

# Information and Best Practices for Homeschooling and Homeschooled College Applicants

From IECA's Homeschooling Affinity Group

## Resources

### Where to find more information about homeschooling?

- [IECA Homeschool Affinity Group](#)
- [IECA Homeschool Affinity Group College Panel Discussions](#)
- [Summary of State Regulations](#) (used with permission from Robert Kunzman)
- [International Center for Homeschool Research](#)
- [Homeschooling: An Updated Comprehensive Survey of the Research](#)
- [CEG Podcast 212: Advice for Homeschooling Students](#) (for parents and students to learn about homeschooling in general; Ethan Sawyer interviews Rebecca Stuart-Orlowski)
- [7 Things to Know When Considering Homeschooling](#)
- [Advanced Placement for Homeschoolers](#) (article on the ins and outs of AP access)
- [NCAA & home schooled students](#)
- [Homeschooling/Unschooling Resources](#)
- [@themelaninvillage](#) on Instagram and their site <https://linktr.ee/TheMelaninVillage>
- State & Local homeschool groups (suggested search: “homeschooling in \_\_\_”) Many groups are organized through Facebook.

### Online Groups and Homeschool Forums

- [California Homeschool Network](#) (for California parents and IECs to understand how homeschooling works in California)
- [The Well-Trained Mind forums](#)
- [The Brave Learner Home](#)
- [Secular, Eclectic, Academic Homeschoolers](#)
- [Special Needs Homeschooling - Hope-filled, Help-filled, Peace-filled](#)
- [HS2Coll](#) a lively listserv for home educators with college-bound students
- Many social media sites, such as Facebook & groups.io, particularly for regional groups. (Search them for “homeschooling in \_\_\_” and fill in your state or region’s name.)

### Reading

- *Rethinking School: How to Take Charge of Your Child's Education*, Susan Wise Bauer
- *Learning All the Time*, John Holt
- *The Brave Learner: Finding Everyday Magic in Homeschool, Learning, and Life*, Julie Bogart

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*If you have a client family that asks about homeschooling as an option for their student, these questions might help them think through the reasons for considering homeschooling.*

### **Why are you thinking about homeschooling?**

- For many homeschoolers, there was something that wasn't working well in school that served as a catalyst for investigating homeschooling.
- Identifying the frustrations or unmet needs of the student can help determine if homeschooling would be a helpful alternative or if another option (like a subject tutor) would be a better choice.

### **What do you think homeschooling would look like for your family? Is there a style or method you are drawn to?**

- There are many different methods of homeschooling: parent directed courses, student led education, online classes, full online schools, or an eclectic mix of methods that vary by subject.
- Styles of homeschooling can include classical, tutorials, textbook-oriented, Charlotte Mason, and unschooling.
- Does the proposed homeschool plan make sense given the reasons for homeschooling? If a family is frustrated with virtual schooling, choosing online homeschool courses might be a poor choice.

### **Who would provide instruction in your homeschool?**

- Homeschooling can strengthen family bonds, but it can also cause stress when the roles of parent/teacher and child/student blend together.
- Homeschooling can be time intensive and might not mix well with parent work schedules.
- If outside providers are used, what is the cost for these courses?
- Is dual enrollment an option in the local area and would it fit the student's needs?

### **Do you think you would want to be able to return to a traditional school setting?**

- Some public or private high schools restrict credit or placement for coursework done in a homeschool setting.
- Students who want to return to a traditional high school after a period of homeschooling may be limited to a curriculum that will be acceptable to their high school.

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## Is your student involved in activities that depend on school support? Do they hope to play an NCAA-governed sport in college?

- Not all states or districts allow homeschoolers to participate in school-based varsity sports, extracurricular activities, or competition teams.
- NCAA reviews homeschool coursework as part of the athlete eligibility review process. There is close attention to online courses. (Highly recommend consulting someone who is experienced in the intersection of homeschooling and NCAA eligibility).

## What homeschooling resources exist in the local area?

- Some areas have large homeschool communities with homeschool co-ops and support groups, sports teams, academic competitions, and other activities (even prom and graduation). Other areas struggle to support extracurricular activities.
- Sometimes having activities for homeschooled students requires parental involvement and mentoring.

## Does the student have any special needs (learning differences or giftedness)? Do they have an IEP?

- Homeschooling can allow for extensive accommodation and individualized learning. It might also limit access to specialist educators.
- Homeschoolers can get accommodations on SAT and ACT, but may need to start the request process well before testing. If a student had an IEP prior to homeschooling, it is often advantageous for them to maintain the IEP to support their request for accommodations.

*Homeschoolers may have additional requirements when applying to college.*

## How will homeschooling be documented for college applications?

- Outside documentation is often beneficial and sometimes required; this can include grades in dual enrollment or other outside courses, research, mentored projects & apprenticeships, recommendations from non-family members, and test scores.
- It is important to check each college's requirements for homeschooled applicants; for example, test optional policies may exclude homeschoolers and interviews might be highly recommended or required for homeschooled students.

## What documents does the homeschool counselor (parent) provide during the college application process?

- Parents are responsible for the transcript, course descriptions, school & community profile, and counselor letter of recommendation.
- Partnering with an IEC experienced in creating and reviewing these documents can be critically important.
- Quick [overview guide](#) to homeschool counselor documents.
- Quick [overview guide](#) to the Common App for homeschool parents.

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## When is a homeschooler not a homeschooler?

- A key question: who keeps the transcript and issues the diploma?
- If an online or charter school is providing the transcript & issuing the diploma, then the student will likely apply to colleges as a private or public school student, not a homeschooler.
- If a parent will be issuing the diploma and providing the official transcript, then the student will likely apply to colleges as a homeschooled student.

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