



219 North Main Street, Suite 402  
Barre, VT 05641 (p) 802-622-1254 | (f) 802-479-4320

## Home Study Guidelines

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Thank you for your interest in enrolling your student/s in a Vermont Home Study Program. Please be advised that we have made some changes to our Home Study Enrollment forms in order for them to be more user friendly and efficient. Please read this guidance document prior to completing the enrollment forms.

These forms are available and can be completed in one of two ways; electronically or in written form.

1. Electronic: The forms are designed to be completed on a computer and designed to be a fillable form. They require you to use Adobe Reader to complete them electronically. If you choose this method, please fill out the gray boxes with the required information. In most cases, you will be able to use the TAB function to move from box to box to complete. This version may be saved on your computer and updated annually. This will ultimately prove to be more efficient for families in the long run. Please make sure that you fill out a separate form for each student. You will be able to upload this completed form to our electronic platform.
2. Written: For families who prefer, the forms can be printed out and completed in writing (additional paper may be used if necessary.) The forms can then be either mailed or scanned and uploaded to our electronic platform.

It is preferable that you submit your enrollment form electronically through our secure platform. In order to use this system, families will need to either fill out the forms electronically and upload them directly to our Electric File Transfer (EFT) system, or print them out and then scan and upload them once completed. The EFT system can be found [online](#). Once uploaded, you will then be prompted to call or [email](#) our technical assistance line (802-622-1254) to obtain a user name and password in order to complete the process.

Please remember that all signatures must be original signatures. Agency of Education cannot accept e-signatures or typed signatures at this time. Signatures received electronically as a scanned document or printed and then faxed are acceptable. The fax number is 802-479-4320.

## Contents

Instructions on Completing the Home Study Enrollment Forms .....	3
Student Exemption .....	4
Enrollment Timelines .....	6
Minimum Course of Study (MCOS).....	7
Things to remember when writing a Minimum Course of Study: .....	8
Minimum course of study exemption:.....	9
Classes taken at a Public School or at a VT approved Postsecondary Institution: .....	9
Children who are eligible for special education or who have special needs:.....	11
Withdrawal from a Home Study Program:.....	11
Upon Entering/Returning to a Public/Independent School:.....	11
End of Year Assessment (EOYA).....	11
EOYA Option #1: Teacher Assessment .....	12
EOYA Option #2 and #3: Parent Report and Portfolio or Teacher Advisory (TA) Report and Portfolio .....	12
The Parent Report: .....	12
The Teacher Advisory Service Report:.....	13
Creating and Preparing the Portfolio to Accompany a Parent or TA Service Report:.....	13
Suggestions for Assembling Portfolio Samples: .....	13
Appendix #1: Information Regarding End of the Year Assessments .....	15
Specific Portfolio Suggestions for Each Content Area.....	15
Results from a Standardized Achievement Test.....	16
Combining End-of-the-Year Assessment Options .....	16
Appendix #2: Parental Resources .....	17
Appendix # 3: Vermont Rules and Statutes.....	18
Title 16 V.S.A. §11(21) Classifications and Definitions.....	18
Title 16 V.S.A. §1121 Attendance by Children of School Age Required (Compulsory Attendance).....	18
Title 16 V.S.A. § 166b Home Study Program .....	18
Title 16 V.S.A. §906 Course of Study .....	22
State Board of Education Rule Regarding Special Services for Home Study Students .....	23
State Board of Education Rules for Integration of Home Study Students.....	23
Act 119 .....	27
Vermont Principals’ Association (VPA) Eligibility Standards for Home Study Students .....	28

## Instructions on Completing the Home Study Enrollment Forms

With the feedback and support from the Home Study Advisory Group, Agency Of Education has made some changes to these forms. Please keep that in mind there is specific information that is required before the enrollment process can be considered complete. Not all students require the identical forms to be submitted. Please refer to the following grid to ensure that all of the specific information required for your student is included in your submission. Missing documents will delay the home study enrollment process.

Required forms to be included in the enrollment packet:

Specific Form	New Enrollments	Second Year Enrollments	Subsequent Enrollments
Home Study Enrollment Notice Form A	Required	Required	Required
Independent Professional Evidence (Disability) Reporting Form Form B	Only if the student has not been previously enrolled in a VT public school or home study program	NA	NA
Assurance of Legal Authorization to Make Educational Decisions	Only necessary for a parent with sole legal and educational decision making rights or if the parent and student have different surnames	Only if family dynamics changed from the previous year	Only if family dynamics change from the previous year
Minimum Course of Study (MCOS)	Required	Required	Required unless the family qualifies for the MCOS exemption. Students who are age 12 must have an MCOS regardless of the exemption
MCOS Adaptations for Disabilities	Only necessary if the student has a diagnosed disability	Only necessary if the student has a diagnosed disability	Only necessary if the student has a diagnosed disability
Instructor Form for Home Study Enrollment Form C	Only necessary if someone <i>other than the parents/guardians</i> is providing ongoing instruction in a subject area of the Minimum Course of Study	Only necessary if someone <i>other than the parents/guardians</i> is providing ongoing instruction in a subject area of the Minimum Course of Study	Only necessary if someone <i>other than the parents/guardians</i> is providing ongoing instruction in a subject area of the Minimum Course of Study

## Student Exemption

16 VSA §166b(k): *A VT home study program that has successfully completed the last two consecutive school years of home study with any enrolled child, provided those two years fall within the most recent five years, shall not thereafter be required to submit an annual detailed outline or narrative describing the content of the minimum course of study.*

**All students regardless of their MCOS exemption, who are 12, must submit an MCOS.**

The MCOS exemption doesn't apply if the program has been disallowed by order of a hearing officer or a home study enrollment notice was withdrawn during the previous year.

Please remember to include all applicable forms when submitting your enrollment packet. This will avoid multiple submissions and follow up calls/emails on behalf of both the families and the Agency Of Education staff which will delay the enrollment process.

