



Respecting Educational Alternatives and Choices in Homeschooling

Policies & Procedures Handbook

**REACH Homeschool Program
Sitka School District**

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About REACH Homeschool

REACH is Sitka School District's homeschool support program for families who reside in the City and Borough of Sitka, Alaska.

REACH provides educational support while honoring parental choice in curricular materials and methodology based upon the specific needs of each individual child. Each child's academic success and the success of the homeschooling parent/guardian are our priorities. REACH is dedicated to teaming with parents and guardians to provide the best educational experience for both part-time and full-time homeschool students.

In addition to offering allotment funds for educational materials, activities, and tutoring, REACH provides on-site certified teacher support for personalized assistance, dedicated high school liaison support, strong partnerships with district schools for classes and activities, and access to the Lending Library for curriculum materials and student laptop checkout.

Comment forms for parent/student feedback regarding the REACH Program/staff are available in the REACH office, at the Superintendent's office, or online at www.sitkaschools.org.

Enrollment Requirements

- Reside in the City and Borough Sitka (proof of residency may be required).
- Complete enrollment online at www.sitkaschools.org or at the REACH office.
- Sign verification that student is not enrolled in any other public school in the State of Alaska.
- Pay \$50.00 initial enrollment fee for use of Lending Library materials for duration of enrollment in REACH.
- Submit an Individual Learning Plan (ILP) on or before September 15th of the enrolling school year.
- Complete Progress Reports and submit work samples on a quarterly basis (October, December, March and May).
- Update REACH monthly on student progress via email, phone, scheduled meeting, and quarterly Progress Reports. At-Risk students check in weekly.
- Participate in all state and district mandated assessments particular to the student's grade level.

Immunization/Proof-of-Age Requirements for Enrollment

All State of Alaska guidelines for immunizations apply to REACH students. Waivers for religious/medical reasons are available. Proof of age is required for all students in Kindergarten, First Grade, and any student new to the district. Kindergartners must be 5 years old by September 1st of the enrolling year.

Enrollment Period

REACH maintains open enrollment for students throughout the school year. Students may enroll in the REACH program through the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development count period to be guaranteed allotment allocations.

Families who enroll by September 30th are eligible for full allotment allocations. Families who enroll *during* the October count period will be eligible for pro-rated allotment allocations at 5% for each verified day of enrollment during the count period. Families who enroll *after* the count period will not receive an allotment but will have full access to Lending Library materials, laptop checkout, and all other REACH services.

Enrollment Timeline	Allotment Funds Eligibility
On or before September 30 th	Eligible for full allotment funds
<i>During</i> October count period	Eligible for pro-rated allotment funds
<i>After</i> October count period	Not eligible for allotment funds

Enrollment Deposit

A \$50.00 refundable deposit is due upon enrollment for use of the Lending Library. This deposit is refundable when materials are returned and coursework is completed. This guideline includes single-course enrollments. A sliding scale for financial hardship is available.

Full-Time Enrollment

Full-time enrollment status specifies a student is enrolled with REACH in at least 4 core courses (secondary students) or 4 hours per day (elementary students) and may not be enrolled in another public school in the state of Alaska.

Refer to AK State Regulations [4 AAC 09.040](#). Counting of correspondence students and part-time public school students.

Core Courses

Core courses are –

- English
- Mathematics
- Social studies
- Science
- Technology
- World Languages
- Course required by student’s IEP if the student is receiving special education and related services under *4 AAC 52 State of Alaska Correspondence Program Regulations*.

Part-Time Enrollment

Part-time enrollment status specifies a student is enrolled in another Alaska school district and REACH.

Students enrolled in another Alaska school district may also enroll in courses through REACH, provided that at least 50 percent of the student’s coursework taken through REACH is in core courses. State regulations prohibit students from enrolling in the same course(s) at both REACH and another school. Core courses must also be in two different subject areas.

Refer to AK State Regulations [4 AAC 33.426](#), regarding core course requirements and Board Policy [AR5111.2](#) regarding part-time enrollment limitations.

Shared-Student Enrollment

A student enrolled in both a Sitka School District school and REACH for 1 or more courses is considered a shared student.

A student enrolled full time in a Sitka School District school may only enroll as a shared student in REACH courses with approval from both the REACH Coordinator and principal and/or counselor.

Information Specific to Elementary School Shared Students

Full-time REACH enrolled Kindergarten – 5th grade students may attend Specials (Music, PE, Band, Science, Library) with no reduction to allotment funds.

Students enrolled full-time at a Sitka School District elementary school seeking to enroll in courses through REACH should contact the school principal for more information and scheduling options.

