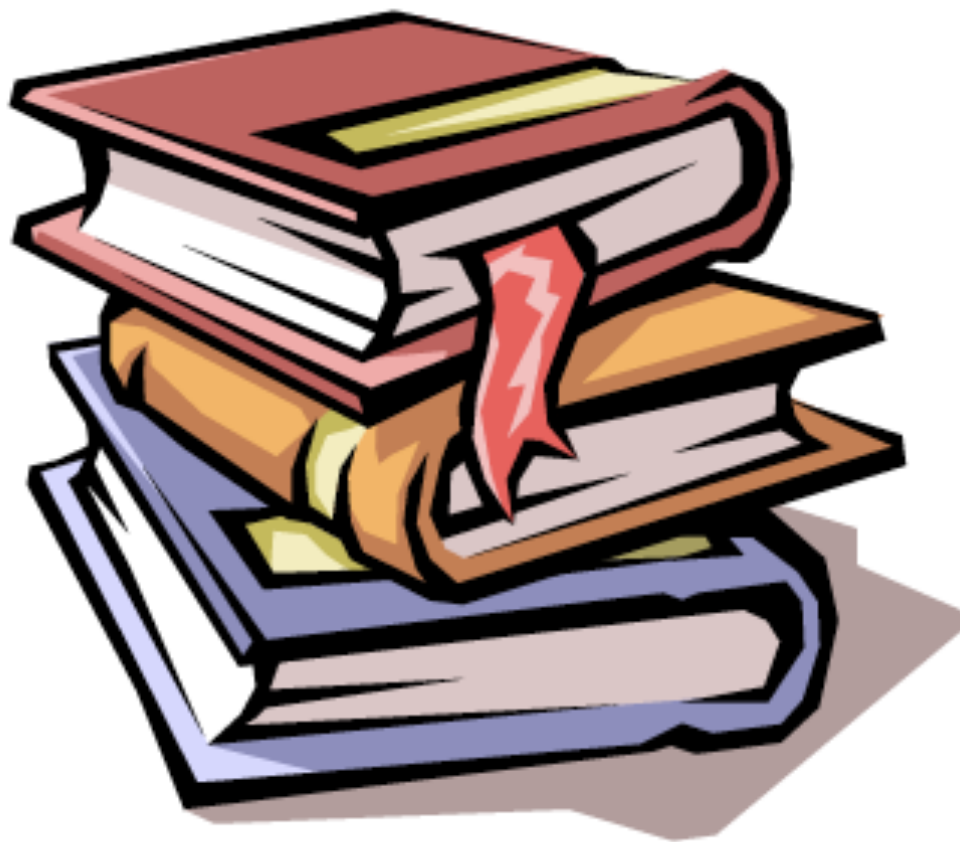

HOME INSTRUCTION

HOWARD COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM
Student Services and Special Education
Office of Pupil Personnel



Revised 10/12

Home Instruction Philosophy

The Howard County Public School System recognizes and respects a parent's right to choose home instruction as an alternative educational program. Appreciating a parent's commitment and desire for academic achievement, the Howard County Public School System supports parents by providing information and support necessary to ensure a successful partnership between the home schooler and the public school system.

**Howard County Public School System
Office of Pupil Personnel**



Dear Parent/Guardian:

I am writing in response to your request for information regarding home instruction. The Howard County Public School System supports home instruction in accordance with the Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) 13A.10.01.

I am enclosing the following for your information and use:

1. MSDE General Regulations 13A.10.01 (Bylaws)
2. Nonpublic Entities Supervision of Home Instruction
3. HCPSS Home Instruction Procedures
4. Frequently Asked Questions Regarding Home Instruction
5. Preparing the Portfolio for Home Instruction Under Option A.
6. Regional Home Schooling Support Groups
7. Home Schooling Notification Form – one per family

Parent guides for each grade level K-8, well as high school Algebra, American Government, English 9, Biology and Geometry, are available online at www.hcpss.org/academics/learnguides.shtml

After reviewing the materials, if you decide to instruct your child or children at home, please return the Home Schooling Notification Form as indicated on the bottom of this form. This serves as your application. Please note your application must be received **at least 15 days** prior to beginning your home instruction program. Thank you for your cooperation.

Restia Whitaker
Coordinator, Pupil Support Services

Title 13A STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Subtitle 10 HOME INSTRUCTION

Chapter 01 General Regulations

Authority: Education Article, §7-301, Annotated Code of Maryland

.01 Home Instruction Program.