While electronic submissions are preferable, the Home Study Team will continue to accept paper copies of enrollment notices. Families who want to ensure the arrival of their enrollment packet are encouraged to obtain confirmation via the postal service. During the summer months, the Home Study staff receive up to 150 enrollment packets per day. Once the packets are received, Agency Of Education staff have 14 business days to respond to families. This will be done in writing, either via email or the postal service. **Please refrain from contacting the Home Study staff to inquire about the status of your enrollment unless you receive a specific request to do so.** If you have not received a response from the Home Study office within 3 weeks, please contact the Home Study Team at [AOE.HomeStudy@vermont.gov](mailto:AOE.HomeStudy@vermont.gov) or via our technical assistance line at 802-622-1254

Home Study Team strongly encourages families to review the [Home Study page](#) on the Vermont Agency of Education's website for the most recent forms and information.

Finally, please remember that all students must be **enrolled** in a home study program, independent school or public school by the beginning of each school year. If students are not officially enrolled in one of these three programs, the students are considered truant, and the public school shall notify the local truancy officer. Submission of an enrollment packet does not mean that the student has been enrolled in a home study program. **When students are officially enrolled in a home study program, families will receive a complete letter from the Home Study Office.**

There are three ways to submit enrollment packets:

1. Complete the forms electronically and upload them directly to our Electric File Transfer (EFT) system The EFT system can be found [online](#). Once uploaded, you will then be prompted to call or [email](#) our technical assistance line (802-622-1254) to obtain a user name and password in order to complete the process.
2. Print off the forms, fill them out, scan them and then upload them directly to our Electric File Transfer (EFT) system The EFT system can be found [online](#). Once uploaded, you will then be prompted to call or [email](#) our technical assistance line (802-622-1254) to obtain a user name and password in order to complete the process.
3. Print off the forms, fill them out and mail them directly to:

Home Study/VT Agency of Education  
219 North Main Street, Suite 402  
Barre, VT 05641

Additional questions may be referred to the Home Study team via phone at 802-622-1254 or email [AOE.HomeStudy@vermont.gov](mailto:AOE.HomeStudy@vermont.gov).

## Enrollment Timelines

Following are timelines relevant to home study enrollment in Vermont:

Timeline/Date	Explanation
March 1	Enrollments can be submitted and processed for the following school year
May 15	Home Study generally does not accept any additional enrollment packets for the current year; contact the Home Study Office for more information.
March 1- Labor Day	Typical timeline for processing home study enrollments
14 business days	Within 14 business days of receiving an enrollment notice, the Home Study staff will send a written document indicating whether the enrollment packet is either complete or incomplete.
14 calendar days	If information is missing from the enrollment packet, families have 14 calendar days to provide the missing information in writing.
45 calendar days	The Home Study staff has 45 calendar days to respond to the enrollment packet, indicating that the student is enrolled in a home study program OR call a hearing. The Secretary of Education may call a hearing if there is information that creates a significant doubt about whether a home study program can or will provide a minimum course of study for a student who has not yet enrolled.

**Please keep in mind: Enrollment in home study does not occur immediately upon the submission or receipt of an enrollment notice to the Agency. The Agency will contact the family within 14 business days to request additional information, or state that the enrollment notice is complete and there is enough information to move forward though the process. A student’s enrollment in home study will not become effective until the date of the Agency’s letter indicating that his or her enrollment notice is “complete” and no further action or information is required from the home study program, or 45 days following the Agency’s receipt of an enrollment notice, whichever date is sooner.**

Enrollment may be delayed, however, if the child's enrollment notice is lacking information required under the home study statute.

Parents intending to enroll a child in a Vermont home study program for a full school year should ensure that the Agency receives an enrollment notice for that child by Labor Day. Enrollment notices received via mail will be considered timely if postmarked before Labor Day. Enrollment notices received via electronic mail, facsimile, or in-person delivery to the Agency, will be considered timely if delivered by 4:30 pm local time on the first business day following Labor Day.

Remember that students must be enrolled in a public, independent or home study program by the first day of school in accordance with compulsory attendance requirements. Parents are strongly encouraged to submit the enrollment packet by July 15 to ensure completion prior to the start of the school year. Students who do not attend a school while a home study notice of enrollment is pending may be deemed legally truant.

Parents may submit enrollment packets throughout the school year for students who:

- Turn six prior to the local school district's age cutoff
- Seek to transfer into home study from enrollment in a Vermont school
- Have moved into Vermont and want to enroll in a home study program

### **Minimum Course of Study (MCOS)**

Vermont law requires that parents provide a list of skills and topics, scope and sequence, outline or narrative for each of the topic areas that the student will be learning about during the course of the school year for **each** child.

The MCOS (aka "curriculum") must include the areas outlined in the law (and further defined on page 8 of this guide). The curriculum should be commensurate with the age and ability of your child including any special services and adaptations to be made to accommodate any special needs (including any diagnosed disability) the child may have. The minimum course of study must adequately describe the topics and content to be studied and/or the skills to be attained in each subject area.

Please do not submit a curriculum that gives topics and projects that "may" be included. The home study statute requires a description of what you will be doing and your end of the year progress assessment will be reviewed to determine if it corresponds to your curriculum. You can build flexibility into the description of topics. You can also simply notify the home study office if you have decided to make a major change in your curriculum.

The MCOS as outlined in [16 V.S.A. § 906](#) means learning experiences adapted to a student's age and ability in the specific subject areas listed below (please note that the examples below are not an exhaustive list):

1. **\*Basic Communication skills, including English, American & other literature, reading, writing**, (i.e. *phonics, speaking/listening, vocabulary, spelling, grammar, types of writing, genres of books, plot, responses to reading*):
  2. **Basic Communication skills mathematics** (i.e. *addition, fractions, time, measurement, algebraic/geometric concepts*):
  3. **Citizenship, History, and Government in Vermont and the United States** (i.e. *community action and local government, specific eras in history of VT, the US*)
  4. **Natural Sciences** (i.e. *the scientific method, discoveries and inventions, Physical Science, Life Science, Earth and Space Science, and Engineering*):
  5. **\*\* Physical Education** (i.e. *team sports, dance, martial arts, yoga, skiing*):
  6. **\*\* Comprehensive Health Education including the effects of tobacco, alcoholic drinks, and drugs on the human system and on society** (*first aid, human growth and development, and nutrition*):
  7. **\*\* Fine Arts** (i.e. *visual arts, media arts, music, dance, attend performing arts events*):
- \* Literature has been combined with **Basic Communication Skills: including English, American & other literature, reading, writing**.

