**Frequently Asked Questions**

● **Can a parent withdraw to attend home school at any point in the school year?**

○ Yes. The cutoff date for registering for home school has been removed from the home school law. A parent is allowed to withdraw their child from the public school and register for home school at any point in the school year. The Home School Office can walk you through this process if needed.

**● Is a power of attorney sufficient as proof of legal guardianship?**

○ No. A power of attorney is not considered the same as legal guardianship for the purposes of withdrawing a student to attend home school.

● **Can a student who has been home schooled during the kindergarten year enter the first grade in a public school?**

○ Since home schooling in kindergarten is in compliance with the compulsory school attendance law, it is deemed an approved kindergarten program. A student who has been home schooled during the kindergarten year may enter the first grade in a public school if they demonstrate acceptable performance on the district's placement test. The Home School Office can help support you when making arrangements for taking the placement test.

● **What rights do home school students have for special education services from Knox County Schools?**

○ Students who are home schooled are entitled to the same services as children who are placed in private schools by their parents. This is provided via a "services plan" and is generally some type of related service, such as speech therapy, as determined by the school district where the student is registered to home school. The parent should contact the Knox County Schools’ Home School Office for complete information.

**● Are home school students allowed to participate in public school athletic programs?**

○ Independently registered home school students have the right to try out for sports/athletic teams at their zoned Knox County School. TCA § 49-6-3050 states: (e)(1) If any of the public schools established under the jurisdiction of an LEA (Local Education Agency) are members of an organization or an association that regulates interscholastic athletic competition, and if such organization or association establishes or maintains eligibility requirements for home school students desiring to participate in interscholastic athletics at a member school, then the LEA shall permit participation in interscholastic athletics at those schools by home school students who satisfy the eligibility requirements established by the organization or association. (2) This subsection (e) does not guarantee that a home school student trying out for an interscholastic athletics team will make the team or supplant the authority of coaches or other school officials in deciding who makes the team. This subsection (e) is intended to guarantee only that the home school student shall not be prohibited from trying out for an interscholastic athletics team, if the student is eligible under the rules of the organization or association, solely by reason of the student's status as a home school student. (3) This subsection (e) shall not be construed to limit or supplant the authority of the organization or association to determine eligibility and to establish, modify and enforce its rules and eligibility requirements, including those applicable to home school students. ○ If interested, contact Marion Quinn at marion.quinn@knoxschools.org

**● If a student is 18 years old, can they withdraw themselves as an independent home school student?**

○ The home school law is defined as a school “conducted or directed by a parent or parents or a legal guardian or guardians for their own children.” So, students (even if they are 18 years old) would not be allowed to withdraw themselves to home school.

● **Is the state curriculum mandated for independent home school students?**

○ No. The Home School Law (TCA 49-6-3050) provides very little guidance specific to the curriculum a parent must provide. The only mention of curriculum is in section (b) (1): “…submission to the director of schools… the proposed curriculum to be offered…” But there is no mention of what type of curriculum should be used. However, parents should keep in mind the testing requirement in grades 5, 7, and 9 in which their child will be tested on the grade level state curriculum in Reading/Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies. A parent should include those subjects in with their proposed curriculum to ensure that their child will be prepared for testing in those areas. ○ See the Testing section of this handbook for information on practice materials and important websites.

● **Is Knox County responsible for testing students enrolled in Category III Online Virtual and Category IV Satellite (Church-Related/Umbrella) home schools?**

○ No. Knox County is only responsible for testing students who are registered as independent home school students.

● **Can a parent of a home school student in grades 5, 7, or 9 choose to provide some other form of assessments rather than the TCAP/EOC?**

○ Yes, there is an option outlined below in TCA § 49-6-3050 which would allow for a home school student to take a test other than the TCAP or End of Course Assessments. The law states: (5) (A) Administration by the commissioner of education, or the commissioner's designee, or by a professional testing service that is approved by the LEA, to home school students of the same state board approved secure standardized tests required of public school students in grades five (5), seven (7) and nine (9); (ii) Tests administered by a professional testing service shall be administered within thirty (30) days of the date of the statewide test. Tests administered by a professional testing service shall be administered at the expense of the parent-teacher; (iii) All test results from either administration by the commissioner or the commissioner's designee, or by a professional testing service, shall be provided to the parent-teacher, the director of schools and the state board of education; So the test would need to be standardized, administered by a professional testing service within 30 days of the statewide assessments, and the results provided to the LEA for review. ○ Please contact the Home School Office so we can work with you and your family to ensure the appropriate assessments and steps are taken in order for you to be in compliance with the requirements.

● **Which End of Course Assessments are required of 9th grade home school students?**

○ If a home school student in grade 9 is taking a course for which there is an end of course test, that student should be required to take that end of course exam. That will mean some 9th grade students, depending on the courses they are taking, will have less tests to take that year than others.