

THIS ANALYSIS DOES NOT CONSTITUTE THE GIVING OF LEGAL ADVICE

SOUTH CAROLINA LAW

I. The compulsory attendance law in South Carolina requires all children, five years of age before September first until graduation from high school or their seventeenth birthday should attend school. Any parent whose child is not six years of age on or before the first day of September of a particular school year may elect for their child not to attend kindergarten, and then must sign a written document with the school district.

II. Each school year should consist of 180 days.

III. Each student should study the following subjects: reading, writing, math, science, and social studies. Grades 7 - 12 should study composition and literature in addition to the above subjects.

IV. Parents must have a high school diploma or GED or a baccalaureate degree in order to teach. The basic skills exam (Education Entrance Examination) is no longer required for parents wanting to teach their children.

V. There are three options to legally home school.

Option I - The parents may teach their children at home if the instruction is approved by the district board of trustees. The board shall approve with no discretion if:

1. The parent has either a high school diploma or GED or a baccalaureate degree.
2. The instructional day is at least 4 1/2 hours and the year at least 180 days.
3. The curriculum includes the required subjects listed above.
4. The parent maintains records of regular instruction including, a plan book or other record of evaluations with a semiannual progress report to be submitted to the school district.
5. The student has access to the library facilities.
6. The student participates in the annual statewide testing program and the Basic Skills Assessment Program.
7. The parents release the district from liability regarding their child's education. Parents may appeal school district decisions to the State Board of Education within ten days. They may appeal State Board decisions to the Family Court within 30 days. School districts have no authority to require home visits.

Option II - Parents may teach their children at home by becoming a member of the South Carolina Association of Independent Home Schools (SCAIHS). Bona fide membership and continuing compliance with the academic standards of SCAIHS exempts the home school from the further requirements of Option I. You may contact SCAIHS at the following address:

SCAIHS, 930 Knox Abbott Drive, Cayce, SC 29033; (803)454-0427; or www.SCAIHS.org (e-mail: SCAIHS@scaihs.org)

Parents or guardians must meet the following requirements:

1. Hold at least a high school diploma or GED.
2. The instructional year is at least 180 days.
3. The curriculum will include the required subjects listed in Option I.

Option III - Parents may teach their children at home by becoming a member of a bona fide association. Membership to a bona fide association and continuing compliance with the standards of the bona fide association exempts the home school from the further requirements of Option I. One such organization is: Palmetto Independent Educators, PO Box 2475, Aiken, SC 29802; (803) 649-2415, or www.homeschoolingwithpie.org (e-mail: admin@homeschoolingwithpie.org)

A bona fide association must maintain, as a minimum, the following membership standards:

1. Parent or guardian meets the three requirements specified under Option II.
2. The parent or guardian maintains a written record of subjects taught, a portfolio of the student's work and a semiannual progress and attendance report.
3. Association has a membership of at least 50 students.
4. Association reports to the local school district of each member the number and grade level of the students in the association by January 30 of each year.
5. These standards are subject to annual review by the State Dept. of Education.

VI. All students complying with Option I must participate in the annual statewide testing program and the Basic Skills Assessment Program. If they do not perform well enough on the test to meet the public school promotion standard for advancing to the next grade, the school district will decide if they should be put in a public school, receive special handicapped services, or have instructional support for home schooling at the parents' expense. The test must be administered by a "certified school district employee". Those who enroll in SCAIHS (Option II) or a bona fide association (Option III) are exempt from state testing.

*******The CSRA HEA does NOT function as an accountability group according to SC homeschooling requirements.**