

OPTIONS AND HOME SCHOOL A SPECIAL PARTNERSHIP

WHY IT MIGHT BE THE RIGHT CHOICE FOR YOUR CHILD

What is Options?

The Options program is part of the Aurora Public Schools district and is open to students in grades K-12 and is designed to support parents who choose to school their children at home. Parents remain the primary instructional provider, with the school supplementing and complementing their efforts. Families participating in the program receive instructional and most educational materials at no cost. This is possible because, as a part of the public school system, Options receives a portion of the Per Pupil Operating Revenue (PPOR) distributed at the state level for each enrolled student. This money is used to pay salaries, purchase textbooks and curriculum, pay site rental and other cost associated with running the program.

What are the expectations for students?

In order to receive funding, each registered student must spend a minimum of 90 hours per semester with a licensed teacher hired by Options, for a minimum of 180 hours per school year. This is approximately five to six hours for one day per week. These hours must be regularly scheduled. Contact hours may be obtained through Options classes for home-schooled students and college classes.

Students in grades 9 through 12 may be eligible for Concurrent Enrollment at a community college or university with pre-approval from an Options administrator. Options pays for tuition but parents are responsible for fees and textbooks.

Why would a parent choose Options?

Parents choose to place their children in Options because their children can be a part of a classroom experience. They value the opportunity for students to share academic time with their peers. Also, science labs, art, music and other types of classes may be difficult to offer at home. Students are able to participate in group activities such as field trips. Parents encourage the opportunity for their students to experience the rigor of regular classroom setting and the accountability that comes from deadlines and the need to demonstrate organizational skills.

The teachers, administrators and support staff for Options are competent, well trained and dedicated to educational excellence. All teachers for Options are fully accredited and must hold a valid Colorado teacher's license appropriate for his/her assignment. In addition, teachers are highly qualified as defined in No Child Left Behind (NCLB). Pupil-teacher ratios are far below those in most public schools and teachers are able to give students the personal attention necessary for an outstanding educational experience. Teachers are encouraged to develop on-going communications with parents to ensure school and home are working as a team to ensure an excellent education for each child.

Another very important aspect is that through enrollment with Options, parents have the availability of textbooks, curriculum and testing, paid through Options. Curriculum is available to parents for their home use for annual check out, at no cost except for consumables. Parents are able to order cost effective, reusable curriculum, which is non-religious in nature. Many of the curriculum choices are those that are in popular home-school catalogs. Items are returned at the end of the school year.

What is the partnership between Options and Home Schooling?

Parents connected with the Options program consider home schooling their primary means of educating their students. State law relating to home-schooled students requires that each child participating in a non-public home-based educational program be evaluated when the child reaches grades three, five, nine and eleven. Each child may take a nationally standardized achievement test to evaluate the child's progress or be evaluated by a qualified person to determine the child's academic progress. The test or evaluation results are submitted to the local school district of residence. The purpose is to evaluate the education progress of each child.

All students should be registered with their home district as home-schooled. Since students in the Options program are home-schooled more than 50% of their time, Options provides students the opportunity to take the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) to fulfill this requirement. Test results are provided to parents and reporting to their home district is the responsibility of the parents. Options students are not required to take TCAP or ACT since they are home-schooled for their primary education (SB 186).

How are students enrolled and where do they attend?

Parents interested in learning more about the Options program or enrolling students should call the Options administrative office at 303-340-0666. A list of sites will be provided to determine which might be most convenient for the student to attend. Interested parents will be connected with specific site coordinators. The coordinator from each site will work with interested parents to answer specific questions about that site and complete the enrollment process. Options currently has programs at sites that extend from Greeley to Aurora. Also, check out the Aurora Public Schools website at www.aurorak12.org and click on *schools*, go to *alternative* and click on *Options program*.

Rev. 8/22/2013