

Homebound Instructional Services Overview District Protocols / Parent & Student Expectations

Students are expected to attend school to the fullest extent possible, but homebound instruction may be provided to students who have a medical or mental/emotional condition preventing them from participating in classroom instruction because they are confined to home or a health care facility. A *Frequently Asked Questions* brochure regarding the eligibility of students for homebound instruction is available in your school's Guidance Office and online on the district's website.

Your child's Guidance Counselor, in consultation with the building administration and the Director of Student Services, determines eligibility for homebound instruction based on the Pennsylvania Department of Education Guidelines and the local Board Policy. Approval of students for homebound instruction requires medical documentation submitted by an approved medical professional and information provided by school staff members. Approval is determined by the team on the basis of the documented need for service, taking into consideration less restrictive educational options and a student's participation in extracurricular or employment activities.

A request for homebound instruction will only be considered if the application states that the student will either be out of school for 10 or more consecutive school days, or if the intermittent accumulation of absences over a 30 day period will be more than 15 days. The goal of homebound services is to keep the student current with classroom instruction and facilitate the student's return to the current classroom setting. As homebound instruction is a very restrictive learning environment where peer interaction, classroom social learning, and whole class teacher directed instruction is absent, the district's plan and support will generally focus first on the development of a reduced day program to facilitate a transition back to full time attendance.

Homebound instruction is not intended to replace school services and is, by design, temporary. It is not a remediation program and is not designed to provide students with time to make up previously missed assignments. The goal of homebound instruction is to keep the student as current as possible with classroom instruction. Provision of instruction will only occur in increments of 30 days upon which time services must be renewed through new medical authorization. Per Board Policy, Homebound Instruction will extend for no more than sixty (60) school days unless approved for an extension by the PA Department of Education.

Levels of Homebound Instruction

- Students who will miss 10 consecutive days or more of classroom instruction may be considered for full homebound instruction.
- Partial or intermittent homebound instruction may be appropriate for some students.

Courses Supported and Teachers

- Instructional support is provided for core academic classes only: English, science, social studies, and mathematics. For secondary students, foreign language may also be supported.

- Homebound instructors do not provide instruction in physical education (P.E.), fine arts, technical arts, and elective courses. Students must arrange to communicate with these teachers via email to stay current on the progress and expectations in these courses.
- Homebound instruction occurs along a continuum of services which may include certified instructors in the home or a cyber / computer-based learning experience.
- Assignments and materials provided by the classroom teacher will be used by the homebound instructor unless the missed curriculum is being supplemented via a cyber / computer-based learning experience.

Hours and Location of Homebound Services

- Based on a regular five-day school week, students are generally provided up to a total of five hours per week. Extenuating circumstances related to extraordinary conditions may necessitate that those hours be raised to no more than a maximum of ten hours per week. Only the Director of Student Services can determine on a case-by-case basis if a child will be provided homebound instruction beyond the five hours a week.
- Homebound instruction is delivered during regular school hours, late afternoon, or early evening, and only on those days when school is in session.
- When scheduling sessions, homebound instructors will take into consideration parent or guardian requests, however not all requests can be accommodated and it is the homebound instructor's discretion to set the schedule for the hours.
- The location of services will be designated by the homebound instructor and may be the student's home or a health care facility. If services are to be provided in the home, a home visit must be completed prior to the initiation of services, an adult must be present at all times, and all pets must be confined prior to the arrival of the homebound instructor.
- All delivered hours of instruction must be documented by the instructor with a parent signature required after each tutoring session.
- The District reserves the right to withhold individual instruction when the instructor's presence in the place of a student's confinement presents a hazard to the health or safety of the teacher or if a parent or other adult in authority is not at home with the student during the hours of instruction.

Missed sessions

- Make-up sessions will only be allowed for sessions missed due to medically documented illness or family emergencies when cancellations are made 24 hours prior to scheduled sessions.
- Unless a session can be made up during the same week it was missed, it cannot be made up without permission from the building principal or the Director of Student Services.
- Sessions missed due to cancellation by the homebound instructor(s) will be made up.

- Sessions missed due to cancellation of Springfield School District activities will **not** be made up.

Special Education

- If your child currently has an IEP, you should request that the IEP Team reconvene for your child as part of your request for homebound instruction. Homebound instruction for a special education student can only be granted for a short duration of time for a medical reason that cannot be attributed or associated with the child's identified disability, i.e., a broken leg or surgery. If the child is unable to access education at a school and needs to be at home, this may require the team to determine a change in placement and consider "Instruction in the Home" as part of the continuum of services for a child on an IEP.

Technology

- The use of available technology for the student to participate in some classroom activities from home and to support instruction will be considered when appropriate. Cyber / computer courses may be employed to better support the student during homebound instruction. The use of such courses remains solely at the discretion of the district.