Information Specific to Middle School Shared Students

Full-time REACH enrolled 6th - 8th grade students may enroll in courses at Blatchley Middle School. Allotment funds may be pro-rated dependent upon the shared course load.

Students enrolled as full-time students at Blatchley Middle School seeking to enroll in a course through REACH should contact the BMS counselor and principal for more information and scheduling options.

Middle school students taking a high school-level course will not concurrently earn high school credit, rather the course would satisfy credit requirements for the current year of enrollment.

Information Specific to High School Shared Students

Full-time REACH enrolled 9th – 12th grade students may enroll in courses at SSD high schools. Allotment funds may be pro-rated dependent upon the shared course load.

Students enrolled as full-time students at a district high school seeking to enroll in courses through REACH should contact the high school counselor and principal for more information and scheduling options.

The REACH Coordinator reserves the right to deny access to students who do not have an acceptable supervisor or to students who have been unsuccessful with a correspondence course in the past.

General Guidelines for High School Shared Students

1. Weekly check-in with the REACH High School Liaison is required.
2. Grades for REACH courses will appear on the student's transcript.
3. All REACH courses count toward sports/activity eligibility.
 - a) Eligibility for high school extra-curricular activities will start when students are officially enrolled at Sitka High School or are listed as a 9th grader on enrollment records. Students may participate in four years of high school co-curricular activities.
4. Students should work on homeschool courses in the SHS Library, SHS/STA Student Support Center, or other area agreed upon per the REACH Liaison.
5. Parents/guardians are responsible for grading course lessons and tests that do not require proctoring by REACH.
6. Tutors (if applicable) must be at least 21 years of age and possess a high school diploma or GED and may not be involved with the student romantically.
7. Specified tests and finals will be proctored by the REACH Liaison or REACH Coordinator

- a) Proctored tests/finals will be graded and evaluated by a highly-qualified teacher certified in the subject area.
8. Timelines for all courses follow the semester schedule set by the Sitka School District.
 - a) Course will not be allowed to carry over to another school year without permission from the REACH Coordinator and the principal.
 - b) Seniors are expected to complete courses 2 weeks prior to the end of the semester to meet deadlines for class rankings.

Additional Enrollment Options

Full-time Plus Enrollment (Middle and High School Only)

Any special circumstance under which a student is allowed to enroll in a REACH Homeschool/Correspondence course(s) in addition to the student's full-time status at the middle school or high school requires prior approval of the REACH Coordinator and/or principal, or superintendent.

The cost of full-time plus enrollment will be the price of all necessary materials for the specific course the student has chosen and a \$50.00 per class tuition fee. These fees will be paid prior to receiving materials and beginning the course. *Waivers may be granted at the discretion of the administration.*

In-District Transfer

Students currently enrolled in another Sitka School District school may transfer to REACH upon approval by both the REACH Coordinator and the corresponding school principal. Parents are responsible for the cost of any curriculum which is needed if enrollment occurs after September 30. Alternatives to this policy may be considered on an individual basis and approved by the Superintendent of Schools.

Private School Dual-Enrollment

State Law allows students who are enrolled in a private school to also enroll in REACH and receive supplemental assistance if eligible. Students may not enroll for duplicate courses with REACH and the private school. Private school tuition is not eligible for reimbursement.

Alaska Constitution, Article VII, § 1 states, "The legislature shall by general law establish and maintain a system of public schools open to all children of the State, and may provide for other public educational institutions. Schools and institutions so established shall be free from sectarian control. No money shall be paid from public funds for the direct benefit of any religious or other private educational institution."

Pre/Post-Expulsion Enrollment

Students who are officially expelled from the Sitka School District will not be allowed to enroll in the REACH program. Prior to an expulsion, REACH enrollment may be offered as an alternative to expulsion but only at the discretion of the administration and REACH Coordinator, and only with direct supervision by the parent/guardian.

Pre-School Sibling Enrollment

Families who have at least one full time REACH student can qualify for a \$250 allotment for educational items for 4-year-old sibling. Pre-schoolers must be 4 by Sept. 1. A copy of the child's birth certificate is required as proof of age.

College-Level Courses in High School

Students in grades 9 – 12 may receive academic or CTE credits that count toward graduation requirements for successfully completed courses at the University of Alaska Southeast or other approved university.

Co-Curricular Activities

Homeschool/Correspondence students who reside in Sitka may participate in Sitka School District co-curricular activities. Students in 9th – 12th grade may participate in all Sitka High School co-curricular activities. Participation in 3rd – 8th grade co-curricular activities will be determined on an individual basis.

