IHBGA - HOME SCHOOLING - PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL PROGRAMS

The Cape Elizabeth School Board acknowledges the provisions for equivalent instruction under Maine law. The Board further recognizes the Legislature's statement “that the term 'equivalent' is intended to mean meeting state standards for alternate or other instruction and is not intended to mean the same as the education delivered in the public-school system.”

In addition, it is the intention of the Board to “cooperate in the home instruction of any child who resides in the school administrative unit to the degree that the level of cooperation does not interfere with the responsibilities to the students enrolled in Cape Elizabeth School Department (CESD)'s regular programs.” Furthermore, participation of students in such school programs shall be limited to home-schooled students whose home instruction programs are in compliance with applicable Maine law and Department of Education regulations.

In order to maintain an efficient and orderly school program, the Board directs the Superintendent/designee to develop procedures, as appropriate, regarding the availability of school system resources and services to home-schooled students who would otherwise be eligible to attend school in CESD. The procedures shall be in accord with the following provisions.

I. PROVISIONS OF INFORMATION
At the request of the student or the student's parent/guardian, the CESD shall make available to home-schooled students, in a form determined by the school, information regarding access to public school activities and attendance at CESD. The information must include:

I. Requirements regarding initial health and development screening for motor skills, vision, hearing, and immunization; and

II. Criteria for participation of home-schooled students in curricular, co-curricular, and extracurricular activities.

II. PERMITTED PARTICIPATION

I. Participation in Regular Classes: Home instruction students may enroll in specific, day-school classes provided that the student's attendance is regular, the class is deemed to be age and grade appropriate, and all prerequisite course requirements are met. In addition, the following shall also apply:

1. The student or the student's parent/guardian on the student's behalf, shall apply in writing to and receive written approval from the Superintendent/ designee. Approval may not be unreasonably withheld.

2. The student shall demonstrate prior satisfactory academic achievement consistent with CESD policy and procedures applicable to all students.

3. The student shall comply with behavioral, disciplinary, attendance, and other classroom rules applicable to all students. If a student fails to comply, the school may withhold credit or terminate the student's participation.

4. Transportation must be provided by the parent/guardian or student. However, the student may use the same transportation as all other students in the school department as long as additional expenses are not incurred and vehicle capacity is not exceeded.

5. The student shall complete all assignments and tests as required of all students in the same class.

II. Course Auditing: Home instruction students may audit a course(s) provided the following conditions have been met:

1. The student or the student's parent/guardian, on behalf of the student, shall apply in writing to and receive written approval from the Superintendent/ designee to audit a specific course or courses. Participation may not be unreasonably withheld.

2. The student agrees to meet established behavioral, disciplinary, attendance, and other classroom rules applicable to all students. If a student fails to comply, the school may terminate participation.

III. SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

Special Education services will be available to eligible special education students in accordance with applicable federal and state laws and regulations.

IV. ADMISSION TO REGULAR PROGRAM/PLACEMENT

A student who has been receiving home-school instruction and who seeks admission or readmission to the regular school program will be placed in a grade commensurate with the level of the student's academic achievement. Placement must be guided by the following:

I. Grade level placement is determined by the principal, in consultation with the appropriate school staff, based upon, but not limited to, such factors as the student's completed curricula and record of achievement, conferencing with the student's parent/guardian and administration of tests, if determined necessary.

The final grade placement decision shall be made by the principal.

V. USE OF SCHOOL TEXTBOOKS AND LIBRARY BOOKS

Subject to availability, a student receiving home instruction may use school textbooks, if the number of particular copies are sufficient, and library books owned by the school department, subject to the following conditions:

I. The use does not disrupt regular student, staff, or special program functions.

II. The student's sign-out period for a library book is the same as that applicable to regularly enrolled students.

III. The student may sign out a textbook for a period not exceeding one school year.

IV. The parent/guardian and student agree to reimburse the school department for lost, unreturned, or damaged library books and textbooks and for consumable supplies used.

