

CAPITAL AREA SCHOOL FOR THE ARTS CHARTER SCHOOL (CASA)

No. 117

SECTION: PROGRAMS

TITLE: HOMEBOUND
INSTRUCTION

ADOPTED: 4/15/2019

NO. 117 HOMEBOUND INSTRUCTION

In accordance with 22 Pa Code § 11.25, the Board of Trustees of the Capital Area School for the Arts Charter School ("Charter School"), sets forth the following policy:

"(a) A school district, area vocational technical school, charter school, independent school, private school or non-public school may temporarily excuse a student from compulsory attendance on account of illness or other urgent reasons and provide that student homebound instruction while he or she is excused from school. Regulations require that the term "urgent reasons" be strictly construed not to permit irregular attendance at school."

(b) A school district, area vocational technical school, charter or independent school may provide students temporarily excused under this section with homebound instruction for a period not to exceed 3 months. A school district, area vocational technical school, charter or independent school may request approval from the Department to extend the provision of homebound instruction, which shall be reevaluated every 3 months. When a student receives homebound instruction, the student may be counted for attendance purposes as if in school. A school district shall be reimbursed for homebound instruction provided to a student under section 2510.1 of the Public School Code of 1949 (24 P. S. § 25-2510.1).

(c) A school district, area vocational technical school, charter or independent school shall adopt policies that describe the instructional services that are available to students who have been excused under this section. The policies must include statements that define the responsibilities of both the district and the student with regard to these instructional services."

Purpose of Homebound Instruction

The purpose of homebound instruction is to keep students on track academically while the student is temporarily out of school. Homebound instruction is defined in the PDE Basic Education Circular ("BEC") as school-supplied one-to-one tutoring for a limited time.

Certification of Teachers Providing Homebound Instruction

Teachers employed for delivering homebound instruction are governed by the same certification regulations as all other teachers. Refer to Certification Staffing and Policy Guidelines (CSPG) #1, Appropriate Certification in Pennsylvania, Statement 7:

A "homebound instruction" teacher is governed by the same certification regulations as all other teachers. When regularly employed professional staff cannot be assigned to homebound instructions, persons on the substitute roster holding appropriate certification may be used. If no certified person is available, an emergency certificate may be issued to qualify a person to teach homebound students.

Documentation for Homebound Instruction Request

Since the goal is to rehabilitate a student so that they can return to school, the Charter School may define what is acceptable as an appropriately licensed professional for a specific type of excusal. Accordingly, the Charter School requires written documentation from a physical or mental health provider at the doctoral level or above, who is licensed to practice in Pennsylvania and who is actively treating the student for the medical condition at issue for homebound instruction. PDE's guidance states that a doctor does not "order" homebound instruction but rather provides the diagnosis to enable the school district/charter school to make an informed decision on how to best provide for the student's education. Furthermore, PDE guidance allows the Charter School to require frequent updates on the student's progress, from this appropriately licensed professional, as a condition of continued excusal.

A Charter School may provide homebound instruction for an initial total of three months without consulting or notifying PDE.

Extension: After expiration of the initial three month period of homebound instruction, it is not necessary for the Charter School to send to PDE the licensed professional's documentation with the extension request; rather, the Charter School must ensure the excuse is reasonable for absence from school and that the student is being treated actively for the condition necessitating the absence.

NOTE: If the need for homebound instruction goes beyond the initial three months, the Charter School should determine whether the student should be evaluated or considered for

either an IEP or a 504 Service Agreement.

Pregnant and Parenting Students

Becoming pregnant or being a parent does not, in itself, necessitate that a student receive homebound instruction. Certification of a physician is required for any students, including pregnant or parenting students, who are requesting homebound instruction because of an illness or other urgent reason.

Attendance

A student receiving homebound instruction is counted in both membership and attendance. If a student does not receive homebound instruction during the first three months of a school year, then the student is counted in membership but not in attendance.

PDE defines the following terms:

- ***Membership***: student is on the attendance roles, whether or not he or she physically is present on any given day.
- ***Attendance***: days when a "member" student is counted as present in school.
- ***Inactive Roll***: student is not counted in either membership or attendance.

