



FREE FLORIDA HOMESCHOOL STARTER KIT

Start homeschooling in Florida with clarity and confidence.

A parent-friendly guide to the first steps, recordkeeping, annual evaluations, local support, scholarship questions, and the decisions that matter most.

Inside this kit

- [] A simple first-30-days checklist
- [] Florida legal essentials in plain language
- [] Notice of intent planning template
- [] Portfolio, learning-log, and evaluation pages
- [] County resource and provider worksheets
- [] PEP scholarship purchasing reminders

Created by a homeschool parent. Built for Florida families.

FloridaHomeschoolResource.com



WELCOME

You do not have to figure everything out today.

Homeschooling begins with a few clear decisions, not a perfect curriculum shelf. Use this kit as a calm starting point and come back to it as your family's needs change.

How to use this kit

Read the first four pages before filing anything. Then print the worksheets you need. Keep completed planning pages in your homeschool binder, but do not send them to the district unless an official requirement specifically asks for them.

Your quick-start path

- [] Choose the Florida education pathway that fits your family.
- [] If establishing a home education program, locate your district's home education office and prepare your written notice.
- [] Create a simple portfolio and learning-log routine.
- [] Choose a realistic rhythm, then begin with a short trial week.
- [] Put an annual-evaluation reminder on your calendar.
- [] Find one local connection - a co-op, activity, evaluator, or parent group.

A note about accuracy

This guide summarizes general information available in October 2026. Laws, district procedures, scholarship rules, provider availability, and reimbursement requirements can change. Always confirm current requirements with the official source before acting. This guide is educational and is not legal, tax, financial, or scholarship-eligibility advice.



STEP 1

Choose your Florida learning pathway

Different Florida options have different registration, recordkeeping, funding, and oversight rules. Start by identifying which option you are actually using.

Home education program	Parent-directed and registered with the district for attendance compliance. Florida's home education statute establishes the notice, portfolio, and annual-evaluation responsibilities.
PEP scholarship	A scholarship pathway with an education savings account and its own participation and purchasing rules. Do not assume every home education rule or every expense rule applies in the same way.
Private umbrella school	The student is generally enrolled in a private school rather than registered as a home education student. Ask the school exactly what records, attendance reporting, and evaluations it requires.
Public virtual or district program	Public-school enrollment delivered online. Curriculum, attendance, testing, and reporting requirements are controlled by the public program.

Questions to answer before choosing

- ☐ Do we want full parent control of curriculum and pace?
- ☐ Do we plan to use scholarship funds?
- ☐ Are we comfortable maintaining a portfolio and arranging an annual evaluation?
- ☐ Do we need public-school services, athletics, or virtual courses?
- ☐ What does our child need socially, academically, and emotionally right now?



The home education requirements at a glance

For families establishing a Florida home education program under section 1002.41, these are the responsibilities to build into your system.

Written notice	Submit a signed written notice of intent to the district school superintendent within 30 days after establishing the program. It must include each participating child's full legal name, address, and birthdate.
Portfolio	Keep a contemporaneous log of educational activities with reading materials identified by title, plus samples of student work and creative materials.
Two-year retention	The parent chooses the portfolio contents and preserves the portfolio for two years.
Possible inspection	The district may request inspection of the portfolio with 15 days' written notice. The law does not require routine inspection.
Annual evaluation	Arrange and file an annual educational evaluation showing progress commensurate with the student's ability. Florida law provides several evaluation methods.
Ending the program	When terminating the home education program, file a written termination notice and the required annual evaluation within 30 days.

Important: A parent maintaining a home education program is not required to hold a Florida teaching certificate.



ACTION PLAN

Your first 30 days

Keep the plan simple. A calm, repeatable system is more valuable than trying to recreate school at home overnight.

Days 1-3: Decide

- ☐ Confirm your chosen education pathway.
- ☐ Read the current official requirements for that pathway.
- ☐ Write down your child's strengths, needs, interests, and current challenges.