\*\* Only required if the student is under 13.

**Things to remember when writing a Minimum Course of Study:**

- Each content section must include list of skills and topics, scope and sequence, outline or narrative for each of the topic areas.
- Home Study staff will not accept a website address as a substitute for the MCOS.
- Please provide the MCOS for each child *separately*. Each child's enrollment is considered individually. Each child's MCOS must be adapted to his/her age and ability, as well as any disability or special needs.
- When a child is re-enrolled, Home Study staff compares the new MCOS to the prior year. We are looking to see if the minimum course of study is commensurate with the child's age and ability. As the child gets older, the skills should advance and knowledge increase. Please use the MCOS as a guide when completing the end of the year assessment.

### **Minimum course of study exemption:**

The home study statute describes how a home study program may qualify for the minimum course of study exemption. [16 V.S.A. §166b\(k\)](#) states that “A Vermont home study program, which has successfully completed the last two consecutive school years of home study with any enrolled child, provided those two years fall within the most recent five years, shall not thereafter be required to submit an annual detailed outline or narrative describing the content of the minimum course of study.

For students to qualify for the “minimum course of study exemption” the home study enrollment notice must be received by the Vermont Agency of Education on or before Labor Day. Another requirement is that the home study program must be in effect for the entire school year (i.e. the home study enrollment has not been withdrawn during the school year.)

*Successful completion* of a home study program shall mean that in each of the two consecutive years, the program has not been disallowed by the hearing officer, the previously enrolled student made progress commensurate with age and ability in all subject areas of the minimum course of study, and the home study program has otherwise complied with the requirements of this section.” See [16 V.S.A. § 166b \(k\)](#).

**A minimum course of study must be submitted for each child who is 12 years old at the time the enrollment notice is submitted even if the student has met the aforementioned exemption.** See [16 V.S.A. § 166b\(l\)](#).

### **Classes taken at a Public School or at a VT approved Postsecondary Institution:**

- Students enrolled in home study may take part in classes and activities at their public (not independent) schools. Act 119 provides for the participation of homeschoolers in public school academic, co-curricular, and extracurricular programs.
- To be enrolled in a home study program, at least sixty percent of the core academics (3 out of 5) must be conducted at home. “Core academics” includes (basic communication skills: reading and writing, basic communications skills: use of numbers/math, history/citizenship/government, the natural sciences, English, American, and other Literature, and other literature.
- If a student is taking a class at the public school, you must:
  - Include the content of the public school class in the minimum course of study. (Not applicable if the student has met the minimum course of study exemption.)
  - Provide an end-of-the-year assessment for the class consistent with one of the options provided in the home study statute. A home study program

must submit the signature of a school official (teacher, principal, guidance counselor, etc.) verifying the class the child is taking at the public school.

- Complete Form C in the enrollment packet.
- Act 77 is defined as *“any combination of high-quality academic and experiential components leading to secondary school completion and postsecondary readiness, which may include assessments that allow the student to apply his or her knowledge and skills to tasks that are of interest to that student.” This does not refer to a finite menu of pre-selected pathways from Introduction to Act 77 (Revised: January 25, 2016) Page 2 of 4 which a student must choose. Rather, it implies that there may be as many unique pathways as there are students. Such flexibility in students’ experiences will require that school personnel, students, and parents are familiar with school-based course offerings, virtual learning opportunities, community work-based learning (WBL) opportunities, and dual enrollment options.*
- What does Act 77 mean for you?

This act creates a [Flexible Pathways Initiative](#) within the Agency of Education to expand opportunities for secondary students to complete high school and achieve postsecondary readiness. The Act provides the opportunity for each high school student to:

- Enroll in two [dual enrollment](#) courses at no expense to the student,
- Authorizes the development of additional [early college](#) programs through which students’ complete 12th grade entirely on a college campus, and
- Removes the upper age limit for participation in the High School Completion Program.

The Act includes multiple effective dates, beginning July 1, 2013.

For more information:

[Dual Enrollment](#)

[Early College](#)

## **Children who are eligible for special education or who have special needs:**

- Children receiving special education services (via an Individualized Education Program (IEP)) at public schools are not entitled to continued services when they enter a home study program.
- Some students may be eligible for a services plan through the public school
- If a student, eligible for special education is partially enrolled in public school, they may be able to receive services based on the nature of the disability and the class/es the student is taking.
- If a student has a disability or special need, the MCOS section on adaptations must be completed. Adaptations may include modifying the curriculum or materials, or using alternative methods of delivering the content in order to accommodate any special needs your child has as a result of a disability. Adaptations must enable your child to make progress which is commensurate with his/her age and ability.

## **Withdrawal from a Home Study Program:**

Each home study program must notify the Secretary of Education in writing within seven (7) days of the day that a student ceases to be enrolled in the program. See [16 V.S.A. § 166b\(c\)](#). An End of the Year Assessment is required to be completed for the time the student was enrolled in a home study program in order to close out a student's home study record. This is required even if the student has returned to a public or an independent school, turned sixteen (16) or has moved out-of-state. Otherwise, our office will not be able to verify that the home study program was completed.

## **Upon Entering/Returning to a Public/Independent School:**

- If the student completes a home study program and enters/returns to a public/independent school, the student's achievement level (such as grade level or academic standing) will be at the discretion of the school. Students might not receive credit for courses undertaken at home and may need to repeat courses.
- High school students enrolled in a home study program do not receive a high school diploma from the Agency of Education. Upon request, the Agency will provide a verification letter that may be used to document that the student was enrolled in home study.
- Parents are encouraged to keep copies of curriculum, samples of student work, and assessment results. These records may be useful for college admissions, military service opportunities, etc.