Co-Curricular activities include: sports, drama & debate, school plays, music fest, spelling bees, geography bees, Battle of the Books, and similar activities.

High School Activities and Eligibility

Participation in co-curricular activities at the high school level is limited to students who are enrolled in at least five semester credits (university classes may be used provided the transfer credit ensures the five-semester credit minimum).

ASAA Eligibility

REACH enrolled students participating in co-curricular activities at Sitka High School must meet all applicable eligibility requirements of Alaska School Activities Association’s (ASAA) guidelines for alternative education students and those of Sitka High School, as the governing body of the school of eligibility.

NCAA Eligibility

For students planning to participate in college athletics, eligibility is tied to specific academic requirements. While all REACH approved courses meet Sitka School District graduation requirements, some course offerings may not also meet NCAA eligibility requirements. Visit NCAA.com for more information.

High School Graduation Requirements

Graduation requirements from the REACH Program shall be the same as for all other Sitka School District schools. A *Sitka School District High School* diploma will be awarded to each REACH student following completion of the graduation requirements with a minimum of **23** credits.

Graduation Requirements

English	4 credits	
Social Studies	3 credits	1 credit of U.S. History 1 credit of American Government 1/2 credit of Global Issues 1/2 credit of Alaska Studies
Math	3 credits	Must pass Integrated Math 2 or equivalent
Science	3 credits	1 credit of Life Science 1 credit of Physical Science 1 credit Science Elective
Physical Education	2 credits	Must include 1/2 credit of health and must pass swimming competency
Vocational	1 credit	
Electives	7 credits	

Total Credits	23 credits	Minimum required
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Individual Learning Plan (ILP)

The Individual Learning Plan (ILP) is a state-required document that details the educational plan of the student for the enrolling school year and is **due on or before September 15th of the enrolling school year**. The ILP may be written by the parent/guardian or with assistance from the REACH Coordinator. ILPs may be amended throughout the year based on student need and certified teacher approval.

Individual Learning Plans must –

- Provide for a course of study appropriate to the student’s grade level.
- Be consistent with state and district standards.
- Be specific in reflecting the necessity of the activities and curricular materials eligible for allotment allocation reimbursement.
- Provide the tutor’s name and list of tutored courses. Tutors must be pre-approved by the REACH office.
- Specify an on-going assessment plan that includes statewide assessments required for public schools under AS 14.03.123(f).

Progress Reports and Work Samples

A Progress Report is a state-required document **due quarterly in October, December, March, and May**. All students enrolled in courses through REACH are required to submit quarterly Progress Reports with work samples to be kept on file in the REACH office.

Progress Reports

Progress Reports are a review of a student’s work or progress in the courses listed on the Individual Learning Plan. Work samples for each subject/course are submitted with the Progress Report.

Work Samples

Work Samples are due quarterly for *each* subject listed on the student’s ILP and are submitted with the Progress Report. Only one work sample per subject area/course is required.

Work Samples should demonstrate academic rigor of targeted standards and be representative of the student’s abilities in the subject area/course. Work Samples may include originals or copies of -

- Journal entries
- Essays
- Unit/section test
- Project/workshop summary
- Unit review
- Pictures of event/activity with description (PE, cooking, etc.)

Curriculum

REACH supports parental choice in curriculum and will work with parents/guardians to find curriculum that both meets the needs of the student and adheres to regulations set forth by the State of Alaska and the Sitka School District.

State of Alaska Regulations

1. Curriculum material shall be of the same quality offered by the district in all other programs and be in compliance with AS 14.18.060.
 - a. AS 14.18.060 prohibits discrimination in textbooks and instructional materials.
2. Curricular materials purchased by REACH must be neutral in religious perspective; state law prohibits REACH from providing funding for religious materials/curriculum.
 - a. AS 14.03.090 states: Partisan, sectarian or denominational doctrines are prohibited with regards to use of public school funding.
3. Courses purchased by parents that are religious in nature *cannot* count towards the Department of Education and Early Development’s (EED) Full Time Enrollment (FTE) calculation.
 - a. EED guidelines require that at least 50% of REACH-supported coursework be in a core curricular area (i.e. math, English, social studies, science).
 - b. Funding is based on the state guidelines with 4 courses constituting full-time enrollment.

Parent-Designed Courses

Parents may choose to design their own courses with the assistance and approval of the REACH Coordinator. Parent-designed courses must include texts and materials to be used, align to Common Core State Standards and include appropriate assessments.