A. Purpose. The purpose of this regulation is to establish a procedure to be used by the superintendent of each local school system to determine if a child participating in a home instruction program is receiving regular, thorough instruction during the school year in the studies usually taught in the public schools to children of the same age.

B. Written Agreement.

(1) A parent or guardian who chooses to teach a child at home shall initially sign a statement on a form prescribed by the State Department of Education which:

(a) Indicates consent to the requirements set forth in §§ C, D, and E of this regulation; and

(b) Shall be submitted to the local superintendent **at least 15 days** before the beginning of a home instruction program.

(2) Annual Verification. Annually thereafter, before the beginning of the school year, a parent or guardian shall verify the continuation of home schooling for his or her child with the local school superintendent or with the supervising nonpublic school or institution described in Regulation .05 of this chapter.

(3) Change in Status. A parent or guardian shall notify the local school superintendent or the supervising nonpublic school or institution described in Regulation .05 of this chapter if a change occurs in the home school status of the child during the school year.

C. Instruction program. The home instruction program shall:

(1) Provide regular, thorough instruction in the studies usually taught in the public schools to children of the same age.

(2) Include instruction in English, mathematics, science, social studies, art, music, health and physical education.

(3) Take place on a regular basis during the school year program and be of sufficient duration to implement the instruction program.

D. Education Materials. A parent or guardian who chooses to teach a child at home maintain a portfolio of materials which:

(1) Demonstrates the parent or guardian is providing regular, thorough instruction during the school year in the area specified in § C (1) and (2).

(2) Includes relevant materials, such as instructional materials, reading materials, and examples of the child's writing, worksheets, workbooks, creative materials, and tests.

(3) Shall be reviewed by the local superintendent or the superintendent's designee at the conclusion of each semester of the local school system at such time as is mutually agreeable to the local superintendent or designee and the parent or guardian.

E. A parent or guardian shall agree to permit a representative of a local school system to review the portfolio of education materials, discuss the instructional program, and observe instruction provided that all of the following requirements are met:

(1) The review is at a time and place mutually agreeable to the representative of the local school system and the parent or guardian.

(2) The purpose of the review is to ensure that the child is receiving regular, thorough instruction as set forth in § C and;

(3) There are not more than three reviews during the school year.

F. Additional Requirements. A local school system may not impose additional requirements for home instruction programs other than those in these regulations.

.02 Voluntary Participation in Standardized Testing.

Upon request of a parent or guardian, a child receiving home instruction may participate in the regularly scheduled standardized testing programs that are administered in the public school the child is eligible to attend.

.03 Noncompliance with Requirements.

A. Failure to Consent. If a parent or guardian does not agree to the requirements of regulation .01B, C, and D, above, a child shall be enrolled promptly in a public school or nonpublic school as defined in COMAR 13A.09.09.02.B(4)(a).

B. Deficiencies in the Program. If a local superintendent determines on the review of the home instruction program or inspection of the portfolio that a child is not receiving a regular, thorough instruction program in conformity with Regulation .01C and D, the local superintendent shall notify the parent or guardian in writing of any deficiencies in the program. The following apply:

(1) Within 30 days of receipt of notification of any deficiencies, the parent or guard shall provide evidence to the local superintendent that the deficiency has been or is being corrected.

(2) If a local superintendent determines there is not a satisfactory plan to correct a deficiency or if a deficiency is not corrected, a child shall be enrolled promptly in a public school or a non public school as defined in COMAR 13A.09.09.02B(4)(a).

.04 Placement in Public School.

Upon application of a child for admission to a public school from a home instruction program, the local superintendent shall determine by an evaluation the placement of the child and any credits to be awarded toward high school graduation. The evaluation may include administration of standardized tests and examinations and interviews with the child.

.05 Home Instruction Under Supervision of Nonpublic School.

