

HOME EDUCATION

The Gardner School Committee recognizes the right of parents or guardians to educate their child(ren) at home. The School Committee appreciates the personal and cultural uniqueness of each family and desires to ensure that the process by which school officials approve and review home education programs is both lawful and equitable.

The Massachusetts General Law requires the School Committee to determine that a Home Schooling program meet with the minimum standards established for public schools in the Commonwealth prior to approving such a program.

Therefore, when a parent or guardian of a student below the age of 16 wants to establish a home-based educational program for their child, the following procedures shall be followed in accordance with the law:

Prior to removing the child from public school:

- The parent/guardian must submit written notification of establishment of the home-based program to the appropriate administrator, and resubmit notification on an annual basis as long as the child or children are being educated in a home-based environment
- The Superintendent or their designee must provide the parent/guardian with written notification of approval of the home-based program
- The parent/guardian must certify in writing, on a form provided by the District, the name, age, place of residence, and number of hours of attendance of each child in the program.

The Superintendent or their designee shall give the notice to produce records required by law if there is probable cause to believe the program is not in compliance with the law. Factors to be considered by the Superintendent, their designee or School Committee in deciding whether or not to approve a home education proposal may be:

1. The proposed curriculum and the number of hours of instruction in each of the proposed subjects.
2. The competency of the parents/guardian to teach the children,
3. The textbooks, workbooks and other instructional aids to be used by the children and the lesson plans and teaching manuals to be used by the parents/guardian.
4. A mutually agreeable method of assessment which corresponds to the type of educational program being followed and may include one or more of the following:
 - a. Daily logs, journals, progress reports, portfolios or dated work samples;
 - b. An independent report made by someone acceptable to both superintendent or their designee and parent(s) or guardian(s);
 - c. A Periodic standardized testing of the children to ensure educational

- progress and the attainment of minimum standards
- d. Consultation with the Superintendent or their designee;
 - e. Any other method agreed to by both Superintendent or their designee and home educator(s).

A student being educated in a home-based program within the district will have access to extra-curricular activities. Children participating in extra-curricular activities must meet all requirements regarding immunizations. Acceptance and completion of a homeschooling plan does not meet the requirements for a Gardner High School diploma.

The Superintendent or their designee has the responsibility for the development of the procedures and forms necessary for the implementation of this policy.

[Adopted: April 2001]

[Reviewed: September 2003]

[Reviewed: June 2007]

[Reviewed: September 2016]

[Reviewed: May 2020]

[Revised: April 2024]

Date Received: _____

GARDNER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

**Notice of Intent to Pursue a Program of Home Education
Academic Year _____**

Instructions: Please complete this form, attach any additional information and forward it to the Superintendent of Schools, 160 Elm Street, Gardner, MA 01440 prior to the starting date of the home education program. Expect a prompt response to this from the Superintendent or designee. If this process is initiated during the school year, the student must remain in school until the school district and the parents agree jointly to the home education plan.

A. Parent Name _____

Address _____

Phone (daytime) _____ (evening) _____

Email: _____

Student(s) _____ Birthdate _____ Grade Level _____

Student(s) _____ Birthdate _____ Grade Level _____

Student(s) _____ Birthdate _____ Grade Level _____

Student(s) _____ Birthdate _____ Grade Level _____

B. On a separate sheet, describe the instructional program to be taught, including subjects, texts and instructional aides to be used.

C. Name(s) and academic background, life experience and/or qualifications of those who will be instructing the child(ren), as they relate to the instructional program described in section B.

D. Check the method of assessment to be used followed by a brief description.

- Daily logs, journals, progress reports, portfolios or dated work samples
- An independent report made by someone acceptable to both Superintendent and parent(s) or guardian(s)

- Standardized test results
- Consultation with the Superintendent or appropriate school principal
- Any other method agreed to by both Superintendent and home educator(s)

E. A sample daily schedule.

The following signature confirms the intent to provide a minimum of 900 hours (elementary) 990 hours (secondary) 180 days of instruction.

Signature of Parent or Guardian

Date Submitted

The signature of the school official indicates final approval of this plan. A parent/administrative conference may be scheduled.

Signature of Superintendent or Designee

Date of Response

Attached to this application is a packet that includes the following materials:

- Gardner Public Schools Home Education Policy

Failure of a home educator to abide in good faith by the procedures outlined above may result in the School Committee taking action under Massachusetts General Law Chapter 76, sections 2 and/or 4, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent. Child Requiring Assistance (CRA) proceedings pursuant to Massachusetts General Law Chapter 119, Section 39E, will not be invoked for any child pursuing a home education program.

[Reference: Legal Ref: M.G.L. Chapter 76, Sections 1, 2, and 4 Charles Decision]

[Reviewed: September 2003]

[Revised: November 2016]

[Revised: May 2020]

[Revised: March 2024]