Reusable Curriculum Materials Purchased with Allotment Allocation Funds

Curriculum materials that are reusable and purchased with allotment allocation funds are the property of REACH. These materials should be returned when parents/guardians are no longer using them or when the student withdraws. These materials will be placed in the Lending Library.

Allotment Allocations

REACH provides a fund account to parents/guardians for the purpose of meeting instructional expenses for the student enrolled in the program.

Full-Time Enrollment Allocations

Parents/guardians are allocated a specific amount of funds per full-time enrolled student for curriculum materials and activities that support the student's Individual Learning Plan (ILP).

Pre-School (4 yr old)	Kindergarten – 5 th Grade	6 th – 8 th Grade	9 th – 12 th Grade	K-12 Grade
\$250 per child	\$2000 per student	\$2000 per student	\$2400 per student	May qualify for an internet allotment or SIM card device

To be eligible for full allotment allocations, a student must –

- Be enrolled full-time with REACH
- Be enrolled before September 30th of the enrolling school year

To be eligible for the pre-school allotment:

- Family must have at least 1 full time REACH student enrolled by Sept. 30th of the enrolling year
- Pre-schooler must be 4-years-old by Sept. 1- birth certificate proof required

To be eligible for an internet allotment or SIM card device:

- Must be enrolled full time with REACH by Sept. 30 of the school year (students enrolled mostly at another SSD School will receive their device from that other school)
- Internet allotments are for \$40 a month per family.
- Families must submit an internet reimbursement form along with a receipt showing the internet cost on their chosen provider's invoice. Internet reimbursements may be submitted at the end of each month and are available for 9 months (Aug. – April).
- A SIM card may be placed in a district device in leu of a monthly internet allotment.

Part-Time Enrollment Allocations

Partial enrollment allotments may be available depending on the number of courses for which a student is enrolled and is determined on a case-by-case basis.

Allotment Disbursement/Reimbursement

Sitka School District has established the following guidelines regarding the disbursement and reimbursement of allotment funds to qualifying families.

1. Curriculum materials may be purchased directly by parents/guardians (see *Curriculum* section).
2. Allotment allocations are specifically assigned to a given student; more than one student's allotment may not be combined for purchases.
3. Per state requirements, allotment allocations may *not* be used to pay a family member for services (lessons, tutoring, or classes). Family members include: student's spouse, guardian, parent, step-parent, sibling, step-sibling, grandparent, step-grandparent, child, uncle or aunt.
4. Tutoring services may *not* be provided by a private school.
5. Allotment funds may be used for activities that will be occurring in the summer, but may not be used to pre-pay activities for the up-coming school year.
6. If enrollment registration has been completed in the spring for the following school year and the Individual Learning Plan (ILP) has been turned in to the REACH office, activities reflected on the ILP and which occur after July 1 are eligible for reimbursement.
7. Submit reimbursements for purchases from 1 July - 31 December by January 31st.
8. Submit reimbursements for purchase from 1 January - 30 April by April 30th.
9. The last day to submit for reimbursements during the school year calendar is April 30th.
10. Reimbursements may take up to 30 days to process.
11. Unused allotment allocation funds carry over to the following school year for full- and part-time enrolled students.

Disbursement Timeline

Allotment funds are dispersed as the following conditions are met –

- 1/3 available at the time the ILP is submitted to the REACH office
- 1/3 available after Progress Report #1 is submitted
- 1/3 available after December 31st

Reimbursement Eligibility

The following are eligible for reimbursement –

- General supplies (notebooks, pencils, binders, etc.)
- Books (textbooks, workbooks, audio/e-books, etc.)
- Curriculum packages
- Tutoring
- Electronic hardware (laptops, cameras, etc. under \$499)
- Physical education & enrichment activities (sports fees, music lessons, etc.)
- Educational toys/games
- Subscription boxes (Tinker Crate, Little Passports, etc.)
- Magazine subscriptions (educational)
- Online subscription programs (educational)
- Online course and advisory services

**Sales tax is not eligible for reimbursement*

To be eligible for reimbursement –

- All items, activities, curriculum, tutor information, and subscriptions must be detailed on the student’s ILP (excepting general supplies)
- Curriculum/books must be in compliance with Alaska state regulations (see *Curriculum* section)
- Obtain prior approval for any item, curriculum, or service not specifically addressed as eligible for reimbursement
- Expenditures over \$50 must be paid with credit card, check, or money order (not cash)
- Tutoring services information must include: subjects tutored, month tutored, hours, hourly rate, method of payment, and name of parent and student

Reimbursement Procedures

1. Purchase materials directly and maintain original copies of receipts.
2. Fill out reimbursement form in REACH office by listing all materials purchased.
For multiple students in a family, **please group each student’s expenditures separately.*
3. Sign the reimbursement form and attach all receipts.

