



**Ministry of Education, Youth, Sports and Culture
BELIZE**

**HOME SCHOOLING
Protocols**

July, 2020

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INTRODUCTION

Rule 10 (6) of the Education Rules, 2000 offers the following provision for home schooling:

Home schooling of children of compulsory school age may be allowed where the parents satisfy the Chief Education Officer that there is good reason to so do and that the parents possess the competence and the capacity or will make the necessary provision for the proper education of the child.

These proposed protocols provide specific guidelines for District Education Centers; they allow the Ministry of Education to enter into a formal agreement with the parent/legal guardian who wishes to provide home schooling to his/her child(ren) in accordance with EDR 10 (6).

HOME SCHOOLING PROTOCOLS

- A. The parent/legal guardian requesting authorization for home schooling must:
1. reside in Belize; proof of residence must be ascertained
 2. possess a minimum of an Associate degree; authenticated credentials must be submitted
- B. A child will be considered registered for home schooling only after the following is completed:
1. The parent/legal guardian must send a letter of application, with the mandatory supporting documentation¹, to Chief Education Officer requesting permission to provide home schooling.
 2. The Chief Education Officer will forward the application and supporting documentation to the respective District Education Center (DEC).
 3. Following the receipt of said letter of application and supporting documentation, the DEC will engage the parent/legal guardian to get the following documents completed and signed **before the first day of school**:
 - i. Home Schooling Registration/Agreement Form (Addendum A)
 - ii. Educational Plan Template (Addendum B)
 - iii. Curricular Learning Outcomes specific to grade level

Note that the parent/legal guardian must provide an Educational Plan aligned to the Learning Outcomes for the respective grade level curriculum produced or recognized by the Ministry of Education.

¹ Supporting documentation includes: official identification of parent/legal guardian; academic credentials of parent/legal guardian; birth certificate of child(ren); evidence of residence; and legal authorization of ward, if applicable

- C. The child will be considered registered for home schooling with the Ministry of Education only after all documents (registration/agreement form and education plan) are received, completed and signed by the parent/legal guardian and the designated official at the District Education Center.
- D. The parent/legal guardian can expect to be officially advised of an approval within two weeks of the submission of the signed and completed documentation.
- E. Should the parent/legal guardian refuse to comply with the prescribed registration process, his/her request will be automatically denied.
- F. Officers from the DECs will conduct term visits (at least one per term) to monitor student engagement and progress. Alternate arrangements can be made to review the portfolio (see Addendum C) for each term. Written feedback will be provided immediately.
- G. At the end of the school year, the officers from the DECs will complete an evaluation of the student under the Home Schooling Agreement. Such evaluation shall include the following:
 - o an interview with the child
 - o a literacy and numeracy assessment
 - o a review of the child's Home Schooling portfolio

Where necessary, officers from the Education Support Services of the Ministry may be asked to become involved in the evaluation process. Such involvement would occur if the child being home schooled has any particular learning needs that require a more specialized instructional approach.

Once the evaluation has been completed, a written report will be sent to the parent/legal guardian and a copy will be placed in the student's file.

- H. If the request for home schooling is not approved, or if after evaluation it is determined that the educational experience received at home is not equivalent to what is provided at school, the Ministry of Education shall require the child to enter or be returned to a regular school setting.

If the child is not registered in any school within three months of such decision, the Ministry will act in accordance with its legal responsibility.

- I. The Home Schooling Agreement is valid for one school year and a new application must be made by the parent/legal guardian annually. Should the parent choose not to register his/her child with the Ministry the following year, he/she is expected to provide documented evidence that his/her child's registration is made at a school recognized by the Ministry.

Failing this, the Ministry will act in accordance with its legal responsibility.

