



# Homeschooling In Kansas 2012-2013 Fact Sheet

## General information

All homeschools are classified as Non-Accredited Private Schools in Kansas and must follow the regulations set forth by law.

Kansas does not specifically authorize "home instruction" or "homeschooling" by state statute. However, Kansas does recognize Non-Accredited Private Schools.

There is no fee charged to register a non-accredited private school.

A non-accredited elementary or secondary private school is one that satisfies the state's compulsory school attendance laws, but which is not accredited by the State Board of Education.

Compulsory school attendance laws apply to children who have reached the age of 7 and those who are under 18 years of age (may be under 7 for children identified as handicapped). Every parent or guardian of children in that age group must require such children to attend a public, private, denominational, or parochial school for the duration of the school term.

## Registration Requirement

Non-accredited private schools are required by law to register the name and address of the private elementary or secondary school (homeschool) with the State Board of Education. Registration consists of completing a form provided by the state showing the name and address of the school and the name and address of the official custodian of the school's records.

**Registering a school does not mean the school has been "approved" by the State Board of Education.**

## Teacher Requirements

Non-accredited private schools are not required to employ teachers who are licensed by the state, but their courses must be taught by competent instructors.

## Hours of Instruction

Classes must be held for a period of time which is substantially equivalent to the time public schools are in session. The time required for public schools is at least 186 days of not less than 6 hours per day, or 1116 hours per year for grades 1-11.

## Diplomas

Private schools, including non-accredited schools issue their own high school diplomas. **These diplomas are not recognized by the State of Kansas as meeting any requirements. The State does not issue diplomas.**

## Credits

When a student transfers to a non-accredited private school, the school previously attended must be notified by the parent/guardian that the student is changing schools. If a student simply stops coming to school, the school is required by law to report the student as truant.

It is in the best interest of students attending non-accredited private schools that accurate and complete records of their progress be kept. These records will be needed if the student transfers to a public or an accredited school, or applies for admission to a college or university.

If a student transfers from a non-accredited private school to an accredited school, the accredited school is not required to accept the transfer of credit. The accredited school may find it necessary to test the student in order to make a decision regarding the transfer of credit.

## Curriculum and Books

Non-accredited private schools are responsible for acquiring their own books and curriculum materials. Books may be purchased from private organizations, checked out through the public library, or rented from the public school with district approval. The public school is under no obligation to make books and materials available to students attending other schools.

No books, curriculum materials, guidelines, or technical assistance on curriculum development are available from the State Department of Education for non-accredited private schools.

## Entering College

Colleges and universities determine their own criteria for admission of students who graduate from a non-accredited private school.

Most institutions of higher education will require a Graduate Equivalency Diploma (GED) or other criteria to be met for admission.

## Who Does One Contact if One Has Questions?

Non-Accredited Private Schools

KSDE

Attn: Tate Toedman

120 SE 10th Avenue

Topeka, KS 66612-1182

PHONE: (785) 368-7088

## WEBSITE

<http://www.ksde.org/Default.aspx?tabid=1684>

No fee



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### Kansas Statute 72-53,100 through 102

72-53,100. Nonaccredited private schools; pupil records; definitions. As used in this act:

- (a) "Private elementary or secondary school" means an organization which regularly offers education at the elementary or secondary level and attendance at which satisfies the compulsory school attendance laws of this state, but which is not accredited by the state board of education.
- (b) "Pupil records" means all records, files and data of pupils who are or have been in attendance at a private elementary or secondary school.
- (c) "Official custodian" means an officer or employee of a private elementary or secondary school who is responsible for the custody and maintenance of pupil records.

History: L. 1982, ch. 286, § 1; July 1.

72-53,101. Nonaccredited private schools; registration of name and address required; state board of education, administration and duties.

(a) The official custodian of every private elementary or secondary school shall register the name and address of the private elementary or secondary school with the state board of education.

(b) The state board of education shall administer the provisions of this act and shall prepare and maintain a compilation of the registrations submitted under subsection (a).

(c) Upon transfer of a pupil from a private elementary or secondary school to a school district, an accredited nonpublic school, or another private elementary or secondary school, the state board of education, upon request of the school district, accredited nonpublic school, or other private elementary or secondary school therefore, shall make available the registration of the private elementary or secondary school from which the pupil transferred.

History: L. 1982, ch. 286, § 2; L. 1986, ch. 268, § 3; July 1.

72-53,102. Same purpose of registration requirement. The purpose of this act is solely to make available to a school district, an accredited nonpublic school, or a private elementary or secondary school to which a pupil transfers, the

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name and location of the private elementary or secondary school from which the pupil transferred so that request may be made by the transferee school district, accredited nonpublic school, or private elementary or secondary school for the pupil's records.

School Improvement Grants (SIG)

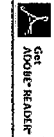
History: L. 1982, ch. 286, ? 3; L. 1986, ch. 268, ? 4; July 1.

SUMMARY - K.S.A. 72-53,100

Private Elementary and Secondary School Registration

K.S.A. 72-53,100 through 102 requires the official custodian of each private elementary and secondary school to register the name and address of the school with the State Department of Education. The State Department will maintain a compilation of such registrations.

The purpose of the legislation is to make available to a school district or accredited nonpublic school to which a pupil transfers from a private elementary or secondary school, the name and location of such school so that the school district or accredited nonpublic school may request the transfer of the pupil's records thereto.



