



JO NEWHALL *County School Superintendent*

PARK COUNTY SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT DEPT.

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Dear Home Educator,

The rights and responsibilities of a parent who provides home school and the rights of the child in the home school are provided in the following sections of Montana Code:

1. A home school is the instruction by a parent of his child, stepchild, or ward in his residence. (§20-5-102 (2) (e), MCA)
2. To qualify its students for exemption from compulsory enrollment under §20-5-102 MCA, a home school
 - Shall maintain records on pupil attendance and disease immunization and make the records available to the County Superintendent on request;
 - Shall provide the minimum aggregate hours of pupil instruction in accordance with §20-1-301 MCA;
 - Must be housed in a building that complies with applicable local health and safety regulations;
 - Shall provide an organized course of study that includes instruction in the subjects required of public schools, as a basic instructional program pursuant to §20-7-111 MCA;
 - Shall notify each fiscal year the County Superintendent of Schools of your intention to home school your student(s). §20-5-109 MCA
3. A parent has the authority to instruct his child, stepchild, or ward in a home school and is solely responsible for:
 - the educational philosophy of the home school;
 - the selection of instructional materials, curriculum and textbooks
 - the time, place and method of instruction; and
 - the evaluation of the home school instruction. §20-5-111

By choosing to educate your child at home, you have assumed the complex role of teacher, registrar, record keeper and selector of textbooks and curriculum. If you need help, you can contact the Park County Homeschool Network or the county superintendent's office. We do offer a registration card that gives you some discounts at bookstores and area businesses in Bozeman. A complete homeschool packet will be mailed to you upon request, or you can view and print the following forms online:

1. Home School Report

This form is to assist you with annual notification. You may call, email or send your notification in a letter format to the county superintendent's office. It's important to remember that until you notify this office each year, you have not complied with Montana law for exemption from compulsory attendance requirements.

2. Federal Government Programs

This page is to be completed when you notify us. Federal law requires that these programs be offered to everyone, so please sign the Notification of Opportunity to Participate form even if you do not want to take advantage of them. In order to benefit from any program except special education during the next school year, the form must be returned by October. A brief description of the available programs is included with this packet.

- If you **do not** complete this form, the school district in which you live is required to send a copy to you by registered mail.
- If you check **No**, you will not receive any further notification of federal programs until you tell us differently.
- If you check that you do wish to be notified, a participation form will be sent to you in the spring by the school district.

3. Attendance Record

According to §20-1-301 MCA, all home schools must provide the minimum aggregate hours:

- 360 hours per year for half-time kindergarten and 720 hours for full-time
- 720 hours per year for grades 1 through 3
- 1080 hours per year for grades 4 through 12

Please submit a copy of your attendance records to the county superintendent's office at the end of each year or when you notify us of your intention to home school for the following school year. (There is a form included in the packet or one may be found online).

4. Park County Homeschool Network

The Park County Homeschool Network is an inclusive group of homeschool families who want to network and share information. The contact information for the group is included in this packet or you may contact Mary Murphy at (406) 222-3543.

5. Websites and Resources

Look up "curriculum for school subjects" and "Distant Learning" to access websites that may help you choose your curriculum. The "Montana Guide to Home Education" at www.mtche.org might also be of help. If you have a plan to re-enter school at some point check with the school to see if the program you have chosen meets local accreditation standards.

6. Montana Content Standards and Benchmarks

Montana's Board of Public Education has adopted the Common Core Standards in math and English/language Arts for the state of Montana. If you would like to find out more about these standards as well as what basic skills should be mastered at various grade levels, visit www.opi.mt.gov and choose "Curriculum & Assessment for information.

For more information on Park County public, private and home schools, visit our website at www.parkcounty.org, click on "Government Departments" and then "Superintendent of Schools" or feel free to drop me a line at cosupt@parkcounty.org. You can also call or fax me at the numbers listed at the top of this letter.

Jo Newhall
Park County Superintendent of Schools