

49-6-3050. Home schools. —

(a) (1) A “home school” is a school conducted by parent(s) or legal guardian(s) for their own children. In the case of special needs courses, such as laboratory sciences, vocational education, special education, etc., premises approved by the local director of schools may be used. Public school facilities may be used by home school participants with the approval of the local director of schools, but this permissive authority shall not be construed to confer any right upon such participants to use public school facilities. If approved, such use shall be in accordance with rules established by the local board of education.

(2) (A) Home schools which teach kindergarten through grade twelve (K-12), where the parents are associated with an organization that conducts church-related schools, as defined by § [49-50-801](#), which are supervised by such organization through the director of schools of such organization's department of education, and which administer standardized achievement tests at the same time such tests are given in their regular day schools, are exempt from the provisions of this section.

(B) Parent-teachers registered with such organization for conducting a home school for children in grades nine through twelve (9-12) shall possess at least a high school diploma or general education development certificate (GED), and shall have such grade nine through twelve (9-12) students administered an annual standardized achievement test or the Sanders Model of value-added assessment, whichever is in use in that LEA and is sanctioned by the state board of education.

(C) (i) Notwithstanding the provisions of subdivision (a)(2)(A), any parent desiring to conduct a home school covered by the provisions of this subdivision (a)(2) must register children who would be in grades nine through twelve (9-12) with the LEA which the child would otherwise attend.

(ii) Any parent conducting a home school for children in grades nine through twelve (9-12) under this subdivision (a)(2) must adhere to the same program of the Sanders Model of value-added assessment, or other standardized achievement testing in use in the LEA which the child would otherwise attend. If the child fails, for two (2) consecutive years, to meet or surpass the average level of achievement in the Sanders Model of value-added assessment or other standardized achievement testing in use in the LEA, the child shall be enrolled in the appropriate grade level of the LEA or private or church-related school.

(b) A parent-teacher conducting a home school must comply with the following requirements:

(1) Notice to the local director of schools by August 1 before the commencement of each school year of the parent-teacher's intent to conduct a “home school” and, for the purpose of reporting only, submit the name, number, age and grade level of children involved, the location of the school, the curriculum to be offered and the proposed hours of instruction and the qualifications of the parent-teacher relative to subdivision (b)(4) or (b)(7). Information contained in such reports may be used only for record keeping and other purposes for which similar information on public school students may be used in accordance with guidelines, rules and regulations of the state board of education. If notice is not given by August 1, but is given by September 1, it may be submitted upon payment by the parent of a penalty of twenty dollars (\$20.00) for each week or portion thereof by which notice is late. This penalty payment shall not exceed eighty dollars (\$80.00) and shall be charged per family regardless of the number of children attending the home school. The director of schools has the discretionary authority to waive the September 1 deadline for good and sufficient reasons. The director of schools or the director of schools' designee shall ensure that attendance teachers are informed of parents' rights to conduct a home school pursuant to § [49-6-3001](#)(c)(4), subsection (a) of this section, and § [49-50-801](#) upon employment of such persons and at the beginning of each school year;

(2) Maintenance of attendance records, subject to inspection by the local director of schools, and submission of these records to the director of schools at the end of each school year;

(3) Instruction for at least four (4) hours per day for the same number of instructional days as are required by state law for public schools;

(4) Possession of a high school diploma or GED by the parent-teacher conducting classes in kindergarten through grade eight (K-8);

(5) (A) Administration by the commissioner of education, or the commissioner's designee, or by a professional testing service which is approved by the LEA, to home school students of the same state board approved secure standardized tests required of public school students in grades five (5), seven (7) and nine (9); however, the test for grade nine (9) shall not be the high school proficiency test required by § [49-6-6001](#);

(B) (i) Tests administered by the commissioner or the commissioner's designee shall be at the same time tests are administered to public school students, and shall be administered in the public school which the home school student would otherwise be attending, or at whatever location students at such school are tested. Tests administered by the commissioner, or the commissioner's designee, shall be administered without charge. The parent-teacher may be present when the home school student is tested in grade five (5). Both parent-teacher and home school student shall be under the supervision of the test administrator;

