

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### Ohio Homeschool Notification

#### **How is homeschool notification regulated in Ohio?**

The process of notification is regulated by the Ohio Administrative Code, Chapter 3301, section 34, part 03. To access OAC 3301-34-03 online, search For “Ohio Administrative Code.” Click on “Anderson’s Online Documentation, go to Chapter 3301--Department of Education, Section 34-Excuses from Compulsory Attendance for Home Education, Part 03--Notification. Or go to [www.cheohome.org](http://www.cheohome.org) and click on “Getting Started.” The purpose of the regulations (as stated therein) is “to prescribe conditions governing the issuance of excuses from school attendance. . . .to provide for the consistent application thereof throughout the state by superintendents, and to safeguard the primary right of parents to provide the education for their child(ren). ...“

#### **Should I follow the regulations when notifying my school district of my intent to home educate?**

Yes, PEACH recommends cooperating with the regulations that govern home schooling in Ohio. The regulations were established for our protection, and it is through our cooperation with them that we can be secure in our privilege to home school. Educate yourself in the regulations for your own peace of mind and confidence. Children are considered truant when they are absent from school without authorization.

#### **Who should notify?**

Any child who will be 6 by Sept. 30 is considered compulsory school age according to the Ohio Revised Code 3321.01(A)(1)(2). As of 2001, however districts had the option of making August 1 the age limit ORC 3321.01(A)(3)--check with your district. A child must have “successfully completed kindergarten” before being admitted to first grade in a school district unless the conditions called for in ORC 3321.01(D) are met. It is strongly recommended that you notify for the kindergarten year if you intend to enroll the child in first grade in a public or chartered non-public school. Otherwise, be sure to notify the year your child will be 6 by Sept. 30 or August 1, depending on your school district.

#### **Do I notify if my child is enrolled in an online charter school?**

No, an online charter school, such as OHDELA or K12, is considered a public school and does not fall under the umbrella of homeschooling in Ohio.

**Is there an approved form for notification?**

Yes, there is a form that was developed by the advisory committee which drafted the regulations. It is available on this website. **DO NOT** use a form developed by a school district; they often ask for information not required by the regulations.

**If my school district asks for information in addition to what is included on the form or in the regulations, should I provide it?**

No. That is why it is important to be familiar with the regulations. Giving more information than the regulations call for, although it may seem harmless, can actually cause future problems for you or others in allowing school officials more latitude than intended. While most school officials are well intentioned, some would like to challenge "...the primary right of parents to provide the education for their child(ren)."

**Can each school district establish its own policies for collecting information from parents?**

No, they must follow the regulations as outlined in ORC 3301-34-03.

**Should I give information to school officials over the phone?**

No. It is recommended that you do all communicating with school officials in writing. This will establish records of your communication which should be kept in a file.

**Is there a source for legal counsel designed for homeschoolers?**

Home School Legal Defense (HSLDA) was established to support parents in their homeschooling endeavors. Go to [www.hsllda.org](http://www.hsllda.org) for more information on membership. Members of PEACH can get a discount on HSLDA membership.

**Is there another option for notification besides the recommended form?**

Yes, you may write a letter containing all the information required by the regulations.

**Can someone other than a child's own parent homeschool him or her?**

Yes. This person should be listed in item (3) on the notification form, or mentioned in the letter.

**Can a child be enrolled part time in public school?**

This is at the "discretion of the Superintendent." Contact your local school district or superintendent for more information.

**Can a homeschooled student play public school sports?**

This question falls under the authority of the Ohio High School Athletic Association and the discretion of the school district. Contact your local school district or superintendent for more information.

**How do I prepare a child to enter first grade in a public or private school?**

Fill out notification paperwork for the child, even if he is not of compulsory school age so that the district has his Kindergarten work on record. Follow a scope and sequence or a Kindergarten curriculum of a reliable publisher. Contact your local school district or superintendent for more information.

**What is used to determine placement for enrollment of a homeschooled student in public school?**

Placement in public school is determined by the superintendent with consideration of 1) most recent annual test results, 2) participation in regularly scheduled testing in that district, 3) other information deemed necessary, including interviews. ORC 3319.01 Contact your local school district or superintendent for more information.