## **End of Year Assessment (EOYA)**

The home study statute states that *each home study program shall assess annually the progress of each of its students. Progress shall be assessed in each area of the Minimum Course of*

*Study.* See [16 V.S.A §166b\(d\)](#). Each student who is enrolled in a home study program must be assessed for the time spent studying in the home study program. A student's enrollment may not be considered closed or complete without the EOYA. This applies to all home study students including students who:

- Re-enroll in a home study program for the following school year
- Return to the public school, either during the school year or the following school year
- Withdraw from a home study program during the school year
- Turn 16 during the school year (thus completing the compulsory age of attendance)
- Graduate from high school

The home study statute requires that parents use **one** of four types of assessments:

1. Teacher Assessment
2. Parent Letter and Portfolio
3. Teacher Advisory Service Report from a publisher of a commercial curriculum and Portfolio
4. Results from a Standardized Achievement Test

#### **EOYA Option #1: Teacher Assessment**

- The assessment must be completed and authored by a currently licensed Vermont teacher
- The assessment must be completed in a face-to-face meeting with the student
- The teacher will review the student's curriculum and the student's content knowledge and/or skills in each subject area of the MCOS
- If the student has a disability, the teacher must ensure that the student is making progress commensurate with his/her age and ability
- May be completed using a form designated by the Secretary of Education or another format as long as the required information is included

#### **EOYA Option #2 and #3: Parent Report and Portfolio or Teacher Advisory (TA) Report and Portfolio**

The parent/TA report may be completed by the parent, the student's instructor, or a teacher advisory service report from a publisher of a commercial curriculum **together with a portfolio of the student's work** that includes work samples to demonstrate progress in each subject area in the minimum course of study.

##### ***The Parent Report:***

- A parent report must contain a description of the student's progress in each area of the MCOS. This will involve a brief description of work accomplished in each area. There must be a separate report for each student. A portfolio of the student's work must accompany the report. The parent report and student

portfolio must indicate age-appropriate progress in each area of the MCOS.

- If the student is 13 or older, the parent report does not need to provide information for Physical Education, Health or Fine Arts.

***The Teacher Advisory Service Report:***

- If the student accessed a Teacher Advisory Service Report/Correspondence Program during the school year, then the student's work was mailed to a program and subsequently received a grade report. This grade report may be submitted to satisfy part of your EOYA. A portfolio must also be submitted.

***Creating and Preparing the Portfolio to Accompany a Parent or TA Service Report:***

- The portfolio must include student work samples.
- Each portfolio must include work samples for only one student.
- Supporting documentation in each area of the MCOS must be included.
- If a student participates in an on-line class, families should consider saving samples of their student's work to include in the portfolio before emailing final copies to the program.
- Copies of the table of contents from books, summaries of what the student learned written in the parent's handwriting, or copies of the MCOS with the word "Completed" written on it are not acceptable portfolio pieces.

***Suggestions for Assembling Portfolio Samples:***

It is important to document each student's progression throughout the school year. Each portfolio sample should have the student's name on it, the date and any corrections that have been made. Please arrange samples in an orderly fashion by subject and by date.

Younger students whose writing skills are still developing may not have as much written work which indicates learning in science or global citizenship. Parents may provide drawings, maps, photographs, lists of experiments, etc., and more detail in the parent report.

You may also document learning with:

- Brochures from museums, art shows, or events which include a description of content learned
- Photographs of the child participating in an event or program
- Photographs of artwork or projects
- Workbook pages from academic areas
- Titles of books read in various subjects
- Drawings, maps, graphs, or diagrams done by the student
- Student's activity logs
- Book reports
- Research papers
- Graded exams

- Lists of experiments
- Copies of certificates and awards

For each area of the minimum course of study, 4-6 documents which clearly represent what was covered must be provided. The sample documents should illustrate skills practiced or knowledge gained in each area being addressed. The work samples should be from throughout the school year.

When the student's portfolio is assembled, it should be reviewed in an objective manner. The following questions should be considered prior to the parent letter/TA Service Report and portfolio submission:

1. Do the samples match the MCOS which was submitted to the Agency of Education?
2. If the home study program qualified for the MCOS exemption, do the samples indicate content learned in each required area of the MCOS?
3. Does the portfolio reflect the child's learning experience throughout the school year?
4. Is it evident how progress was made in each area of the curriculum?
5. Do the samples include the student's name, date and have they been corrected?
6. Do I have 4-6 samples for each area of the MCOS?
7. Does my parent letter include all areas listed in the MCOS?

**Please do not send paperwork in notebooks or binders of any kind. Please keep your originals** and send our office copies. It is not our practice to return portfolios. You should keep your student portfolios if your child expects to attend college, as they are helpful in documenting your child's home study experience.

## **Appendix #1: Information Regarding End of the Year Assessments Specific Portfolio Suggestions for Each Content Area**

**Basic Communication skills, including English, American & other literature, reading, writing:** Submit four to six dated work samples showing improvement over the year in each topic area studied. Reports or creative writing assignments from different times during the year may show improvements in many areas. Writing samples may be counted for more than one area. For example, a report on George Washington may be considered a work sample for history and basic communication skills (writing). For literature, document the content covered including plot development, characterizations, author's language, author's point of view and/or book titles. Examples of book reports, a booklist, or graded literature tests which were a part of the curriculum may also be included.

**Basic Communication skills mathematics:** Submit four to six dated math papers which might include work accomplished in various topics throughout the year. The work samples may be in the form of graded tests, corrected homework problems, graphs, etc.

**Citizenship, History, and Government in Vermont and the United States:** Please provide four to six dated work samples from each area studied in topic areas such as specific eras in history of Vermont, the United States, and/or the world. Field trip reports, pictures of projects, workbook pages, and lists of books that were read are acceptable.

**Natural Sciences:** Describe the content (topics/skills) covered in science and provide four to six dated work samples which may include samples of written work, graded tests, a list describing experiments conducted, or photographs of student doing experiments.

