

Right to Access Public Benefits

It is helpful for leaders of unconventional learning environments (ULEs) to understand what options students have to various state-provided benefits, such as standardized testing, driver's education, and access to courses and extracurricular activities through their local public school.



1. Homeschool Student Participation in Interscholastic Activities at Public Schools

A student who is homeschooled (which may include primary or supplemental instruction in a ULE), may participate in interscholastic activities at their resident public school, provided:

- The home-schooled student reports to the resident school district within the first eleven (11) days of the fall or spring semester of the district; and
- The homes-schooled student or his or her parent notifies the principal of the resident school of the student's request to participate in the interscholastic activity before the signup, tryout, or participation deadlines established for students enrolled in the school.

The student's resident school principal shall approve a request to participate if the home-schooled student demonstrates compliance with the above notification requirements and meets academic eligibility requirements by: (1) scoring at or above the 30th percentile on a nationally recognized norm-referenced test in the previous twelve (12) months; or (2) scoring at or above a minimum score on a test approved by the State Board of Education.

A home-schooled student may only participate in interscholastic activities at a nonresident school if there is mutual agreement between the student, the resident school, and the school where the student wishes to participate.

While a home-schooled student shall have an equal opportunity to try out and participate in interscholastic activities, there is no right or guarantee to make the team or otherwise be chosen for participation in the desired activity.

A student who withdraws from an Arkansas Activities Association member school to be home-schooled shall not participate in an interscholastic activity in the resident school district for a minimum of three hundred sixty-five (365) days after the student withdraws from the member school. [Ark. Code § 6-15-509.](#)

The Arkansas High School Activities Association Eligibility [Guidebook](#) reflects this statutory-mandated eligibility for home-schooled students.

School districts providing services to home school students shall be eligible for local, state, or federal funds allocated or approved for such services. [Ark. Code § 6-15-507.](#)

2. Homeschool Student Participation in Interscholastic Activities at Private Schools

A private school may approve a home-schooled student to participate in interscholastic activities at the private school if:

- The home-schooled student requests to participate before the signup, tryout, or participation deadlines established for enrolled students.
- The home-schooled student has demonstrated academic eligibility by one of the following: (1) scoring at or above the 30th percentile on a nationally recognized norm-referenced test in the previous twelve (12) months; or (2) scoring at or above a minimum score on a test approved by the State Board of Education.

If approved, a home-schooled student shall have an equal opportunity to try out and participate in interscholastic activities, but the student must meet the criteria for participation in the activity that apply to students enrolled in the private school.

A student who withdraws from an Arkansas Activities Association member school to be home schooled shall not participate in an interscholastic activity in a private school for a minimum of three hundred sixty-five (365) days after the student withdraws from the member school. Ark. Code § 6-15-510.

3. Driver's Licensing

Students participating in an ULE may face scrutiny when applying for a state driver's license because some state officials are unfamiliar with the legality of homeschooling and education in an ULE. Since 2019, however, home school students are not required to bring a notarized copy of their homeschool notification form when the written portion of the Arkansas driver's test is administered.

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