



## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT HOME SCHOOLING**

### **WHAT IS HOMESCHOOLING?**

Homeschooling is best defined as parent-led, family-funded, relationship-based education of a child.

### **New Mexico STATE LAW DEFINES A HOMESCHOOLER**

NMSA 22-1-2 Definitions.

F. “home school” means the operation by the parent of a school-age person of a home study program of instruction that provides a basic academic educational program, including reading, language arts, mathematics, social studies and science;

K. “parent” includes a guardian or other person having custody and control of a school-age person;

V. “school year” means the total number of contract days offered by public schools in a school district during a period of twelve consecutive months;

P. “school-age person” means a person who is at least five years of age prior to 12:01 a.m. on September 1 of the school year and who has not received a high school diploma or its equivalent.

### **New Mexico Statutes Annotated 22-1-2.1**

A. Parents/Legal Guardians must send written notification to the Secretary of Education within thirty days of the home school’s establishment and by August 1 of each subsequent year of operation for renewal.

B. Maintain records of student disease immunization or a waiver of that requirement; and

C. Provide instruction by a person possessing at least a high school diploma or its equivalent.

### **VIRTUAL CHARTER SCHOOLS ARE NOT THE SAME AS HOMESCHOOLING**

A child enrolled in **publicly** funded distance learning or virtual school program is classified by law as a public school student. These students are not classified as homeschooled students.

### **WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES?**

- Parents are able to tailor a course of study to their child’s individual abilities, learning style, needs, and future goals.

- The flexibility to customize the pace at which the child moves through material is beneficial for concept mastery.
- The one-on-one tutorial style of learning is highly effective.
- Parents are able to choose the worldview through which their children are educated.
- Learning together builds strong family relationships.
- There is a greater opportunity for character training.
- Parents have the ability to address character issues immediately and consistently.
- Students often have more time to pursue areas of interest.
- High school students can get a jumpstart on college education or career preparation.

Homeschooling is more than an education option... it is a lifestyle of learning!

## **WHAT ABOUT SOCIALIZATION?**

Socialization is defined “to make fit for companionship with others; make sociable.”

Many homeschooling families have discovered that healthy socialization takes place when children are exposed to people of all ages in various settings, rather than being limited to a group of peers all about the same age. Children can learn to socialize in everyday activities such as a trip to the grocery store or library, visits with grandparents, play dates with friends, support group activities, park days, and so on. More importantly, children often receive their most valuable socialization in the nurturing environment of home and family.

New Mexico has a vibrant, active homeschool community with many opportunities for socialization. One of the biggest challenges families encounter is dealing with the overabundance of activities available. Parents should look for activities that enhance the homeschool experience without leading to the frenzied distraction of too many outside endeavors. Learning to say “no” to the good and the better helps a family leave room for the best.

## **WHAT DOES IT COST?**

The cost of homeschooling is as varied as the individual families who teach their children at home. It depends upon many factors including:

- The curriculum and resources you choose
- How many and what types of extracurricular activities your child participates in
- Field trips and enrichment activities you choose to do
- If you decide to have your child take standardized testing

Homeschooling is a worthwhile investment in your child!

## **AN OVERVIEW OF NM HOMESCHOOL REQUIREMENTS**

**COMPULSORY SCHOOL AGE:** The state’s compulsory school attendance law applies to students ages 5-18. That means that once your child turns age 5, then you must officially notify the state that you are a homeschool operator. You must also re-notify the state annually by August 1 as long as you choose to homeschool or until your child turns 18 or passes the GED.

**ATTENDANCE:** Minimum of 180 teaching days.

**SUBJECTS:** Provide a basic academic educational program including reading, language arts, mathematics, social studies and science.

**QUALIFICATIONS:** Instruction given by parent or legal guardian that possesses a high school diploma or its equivalent.

**NOTICE:** Submit a Notification of Intent to Homeschool to the NM PED within 30 days of starting to homeschool and each subsequent year by August 1<sup>st</sup>. (The notification form and additional information can be found on the CAPE website). Maintain records of student disease immunization or a waiver of that requirement for your child.

**TESTING:** None required.

### **HOW DO WE GET STARTED?**

- Read books about homeschooling.
- Familiarize yourself with New Mexico homeschool law.
- Find a homeschool support group in your area.
- Talk to other homeschooling parents.
- Notify the state of New Mexico of your intent to homeschool.
- Select and purchase your curriculum and resources.
- Set goals for the year.
- Get organized. Organize your home, your supplies, and your schedule.
- Realize there will be trial and error. Be willing to adapt as needed.