Grading

- Frequent communication is required between the classroom and homebound teachers, and all work completed by the student is turned in to the classroom teacher.
- The classroom teacher is the teacher of record and is responsible for assigning the quarter, semester, and final grades to the student.
- Every effort will be made to ensure academic progress; however, course credit must still be earned according to class requirements.

Extension or Early Termination of Homebound Services

- Homebound instruction is only allotted in increments of 30 days.
- If a child requires more than 30 days, a new request and application will have to be filled out and approved. Updated documentation will be required for approval of continued service. Per Board Policy, homebound instruction will extend for no more than sixty (60) school days unless approved for an extension by the PA Department of Education.
- The Superintendent or his/her designee may request approval from the Department of Education to extend the period of homebound instruction for an individual, which shall be re-evaluated every three (3) months.
- If the student is able to return to school before scheduled to do so, the parent must obtain a medical release statement.

- Special education students must have an IEP meeting and change in NOREP which returns them to school-based services if the team meeting prior to determining services resulted in a decision to place the student on “Instruction in the Home”. If the special education student was only receiving “Homebound” services, then an IEP meeting is not required to change the services provided.

PSSA / Keystone Examinations and Other Required Testing

- The district testing coordinator, the child’s guidance counselor, the, building/grade level administrator, and homebound instructors will collaborate to arrange for the administration of required testing. Strict protocols exist when administering standardized testing. It may be the case that a child may have to attend school on an abbreviated schedule on the days assigned for testing.

End of Year Termination of Homebound Services

- Homebound instruction for general education students ends one week before the end of the school year unless prior approval has been granted by the Director of Student Services.
- Homebound instruction for special education students follows the schedule delineated by the student’s IEP.

Responsibilities

Successful homebound instruction depends on the cooperation of a number of individuals. The responsibilities of each of these individuals are summarized below:

Child’s Guidance Counselor:

- Receives request for homebound instruction from the parents / guardians.
- Convenes team of building administrator and child’s case manager, when applicable, to review the existing information regarding the request.
- Contacts the Director of Student Services for review of all materials associated with the request.
- Collects medical documentation and completed application.
- Places all supporting materials in the student’s educational file including a copy of the application.
- Assigns instructors and notifies classroom teachers about the timelines.
- Forwards original signed copies of the application to the Director of Student Services.
- Provides oversight of instruction and timelines.

- Ensures there is appropriate collaboration between classroom teachers and homebound instructors and supports school staff members in working with the student and family.

Supervisor of Special Education / Director of Student Services:

- If the student receives special education services, ensures the student receives appropriate services and accommodations while receiving homebound instruction.
- Works with building administrators to ensure compliance with special education law and state policy.
- Assists the team in developing plan and timelines.

Classroom teacher:

- Collaborates with the homebound instructor to exchange information, strategies, materials, assignments, assessment tools, etc. needed to provide instruction.
- As the teacher of record determines the quarter, semester and final grades.

Homebound Instructor:

- Contacts the family to schedule homebound instruction on regular school days.
- Works with the classroom teacher as described above.
- Using materials and assignments provided by the classroom teacher, provides instruction to the student with the goal of keeping the student as current as possible with classroom instruction.
- Returns all completed work to the classroom teacher.
- Returns tutoring timecard to district office (Ellen Piltz) every two weeks for prompt processing for payroll

Parents or Guardians:

- Provide the medical documentation needed to support the homebound request.
- Obtain assignments from the classroom teachers until homebound teachers are assigned.
- Work with the school staff to obtain assignments for courses not supported by homebound instruction.
- Once homebound teachers are assigned, schedules instructional sessions (Note that not all scheduling requests can be accommodated.)
- Make sure the student is ready for instruction.

- Provide an appropriate learning environment.
- Confine all pets prior to the arrival of the homebound teachers.
- Ensure that an adult is in the home at all times.
- Supervise daily homework.
- Keep all appointments with the homebound teacher or notify the teacher at least 24 hours in advance if the student is unavailable.
- Communicate with the school prior to having their child attend any school related functions or events.
- Sign paperwork necessary to verify homebound instruction was provided.
- Inform the child's guidance counselor if the student's medical situation changes.
- Work to return the student to school-based instruction as soon as possible.
- Communicate directly with instructor regarding academic progress. If problems cannot be resolved satisfactorily at this level, the parent will contact the child's guidance counselor.

Student:

- Be ready to meet with the homebound teachers at the scheduled times.
- Participate actively in instruction.
- Complete all assignments, including homework assigned.
- Work to return to school-based instruction as soon as possible.
- Maintain an organizational system for assignments, as necessary.
- Utilize the homebound instruction in support of a swift return to school.

These guidelines are intended to protect the interests of the student, the district, and the instructors. If there are any concerns relative to the content or interpretation of these expectations / guidelines, parents are encouraged to contact the appropriate guidance counselor and/or the building administrator.