



There Are Few Regulations to Homeschool in Indiana

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The Census Bureau noted an uptick in homeschooling in the U.S. Prior to the pandemic appropriately 3.3% of families were homeschooling. The Household Pulse Survey marked the number at 5.4% for spring 2020 and at 11.6% for fall 2020. In Indiana, the rate for spring 2020 was 5.4% and 10% for fall 2020. Nationally, Black families homeschooling increased five times the normal rate. Concerns for safety due to the coronavirus and concerns about how

and what children were taught in the curriculum are a couple of reasons parents moved their children to homeschooling. In Indiana, homeschooling does not have many requirements.

First, parents don't have to register with the state or the department of education to say they are homeschooling their children or share what curriculum they are using. Also, parents can switch back to their boundary public school whenever they wish. There are no regulations that state that families have to wait until the end of a quarter or semester. If they don't like the education, they can remove their children and put them right back into the homeschool setting. Because homeschoolers can enter back into the public school setting when they wish, it can make it hard for them to be successful when teachers have little time to prepare. It is important to note that upon returning, the public school has the right to assign the student to a grade and that grade might not align with their current homeschool grade.

Parents are supposed to do a couple of tasks. They are supposed to keep a record of attendance just in case the Secretary of Education requests the records. They are also supposed to complete the withdrawal to non-accredited nonpublic school form when their children reach high school. Failing to do this could bring consequences because the principal of the students' boundary high school is supposed to report students who don't attend school as dropouts to the Bureau of Motor Vehicles. This could result in the BMV refusing to issue a learner's permit or driver's license to those students.

The law for homeschooling is vague. Parents are told they must "send their child to a public school for a full term unless the child is being provided with instruction equivalent to that given in the public schools." There is no guidance to explain what it means for parents to provide an equivalent education. With homeschooling on the rise, school choice continues to expand. Homeschooling is typically not part of the school choice conversation, but it should be especially when the guidance and regulations for homeschooling in Indiana are minimal.

To learn more about homeschooling, you can read the IDOE [memo](#) or contact Kimb Stewart at kstewart@doe.in.gov or 317-232-0957.