### **WHAT ABOUT GRADUATION?**

The homeschooling parent is responsible for creating and maintaining their child's high school transcript, and for issuing a diploma. Students homeschooled through high school are able to successfully go on to college, the workplace, and the military. CAPE hosts annual graduate recognition ceremony for homeschooled graduates. Below are a few helpful resources.

**HOMESCHOOLING THROUGH HIGH SCHOOL** – [www.hslda.org/highschool](http://www.hslda.org/highschool)

**THE HIGH SCHOOL HANDBOOK: JR & SR HIGH AT HOME** – by Mary Schofield

**NATIONAL HOME EDUCATION RESEARCH INSTITUTE** – [www.nheri.org](http://www.nheri.org)

### **CAN MY CHILD GO TO COLLEGE?**

Colleges and universities across the country are not only accepting, but actively recruiting homeschooled students for their excellent academics and independent study habits.

The law states in NMSA 21-1-1-1: “In determining the standard of requirements for admission to any public post-secondary educational institution the board of regents, governing board or community college board shall not require a student who has completed the requirements of a home-based or non-public

school educational program and who has submitted test scores that otherwise qualify him for admission to that institution, to obtain or submit proof of having obtained a general equivalency diploma certificate. In determining requirements for admission, the board of regents, governing board or community college board shall evaluate and treat applicants from home-based or non-public educational programs fairly and in a nondiscriminatory manner.”

## **CAN I HOMESCHOOL MY STRUGGLING LEARNER?**

Yes! Hundreds of families are homeschooling children whose special needs range from attention deficit disorder to severe multiple handicaps. Parents can offer their children individualized education, flexibility, encouragement, and support.

**HOMESCHOOLING STRUGGLING LEARNERS** – [www.hsllda.org/strugglinglearner](http://www.hsllda.org/strugglinglearner)

## **WHERE DO WE FIND CURRICULUM?**

There is an abundance of curriculum and resources available to homeschooling families today. Attending CAPE’s annual homeschool convention is a great place for hands-on review and purchasing a wide variety of curriculum and resources. Visit the CAPE website for convention details.

You can search the internet, talk to other homeschooling parents and support group leaders, and read guides such as the ones we’ve mentioned below to learn more about what’s available.

**100 TOP PICKS FOR HOMESCHOOL CURRICULUM** – by Cathy Duffy

**THE BIG WHAT NOW BOOK OF LEARNING STYLES** – by Carol Barnier

**MARY PRIDE’S COMPLETE GUIDE TO GETTING STARTED IN HOMESCHOOLING** – by Mary Pride

Identifying your child’s learning style – auditory, visual, or kinesthetic- can help you choose curriculum that works best for them. There are a number of books on the market that can help you do this. **The Way They Learn** by Cynthia Ulrich Tobias is one example.

## **WHAT ABOUT SPORTS?**

Student athletics in New Mexico may either be played in the private sector (club ball, local organizations, and homeschool organizations) or through the public sector (NMAA).

By law a homeschool student is eligible to participate in school district athletic activities (up to three) at the public school in the attendance zone in which the student resides. Each school district determines the student’s eligibility. For further information on this subject please visit <http://www.cape-nm.org/getting-started/high-schooljr-high/>.

Does CAPE oppose homeschool involvement in public school sports or activities? CAPE does not work either for or against such legislation, unless we see a potential to erode homeschool rights. We will review any potential bills or policy changes to make sure that any application for academic eligibility

doesn't surrender any parental right to direct home education or leave a door open to violate the rights of the rest of the homeschool community.

### **Christian Association of Parent Educators of New Mexico**

CAPE-NM is a statewide organization that has been serving the needs and protecting the rights of New Mexico's homeschooling families since 1996. CAPE is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit education corporation run by a Christian board of directors. CAPE membership is open to all homeschooling parents in New Mexico.

CAPE exists to inform, encourage, and support parents to educate their children, promote parent-led, family funded, relationship-based home education, and preserve the freedom to homeschool.

- INFORM
- ENCOURAGE
- SUPPORT

CAPE supports New Mexico homeschoolers in a variety of ways. Most importantly, CAPE watches legislation that may affect the freedom parents currently enjoy to teach their children at home. CAPE also keeps up-to-date on issues pertaining to homeschooling in our state, nation, and world.

Visit the CAPE website for more information about our organization and our events, benefits of membership, resources for homeschooling families, news, articles, notification form, and more!

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