

# Getting Started

If you would like me to evaluate your child, please choose an available date and time from my calendar of available dates and times, then fill out the “CONTACT ME” form and include your choice of date and time. I will then get back to you to confirm the evaluation appointment.

## **The homeschool law, Act 169, states that the following courses are to be taught:**

**Elementary School Level (grades 1-6)** - the following courses shall be taught: English, to include spelling, reading, and writing; arithmetic; science; geography; history of the U.S. and PA; civics; safety education, including regular and continuous instruction in the dangers and prevention of fires; health and physiology; physical education; music; and art.

**Secondary School Level (grades 7-12)** - the following courses shall be taught: English, to include language, literature, speech, and composition; science; geography; social studies, to include civics, world history, history of the U.S. and PA; mathematics to include general mathematics, algebra, and geometry; art; music; physical education; health; and safety education, including regular and continuous instruction in the dangers and prevention of fires. Other courses may be included at the discretion of the supervisor.

## **PORTFOLIO DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS:**

The law requires that a portfolio be part of the homeschool evaluation. The purpose of the portfolio is to demonstrate sustained progress and to show that an appropriate education took place. The portfolio is to be a sampling of the child’s work, to be collected throughout the school year, for each of the required subjects. A combination of worksheets, tests, written assignments, pictures, tests, time lines, and projects, etc. would be acceptable representations of the student’s work. To help the evaluation flow smoothly, the portfolio should be well organized in an easy-to-read manner. A three-ring binder with subject separators is an excellent vehicle for displaying samples of the student’s work. A box of loose material for me to root through, is NOT acceptable.

While the law does not specifically state **how much documentation** is needed, I believe that adequate testament of progress and appropriate education can be proven by using the following guidelines:

**Math:** 15 to 18 lessons.

**English:** 4 to 10 writing samples, varied length, content, and depth depending on the student's age and ability. Evidence of grammar should be included.

**Books read:** List books read by or to the student noting any classics. This list should be part of the "log."

**Spelling:** 7 to 9 lessons if you do formal spelling in grades 1-6.

**Handwriting:** 7 to 9 samples if you do formal handwriting in grades 1-6.

**History:** 12-18 pages of notes, end of chapter questions, tests, time lines, pictures, and/or essays.

**Science:** 12-18 pages of notes, end of chapter questions, tests, time lines, pictures, and/or essays.

**Art, music, and physical education:** Samples or brief write ups depending on depth of the program.

**Field trips:** While not required, you may include a complete list in the portfolio.

**Extra-curricular activities and/or awards:** While not required, but you may include a complete list in the portfolio.

**Unit Studies:** Separate work into individual subjects or label as a unit study and keep all documentation together.

**Note:** If you are using an "unschooling" approach and lack documentation, just include a brief description of how the required subjects were covered. Booklists, photographs, and hand drawings are also acceptable documentation.

If you are using CD-ROM programs, include print outs or notes, etc. for documentation. This is especially true if the CD-ROM is your sole curriculum source for a subject

## **STUDENTS WORKING TOWARD DIPLOMA PROGRAMS:**

If you are working toward a homeschool diploma, your portfolio **must** include documentation for each subject. You need to **write a summary** of your school year for me. Besides writing about how you covered the different subjects, you can include community service projects, work experiences, mission trips, or any special projects you might like listed in your evaluation. I am an approved evaluator for the Erie and Susquehanna diploma programs. It is helpful if you e-mail me the required English research papers before our evaluation date so that I can spend more time with your student during the evaluation.

In order to receive credits on your transcript, you should know and follow the guidelines of your homeschool diploma program. [Otherwise you don't know what credits you have earned.] If you gave a speech, include evidence such as speech notes, pictures, or printed program. Reminders to **seniors** - check for the deadlines to file for a homeschool diploma. Filing dates range from the end of February to the end of May depending on the diploma program you chose to follow.

## **OTHER ITEMS TO BE INCLUDED IN THE PORTFOLIO:**

**LOG:**

The log is an ongoing list, in chronological order, of reading materials used in your school program. This includes books read to or by the student. Curriculum that is used regularly would be stated once and noted as “ongoing.”

**RECORD OF ATTENDANCE:**

You must document the state’s attendance requirement of 180 days of school or 900 hours for the Elementary Level (grades 1-6) or 180 days or 990 hours at the Secondary Level (grades 7-12). Remember, although you must meet the hour or day requirement you can be evaluated **before the requirement** is actually met.

**STANDARDIZED TESTING:**

If your child is in grades 3, 5, or 8, the portfolio must include the results of a standardized test for at least reading and math. I will again be offering the Peabody Individual Achievement Test (P.I.A.T.). The P.I.A.T. is accepted by the PA Dept. of Ed. and can be given for all grades. If you need to schedule testing at the time of evaluation, please let me know when you make your appointment. If you need information on other testing options please feel free to “Contact Me.”

**PRE-EVALUATION WORKSHEET:**

Please fill out the appropriate elementary or secondary form for your student. By filling out this basic information, I can spend more time reading selected writing samples and discussing the student’s schooling. I can tell at a glance what curriculum or learning materials were used. The student will enter the evaluation with confidence because he/she has had a chance to record the highlights for each subject and to answer basic questions.

**HEALTH SERVICE REQUIREMENTS: (For your perusal)**

Each year vision, height, and weight must be checked. Depending upon your child’s grade level, the following are required:

First Year:	Dental Exam and Tuberculosis Test
First Year in PA:	Medical Exam
Second Grade:	Hearing Test
Third Grade:	Hearing Test and Dental Exam
Sixth Grade	Medical Exam and Scoliosis Test
Seventh Grade:	Hearing Test, Scoliosis Test, and Dental Exam
Ninth Grade:	Tuberculosis Test
Eleventh Grade:	Medical Exam and Hearing