**Is a child of a certain age required to be working in a certain grade level?**

No. There are two choices of assessment in addition to “an alternative assessment mutually agreed upon between the parents and the superintendent.” The first option is a standardized achievement test, whereby the parents choose at what level the child tests. The second option, a written narrative, requires that the child be making “progress in accordance with the child’s abilities.”

**Do I need to submit a schedule?**

No.

**What if I receive notification from my school district that my notification was incomplete?**

The superintendent must state in writing what information from (A) of OAC 3301-34-03 (the notification form) is missing and give the parents two options: 1) supply in writing the missing information, 2) arrange a conference with superintendent to supply the missing information. Option #1 is recommended.

**What if I move during the school year and wish to continue homeschooling in the new location?**

Request in writing that the original district forward the notification and related materials to the new district in a timely manner. OAC 3301-34-03(F). If you move to a different state, familiarize yourself with that state’s requirements as soon as possible.

**Must my child be tested to begin homeschooling? Do I need to send assessment results with my first notification?**

OAC 3301-34-04(A) No. There is no testing requirement to begin home education.

**What is the difference, in purpose, between standardized testing and a written narrative?**

The objective for testing is to report academic proficiency. The objective for a narrative is to report progress in accordance with the child's abilities.

**Should I test at my local school?**

We are NOT required to test with the school district. In fact it is preferable not to, as it eliminates privacy and the right to report only the composite score.

**Who determines whether my child(ren) is/are tested or assessed through a narrative?**

The parent chooses which assessment option to employ.

**Who can administrate a standardized test to my child(ren)?**

A test administrator can be a certified teacher, a person mutually agreed upon by the parents and superintendent, or a person duly authorized by the test publisher. PEACH provides testing in the spring with people duly authorized by Bob Jones University Press to administrate the Stanford Achievement Test.

**How are test results reported?**

Either use the form on this website or state them in a letter that you send with your notification.

**Should I send a copy of the complete printout of the test results?**

No! The regulations clearly state OAC 3301-34-04(B)(1)(b): "Results should demonstrate reasonable proficiency as compared to other children in the district at the same grade level. Any child that has a **composite score** at or above the twenty-fifth percentile shall be deemed to be performing at a level of reasonable proficiency." [emphasis added] It important to report only the composite score. One danger in sending the whole report is that a superintendent may try to require a child to be remediated because of a subtest score lower than the 25th percentile. This is not provided for in the regulations. Even if your child(ren) are well above the 25th percentile, other children could be affected if you send the entire report and the superintendent decides he/she would like to see one from all homeschoolers.

**What if my child does not test well?**

A composite score below the 25<sup>th</sup> percentile requires one of four options be exercised: 1) retest, 2) choose the narrative 3) alternate assessment agreed upon by the parents and the superintendent 4) plan of remediation designed by the parents and submitted to the superintendent within 30 days of the request for remediation.

PEACH would advise you to exercise option #1 or #2 and DO NOT report a composite score below the 25<sup>th</sup> percentile. Contact PEACH for a list of qualified teachers for retesting or a written narrative.

**What if I send only the composite score on the form or in my letter and the superintendent asks for the printout?**

The form PEACH has used in the past did not state clearly that the score being reported was the COMPOSITE score. The form has now been updated to state, *“The COMPOSITE results, of the \_\_\_\_\_ percentile, demonstrate reasonable proficiency as compared to other children in the district.”* If the superintendent will not accept this form, you may contact HSDLA for advice. They have an updated form on their website for their members to use to report test scores. You may also provide the superintendent with a copy of your test scores, blacking out all personal information and scores other than the composite (or complete battery) score. Cover all the subtest scores allowing only the header showing the testing company’s name, the student’s name at the top and the composite score about half-way down the page to show. Make a copy and send that to the superintendent.

**What is a written narrative and who can do it?**

A certified teacher or person agreed upon by the parent and superintendent reviews a portfolio of the child’s work. Contact PEACH to be put in touch with a qualified person.

**To whom do I send my notification?**

A list of addresses for Greene County and surrounding systems can be found by going to [www.peachhomeschool.org](http://www.peachhomeschool.org) and clicking on “Forms and Links” then opening up the file “Notification Procedures.”

**Where can I find additional information about homeschooling in Ohio?**

[www.cheohome.org](http://www.cheohome.org)

[www.hsllda.org](http://www.hsllda.org)