A. A parent or guardian may provide instruction for a child at home without compliance with the requirements of this regulation, other than the requirements of Regulations .01B(2) and .04, if that I instruction is offered through correspondence courses and is under the supervision of a:

(1) Schools or institution offering an educational program operated by a bona fide church organization,

(a) Pre-enrollment conferences with parents or guardians,

(b) Textbooks, lesson materials, and other instructional materials or equipment designed to be used independently by the pupil at a site other than the school,

(c) Visits by supervisory personnel to the site where the pupil is receiving instruction, and

(d) Conferences with parents or guardians at appropriate intervals during the period of enrollment or;

(2) Non public school with a certificate of approval from the State Board of Education, and the supervision includes at a minimum all of the following components:

(a) Textbooks, lesson materials, and other instructional materials or equipment designed to be used independently by the pupil at a site other than a school, and

(b) Assignment of a school-based teacher to assist the home teacher in using the correspondence courses and to assist the pupil by issuing progress reports, marking papers, and grading tests.

B. Annual Verification. The supervising non public school or institution described in Section A of the regulation annually shall:

(1) Verify with the local school superintendent the identification of home schooled students whose instruction is continuing under its supervision;

(2) Notify the local superintendent of the identification of home schooled students whose instruction is newly added to its supervision; and

(3) Provide the local school superintendent with the identification of home-schooled students whose instruction is no longer under its supervision.

C. Change in status. The supervising non public school or institution described in § A of this regulation shall notify the local school superintendent if a change occurs in the status of a home schooled student whose instruction was under its supervision during the school year.

NONPUBLIC ENTITIES SUPERVISION OF HOME INSTRUCTION

COMAR 13A.10.01, Home Instruction, requires supervision of the home instruction that parents or legal guardians provide to their children. A home schooling parent may choose one of the following options to supervise the home instruction:

1. The local school system.
2. A nonpublic school that holds a Certificate of Approval from the Maryland State Board of Education.
3. A nonpublic school registered with the Maryland State Department of Education as exempt from education regulation because it is governed and operated by a bona fide church organization.
4. An education ministry of a bona fide church organization.

If a parent does not wish the local school system to supervise the home instruction that is being provided, the parent may elect option 2., 3., 4., to supervise the home instruction (see above).

The list of nonpublic entities that are registered with the Maryland State Department of Education to supervise home instruction provided by parents or legal guardians can be obtained at http://www.msde.state.md.us/nonpublic/home_instruction/DisplayLocationsByCounty.asp

Registration of the supervision of home instruction does not mean or imply that the home instruction program of the nonpublic entity holds any type of approval by the Maryland State Department of Education.

Registration means only that the nonpublic entity has certified to the Maryland State Department of Education that it will supervise home instruction consistent with the supervision requirements established in the Home Instruction regulations.

The list is for informational purposes only. It is *not* a list of recommended programs of home instruction. With the exception of Calvert School, Inc. and Griggs University, the state or local boards of education do not monitor the home instruction programs on this list. The home instruction programs of Calvert School, Inc. and Griggs University hold a Certificate of Approval and were approved by the Maryland State Board of Education when Maryland regulations provided for the approval programs of home instruction. The State no longer has authority to approve programs or courses of home instruction.

The Howard County Public School System

Home Instruction Procedures For Parents and Guardians

General Expectations

A parent or guardian who chooses to teach his or her child at home must provide regular thorough instruction during the school year in the studies usually taught in the public schools to children of the same age. The supervision or oversight of this instruction must be done in one of two ways: Option A – under the supervision of the Howard County Public School System; or, Option B – under the supervision of a nonpublic entity. The following information outlines the general expectations of these two options.

Option A (home instruction under the supervision of The Howard County Public School System):

1. Read and comply with the regulations regarding home instruction (COMAR13A.10.01).
2. Complete and return the *Home School Notification* form (yellow) to the office indicated **at least 15 days** prior to beginning home instruction.
3. Notify the office annually if you intend to continue home instruction with no change in status.
4. Provide written notification to the office of any changes in status (see below).
5. Attend review meetings (see below).
6. Complete an Educational Program form for each child being home instructed.
7. Maintain a portfolio for each child being home instructed (see *Preparing the Portfolio*).

Option 4b (correspondence courses under the supervision of a nonpublic entity):

8. Read and comply with the regulations regarding home instruction (COMAR 13A.10.01).
9. Complete and return the Home School Notification form to the office indicated at least 15 days prior to beginning home instruction.
10. Notify the office annually if you intend to continue home instruction with no change in status.
11. Provide written notification to the office of any changes in status (see below).

Review Meetings for Families Choosing Option A

You are assigned annually to a review team responsible for reviewing your child's instructional program.