Days 4-7: Establish

- ☐ If using a home education program, prepare and submit the written notice to your district.
- ☐ Save proof of submission and the district's response.
- ☐ Create one physical or digital folder for official records.

Week 2: Plan

- ☐ Choose core resources without overbuying.
- ☐ Plan a one-week trial schedule.
- ☐ Choose how you will maintain the activity log and work samples.

Weeks 3-4: Begin and adjust

- ☐ Start with a sustainable daily rhythm.
- ☐ Keep short notes about what works and what creates friction.
- ☐ Connect with one local group, co-op, evaluator, or activity.
- ☐ Schedule a 30-day family review and adjust without guilt.



PLANNING WORKSHEET

Notice of intent preparation

Use this page to gather the information required for a Florida home education notice. Check your district's submission instructions before sending anything.

Parent/guardian name	
Home address	
County	
District office/contact	
Planned start date	
Submission method	
Date submitted	
Confirmation saved at	

Student information

Full legal name	Birthdate

Keep a copy

Save the signed notice, proof of delivery, district confirmation, and every later evaluation or termination record. A simple folder named by school year is enough.



RECORDKEEPING

Build a portfolio you can actually maintain

Your portfolio should document the learning journey without turning every day into paperwork.

A practical portfolio can include

- [] A dated learning log created as learning happens
- [] Titles of books, articles, audiobooks, and other reading materials
- [] Representative writing, worksheets, projects, photos, and creative work
- [] Notes from field trips, experiments, classes, performances, and community activities
- [] Periodic samples that make progress visible over time

A simple organization system

1. Official records	Notice, district correspondence, annual evaluations, and termination records.
2. Learning log	Brief dated entries naming activities and reading materials.
3. Work samples	A representative selection. You do not need to save every page.
4. Progress snapshots	Three or four times a year, note skills gained, current challenges, and next priorities.
Retention reminder	Florida law says the parent determines portfolio content and preserves it for two years. Store backups of important records in a second location.



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Weekly learning log

Short, consistent entries are usually easier to maintain than a complicated tracker.

Student

Week of

Current focus

Date	Learning activities and experiences	Reading materials by title
Monday		
Tuesday		
Wednesday		
Thursday		
Friday		
Weekend/other		

Work samples to save this week:



ANNUAL REQUIREMENT

Plan the annual evaluation before it becomes urgent

Florida law provides multiple evaluation methods. Choose the method that fits your student and confirm the evaluator's qualifications or district requirements.

Portfolio review	A Florida-certified teacher selected by the parent reviews the portfolio and discusses progress with the student.
Nationally normed test	A nationally normed student achievement test administered by a certified teacher.
State assessment	A state assessment used by the district, administered under district-approved conditions by a certified teacher.
Licensed professional	An evaluation by a qualifying Florida-licensed psychologist or school psychologist.
Mutually agreed tool	Another valid measurement tool agreed upon by the parent and district superintendent.

Evaluation due date

Chosen method

Evaluator/contact

Appointment date

Filed with district

Copy saved at



PLANNING WORKSHEET

Choose resources with purpose

Start with your child's needs and your family's capacity. A strong plan does not require buying the most popular complete package.

Area	Goal for this season	Resource or approach	How we will know it helps
Reading/language			
Math			
Science			
Social studies			
Arts/interests			
Life skills/well-being			

Before buying, ask

- ☐ Does this solve a real need we have now?
- ☐ Can we preview or borrow it first?
- ☐ Does it match how my child learns and how much support I can provide?
- ☐ If using scholarship funds, have I confirmed current eligibility and documentation requirements?



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Our realistic weekly rhythm

Plan anchors, not a minute-by-minute school replica. Leave space for curiosity, appointments, community, and rest.

