



Dear Home Schooling Family,

Thank you for your interest in the Mid-Prairie Home School Assistance Program!

Our mission is to provide support, resources, and assistance to parents as primary teachers in their endeavor to achieve quality home education.

The Mid-Prairie Community School District acknowledges parents' rights and competency to design and execute their children's education independently. Families who belong have absolute freedom to follow their own course of direction and independently choose curriculum for educating their children.

We wish to enable families to understand and meet state laws without imposing additional requirements on them.

The law states that the program must provide families with the services of a supervising teacher for parents to consult with, and who will advise parents with respect to the following during the course of the year: lesson plans, materials and curriculum, setting goals, teaching and learning techniques, forms of assessment, diagnosing student strengths and weaknesses, interpretation of test results, planning, and record keeping.

We must have contact with a family 16 times per year – 8 of which must be face-to-face. Various choices are possible for these face-to-face visits: field trips, visits to the library, home visits, or activity participation. A general guideline is to have some form of face-to-face contact once a month.

By law, a log verifying such contacts must be kept. We do this in two ways. First, each supervising teacher keeps a contact sheet. This is a brief note on a visit or activity. Everything is kept brief and functional. As stated in the agreement letter on the back of the application form, this log is kept by the supervising teacher, but is considered the property of the individual family. Access to these logs by anyone other than the teacher and the family will be granted only by the family's consent. In addition, we keep a monthly grid sheet. Library visits, class or activity participation, teacher visits, phone calls, etc. are logged on it with a check mark. In this way, we have documentation that we are fulfilling the requirements of the law, but no personal information is disclosed. (Feel free to ask to see this log.)

It is important to remember that you are not locked into this program any more than you would be if your child were attending school. Iowa state law provides parents with a variety of options for homeschooling their children. If for some reason you feel that this program or the district is not upholding the agreement and principles stated, or that we are not meeting your family's needs, you can withdraw and become an independent home schooling family.

Supervising teachers are there to work alongside parents to meet the needs and the challenges, and to celebrate the successes.

Each family is assigned to one specific teacher. In addition to your primary supervising teacher, we are ALL ready to assist you in any way we can. Contact with another teacher other than your assigned teacher can count toward your contact requirements. We currently have eight teachers who supervise families and three others who teach classes.

Our resource library is open five days a week during the school year and by appointment as well as on Monday mornings during the summer.

We have been building our resource library year by year and now have over 14,000 items in inventory. This includes materials for every subject area and grade level, unit studies, videos, CD ROMS, home school help books, reference books, educational games, science and math manipulatives, microscopes and lab kits, select novels and books for many reading levels, historical fiction, biographies, and much, much more. All items have a four-week check-out period, and are renewable. Participating families have the option of helping us select specific items to put in our library. \$100 per enrolled student is allowed for such purchases per year.

Field Trips, activities, and classes are planned on a monthly basis and communicated to families through our newsletter.

We try to arrange a variety of activities, classes, and field trips that will be attractive to all ages and interest levels. Most importantly, events are designed for family involvement, and it is important for parents to remain responsible, available, and involved through on-site participation during scheduled events.

Standardized academic assessment is offered free of charge.

Iowa Assessment testing is given in October of each year. Testing is optional and results are seen only by parents and their supervising teacher. Also available is individual standardized testing that is diagnostic in nature. Such a test can help pinpoint areas of strengths and weaknesses that would assist parents in determining the best learning approach for your child.

A high school diploma program and supporting classes are available.

High school students may choose to participate in our home school diploma program. This is not required, but is an option. We want to support those who choose to home school through high school, not only by offering this diploma program, but also by offering college preparatory classes.

What are the expectations and responsibilities of parents?

Parents remain the most important ingredient to the success of the program. They must plan, execute, and document the educational progress of their children. They need to be aware of the required contacts, and make provision for meeting them in the ways mentioned above. Their involvement in HSAP activities is essential because it is important to us that this program remains home centered - not teacher or school oriented. Our goal for the children participating in activities is that they have a commitment to learn, a positive attitude, and exemplary behavior. Again, parental involvement is one of the best ways to ensure that we meet this goal.

In closing, thank you again for your interest in our program. If this letter has not answered your questions, or has caused you to think of other information you would like to have, please do not hesitate to call and ask.

Sincerely,

Jan Childress, Home School Assistance Program Coordinator

(319) 683-2280 – Resource Library

(319) 759-1863 – Cell

The HSAP Resource Library is located at the Washington Township School, 1592 Angle Road SW, Kalona, IA 52247.

Directions to the library from Hwy 1: At the Cheese Factory (540th St), turn west. Go about 4 miles to Angle Road (4-way stop). Turn north (right). Go less than half of a mile and you will see the school on the left. Go around to the back of the school to enter.