Receipts must -

- Include the name of seller/organization (such as official letterhead)
- Show proof of payment (such as credit card or copy of check/money order)
- Be itemized, or detailed to show sufficient proof of products purchased

Lending Library

The REACH Lending Library offers a diverse selection of curriculum materials, manipulatives, games, teaching resources, and educational supplies for all grade levels. The **\$50 initial enrollment fee** allows parents/guardians to check out non-consumable items for the duration of their student’s enrollment with REACH. The fee is fully refundable upon withdrawal from REACH and the return of all borrowed materials.

Consumable items such as workbooks and general supplies may also be purchased from the Lending Library. Allotment funds may be used for purchasing consumable items.

Ipads and Laptops

Devices

A district device is available for student's use each school year. iPads are available with a case and keyboard and are for students grades K-8. Laptops are available to students in grades 9-12. Devices come pre-loaded with software for student use. Use of a device is optional, but encouraged.

Computer Reimbursement Program

Families of full-time enrolled students may participate in the Computer Reimbursement Program which allows for incremental reimbursement of allotment allocation funds for the purchase of a computer/laptop over \$500 up to \$1500. To take advantage of this program, please discuss the specifics with the REACH Coordinator.

Tutors and Tutoring Services

Tutoring services are not provided by REACH but the REACH office will assist families in finding a qualified tutor. Tutoring services are reimbursable provided all guidelines for reimbursement eligibility are met. *See Allotment Disbursement/Reimbursement.*

Contact Requirements

Regular contact between REACH and the homeschooling family is an indicator for increased student success. The REACH Coordinator is available to team with parents/guardians in meeting each child's educational needs.

Initial Planning Meeting

Parents/guardians of newly enrolled students will participate in an Initial Planning Meeting to discuss program options, requirements, and Individual Learning Plans. At this time a list of curriculum materials and resources may be identified and approved by the REACH Coordinator, as curriculum material needs must be reflected in the ILP.

Regular Contact Meetings

Parents/guardians must regularly update REACH on student progress by email, phone, or scheduled meeting. Progress Reports may serve as the update for the corresponding month due.

Regular Contact Meeting requirements are outlined below:

Kindergarten - 12th Grade Full-Time Students

Monthly update by email, phone or scheduled meeting. Progress Reports may serve as the update for the corresponding month due.

9th – 12th Grade Shared Students

Weekly check-in with the REACH High School Liaison and **quarterly** Progress Report submission.

At-Risk Students

Weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly update by email, phone or scheduled meeting to be determined on an individual basis. Progress Reports may serve as the update for the corresponding month due.

Assessments/Screenings

Students enrolled in REACH are required to take part in state-mandated district assessments. Students may also take part in other assessments offered by the Sitka School District, such as MAP Growth. *Contact the REACH Coordinator for questions regarding participation in state-mandated district assessments.*

State-mandated assessments include -

- Alaska Development Profile (Kindergarten and new-to-district 1st grade students)
- Performance Evaluation for Alaska's Schools (PEAKS): English Language Arts and Math (grades 3 – 9)
- Alaska Science Assessment (grades 4, 8, and 10)

Cumulative Records

The REACH office will maintain all student records including ILPs, Progress Reports and Work Samples. Parents may review cumulative files at any time. Cumulative folders are considered confidential.

Early Screenings and IEPs

Parents/guardians are encouraged to take advantage of all early screenings in their district of residence, which are available free of charge and by appointment throughout the school year. Parents/guardians with concerns regarding a student's developmental or pre-academic progress or with questions regarding evaluation and provision of Learning Services will be directed to the District Learning Services Director.

Students with IEPs

REACH will enroll students with special education needs on the same basis as any other student. REACH will work in collaboration with the District Learning Services Director and IEP team regarding accommodations and district-provided services.

Withdrawal

Notification of plans to withdraw for any reason, including transferring to another school within the district, must be shared with the REACH office. All records will remain in the REACH office until a records request is made from another school. If an enrolled student withdraws before the end of the school year, allotment allocation funds will be pro-rated according to the number of days enrolled.

Withdrawal Process

1. Fill out withdrawal form from REACH office
2. Return all Lending Library materials for deposit refund
 - a. Cost of materials that are lost/damaged will be deducted from deposit amount
 - b. Materials that are reusable and were purchased with allotment allocation funds will be placed in the Lending Library