Day	Morning anchor	Learning focus	Community/activity	Notes
Monday				
Tuesday				
Wednesday				
Thursday				
Friday				
Weekend				

Our non-negotiables this season



LOCAL CONNECTION

Build your county resource map

The right local support can make homeschooling feel lighter. Focus on a few relationships and resources your family will actually use.

County

District home education office

Main contact

Website/phone

Category	Name/contact	Why it may fit	Next step
Co-op/group			
Evaluator			
Tutor/class			
Activity/sports			
Library/museum			
Provider/vendor			
Family event			

[Find Florida district home education contacts](#)
[Explore Florida county guides](#)



DECISION GUIDE

Questions to ask a co-op, class, or provider

A polished listing is only the beginning. Ask questions that reveal the actual experience, expectations, and fit.

- ☐ What ages, needs, and learning styles does the program serve best?
- ☐ What does a typical session or week look like?
- ☐ What is expected from parents during and between meetings?
- ☐ What are the full costs, including supplies, registration, uniforms, travel, or fundraising?
- ☐ What are the cancellation, refund, absence, and make-up policies?
- ☐ Who works directly with children, and what screening or safety practices are used?
- ☐ How are allergies, accessibility needs, behavior concerns, and emergencies handled?
- ☐ If scholarship funds are involved, is this specific service currently eligible and what documentation is provided?
- ☐ May we observe, attend a trial, or speak with a current family?
- ☐ How will we know whether the program is a good fit after the first month?

Notes



PEP purchasing reminders

Scholarship rules and purchasing guides change. Use this checklist to slow down before spending or promising reimbursement.

- [] Confirm the current scholarship program, award status, and available balance.
- [] Check the current official purchasing guide for the exact product or service category.
- [] Determine whether preauthorization, credentials, proof of educational benefit, or other documentation is required.
- [] Confirm whether purchasing through the approved platform or requesting reimbursement is allowed.
- [] Before paying out of pocket, verify reimbursement eligibility and save the required proof of payment.
- [] Keep invoices, receipts, provider information, and educational-purpose documentation together.
- [] Do not treat a vendor's presence in a directory as a guarantee that every item or service is eligible.
- [] Ask Step Up For Students directly when the current guidance is unclear.

Why this matters

The official PEP purchasing guide states that families should verify purchase and reimbursement eligibility with their scholarship funding organization before spending when questions remain. Eligibility can depend on the item, provider, documentation, frequency limits, and the student's educational need.

[Current Step Up PEP Purchasing Guide](#)
[Step Up PEP reimbursement information](#)



REFLECTION

Your first 90-day plan

Plan for progress, connection, and well-being. The goal is not to copy school at home; it is to build a learning life that works for your family.

By day 30, we want to...

By day 60, we want to...

By day 90, we want to...

At our 90-day review, we will ask

- ☐ What is helping our child feel capable and curious?
- ☐ What is creating repeated stress without enough benefit?
- ☐ Where do we need support, community, or a different resource?
- ☐ What can we simplify for the next season?



KEEP GOING

You have a starting point. Now build one week at a time.

Florida Homeschool Resource is being built as a parent-friendly home base for county guides, co-ops, activities, evaluators, providers, events, scholarship-aware resources, and family-created products.

Your next best step

Visit FloridaHomeschoolResource.com, choose your county, and save the pages that are most relevant to your family. Return to the official sources below whenever a legal or scholarship question affects a decision.

Official sources

[Florida Department of Education - Home Education](#)
[2026 Florida Statute 1002.41 - Home Education Programs](#)
[Step Up For Students - PEP Purchasing Guide](#)
[Step Up For Students - PEP Reimbursement](#)

Important disclaimer

This educational resource is not affiliated with or endorsed by the Florida Department of Education, the Florida Legislature, Step Up For Students, ClassWallet, or any school district. It does not replace official instructions or individualized legal, financial, educational, or scholarship advice. Information was reviewed in October 2026; confirm current requirements before acting.

Created with care by Florida Homeschool Resource

Created by a homeschool parent. Built for Florida families.

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