



Special Alert: Idaho Parental Choice Tax Credit applications are time-sensitive. Review the timeline and application steps early.

Urgent Action Required:

Idaho Parental Choice Tax Credit applications open January 15 and close March 15. Funding is limited and processed first-come, first-served.

[Apply Here](#) →



Idaho Home Schooling

Idaho Homeschooling Starter Guide

Greetings

For many families, education is more than an academic pathway. It reflects values, priorities, and the long-term vision parents have for their children. Homeschooling allows family life to revolve around its own goals rather than the fixed structure of a traditional school schedule.

Idaho is widely considered one of the most homeschool-friendly states in the nation. State law provides parents significant freedom and responsibility to direct their children's education. Parents have the authority to design curriculum, set schedules, and guide academic and character development in a manner that reflects their family's convictions.

From the Idaho Department of Education:

“Homeschooling is education directed by the parent/guardian. Since Idaho does not regulate or monitor homeschool education, it is up to the parent/guardian to select the curriculum they wish to use. There is no registration or sign-up procedure required and the state of Idaho does not have a set curriculum to be followed for homeschool education. All costs associated with homeschooling are the responsibility of the parent/guardian.”

Prepared for Mountain States Policy Center website publication, March 2026. Idaho provides parents with the freedom to educate their children at home while maintaining a simple legal framework for accountability.

This guide offers a clear overview for families beginning homeschooling in Idaho.

Your 30-Minute Quick Start

1. Decide when you will start homeschooling.
2. Decide how and when to use the Idaho Parental Choice Tax Credit.
3. Withdraw your child from school if currently enrolled. Notify the school in writing and keep a copy for your records.
4. Choose curriculum for the core subjects:
 - Reading
 - Language Arts
 - Mathematics
 - Science
 - Social Studies
5. Create a basic recordkeeping system, including an attendance log, work samples, and curriculum list.
6. Begin teaching.

What Idaho Calls Homeschooling

Idaho law allows parents or guardians to educate their children at home rather than enrolling them in public or private school.

Under Idaho Code §33-202, parents may teach their children at home provided that the instruction is comparable to the instruction provided in public schools.

Idaho does not require registration, approval, or annual filings with the state or local school districts.

Tax Credit Timeline at a Glance

November 1

Parents should have filed their prior Idaho income tax return to establish eligibility.

December 1

Create a Taxpayer Access Point, or TAP, account with the Idaho State Tax Commission.

January 15

Application window opens. Apply as early as possible.

March 15

Application deadline.

April 15

Award notifications are issued.

Idaho Parental Choice Tax Credit

Beginning with the 2025 tax year, Idaho implemented the Parental Choice Tax Credit designed to help families pay for non-public education expenses, including homeschooling.

The program provides:

- Up to \$5,000 per eligible student
- Up to \$7,500 per student with a qualifying disability

Eligible expenses may include:

- Curriculum and textbooks
- Tutoring
- Standardized testing
- Educational therapies
- Certain education-related transportation costs

Because annual funding is limited, applications are processed largely on a first-come, first-served basis.

Key Timeline

- **November 1** – Parents should have filed their prior Idaho income tax return to establish eligibility.
- **December 1** – Create a Taxpayer Access Point, or TAP, account with the Idaho State Tax Commission.
- **January 15** – Application window opens. Parents should apply as early as possible.
- **March 15** – Application deadline.
- **April 15** – Award notifications are issued.

Parents should maintain receipts and records for qualifying education expenses including curriculum purchases, tutoring services, testing fees, and instructional materials.

Official information and application portal:

<https://myschoolchoice.idaho.gov>

AI-Powered Homeschool Option

Many Idaho families are now combining traditional homeschooling with modern AI tools to reduce cost and improve learning efficiency.

- Use Khan Academy for core instruction
- Use AI tools for tutoring and lesson planning
- Focus on 2–3 hours of daily structured learning

This approach can significantly reduce curriculum costs while maintaining strong academic outcomes.

Legal Basics You Need to Know

Notification Requirements

Idaho does not require parents to notify the state or school district when homeschooling. If your child is currently enrolled in school, you should withdraw them in writing.

Compulsory School Age

Compulsory education in Idaho applies to children ages 7 through 16.

Curriculum Expectations

Instruction should be comparable to public school instruction and include:

- Reading
- Language Arts
- Mathematics
- Science
- Social Studies

Testing Requirements

Idaho does not require standardized testing for homeschool students.

Recordkeeping

Although not required, parents are encouraged to keep records such as attendance logs, curriculum lists, work samples, and optional test results.

Parent Qualification

Idaho places no formal qualifications on parents who homeschool.

- Teaching certificates are not required
- College degrees are not required
- State approval is not required

Parents are legally permitted to direct the education of their children.

Step-by-Step: How to Get Started

1. Choose your start date.
2. Withdraw your child from school if they are currently enrolled.
3. Select curriculum for core subjects.
4. Create a weekly schedule.
5. Establish a recordkeeping system.
6. Connect with homeschool support organizations or local co-ops.

Who Do I Contact in Idaho?

Idaho State Department of Education

<https://www.sde.idaho.gov>

The Department of Education provides general guidance but does not regulate homeschool programs.

Elementary School (K-5)

Focus on reading, writing, and mathematics daily. Keep lessons short and consistent. Many families incorporate science activities, nature study, and creative subjects such as art and music.

Keeping a weekly portfolio of student work is helpful for tracking progress.

Middle and High School (6-12)

Parents should plan ahead for high school coursework.

Maintain a transcript beginning in 9th grade that includes course names, credits, grades, and course descriptions.

Students planning to attend college often take standardized exams such as the SAT or ACT.

Support Organizations

- **Idaho Coalition of Home Educators (ICHE)**
<https://iche-idaho.org>
- **Christian Homeschoolers of Idaho State (CHIS)**
<https://chishomeschoolers.com>
- **Home School Legal Defense Association (HSLDA)**
<https://hsllda.org>

Common Pitfalls

- Trying to replicate public school exactly
- Not keeping records
- Waiting too long to plan high school coursework
- Isolation from other homeschool families

Joining a local homeschool group early can help prevent many challenges.

Parent FAQ

Do I need to register my homeschool with the state?

No. Idaho does not require registration or approval.

Do I have to follow the public school calendar?

No. Parents may set their own schedule.

Does Idaho require standardized testing?

No. Testing is optional.

Can homeschool students receive a diploma?

Yes. Parents may issue a homeschool diploma upon completion of their high school program.

Key Sources

- Idaho Code §33-202 – Education of Children
<https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/title33/t33ch2/sect33-202/>
- Idaho State Department of Education
<https://www.sde.idaho.gov>