

## DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

<b>Compulsory Attendance Ages:</b>	“5 years of age on or before September 30th of the current school year . . . until the minor reaches the age of 18 years.” D.C. Code § 38-202(a).
<b>Required Days of Instruction:</b>	Parents are required by section 38-202 of the D.C. Code to “place the minor in regular attendance in an educational institution during the period of each year when the public schools of the District are in session.” A homeschooling program must provide “thorough, regular instruction of sufficient duration to implement the home school program.” D.C. Mun. Regs. tit. 5-E, § 5204.1(a).
<b>Required Subjects:</b>	Language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, art, music, health, and physical education. D.C. Mun. Regs. tit. 5-E, § 5204.1(b).

**Homeschool Statutes:** Sections [38-202](#) and [38-205](#) of the D.C. Official Code; see also [Chapter 5-E52](#) of the Code of D.C. Municipal Regulations.

Every parent, guardian, or other person who has custody or control of a school-age child must place the child in regular attendance in an “educational institution.” D.C. Code § 38-202(a). Homeschooling is a recognized option for satisfying this requirement, and the D.C. State Board of Education (SBOE) “shall . . . [a]pprove state standards for home schooling.” D.C. Code § 38-2652(a)(15). The homeschooling standards approved by the SBOE are located in chapter 5-E52 of the Code of D.C. Municipal Regulations, available at <https://www.dcregs.dc.gov/Common/DCMR/RuleList.aspx?ChapterId=257> Below is a summary of those standards:

1. “Home schooling” is defined as “an education program conducted, in compliance with [the home schooling standards], by the parent or legal guardian.” D.C. Mun. Regs. tit. 5-E, § 5299.
2. The parent or guardian must file a [notice](#) of intent to homeschool with the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) using a form provided by the OSSE (an online form is available at <https://osse.dc.gov/service/dc-homeschooling-program>). The notice must be filed at least 15 days (not including Saturdays, Sundays, or District holidays) prior to the first date of home instruction, and annually thereafter by **August 15**. D.C. Mun. Regs. tit. 5-E, §§ 5202.1, 5203.1.
3. “The home schooling program for each student shall: (a) Provide thorough, regular instruction of sufficient duration to implement the home school program; and (b) Provide instruction that includes, but need not be limited to, language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, art, music, health, and physical education. Nothing in [the home schooling standards] shall be interpreted to require that home schooling should include programs or methods used by the District's public schools. Nor shall any home schooling program be required to adhere to specific curricular frameworks or any other program of instruction adopted by the District's public schools.” D.C. Mun. Regs. tit. 5-E, § 5204.
4. The parent or guardian must “maintain a portfolio of home schooling materials for each child which includes evidence of the child's current work, such as examples of the child's writings, worksheets,

workbooks, creative materials, assessments, or any other materials that demonstrate that the child is engaged in thorough, regular educational activities in a range of subjects. The portfolio should be maintained for at least one year and made available for review by the OSSE upon written request.” D.C. Mun. Regs. tit. 5-E, § 5205.

5. The OSSE may request to review\* the portfolio of homeschooling materials if (a) the request is made in writing, (b) the review is held at a time and place mutually agreeable to the representative of the OSSE and the parent or guardian, (c) no more than two reviews are conducted during a school year, and (d) the purpose of the review is to ensure that the child is receiving thorough, regular instruction consistent with the homeschooling standards. D.C. Mun. Regs. tit. 5-E, § 5206.1.

**\*Historical Context:** In her testimony before the D.C. Board of Education in 2008, then-Superintendent Deborah Gist stated that it was the OSSE’s intention that portfolios would only be reviewed when there was reason to believe that thorough, regular instruction was not being provided. Although the regulation does not explicitly state this, HSLDA believes that such a policy is not only appropriate but required.

6. The parent or guardian must notify the OSSE in writing at least 15 days (not including Saturdays, Sundays, or District holidays) prior to discontinuation of homeschooling OSSE. D.C. Mun. Regs. tit. 5-E, § 5203.2.
7. “Student records, documents, correspondence, and other materials received in accordance with the provisions of [the home schooling standards] shall be reviewed pursuant to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, 20 U.S.C. §1232g; the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 34 CFR Part 99, and any other applicable District or federal confidentiality laws or regulations.” D.C. Mun. Regs. tit. 5-E, § 5200.1.

**Teacher Qualifications:** The parent or guardian must have a high school diploma or its equivalent. A parent or guardian without a high school diploma or its equivalent may petition the OSSE for a waiver by providing evidence of the ability to provide thorough, regular education. D.C. Mun. Regs. tit. 5-E, § 5207.

**Standardized Tests:** None required. But “[a] child receiving home schooling may participate free of charge in the regularly scheduled standardized testing programs that are administered in the public school the child is eligible to attend.” D.C. Mun. Regs. tit. 5-E, § 5209.1.

**Remediation:** If after reviewing a homeschool portfolio, the OSSE determines that the student is not receiving instruction consistent with the homeschooling standards, the OSSE must send a written Notification of Deficiencies to the parent or guardian within 30 days (not including Saturdays, Sundays, or District holidays). After receiving the Notification of Deficiencies, the parent or guardian has 30 days (not including Saturdays, Sundays, or District holidays) to submit a written Corrective Action Plan with evidence that a deficiency has been corrected, or that there is a need for further modification consistent with the homeschooling standards.

The OSSE must respond in writing to the Corrective Action Plan within 15 days (not including Saturdays, Sundays, or District holidays) and either (a) accept the plan or (b) issue a Letter of Non-Compliance explaining the basis for the OSSE’s decision and the parent or guardian’s right to appeal the decision to the State Superintendent of Education. If the State Superintendent of Education issues a final order requiring the child to be enrolled in a public or non-public school, the parent or guardian has 45 days to obtain a court order staying the action. D.C. Mun. Regs. tit. 5-E, § 5208.