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Posted on Sat, Aug. 18, 2012

## Kansas education official's comment riles home-schooling parents

By Suzanne Perez Tobias  
The Wichita Eagle

When a state education official said last week that some home-schooled children may not be getting an adequate education – and that some may even be kept home to babysit younger siblings – the response was fast and fierce.

“As my child’s parent, I have the greatest motivation in the world to make sure she is well-educated,” said Kelsey Gray, a Wichita mother of three who home-schools her 5-year-old daughter.

“I have yet to meet a single home-school family like the one he described.”

David Dennis of Wichita, chairman of the Kansas State Board of Education, said he brought up the topic during the board’s meeting Tuesday because there was an agenda item about legislative requests.

The state board does not oversee or regulate home schools, but Dennis proposed that the Kansas Legislature study the issue, perhaps by ordering a post-audit study, “to see if there’s a problem there or not.”

“We have great home schooling in the state of Kansas. I want to make that clear,” Dennis said.

“But I’ve heard of instances where ... kids are pulled out for a couple years, and when they come back (to public school), it’s evident there hasn’t been a lot of educating going on,” he said.

“Then our schools spend a lot of resources trying to catch that student up again. That’s a concern.”

Officials estimate that as many as 15,000 Kansas families teach their children at home, and the number is growing.

Kansas statutes don’t specifically mention or authorize home schooling, but home-school parents can register as non-accredited private schools. The only requirement is to register the name and address of the school and a custodian of school records with the State Board of Education.

Non-accredited schools are not required to employ certified teachers, but their courses must be taught by competent instructors, and classes must be held for about the same number of days as public schools.

“The standard is high, but the red tape is low,” said Scott Woodruff, senior counsel for the Home School Legal Defense Association, a Washington, D.C.-based advocacy group. “The system works.”

Under current law, a parent suspected of depriving a child of an appropriate education could be investigated by law enforcement or the Kansas Department for Children and Families.

During an investigation, Woodruff said, authorities could ask to see home-school documents such as lesson plans, schedules, a portfolio of school work or standardized test scores. A home-school parent also would have to prove that he or she is a “competent” teacher.

If officials determine that a child is not receiving an appropriate education, they could charge a parent with neglect.

“The way to enforce the law is on the books,” Woodruff said. “I have never seen a situation where a prosecutor said, ‘Gee, I don’t have the laws I need to prosecute.’”

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Dennis, the state board member and a former teacher at Wichita North High School, said the story he cited about students baby-sitting siblings under the guise of home schooling was related to him from a high school principal.

His goal is to get more information, Dennis said, not necessarily to propose more or stricter regulations.

"I just care about educating all of our students, whether they're in public or private schools or home schools," he said. "There is a moral responsibility to make sure that's happening, or at least to find out if there is a problem."

Local parents say the current system works for them, for their children and for most home-school families they know.

"We have the freedom to home-school fairly freely, which is nice," said Kathy Morris, a Wichita mother of four.

A friend who recently moved to Wichita from another state told Morris "how incredibly crippling it was to home-school there," she said. "There was a paper trail for everything, and it just seems like you'd spend most of your time dealing with that instead of actually teaching."

Kansas' relative lack of oversight means each home-school family can do things their own way, she said, but that's no different from any classroom.

"Most home-school families I know are very moral, very dedicated. These are our children, so we want to give them the best education possible," said Morris, who has a master's degree in counseling and teaches public speaking as part of a Wichita home-school co-op.

"There's truly a desire to raise children who will contribute to society and be a light in the world."

Gray, the mother of three, said she chose to home-school because she was home-schooled herself as a child and loved the experience.

The summer before fourth grade, Gray's parents pulled her and her brother out of school to travel across the Atlantic Ocean on a sailboat. After that 15-month adventure, the family continued to home-school in Baton Rouge, La., and Garden City before finally moving to west Wichita. Gray eventually graduated from Maize High School.

Now Gray home-schools her daughter, Charis, who will be 6 in December, and plans to home-school her younger children, 2-year-old Blaise and 6-month-old Iris, at least through middle school.

Her husband, Brent, helps with lessons. So do her parents, who live nearby. The family uses the Calvert School curriculum, which they purchased through Maize Virtual Preparatory School.

Friday morning, Charis and her dad played a memory game with cards that showed parts of a computer. Charis read a story about "Matt the Cat" and drew a picture of the cat.

Each day starts with the Pledge of Allegiance and a short prayer. The Grays' basement features a designated school area with a desk, bookshelves, bulletin board and an alphabet border along the ceiling.

"It saddens me that most people are so blind to the truth of home-schooling," Kelsey Gray said. "My guess is that if there are families out there like the one (Dennis) described, they are the exception, not the rule."

Dennis said he has received "a ton" of e-mails, calls and letters from home-school advocates since he made his comments last week. The board agreed to discuss the issue more at its next meeting in September.

"All I was trying to do was say, 'If there is a problem, do we even know?'" he said. "All I've got is anecdotal evidence, and let's see if there's anything else."

Woodruff, the attorney with the national advocacy group, pointed to studies that show home-schooled children perform well on standardized tests, tend to do well in college and rank among the top on most measures of academic achievement.

"You don't want to legislate by anecdote. You want to legislate based on fact," he said.

"We're not looking to create controversy here, but Mr. Dennis has already created it, and obviously we thought it important that we not stay silent."

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