**Students who are 13 or older are not required to do physical education, health and fine arts.**

**Physical Education:** The documentation should support progress in areas studied. Documentation may include photographs of activities, competition schedules, award certificates, swimming certificates, or a student's exercise log.

**Comprehensive Health Education:** The documentation may include corrected health tests associated with the curriculum, program covers, drawings, etc. If the health and science curricula overlap, please draw our attention to this so we will consider the portfolio samples for both areas.

**Fine Arts:** Describe the content (topics/skills) that was covered and provide one piece of documentation. Examples of portfolio documentation might include photographs of a

student's artwork, student reports on field trips, programs from recitals, or plays are acceptable. **Please do not submit original samples of artwork that you wish to keep as we cannot guarantee their return.**

### **Results from a Standardized Achievement Test**

[16 V.S.A. §166b \(d\)\(3\)](#) provides that an End of the Year Assessment (EOYA) may be done by the complete results of a standardized achievement test approved by the Secretary, administered in a manner approved by the testing company, and scored by either the testing company or by a Vermont licensed teacher who has administered the test and who is not the student's parent or guardian.

A standardized achievement test can be ordered from some of the vendors listed in the Vermont Home Study Resource Guide, which is available through the Agency of Education. Each achievement test publisher requires specific qualifications for the test administrator. When ordering a test, inquire with the vendor about tester qualifications. It is advised that tests be ordered in January or February. This will allow ample time to receive the test(s), administer them, and receive the results back from the publisher. The test results must be submitted with the home study re-enrollment notice.

**Note:** If you wish to have your child tested at a public school, you should contact the local school as soon as possible for information on testing availability and dates.

If you plan to use a standardized achievement test, you will need to carefully check the subject areas covered in the test. Many tests cover only language arts and mathematics, while others may also cover science and global citizenship. Your home study assessment must address **all** required areas of the minimum course of study. Usually an achievement test does not include literature in the topics which it is testing. These tests usually do not address fine arts or physical education. If, under the science section, "life science" is listed, then the achievement test *does* include health. You will need to choose one of the other methods of assessing your child's progress if some areas of the minimum course of study are not covered by the achievement test.

### **Combining End-of-the-Year Assessment Options**

It may be necessary to combine the use of the four different options for end of the year assessments. For example, if a child takes an achievement test which covers only language arts and math, the parent would need to provide an assessment for global citizenship, history and government, science, health, fine arts, physical education and literature using another method of assessment. One choice might be to use a parent report and portfolio for science, citizenship, history and government, health, and literature. If the child participated in physical education and music at the local public

school, families may ask the instructor to complete a teacher letter for these classes. There are many possible combinations.

## **Appendix #2: Parental Resources**

Vermont Family Network  
600 Blair Park Road, Suite 240  
Williston VT 05495  
Telephone: (802) 876-5315 or 1-800-800-4005; FAX (802) 876-6291

VT Agency of Education  
Special Education  
219 North Main Street, Suite 402  
Barre, VT 05641  
(802) 479-1255

For questions regarding students in the care and custody of the State of Vermont, please call the Vermont Educational Surrogate Parent Program at (802) 479-1255.

**Home Study questions may be directed to the Agency Of Education Home Study technical assistance line at 802-622-1254 or at [aoe.homestudy@vermont.gov](mailto:aoe.homestudy@vermont.gov).**

## **Appendix # 3: Vermont Rules and Statutes**

### **Title 16 V.S.A. §11(21) Classifications and Definitions**

“Home Study Program” means an educational program offered through home study which provides a minimum course of study and which is offered to not more than:

- (a) Children residing in that home; and
- (b) Children not residing in that home who either are two or fewer in number or who are from one family.

### **Title 16 V.S.A. §1121 Attendance by Children of School Age Required (Compulsory Attendance)**

A person having the control of a child between the ages of six and 16 years shall cause the child to attend a public school, an approved or recognized independent school or a home study program for the full number of days for which that school is held, unless the child:

- (1) Is mentally or physically unable so to attend; or
- (2) Has completed the tenth grade; or
- (3) Is excused by the superintendent or a majority of the school directors as provided in this chapter; or
- (4) Is enrolled in and attending a postsecondary schools, as defined in subdivision 176(b)(1) of this title, which is approved or accredited in Vermont or another state.

### **Title 16 V.S.A. § 166b Home Study Program**

#### (a) Enrollment Notice

A home study program shall send a written enrollment notice to the Secretary whenever it intends to enroll a child. Enrollments at home study programs shall expire on July 1. If a home study program intends to re-enroll a child for the following school year, a new notice under this section is required and may be submitted at any time after March 1. A notice under this subsection shall include the following:

- (1) The name and age, month and year of birth, of the child.
- (2) The names, mailing addresses, town of legal residence, and telephone numbers of the parents or guardians of the child.
- (3) For each child enrolled during the preceding year, any assessment of progress required under sub-section (d) of this section.
- (4) For each child not previously enrolled in a Vermont public school or Vermont home study program, independent professional evidence on whether the child

has a disability. A comprehensive evaluation to establish eligibilities for special education is not required, but may be ordered by a hearing officer after a hearing under this section.

- (5) Subject to the provisions of subsections (k) and (l) of this section, for each child being enrolled for the current year, a detailed outline or narrative which describes the content to be provided in each subject area of the minimum course of study, including any special services or adaptations to be made to accommodate any disability. Methods and materials to be used may be included but are not required.
- (6) The names, addresses, telephone numbers, and signatures of the persons who will provide the ongoing instruction in the subject areas specified in subdivisions 906(b)(1), (2), (4), and (5) of this title.
- (7) The signatures of all custodial parents or guardians who are legally authorized to make educational decisions for the student.

(b) Notice to home study programs.