There is no requirement in the BEC, or otherwise, as to the minimum number of hours of such tutoring/instruction and other methods may be used to provide student with instructional time. PDE's Child Accounting counts an hour of weekly instruction as equivalent to a day of school attendance. Therefore, five hours of weekly instruction are equivalent to five days of school attendance.

However, for every hour less than the total of five hours of homebound instruction provided (or 2.5 hours for half-day attendees), the student is marked as absent – one day for each hour missed. Hours are counted on a weekly basis; a student cannot be counted as present by combining hours from consecutive weeks. For example, three hours of homebound instruction one week and seven hours the next week cannot count as fulltime for the two weeks.

The Charter School may, at their discretion, provide more than five hours of instruction per week without requesting special permission from PDE.

Part-time Attendance

A Charter School may structure homebound instruction for a student such that the student

attends school part-time, as his or her condition allows; homebound instruction requests need not be restricted to students who are unable to attend school at all. If it is agreed by the Charter School that a student attends school for partial days, then homebound instruction would be prorated. For example, if a student attends school half-days, only 2.5 hours of homebound instruction is required for the equivalent of five days of instruction

PSSA Testing

A homebound student is required to participate in the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment ([PSSA](#)). If the student is incapable of participating at the school, the individual who is providing the homebound instruction should be trained to administer the assessment and then administer the test to the student in his/her home.

PDE Reporting

A charter school may provide homebound instruction for the initial three months of excusal without consulting Pennsylvania Department of Education ("PDE"). Following the initial three months, the charter school must obtain the approval of PDE to extend homebound instruction. Any excusal from compulsory attendance must be reevaluated, at minimum, every three months. The Charter School may have a policy that requires more frequent evaluations.

It is not necessary for the Charter School to send to PDE the licensed professional's documentation with the extension request; the Charter School simply must ensure the excuse is reasonable for absence from school and that the student is being treated actively for the condition necessitating the absence.

Non-attendance without the provision of homebound instruction

If a condition exists which prevents a child from the ability to benefit from study, the student may be entered into the inactive roll with the PDE's approval until such a time as the student may benefit from study. (22 Pa Code § 11.34.)

School Initiated. The Charter School may excuse a school age child from compulsory school attendance upon recommendation of the school physician and a psychiatrist or public school psychologist, or both, and with the approval of PDE. Prior to seeking excusal and approval, the Charter School must provide the child's parents with written notice of both the proposed excusal, including the reasons for the excusal, and an opportunity to be heard. See 22 Pa Code § 11.34 and 24 P.S. § 13-1330(2). Children so excused are entered on the inactive roll.

Other in-home instruction that is not designated as homebound instruction

There are a number of educational options that sometimes are referred to as "homebound

instruction" although they do not fit the legal definition of homebound instruction. The following are NOT categorized as "homebound instruction" pursuant to the PDE BEC:

- **Instruction Conducted in the Home:** for special education students for whom an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) team determines that the instruction of the student is to be conducted in the home; students are counted in both the school membership and school attendance; this is not homebound instruction. (See "Special Education Policy – Instruction in the Home").
- **Home Education Program (Homeschooling):** usually taught at home by a parent (referred to as the home education supervisor); students are not counted in either the membership or school attendance; this is not homebound instruction. Students enrolled in the Charter School cannot be simultaneously home-schooled as they would be in their school district of residence.
- **Home Study:** for expelled students or students awaiting placement; students are counted in the membership but not the school attendance; this is not homebound instruction.

Audits

As the Charter School may be audited for their provision of homebound instruction, the following information will be maintained and made available for such an audit:

- The documentation from the appropriately licensed practitioner substantiating the need for homebound instruction.
- The listing of the students on homebound instruction and the total amount of time for each student in homebound instruction.

TO THE EXTENT THAT ANYTHING IN THIS POLICY COULD BE CONSTRUED TO CONFLICT WITH THE SCHOOL'S CHARTER OR APPLICABLE STATE AND/OR FEDERAL LAWS, THE APPLICABLE STATE AND/OR FEDERAL LAWS AND/OR CHARTER CONTROL.