- The team will contact you to arrange first and second semester (fall and spring) appointments. Once you have had 4 consecutive successful reviews, you will only be required to review in the spring. *It is the parent's responsibility to notify us when this change should occur.*
- Review for one student takes 20 minutes; reviews for two students take 40 minutes; reviews for more than two students take an hour.
- Educational Program forms and portfolios for each student must be brought to meetings.
- Students are welcome to accompany the parent/guardian to meetings.
- *If you fail to appear for your required review without explanation and an effort to reschedule, you will be expected to enroll your child in an approved public or nonpublic school as defined in COMAR 13A.09.09.02B(4-9).*

Written Notification

Written notification to the office is required under the following circumstances:

- Additional children in the family are to be home instructed.
- A student withdraws from home instruction to enroll in a public or nonpublic school, either for the completion of the current school year or the beginning of the next school year.
- A student completes the year of high school graduation or reaches age 16 and withdraws from home instruction.
- The parent/guardian wishes to change from option 4a to 4b or from 4b to 4a on the Home School Notification form. This requires the completion of a new form.
- The parent/guardian wishes to change umbrella groups. This requires the completion of a new form.
- The family wishes to change its decision regarding participation in standardized testing.
- The family no longer resides in Howard County. Please call or write the office if there is any change in the address within Howard County to ensure communication and also to maintain accurate records at the assigned Howard County school.

Maryland State Department of Education
Nonpublic School Approval Branch
200 W. Baltimore Street
Baltimore, MD 21201
410-767-0407

Fact Sheet Regarding Home Instruction in Maryland

Does Maryland law permit a student of mandatory school age to be home schooled instead of attending a public or a nonpublic school?

Yes. [Maryland law, Education Article, §7-301, Annotated Code of Maryland, Compulsory Attendance](#), states that each child who resides in Maryland and is 5 years old or older and under 16 shall attend a public school regularly during the entire school year unless the child is otherwise receiving regular, thorough instruction during the school year in the studies usually taught in the public school to children of the same age. Maryland recognizes nonpublic schools and home instruction as alternatives to public school enrollment as a means for students to receive regular, thorough instruction.

Are there regulations that govern home instruction in Maryland?

Yes. [COMAR 13A.10.01](#) Home Instruction, are the regulations that govern home instruction in Maryland. The purpose of COMAR 13A.10.01 is to establish a procedure to be used by the superintendent of each local school system to determine if a child participating in a home instruction program is receiving regular, thorough instruction during the school year in the studies usually taught in the public schools to children of the same age.

What must a parent do before beginning home instruction?

At least 15 days before the beginning of a home instruction program, a parent or guardian who chooses to teach a child at home must sign a written statement on a form prescribed by the State Department of Education. The parent should contact their local school system for a copy of the consent form and COMAR 13A.10.01.

Does the local school system or the Maryland State Department of Education provide a curriculum to parents to use for the purpose of home schooling?

No. A parent or guardian who elects to provide instruction to his/her child (ren) must select the curriculum to be used. The home instruction regulation does, however, specify the subjects that must be taught by the parent or guardian.

What subject areas of home instruction are mandatory?

English, mathematics, science, social studies, art, music, health, and physical education are the subject areas that parents or guardians must teach their child (ren) who are home schooled. [COMAR 13A.10.01.01C.(2).]

Must home instruction be supervised in Maryland?

Yes. Home instruction must be supervised in Maryland by one of the following entities:

1. The local school system.
2. A nonpublic school that holds a Certificate of Approval from the Maryland State Board of Education.
3. A church-exempt nonpublic school.
4. An education ministry of a bona fide church organization.

What must a nonpublic school or education ministry of a bona fide church organization do before beginning to supervise home instruction of Maryland students?

Before beginning to supervise home instruction, the head of the legal authority of a nonpublic school or the chief officer of a bona fide church organization that elects to supervise home instruction must contact the Maryland State Department of Education for registration procedures. Registration procedures include the completion of an official registration form that can be obtained by calling the Nonpublic School Approval Branch at the Department at (410) 767-0407.

Can a tutor or someone other than the parent or guardian be hired to teach a child who is home schooled?

No. The Home Instruction regulations (COMAR 13A.10.01) are clear that the parent or guardian is to be the primary provider of the home instruction. Other adults may assist with a special area of interest but such adults are not permitted to replace the parent or guardian as the primary provider of instruction.

