved by a teacher with a valid certificate from the Commonwealth to teach special education or a licensed clinical or certified school psychologist, and written notification of such approval is submitted with the notarized affidavit required under section 1327.1(b). The supervisor of a home education program may request that the school district or intermediate unit of residence provide services that address the specific needs of the exceptional student in the home education program. When the provision of services is agreed to by both the supervisor and the school district or intermediate unit, all services shall be provided in the public schools or in a private school licensed to provide such programs and services.

From: 24 P.S. § 13-1327 Compulsory school attendance (as related to a private tutor)

(a) ...Regular daily instruction in the English language, for the time herein required, by a properly qualified private tutor, shall be considered as complying with the provisions of this section. For the purposes of this section, "properly qualified private tutor" shall mean a person who is certified by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to teach in the public schools of Pennsylvania; who is teaching one or more children who are members of a single family; who provides the majority of the instruction to such child or children; and who is receiving a fee or other consideration for such instructional services. No person who would be disqualified from school employment by the provisions of subsection (e) of section 111 may be a private tutor, as provided for in this section. The private tutor must file a copy of his Pennsylvania certification and the required criminal history record with the student's district of residence superintendent.

**Please read the law as CHAP is unable to make legal statements.*