VI. USE OF SCHOOL FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT

A student receiving home-school instruction may use public school facilities and equipment on the same basis as regularly enrolled students if the following conditions are met:

I. The use does not disrupt regular school activities.

II. The use is approved by the school principal in accordance with established school policy.

III. The use does not create additional expense to the School Department.

IV. The use is directly related to the student's academic program.

V. The use of potentially hazardous areas, such as shops, laboratories, and gymnasiums, is supervised by a qualified employee of the school department approved and approved by the Superintendent.

VII. MAINE EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENT AND SAT/MHSA

If a parent of a student in an equivalent instruction program requests to have the student participate in the Maine Comprehensive Assessment System, such request must be granted. Participation in such examinations must be in compliance with all rules and procedures governing testing conditions and must be in compliance with all rules

and procedures governing testing conditions in the school unit.

VIII. ACADEMIC CREDIT

A student receiving home-school instruction must receive academic credit subject to the following requirements:

I. Academic credit for individual courses must be awarded if the student meets required academic standards applicable to all students enrolled in the same course.

II. Academic credit must be awarded for successful completion of alternative instruction opportunities sponsored by the school and available to all students.

IX. HIGH SCHOOL COURSE CREDITS AND DIPLOMA ELIGIBILITY

The following standards govern the awarding of course credits and a graduation diploma to a student receiving home-school instruction who seeks admission or readmission to the high school:

I. A student shall earn high school credits for satisfactory completion of courses in the high school pursuant to 20-A MRSA § 5021(2)(A).

II. A student may earn credit for course work completed through home-schooled instruction if the principal determines both in advance and, upon completion of the course, that the course satisfies the requirements for awarding the credit. The principal may direct that the student undergo a test or tests to assist in making a determination relative to the awarding of credit.

III. Requests for transfer credit for equivalent instruction completed at non-approved private schools, at private schools that elect not to meet requirements under 20-A MRSA § 2901, or through other equivalent instruction programs must be evaluated on the merits of the documentation provided. The principal and guidance staff shall conduct these evaluations on request made by the student or the student's parent/guardian. The principal may direct that the student undergo a test or tests to assist in making a determination relative to the awarding of credit.

IV. Awarding of a high school diploma by the local school is conditioned upon the student's demonstration of having satisfied all specific course credit and other requirements established by the Board. The Board may establish resident credit requirements as a precondition for the awarding of a local school department diploma.

X. PARTICIPATION IN CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Students receiving home-school instruction may participate in co-curricular activities such as field trips, assemblies, and academically-related fairs provided:

I. Prior written permission is obtained from both the parent/guardian and the principal; and

II. The student has agreed to meet established behavioral, disciplinary, attendance, and other rules applicable to all students.

XI. PARTICIPATION IN EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Students receiving home-school instruction are eligible to try out for extracurricular activities sponsored by the school department provided the student applies in writing if the following requirements are satisfied.

I. The student agrees to abide by equivalent rules of participation as are applicable to regularly enrolled students participating in the activity and provides evidence that the rules of participation are being met.

II. The student complies with the same physical examination, immunization, insurance, age, and semester eligibility requirements as regularly enrolled students participating in the activity. All required documentation must be made available upon request by the school department. The school principal is authorized to collect from the student's parent/guardian actual samples of coursework (e.g. homework, examinations, etc.) as the principal deems necessary in order to make the determination that the necessary

academic standards have been met.

III. The student meets equivalent academic standards as those established for regularly enrolled students participating in the activity and provides evidence that the academic standards are being met.

IV. The student abides by the same transportation policy as regularly enrolled students participating in the activity.

XII. APPEALS
Appeals from administration and application of this policy are heard by the Board, whose decision is final and binding. Appeals that question whether this policy complies with legal requirements must be made to the Maine Commissioner of Education, whose decision is final and binding.

Legal Reference:

- 20-A MRSA §§ 5001-A(3), 5021-5025
- Maine Dept. of Ed. Rules Ch. 127

Cross Reference:

- IHBG - Home Instruction Program

Adopted:

- September 12, 2005

Revised:

- November 13, 2012
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