Within 14 business days of receiving an enrollment notice, the Secretary or designee shall send the home study program a written acknowledgment of receipt. The acknowledgment shall include a determination:

- (1) Either that the enrollment notice is complete and no further information is needed, or specifically identifying information required under subsection (a) of this section which is missing. If information is missing the home study program shall provide the additional information in writing within 14 days; and
- (2) Either that the child may be enrolled immediately or that the child may be enrolled 45 days after the enrollment notice was received. At any time before the child may be enrolled, the Secretary may order that a hearing be held. After notice of such a hearing is received, the child shall not be enrolled until after an order has been issued by the hearing officer to that effect.

**(c) Enrollment reports.**

Each home study program shall notify the Secretary within seven days of the day that any student ceases to be enrolled in the program. Within ten days of receiving any enrollment report, the Secretary shall notify the appropriate superintendent of schools.

**(d) Progress assessment.**

Each home study program shall assess annually the progress of each of its students. Progress shall be assessed in each area of the minimum course of study, as defined in subsection (i) of this section, by one or more of the following methods:

- (1) A report in a form designated by the Secretary by a teacher licensed in Vermont. In determining the form of the report, the Secretary shall consult with parents who have

provided home study programs for their children. Nothing in this section shall be construed to require the Secretary to consult with parents on an individual basis regarding the form of a teacher report.

- (2) A report prepared by the parents, the student's instructor, or a teacher advisory service report from a publisher of a commercial curriculum together with a portfolio of the student's work that includes work samples to demonstrate progress in each subject area in the minimum course of study.
- (3) The complete results of a standardized achievement test approved by the Secretary, administered in a manner approved by the testing company, and scored in accordance with this subdivision. In selecting the list of tests to be approved, the Secretary shall:
  - (A) Consult with parents who have provided home study programs for their children. Nothing in this section shall be construed to require the Secretary to consult with parents on an individual basis regarding the test to be administered as a progress assessment for their own home study programs.
  - (B) Select at least four tests to be scored by a testing company, and at least four tests to be administered and scored by a teacher licensed in Vermont who is not the parent or legal guardian of the student.

**(e) Hearings before enrollment.**

If the Secretary has information that creates a significant doubt about whether a home study program can or will provide a minimum course of study for a student who has not yet enrolled, the Secretary may call a hearing. At the hearing, the home study program shall establish that it has complied with this section and will provide the student with a minimum course of study.

**(f) Hearings after enrollment.**

If the Secretary has information that reasonably could be expected to justify an order of termination under this section, he or she may call a hearing. At the hearing, the Secretary shall establish one or more of the following:

- (1) The home study program has substantially failed to comply with the requirements of this section;
- (2) The home study program has substantially failed to provide a student with the minimum course of study;
- (3) The home study program will not provide a student with the minimum course of study.

**(g) Notice and procedure.**

Notice of any hearing shall include a brief summary of the material facts and shall be sent to each parent or guardian and each instructor of the student or students involved known to the Secretary. The hearing shall occur within 30 days of the day that notice is given or sent. If a notice concerns a child not yet enrolled in a home study program,

enrollment shall not occur until an order has been issued after the hearing. The hearing shall be conducted by an impartial hearing officer appointed by the Secretary from a list approved by the state board. At the request of the child's parent or guardian, the hearing officer shall conduct the hearing at a location in the vicinity of the home study program.

**(h) Order following hearing.**

After hearing evidence, the hearing officer shall enter an order within ten working days. If the child is not enrolled, the order shall provide that the child be enrolled or that enrollment be disallowed. If the child is enrolled, the order shall provide that enrollment be continued or that the enrollment be terminated. An order shall take effect immediately. Unless the hearing officer provides for a shorter period, an order disallowing or terminating enrollment shall extend until the end of the following school year, as defined in this title. If the order is to disallow or terminate the enrollment, a copy shall be given to the appropriate superintendent of schools, who shall take appropriate action to ensure that the child is enrolled in a school as required by this title. Following a hearing, the Secretary may petition the hearing officer to reopen the case only if there has been a material change in circumstances.

**(i)** The minimum course of study required under this section shall be provided every school year, and the educational content provided shall be adapted in each area of study to the age and ability of each child and adapted to any disability of the child. Nothing in this section requires that a home study program follow the program or methods used by the public schools. In this section, "minimum course of study" means:

- (1) For a child who is less than 13 years of age, the subject areas listed in section 906 of this title.
- (2) For a child who is 13 years of age or older, the subject areas listed in subdivisions [16 V.S.A. § 906\(b\)\(1\), \(2\), \(4\), and \(5\)](#) of this title, and other subject areas selected by the home study program. However, the child's progress in the elective areas shall not be subject to the annual progress assessment.

**(j)** After the filing of the enrollment notice or at a hearing, if the home study program is unable to comply with any specific requirements due to deep religious conviction shared by an organized group, the Secretary may waive such requirements if he or she determines that the educational purposes of this section are being or will be substantially met.

**(k)** A Vermont home study program which has successfully completed the last two consecutive school years of home study with any enrolled child, provided those two years fall within the most recent five years, shall not thereafter be required to submit an annual detailed outline or narrative describing the content of the minimum course of study. For the purposes of this subsection, successful completion of a home study program shall mean that, in each of the two consecutive years, the program has not been disallowed by order of a hearing officer, the previously enrolled student made progress commensurate with age and ability in all subject areas of the

minimum course of study, and the home study program has otherwise complied with the requirements of this section.

(l) A home study program which has successfully completed two consecutive school years of home study as defined in subsection (k) of this section shall not be exempt from any other requirements of this section and shall annually submit a description of special services and adaptations to accommodate any disability of the child, consistent with subsection (i) of this section. In addition, the program shall submit a detailed outline or narrative describing the content to be provided in each subject area of the minimum course of study as part of its enrollment notice for each child who is 12 years old at the time the enrollment notice is submitted.

### **Exemption**

[16 V.S.A. §166b\(k\)](#), a Vermont home study program which has successfully completed the last two consecutive school years of home study with any enrolled child, provided those two years fall within the most recent five years, shall not thereafter be required to submit an annual detailed outline or narrative describing the content of the minimum course of study. For the purposes of this subsection, successful completion of a home study program shall mean that, in each of the two consecutive years, the program has not been disallowed by order of a hearing officer, the previously enrolled student made progress commensurate with age and ability in all subject areas of the minimum course of study, and the home study program has otherwise complied with the requirements of this section.

