

HOME INSTRUCTION

The Alexandria City School Board recognizes that when the requirements of Va. Code § 22.1-254.1 are complied with, instruction of children by their parents is an acceptable alternative form of education under the policy of the Commonwealth of Virginia. Any parent of any child who will have reached the fifth birthday on or before September 30 of any school year and who has not passed the eighteenth birthday may elect to provide home instruction in lieu of school attendance if the parent:

- Holds a high school diploma; or
- Is a teacher with qualifications prescribed by the Virginia Board of Education; or
- Provides a program of study or curriculum which may be delivered through a correspondence course or distance learning program or in any other manner; or
- Provides evidence that the parent is able to provide an adequate education for the child.

Definition

For purposes of this policy, “**parent**” means the biological parent or adoptive parent, guardian, legal custodian or other person having control or charge of a child.

Notification by Parents

Any parent who elects to provide home instruction in lieu of school attendance shall annually notify the Division Superintendent no later than August 15 of his/her intention to so instruct the child and provide a description of the curriculum, limited to a list of subjects to be studied during the coming year and evidence of having met one of the criteria for providing home instruction. Any parent who moves into a school division or begins home instruction after the school year has begun shall notify the Division Superintendent of his/her intention to provide home instruction as soon as practicable and shall comply with the requirements of this policy within thirty days of such notice. The Division Superintendent shall notify the Superintendent of Public Instruction of the number of students in the school division receiving home instruction.

Evidence of Progress

A parent who elects to provide home instruction to a child who is over the age of six as of September 30 of the school year shall provide the Division Superintendent by August 1 following the school year in which the child has received home instruction with either (i) evidence that the child has attained a composite score in or above the fourth stanine on any nationally normed standardized achievement test or an equivalent score on the ACT, SAT or PSAT test or (ii) an evaluation or assessment that the Division Superintendent determines to indicate that the child is achieving an adequate level of educational growth and progress, including but not limited to: (a) an evaluation letter from a person licensed to teach in any state, or a person with a master’s degree or higher in an academic discipline, having knowledge of the child’s academic progress, stating that the child is achieving an adequate level of educational growth and progress; or (b) a report card or transcript from a community college or college, college distance learning program, or home-education correspondence school.

In the event that evidence of progress as required in this subsection is not provided by the parent, the home instruction program for that child may be placed on probation for one year. Parents shall file with the Division Superintendent evidence of their ability to provide an adequate education for their child and a remediation plan for the probationary year which indicates their program is designed to address any educational deficiency. Upon acceptance of such evidence and plan by the Division Superintendent, the home instruction may continue for one probationary year. If the remediation plan and evidence are not accepted or the required evidence of progress is not provided by August 1 following the probationary year, home instruction shall cease and the parent shall make other arrangements for the education of the child which comply with Va. Code § 22.1-254.

Immunizations

Any parent, guardian, or other person having control or charge of a child being home instructed, exempted, or excused from school attendance shall comply with the immunization requirements provided in Va. Code § 32.1-46 in the same manner and to the same extent as if the child has been enrolled in and is attending school.

Upon request by the Division Superintendent, the parent shall submit to such Division Superintendent documentary proof of immunization in compliance with Va. Code § 32.1-46.

No proof of immunization shall be required of any child upon submission of (i) an affidavit to the Division Superintendent stating that the administration of immunizing agents conflicts with the parent's or guardian's religious tenets or practices or (ii) a written certification from a licensed physician, physician assistant, nurse practitioner, or local health department that one or more of the required immunizations may be detrimental to the child's health, indicating the specific nature of the medical condition or circumstance that contraindicates immunization.

Notification to Parents

Advanced Placement (AP), Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT) and PreACT examinations are available to students receiving home instruction pursuant to Va. Code § 22.1-254.1. The annual schedule of examinations is posted on the ACPS Department of Accountability web page. The Superintendent notifies students receiving home instruction and their parents of the registration deadlines and the availability of financial assistance to low-income and needy students to take such examinations.

Disclosure of Information

Neither the Superintendent nor the School Board shall disclose to the Department of Education or any other person or entity outside of the local school division information that is provided by a parent or student to satisfy the requirements of this policy or subdivision B1 of Va. Code § 22.1-254. Nothing in this policy prohibits the Division Superintendent from notifying the Superintendent of Public Instruction of the number of students in the school division receiving home instruction.

Adopted: November 7, 1996
Amended: July 10, 1997
Amended: July 1, 2011
Amended: June 21, 2012
Amended: December 17, 2015
Amended: June 22, 2017
Amended: February 20, 2020

Legal Refs.: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§22.1-1, 22.1- 254, 22.1-254.1, 22.1-271.4, 32.1-46, 54.1-2952.2.

Pollard v. Goochland County School Board, No. 3:00CV563 (E.D. Va. Sept 27, 2001).

Cross Refs.: JO Student Records