(ii) Tests administered by a professional testing service shall be administered within thirty (30) days of the date of the statewide test. Tests administered by a professional testing service shall be administered at the expense of the parent-teacher;

(iii) All test results from either administration by the commissioner or the commissioner's designee, or by a professional testing service, shall be provided to the parent-teacher, the director of schools and the state board of education;

(6) (A) Consultation between the director of schools and the parent-teacher if the home school student falls three (3) to six (6) months behind the home school student's appropriate grade level, based on the test required in subdivision (b)(5);

(B) If a home school student falls six (6) to nine (9) months behind the home school student's appropriate grade level in the home school student's reading, language arts, mathematics or science test scores or such of these areas, regardless of the term used on the test, as are actually tested for the student's grade level, based on the tests required in subdivision (b)(5), the parent shall consult with a teacher licensed by the state board of education and having a certificate or endorsement in the grade level or course or subject matter in which consultation is sought. The parent and teacher shall design a remedial course to help the child obtain the child's appropriate grade level. The parent shall report the remedial course for the child to the local director of schools;

(C) (i) If a home school student falls more than one (1) year behind the home school student's appropriate grade level in the home school student's comprehensive test score for two (2) consecutive tests based on the tests required in subdivision (b)(5) and if the child is not learning disabled in the opinion of a teacher licensed to teach at the child's grade level, the local director of schools may require the parents to enroll the child in a public, private or church-related school, in accordance with this part, and the parents shall have all rights provided by law to respond to this requirement;

(ii) If a test indicates that a home school student is one (1) year or more behind the home school student's appropriate grade level, the same test shall be administered to the child not more than one (1) year later, notwithstanding the required testing schedule in subdivision (b)(5)(A);

(7) Possession of at least a baccalaureate degree awarded by a college or university accredited by an accrediting agency or association recognized by the state board of education, by a parent-teacher conducting classes in grades nine through twelve (9-12). A parent-teacher may request an exemption from this requirement from the department on a year-to-year basis;

(8) Notification in writing to the local director of schools by a parent-teacher conducting classes in grades nine through twelve (9-12) as to whether a college preparatory or general course of education will be taught to the home school student, and a description of the courses to be taught in each year;

(A) If a college preparatory course is to be given, it must include those areas of study required for admission into public four-year colleges operated by the state;

(B) If a general course is to be given, it must include those courses or areas of study required by the state board of education for graduation from public high schools;

(9) Proof shall be submitted to the local director of schools that the home school student has been vaccinated as required by § [49-6-5001](#), and has received any other health services or examinations as may be required by law generally for children in Tennessee;

(10) Submission by the home school student entering public schools to the evaluation test provided for in § [49-50-801](#), if the local system requires such test, or the tests required by the state board of education for transfer students; and

(11) In the event of the illness of a parent-teacher, or the inadequacy of the parent-teacher to teach a specific subject, a tutor, having the same qualifications which would be required of a parent-teacher teaching that grade level or course, may be employed by the parent-teacher.

(c) An LEA which has responsibility under this section on account of the conduct of home schools within its jurisdiction shall receive a state grant for accounting and record keeping expenses. The amount of this grant shall be set annually by the commissioner in an amount not to exceed one hundred dollars (\$100) per home school student. The grant shall not be included in, or considered a part of, the Tennessee foundation program.

(d) The department of education shall provide annually to home schools with which they have contact, information about meningococcal disease and the effectiveness of vaccination against meningococcal disease at the beginning of every school year. This information shall include the causes, symptoms, and the means by which meningococcal disease is spread and the places where parents and guardians may obtain additional information and vaccinations for their children. This information may be provided electronically or on the department's website. Nothing in this subsection (d) shall be construed to require the department of education to provide or purchase vaccine against meningococcal disease.

[Acts 1985, ch. 398, § 3; 1987, ch. 42, §§ 2-5; 1987, ch. 308, § 33; 1994, ch. 725, §§ 1-3; 1995, ch. 534, § 1; 1997, ch. 434, §§ 4, 5; 2005, ch. 177, § 4.]