Is a home schooled student prohibited from being tutored?

No. A home-schooled student may be tutored in a particular subject just as a student enrolled in a public or nonpublic school may be tutored. Regardless of whether a student is enrolled in home schooling or in a public or nonpublic school, tutoring is supplemental to each of these primary forms of instruction. Tutoring may not be substituted for the instruction that is provided by the parent or legal guardian to his/her home schooled student or the instruction provided by a public or nonpublic school to students enrolled.

Must the parent/guardian be a certified teacher?

No. Present regulations do not require parents/guardians to have teacher certification in order to home school their child(ren). [COMAR 13A.10.01.]

Can a student who is home schooled participate in other aspects of the instructional or extracurricular programs that are offered by a Maryland public school?

No. Present regulations indicate no provisions which would allow home-schooled students to participate in courses or activities that are offered by a Maryland public school other than the standardized testing program. [COMAR 13A.10.01]

May a home-schooled student participate in the standardized testing program that is offered by the student's local school system?

Yes. A child receiving home instruction may participate in the regularly scheduled standardized testing programs that are administered in the student's assigned school. It is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to contact the public school that the child is eligible to attend to find out the testing schedule and to make arrangements for participation prior to the testing date. [COMAR 13A.10.01.01.02] Please make sure you contact the school a *minimum of 30 days prior to testing* to allow time for the school to order your child's testing materials.

For more information on standardized testing in Maryland go to:

<http://www.hcpss.org/academics/tests.shtml>

What are the procedures for a home-schooled student to return to a public school?

The parent must contact the local school for procedures regarding returning from home instruction to enrollment in a public school. The local superintendent of schools or designee shall determine the placement of the child and any credits to be awarded toward high school graduation. The evaluation may include administration of standardized tests, examinations, and interviews with the student. [COMAR 13A.10.01.04]

How can a home-schooled student receive a diploma?

If the home-schooled student returns to a public school and meets their secondary school graduation requirements, yes, the student may receive a Maryland issued state diploma.

If the home-schooled student returns to a nonpublic or church-exempt school and meets that school's secondary school graduation requirements, the student may receive a diploma issued by that school's legal authority. Note: COMAR

13A.09.09.09E states that the diploma of a nonpublic secondary school may not imply that the requirements for graduation from a Maryland public secondary school have been met.

Another alternative for the home-schooled student is to successfully complete the General Educational Development (GED) test and be issued a GED by the Maryland State Department of Education. For more information regarding GED contact the [General Educational Development office](#) at (410) 767-0538.

Does the Maryland State Department of Education provide information about home instruction support groups?

No. The Maryland State Department of Education does not collect information about home instruction support groups. The Department, however, maintains the names and addresses of the nonpublic schools and bona fide church organizations that are registered to supervise home instruction in Maryland.

Whom should I call if I have more questions?

For questions about filing the consent form with the local school system, curriculum, portfolio reviews, standardized testing, special education services, returning to the public school system, contact the Pupil Personnel Office of your local school system.

For questions about the requirements of the home instruction regulations and other matters of concern pertaining to home instruction, contact the Student Services and Alternative Programs Branch of the Maryland State Department of Education in Baltimore at (410) 767-0311.

For questions about nonpublic entities that are registered to supervise home instruction, contact the Nonpublic School Approval Branch of the Maryland State Department of Education in Baltimore at (410) 767-0407.

Preparing the Portfolio For Home Instruction under Option A

Curriculum notes

The General Regulation state that instruction should be provided in subjects “usually taught in the public schools to students of the same age” and should include “English, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Art, Music, Health and physical education”. The following are Howard County Public School System recommendations:

- English/Language Arts should include developmentally appropriate instruction in reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills. Formal writing and spelling are not typically included at the kindergarten level.
- The following areas not listed in the General Regulations are highly recommended:

Career and Technology Education (computers, other technology, tech education, family consumer science, business and/or industrial arts.)

