



QUICK GUIDE TO TENNESSEE SCHOOL AT HOME TERMS

Tennessee’s Parent Training and Information Center, TNSTEP, knows there are questions around schooling your child at home. It is vital that students and families understand the definitions of and differences between terms, like “Homeschooling,” “Homebound Instruction,” and “Virtual or Remote Learning,” as explained in this Quick Guide. Please contact TNSTEP if you have further questions or need special education assistance or visit www.tnstep.info .

	Homeschooling	Homebound Instruction	Virtual or Remote Learning
ELIGIBILITY	Home school is an optional parental placement in which families have elected for their children to be educated through an independent home school, a church-related umbrella school, or through an accredited online school. Reporting requirements are determined by the enrolling school/entity.	A student with a disability may be eligible for a homebound placement if the student qualifies under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and State Board rules and regulations.	Optional virtual attendance describes a situation in which the school district allows parental choice for the student to attend a virtual program in lieu of in-person attendance.
PUBLIC SCHOOL STATUS	The public-school district is removed from responsibility for the education of your child. Home school is considered a “private” school under IDEA.	The student remains enrolled in the public school district.	The student remains enrolled in the public school district, including students being educated through virtual or remote learning due to emergency closures or public health crisis and students enrolled in Tennessee’s Virtual School.
IEP STATUS	The student’s IEP is no longer valid, and all educational and related services will no longer be provided unless the student has a “services plan” agreed to by the school and family.	LEA (Local Education Agency) Review Team determines homebound eligibility based upon certified medical necessity. The IEP remains in effect with the educational placement changed to home instruction.	The student’s IEP remains in effect with no change in placement. A new IEP can be written during this virtual or remote learning period. An IEP team meeting can be requested at any time by the student or parents.
RETURN OR CONTINUATION PROCESS	To return to the district, the student must be re-enrolled and may be re-evaluated for eligibility for special education services.	Homebound is meant to be a temporary placement – with a maximum of 30 school days unless there are extensions for medical necessity – with the goal of the student returning to a less restrictive environment.	The student’s return to in-person learning depends on the school district’s policies regarding emergency closures and/or public health crisis.
RESPONSIBILITY FOR INSTRUCTION	The parent is the “educator of record.” Instruction is the responsibility of the parent, including curriculum, lesson plans, assignments, and tests. Reporting requirements are determined by the agency of authority, including participation in any state mandated tests. The parent/instructor must possess a high school diploma or GED.	Instruction is delivered in the home or another appropriate setting for a <u>minimum</u> of 3 hours per week. Related services listed in the IEP must also be provided.	Instruction is the responsibility of the student’s teacher and school district. This includes the curriculum, lesson plans, assignments, and tests.

	Homeschooling	Homebound Instruction	Virtual or Remote Learning
SCHEDULING DETERMINATION	The parent determines the educational schedule.	The teacher and school district determine the educational schedule.	The teacher and school district determine the educational schedule.
IDEA RIGHTS STATUS/ INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION ACCOUNT (IEA)	Parents of eligible children with disabilities can apply for the Individualized Education Account (IEA) program to potentially help with homeschool costs. However, families making this choice must give up all IDEA special education rights, IEP supports, and services.	The rights of the student, parents, or legal guardians remain the same.	The rights of the student, parents, or legal guardians remain the same.
OTHER RESOURCES	For more information on homeschooling regulations and policies in TN, visit www.tn.gov/education/families/school-options/home-schooling-in-tn.html For more information on the IEA Program in TN, visit http://bit.ly/STEPshfs04	For more information on homebound placement in TN, visit http://bit.ly/STEPshfs02	For more information on Virtual or Remote Learning in TN, visit www.tn.gov/education/families/school-options/virtual-schools.html

For more detailed information on school at home options, see the TN Department of Education School Reopening Toolkit at bit.ly/STEPshfs06 (pages 26 – 28)

Tennessee families can COUNT on TNSTEP for special education assistance.
www.tnstep.info

EAST TENNESSEE 423.638.5819 gethelp@tnstep.info	MIDDLE TENNESSEE 615.463.2310 patricia.valladares@tnstep.info	WEST TENNESSEE 901.763.6022 katherine.williams@tnstep.info
ESPAÑOL 615.463.2310 patricia.valladares@tnstep.info	YOUTH SERVICES 615.682.3120 joey.ellis@tnstep.info	GENERAL INFORMATION 423.639.0125 gethelp@tnstep.info