[16 V.S.A. §166b\(l\)](#) A home study program that has successfully completed two consecutive school years of home study as defined in subsection (k) of this section shall not be exempt from any other requirements of this section and shall annually submit a description of special services and adaptations to accommodate any disability of the child consistent with subsection (i) of this section. In addition, the program shall submit a detailed outline or narrative describing the content to be provided in each subject area of the minimum course of study as part of its enrollment notice for each child who is 12 years old at the time of the enrollment notice is submitted.

### **Title 16 V.S.A. §906 Course of Study**

- (a) In public schools, approved and recognized independent schools and in home study programs, learning experiences shall be provided for pupils in the minimum course of study.
- (b) For purposes of this title, the minimum course of study means learning experiences adapted to the pupil's age and ability in the fields of:
  - (1) Basic communication skills, including reading, writing, and the use of numbers;
  - (2) Citizenship, history, and government in Vermont and the United States;
  - (3) Physical education and comprehensive health education including the effects of tobacco, alcoholic drinks, and drugs on the human system and on society;

- (4) English, American and other literature;
- (5) The natural sciences; and
- (6) The fine arts.

## **State Board of Education Rule Regarding Special Services for Home Study Students**

### **2368 Home Study Placements**

Students who have been determined to be eligible to receive special education and related services and who are enrolled with the Vermont Agency of Education in programs of homeschooling, pursuant to [16 V.S.A. §166b](#), may receive services pursuant to a services plan to the same extent as children with disabilities enrolled by their parents in independent schools. Representatives\* of home study students with disabilities shall be consulted with respect to child-find, child-count, special education evaluations, and provision of services.

\* Representatives of home study students are:

- biological or adoptive parents
- legal guardians
- a person who is legally responsible for the child's welfare
- an educational surrogate parent.

## **State Board of Education Rules for Integration of Home Study Students**

### **4400 HOME STUDY STUDENTS**

4400 Integration of Home Study Students

4401 Statutory Authority: Section 1(c) of Act 119 of 1998; 16 V.S.A. §563(24)

4402 Definitions

“Facilities” means the portions of a school building and grounds used by students for classes, study and co-curricular or extracurricular activities.

“Home study student” means a student enrolled in a registered home study program pursuant to [16 V.S.A. §166b](#)

“Integrated course” means a course covering two or more subjects that are taught in a unified manner by one teacher or team where the subjects cannot be separated into discrete sections for purposes of student attendance.

4403 Part-time Enrollment of Home Study Students in Public School Academic Programs

4403.1 A home study student shall be eligible to enroll as a part-time student in a school operated by his or her district of residence or, if the district does

not operate a school, in a public school for which his or her district of residence is required to pay tuition.

4403.2 Each school board shall adopt, by July 1, 1999, policies and procedures to ensure that home study students who request part-time enrollment in academic courses or programs are accepted into those courses or programs, and are furnished with required learning materials, on the same basis as full-time students.

4403.3 Policies and procedures adopted under this rule shall:

- (a) Upon inquiry by a home study student or parent, require the provision by the district of the student's residence of information concerning the availability of part-time enrollment in school. Such information shall include procedures, including registration deadlines that home study students must follow to enroll on a part-time basis in the schools operated by the home study student's district of residence. In the event the district of residence does not operate a school in the grades appropriate to the inquiring student, the student or parents shall be given information on how to contact neighboring school districts that accept tuition students from the district of residence.
- (b) Apply the same enrollment procedures and deadlines to home study students that apply to full-time students.
- (c) Specify any enrollment capacity limits that the school board will apply to particular academic courses or grade levels. Capacity limits shall apply equally to home study and full-time students.
- (d) Establish criteria to determine whether home study students are eligible to enroll in integrated courses and courses that are available only to students who fulfill prerequisites. Criteria applied to courses with prerequisites shall be applied equally to home study and full-time students. Reasonable indications that academic criteria have been met, including results from achievement tests or other indications of adequate preparation, may be required of home study students, so long as those students are required to meet the same prerequisite standards as full-time students.
- (e) Establish informal and expeditious processes to appeal denials of request for part-time enrollment to administrators and/of the school board.

#### 4404 Participation of Home Study Students in Public School Co-curricular and Extracurricular Activities

4404.1 A home study student shall be eligible to participate in or, when selection to participate in an activity is made on a competitive basis, to try out for,

one or more co-curricular or extracurricular activities at a school operated by his or her district of residence or, if the district does not operate a school, at a public school for which his or her district is required to pay tuition. This rule is not intended to confer a right upon any student to participate in any activity. Although a home study student need not enroll in academic programs to participate in activities under this rule, he or she must show compliance with insurance, physical examination, age, transfer and other requirements of the Vermont Principals' Association on the same basis as enrolled students.

4404.2 Each school board shall adopt, by July 1, 1999, policies and procedures to ensure that home study students who wish to participate in co-curricular or extra-curricular activities are accepted into those activities without first being required to enroll as part-time students at the sponsoring school.

4404.3 Policies and procedures adopted under this rule shall:

- (a) Upon inquiry by a home study student or parent, require the provision by the district of the student's residence of information concerning the eligibility of home study students to participate in co-curricular or extra-curricular activities. Such information shall include procedures, including registration deadlines that home study students must follow to participate in activities at schools operated by the home study student's district of residence. In the event the district of residence does not operate a school in the grades appropriate to the inquiring student, the student or parents shall be given information on how to contact neighboring school districts that accept tuition students from the district of residence.
- (b) Apply the same activity registration deadlines to home study students that apply to full-time students.
- (c) Apply the same academic eligibility requirements to home study students that apply to full-time students. Policies may require the parents of home study students to provide assurances that the school's academic eligibility standards are being met. Such assurances may be required at the same intervals during the year as is required of full-time students. A home study parent's assurance that the student meets the district's academic standards, provided at the intervals required by the school, shall be sufficient to satisfy academic eligibility requirements.
- (d) Establish priorities and criteria for admitting students to particular activities. When space is limited in a particular activity, preference may be given to enrolled students as long as the reporting requirement

in §4404.4 of these rules is met. Procedures for admitting home study students to activities with limited spaces may include lotteries, first-come first-served waiting lists and performance-based criteria for participation on sports teams or in activities.