ADDENDUM A: HOME SCHOOLING REGISTRATION/AGREEMENT FORM

Student's Name: _____ <i>First Name</i> <i>Last Name</i> <i>Middle Name</i>		
Student's Sex _____ M _____ F	Student's Date of Birth: _____ <i>(dd/mm/yyyy)</i>	
<i>Particulars of last School Attended</i>	<i>Last Grade Level:</i> _____	
	<i>Name of School:</i> _____	
	<i>Address of School:</i> _____ _____	
<i>Name of Parent (Mother):</i> _____		<i>Name of Parent (Father):</i> _____
<i>Name of Legal Guardian (if applicable):</i> _____		
<i>Address of Applicant (Parent/legal guardian, whichever applies):</i> _____		
<i>Telephone Contact for Applicant (Parent/legal guardian, whichever applies):</i> <i>Home</i> _____ <i>Work</i> _____ <i>Cell</i> _____		
REASON(S) FOR HOME SCHOOLING: 		
EVALUATION: <i>The student will be assessed by officials from the Ministry of Education during and at the end of the school year. The parent/legal guardian will be contacted by the District Education Center to inform him/her of the date/place/time of the assessment.</i>		
_____ Signature of Parent/Legal Guardian		_____ Manager, District Education Center

HOME SCHOOLING AGREEMENT

In accordance with Rule 10 (6) of the Education Rules, 2000, *Home schooling of children of compulsory school age may be allowed where the parents satisfy the Chief Education Officer that there is good reason to so do and that the parents possess the competence and the capacity or will make the necessary provision for the proper education of the child.*

Taking this into consideration, the Ministry of Education will enter into an agreement with _____, parent/legal guardian of _____, to ensure that his/her education is adequately provided for in accordance with the requirements of the Education Act and Rules.

The parent/legal guardian agrees and undertakes to take personal and direct responsibility for the education of _____ to provide at home education and a learning experience which are in accordance with the appropriate curricular learning outcomes as outlined by the Ministry.

The parent/legal guardian agrees to collaborate with the District Education Center in the establishment of a timeline for the evaluation of _____ in which the assessment of education and learning will be completed by the end of the school year. This may include an interview, a presentation of portfolio and an assessment.

If, for any reason, either the parent/legal guardian and the Ministry of Education decides that _____ should enter or return to a regular school setting, the appropriate registration processes will be carried out by the parent/legal guardian.

Signed by

Parent/Legal Guardian

Date

Manager, District Education Center

Date

ADDENDUM B: HOME SCHOOLING EDUCATION PLAN

1. Personal Information

Student Name:	Birthdate:
Grade Level:	Parent/Guardian:
Address:	Phone: Home Work Cell
	Email:

2. Homeschooling Goals (overall goals for the school year)

3. Subject Information

Your child will be evaluated in Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies by officials of the Ministry in July 2021. It is important to broaden your child's educational experiences by including the Arts and Physical Education in the overall academic plan for the year. The table below serves as a template. Please feel free to adjust or expand to meet your needs.

Subject	Learning Outcomes	Resources or Materials	Types of Assessments or Evaluation
Subject	Learning Outcomes	Resources or Materials	Types of Assessments or Evaluation

ADDENDUM C: HOME SCHOOLING PORTFOLIO GUIDE

The following information is a suggested format to guide the parent/legal guardian regarding the content of the student's portfolio for evaluation purposes.

The portfolio should be organized by school term and include the following:

- ❖ Writing samples, dated chronologically, including sketches, drawings, lettering, journal entries, stories, poems, letters, etc. The sample work kept is to be done over a period of time to show growth and improvement.
- ❖ A list of leveled reading books, magazines and articles read, dated chronologically, with a written report on the reading experience.
- ❖ A written record of Learning Outcomes taught with samples of the child's work included as well as a record of what has been evaluated for:
 - English Language Arts, Math, Science and Social Studies
- ❖ A collection of projects, logs, experiments or other evidence of concepts taught in:
 - English Language Arts, Math, Science and Social Studies.

CONTACT INFORMATION FOR DEC*s*