Library/media skills

Foreign Language

- The K-8 program includes developmentally appropriate instruction in every area. In grades 6—8, instruction in Art, Music, Health, Physical Education, and Technology Education is typically of 9 weeks duration.
- The 9—12 program includes six or more credits of instruction per year toward the Maryland high school graduation requirements. (One credit is equal to an hour of daily instruction for a full school year.) The Maryland high school graduation requirements include as a minimum:
 -
 - 4 credits: English
 - 3 credits: Mathematics (1 credit must be in algebra and 1 credit must be in geometry.
 - 3 credits: Science (1 credit must be in Biology)

- 3 credits: Social Studies (US History, American Gov, World History)
- 1 credit: Fine Arts (Dance, Drama, Visual Arts, or Music)
- 1 credit: Technology Education
- 1 credit: Physical Education/Health
- 2 add. Credits: Advanced Tech Ed or Foreign Language

Portfolio Review Form

This form provides an overview of your instructional program for each student and, when completed, serves as documentation of portfolio reviews. It should *briefly* describe your instructional plan for the year. It should be completed prior to each review, or it can be completed with your reviewer at the review.

The review form should indicate the following:

- How instruction in each area will be structured (such as textbook, correspondence course, art lessons, participation in a structured sports program each season, or a planned syllabus) *

**An integrated or thematic approach to instruction that merges several curriculum areas is acceptable provided that there is evidence of the equivalent of a full program of instruction in each required area. Be prepared to document subject areas separately.*

- Where appropriate, grade level placement and intended goal. For instance, a 4th grade student might be placed halfway through 3rd grade English with plans to finish the year at grade level, while working in a 5th grade math text and continuing into a 6th grade math text if skill and interest permit.

Documenting Regular, Thorough Instruction of Sufficient Duration

General Suggestions:

- Give evidence of a regular, planned *schedule* of instruction.
- Maintain a planning book or log.
- Maintain a record of grades (such as quarterly report cards).
- Bring examples of instructional materials to the fall review.
- When the curriculum does not follow a prepared text or course, provide an outline of topics with a time schedule and resources (such as a bibliography).

Student Portfolio

While curriculum outlines, instructional materials, and descriptions of instruction can help paint a picture of home schooling, actual samples of student work are an essential component of a portfolio review.

- **Adequate** examples to document work for **each subject** throughout the period of instruction must be provided.
- Samples of the student's writing, worksheets, workbooks, creative materials and tests must be provided. **Reading lists are recommended.**
- Other means of documenting work include journals, photographs, certificates, awards, and programs. The checklist on the portfolio review form represents recommended items, but not all are required for a satisfactory review.
- **All school work should be arranged chronologically by subject.**
- **All work should be dated.**
- **Helpful hints:**
- Use a tabbed notebook or pocket portfolio.
- Arrange subjects in the same order as indicated on the Educations Program Form.

PORTFOLIO REVIEW GUIDELINES

Each subject area will be reviewed for clear evidence of instruction, as will the complete portfolio, according to the criteria below. Ratings will be indicated on the Evidence portion of the Home Instruction Portfolio Review Form as well as the Overall Portfolio portion.

- **Acceptable/Clear Evidence** indicates there is sufficient evidence of planning as well as physical evidence of student work to show that regular, thorough instruction has taken place on a regular basis during the school year and is of sufficient duration to implement the program.
- **Needs Better Evidence** indicates there is insufficient evidence of instruction. It is expected that weaknesses will be addressed the next time the portfolio is reviewed.
- **Unacceptable** indicates there is no evidence of instruction. The subject area or portfolio does not comply with COMAR 13A.10.01.D. A portfolio receiving this rating must be revised and resubmitted within 30 days.

On request, your reviewer can help brainstorm ways to better document instruction.

RESOURCES FOR HOME SCHOOL PARENTS

Homeschool Howard County: www.homeschoolhowardcounty.com

Email: info@homeschoolhowardcounty.com

The purpose of Home school Howard County is to forge connections in the Howard County Home school community. Beth Redmond is the current contact.

Hand in Hand Home School: www.handinhandhomeschool.com

Maryland's largest source for Home School families.

The Teaching Home: www.teachinghome.com

Christian Home Schooling magazine

Nathhan (National Challenged Home Schoolers Association Network)

www.nathhan.com

Christian Home schooling for challenged or disabled children. They provide articles, lending library, newsletter and links.

Homeschoolcentral.com (online resource for Home School families).

**For more information, please contact the Home Instruction
office of Howard County Public School System at:**

**Pupil Personnel Services
The Howard County Public School System
10920 Clarksville Pike, Room B-46
Ellicott City, MD 21042
410-313-6792**

**Leslie Evans, Coordinator
Betsy Flemming Rice, Co-Coordinator
Ronda Lennon, Co-Coordinator**