- (e) Policies adopted in compliance with this rule shall establish informal and expeditious procedures to appeal denials of requests to participate in activities to administrators and/or the school board.

4404.4 When a home study student's request to participate in an activity is denied on the grounds that space is not available and that preference is given to full-time students, the school shall, within 30 days of the denial, notify the Home Study Consultant at the Agency of Education on a form provided by the Agency.

#### 4405 Use of School Facilities by Home Study Students

4405.1 A home study student may use facilities at a school operated by his or her district of residence or, if the district does not operate a school, at a public school for which his or her district is required to pay tuition.

4405.2 Each school board shall adopt, by July 1, 1999, policies and procedures to ensure that home study students are allowed to use school facilities on the same basis as full-time students.

4405.3 Policies and procedures adopted under this rule shall:

- (a) Apply to home study students the same criteria, procedures and deadlines for requesting the use of school facilities as are applied to full-time students.
- (b) Upon inquiry by a home study student or parent, require the provision by the district of the student's residence of information concerning the use of school facilities operated by the district. In the event the district does not operate a school in the grades appropriate to the inquiring student, the student or parents shall be given information on how to contact neighboring school districts which accept tuition students from the district of residence.
- (c) Provide for the establishment of criteria to determine whether sufficient space is available to comply with specific requests for facilities use. Criteria may also be developed to establish fees, to be applied equally to home study and full-time students, for security, janitorial or other services not normally available at the time of the requested use.

[Subsection 9200.3.1](#) is added to read:

9200.3.1 A student enrolled as a home study student pursuant to [16 V.S.A. §166b](#) who is not a part-time student enrolled in academic programs, but who participates in one or more co-curricular or extracurricular activities at a public school, shall be counted as .03 of a full-time equivalent student for each activity in which he or she participates. For purposes of this provision, the reporting period shall be from beginning of the 41<sup>st</sup> day of a school year to the end of the 40<sup>th</sup> day of the following school year.

### **Act 119**

Act 119 is a provision of the Vermont statute at [16 V.S.A. § 563\(24\)](#) concerning the powers and duties of public school boards which states that school boards:

Shall adopt a policy which, in accordance with rules adopted by the state board of education, will integrate home study students into its schools through enrollment in courses, participation in co-curricular and extracurricular activities and use of facilities.

The State Board of Education has adopted rules to implement Act 119, which is set forth below. These can also be accessed online. The State Board rules allow home study students to be eligible to enroll as a part time student in a school in his/her district of residence or in a **public school** for which his or her district of residence is required to pay tuition. [Rule 4403.1](#)

It is important to note that Act 119 and the State Board rules are not intended to allow public school students to engage in home study as an elective for a course in the public school.

It is also important to note that if you are the parent of a home study student in a school district without a high school that pays tuition to an independent (private) school, a home study student is not entitled to enroll in courses or participate in extracurricular activities at the independent (private) school. See [Rule 4403.1](#). Private schools may of course allow you to do this voluntarily.

Home study students are expected to meet the same prerequisites for academic courses or extracurricular activities that apply to the school's regular students. See [Rules 4403.3-4404](#).

Schools can set requirements for the use of facilities that establish criteria as to whether sufficient space is available to comply with specific requests for facility use and may establish other criteria such as fees. See [Rule 4405.3 \(c\)](#).

If you have a question about Act 119 the best place to start is to contact your local school administrators and ask for the school board's policy on the integration of home study students into academic, extracurricular and co-curricular activities.\* You may also contact the Agency of Education's legal counsel or the home study office.

\* Co-curricular activities include those activities that are related to the school day like spelling bees, geography bees, student council, etc. Extracurricular activities include sports, clubs, etc.

### **Vermont Principals' Association (VPA) Eligibility Standards for Home Study Students**

A home study student who wishes to participate in a public school \*co-curricular program shall be an "eligible student" under this section if:

- (1) The participating student is enrolled in a home-study program in compliance with [16 V.S.A. §166b](#).
- (2) The participating student must have a legal residence in the school district or is a legal resident of a district that does not maintain a school and pays tuition on behalf of its students.
- (3) Participation in a school's co-curricular activities program shall not commence until a copy of the Vermont Agency of Education Enrollment Letter is presented to the principal by the parent or guardian.
- (4) The participating student's academic program, as referenced in the Vermont Agency of Education Letter of Enrollment, will be reviewed by the student's parent or guardian at appropriate intervals as locally determined and consistent for all students to determine academic progress. This review and determination must be certified in writing from the parent/guardian to the principal.
- (5) Prior to the start of a sport season or fine arts and performance activities in which a home study student wishes to participate, the parent or guardian and student must notify the principal in writing that he/she wishes to participate in a school's co-curricular activities program. Failure to provide a timely notification will not disqualify the student from participating, but may result in some delays in participation.
- (6) The student may participate in co-curricular activities sponsored by a VPA member school provided the student complies with the same physical examination, insurance, age, and any other requirements for participation as required of all students.
- (7) The home study student must adhere to the same standards of behavior,

responsibilities and performance as other participants of the team.

(8) Eligibility issues on all matters other than academic progress may be appealed in accordance with the bylaws of the Vermont Principals' Association.

(9) Consistent with law governing all student athletes, participation in co-curricular activities programs is a privilege, not a right, and nothing in these eligibility standards confers a right on any individual to participate in co-curricular activities.

- 1) The proposed eligibility standards for home study students would be considered a two year transitional program beginning July 1, 1999. The VPA shall provide progress reports and recommendations to the Vermont Board of Education.
- 2) \*The definition of co-curricular activities for this document shall include all interscholastic and extra-curricular activities sanctioned by the VPA.