

The Guidelines:

Please note that the following guidelines are suggested procedures, not the law.

School districts vary in their attitude about the necessity of homeschoolers filing this notice. Many of them respect the choice of a family not to file, and some of them do not. It is the position of HSLDA and T.E.A.C.H. that since the guidelines were part of a good faith agreement between the State and home school representatives, every effort should be made to abide by them, referencing the following scriptures:

"If it is possible,.. live at peace with everyone... submit yourself to the governing authorities.. he who rebels against authority is rebelling against what God has instituted" Romans 13:1-3 – see also Ti 3:1-2, Heb 13:17, 1Tim 2:2, 1Peter 2:13-17

C-14 (or C-4) GUIDELINES

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REVISED PROCEDURES CONCERNING REQUESTS FROM PARENTS TO EDUCATE THEIR CHILD AT HOME

I. Introduction

On November 7, 1990, The State Board of Education adopted the following policy on home instruction.

The State Board of Education acknowledges the right of parents to instruct their children at home as an alternative to public school attendance; and advises local and regional boards of education, where such child would otherwise be attending public school, to acknowledge home instruction when the parent or person having control of a child between the ages of 7 and 16 is able to show that the child is receiving equivalent instruction in the studies taught in the public schools.

The intent of these procedures is twofold: First, to provide local boards of education with suggestions concerning procedures to be utilized when parents wish to educate their child at home; and second, to assist parents in making requests to educate their child at home. The suggested procedures outline a series of steps in a process which should be conducted in an atmosphere of respect and cooperation by parents and local boards of education.

II. Statutory Authority

Section 10-184 of the Connecticut General Statutes (attached) describes the duties of parents for educating their children. It requires that parents or persons having control of children over five years of age (optional until age seven however) and under sixteen years of age shall cause such children "...to attend a public day school regularly ..." However Section 10-184 allows the parent or person having control of such child to educate the child in other than the public schools if they are " ...able to show that the child is elsewhere receiving equivalent instruction in the studies taught in the public schools." The duties of local boards of education are described in Section 10-220 of the Connecticut General Statutes (attached). As part of their identified duties, local boards of education are required to " ...cause each child of seven years of age and over or under sixteen living in the school district to attend school in accordance with the provisions of Section 10-184 ...". If parents wish to educate their child in their home, they must show equivalency as described in Section 10-184 and local boards of education must determine whether or not such a child is receiving equivalent instruction as required by Section 10-220.

The following procedures have been developed in order to assist parents and local boards of education to work together in such a way as to assure children receive the education to which they are entitled by law.

We would deem compliance with these suggested procedures as satisfying the requirements of Sections 10-184 and 10-220 of the General Statutes.

Editor's Note: However, if a person chooses *not* file a NOI they are not required by this statute to take the initiative to show public school officials that the child is receiving equivalent instruction. Instead, the parent must be able to show that the child is receiving equivalent instruction in defense of any court proceeding in which the sufficiency of the instruction is being challenged. ..The mere fact that a child is not enrolled in public school does not indicate that the child is not receiving equivalent instruction in the studies taught in the public school.

Suggested Procedures for Home Instruction

In determining whether the education provided a child is equivalent to the instruction provided in the local schools, it is recommended that the local board of education observe the following procedures:

- A. Parents *must file with the superintendent of schools in the town in which they reside a notice of intent form which provides basic information about the program to be provided to their child. A notice of Intent will be effective for up to one school year (see attached).
- B. Filing *must occur within ten days of the start of the home instruction program.
- C. The school district *will receive the notice of intent, check it for completeness and keep it as part of the district's permanent records. A complete form will be one which provides basic program information including name of teacher, subjects to be taught and days of instruction, and the teacher's methods of assessment.
- D. A parent, by filing a notice of intent, acknowledges full responsibility for the education of their child in accordance with the requirements of state law. Receipt of a notice of intent in no way constitutes approval by a school district of the content or effectiveness of a program of home instruction.
- E. If a parent fails to file a notice of intent or files an incomplete form then a certified letter shall be sent to the parent requesting compliance within ten days.
- F. An annual portfolio review will be held with the parents and school officials to determine if instruction in the required courses has been given.
- G. Any continued refusal by the parent to comply with the reasonable request of the school district for completion and filing of the notice of intent, or to participate in an annual portfolio review **may cause the child to be considered truant
- H. A school district should not accept nor require a notice of intent for any child younger than seven years or older than sixteen years.
- I. The school district shall record the number of students instructed at home on the appropriate form issued by the State Department of Education.

Note: The use of imperative terms like “must” and “will” are obviously contradictory in the context of a document intended to provide “suggestions concerning procedures”, but repeated attempts to change the wording have been unsuccessful. In the event that this leads to any confusion on the part of school officials, a cordial and simple review of the difference between the law and the intent of the guidelines may help. It is important to fully understand the law and guidelines, and have a copy handy when dealing with school officials.

**** Sec. 10-198a. Policies and procedures concerning truants.**

(a) For purposes of this section, "truant" means a child age five to eighteen, inclusive, who is enrolled in a public or private school and has four unexcused absences from school in any one month or ten unexcused absences from school in any school year. (e) The provisions of this section shall not apply to any child receiving equivalent instruction pursuant to section 10-184, – which is homeschooling. Truancy is related only to attendance at a school. Again, know the law – do not expect school officials to understand it.