

MASSACHUSETTS

- Compulsory Attendance Ages:** 6 by December 31 of that school year to 16 years of age. Code of Mass. Regulations Tit. 603, § 8.02. Mass. Gen. Laws Ch. 76, § 1.
- Required Days of Instruction:** None required, but school districts will use the public school's required number of days and hours of instruction time for purposes of comparison, i.e., 180 days; 900 hours at the elementary level and 990 hours at the secondary level. Mass. Gen. Laws Ch. 71, §§ 1; Code of Mass. Regs. Tit. 603, § 27.03 and .04.
- Required Subjects:** Reading, writing, English language and grammar, geography, arithmetic, drawing, music, history and constitution of United States, duties of citizenship, health (including CPR), physical education, and good behavior. Mass. Gen. Laws Ch. 71, § 1.

Home School Statute: None.

Alternative Statutes Allowing for Home Schools: Mass. Gen. Laws Ch. 76, § 1. A “child who is otherwise being instructed in a manner *approved in advance* by the superintendent or the school committee.”

Because homeschooling in Massachusetts is considered private education: “School committees shall approve a private school [homeschool] when satisfied that the instruction in all the studies required by law equals in thoroughness and efficiency, and in the progress made therein, that in the public schools in the same town, but shall not withhold such approval on account of religious teaching. . . .” Mass. Gen. Laws Ch. 76, § 1

1. In a case entitled *Care and Protection of Charles*, 399 Mass. 324, 333-34, 504 N.E.2d 592, 598-99 (1987), the Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts outlined four areas a superintendent or school committee may examine when determining whether to approve a home education plan. These four areas are:
 - a. The proposed curriculum and number of hours of instruction of each of the proposed subjects. *Charles* at p. 601;
 - b. The competency of the parents to teach their children (superintendents or school committees may not require certification, advanced degrees, or college degrees). *Charles* at p. 601.;
 - c. Textbooks, workbooks, and other instructional aids, as well as lesson plans and teaching manuals (so that the superintendent or committee can determine the subjects to be taught and the grade level of instruction for comparison with the public schools' curriculum). The superintendent or school committee may “not . . . dictate the manner in which the subjects will be taught.” *Charles* at p. 602; and

