

## Private School Enrollment and the Notice of Intent

*We cannot over-emphasize how important it is for parents to understand the difference between a private school and a home education program. For attendance purposes, either of these options can be used to comply with the Florida compulsory attendance law (see s.1003.01(13)) and provide a child's education. However, home education has different requirements from private school enrollment. Understanding the status of each program will guide the decision of whether to use the notice of intent (to establish a home education program) or whether to withdraw from a home education program and enroll in the private school instead.*

### Identifying Florida Private Schools

Because there are many new "schools", programs, academies, etc. opening throughout the State, it is helpful to know how to identify a Florida private school. For Florida home educators, this distinction is significant because it could affect Bright Futures, extracurricular activities, diplomas, dual enrollment, and other aspects of the student's education.

*Private schools in Florida are always given a 4-digit DOE (Department of Education) number. Students enrolled in entities with a Florida DOE number are private school students and therefore do not need a notice of intent.*

*Programs and schools without a Florida DOE number are not Florida private schools. Therefore, students enrolled in programs or schools without a Florida DOE number must follow the home education procedures for using the notice of intent.*

When enrolling in any program, academy, online entity, hybrid, co-op, or anywhere else, it is important to know its status. While programs without Florida DOE numbers can still be used, students in programs without DOE numbers must do so as home education students, using the notice of intent.

### Florida Private School Directory

An excellent resource is the Florida School Choice Private School Directory:

<https://www.floridaschoolchoice.org/information/privateschooldirectory/>

This list can help locate private schools in every county, and provide ways to find out about each school. This list is also helpful when researching programs that look like a "school" but really are not.

The fool-proof way to determine if a school or program is a Florida private school is whether it appears on this list and has a Florida DOE number. If a school is not on the list and does not have a DOE number, it is not recognized as a private school in Florida. Schools or programs without a DOE can still be used, but should be used as a home education curriculum with a notice of intent.

### Simple Rule of Thumb

Home education (homeschooling) = notice of intent required

Any entity *with a Florida DOE number* = notice of intent not required

### Gray Areas – Notice of Intent or Not?

Confusion may arise when schools or their websites offer several different options: curriculum options for home education families using the notice of intent, and private school options for

those who wish to enroll in a private school. Following the Rule of Thumb, if the curriculum/school does not have a DOE number, then it is to be used like a curriculum *with* a notice of intent. If the program/school has a Florida DOE number, then it is to be used like a private school *without* a notice of intent.

Programs which distribute grade reports or issue high school diplomas are private schools only if they have a Florida DOE number. Without a Florida DOE number, these programs should be used like a curriculum program which requires registration as a home education student using the notice of intent.

### **Out-of-State Schools**

Out-of-state schools, including those that issue diplomas, typically do not have a Florida private school DOE number and are used with a notice of intent. However, with a satellite office or campus in Florida, some may have a Florida DOE number, as well. Once again, it is important to find out if the school has a Florida DOE number. Students registered in out-of-state schools without a Florida DOE number must register as home education students and must use the notice of intent.

### **What if you discover you needed a notice of intent, but never submitted one?**

The home education law allows 30 days to register your child with the school district in a home education program. If you feel you may have enrolled in an education program without proper documentation, you can still do this now. Completing the notice of intent does not mean you cannot continue home educating your child using your selected method; however, it is important to set the course for successful homeschooling and record-keeping for many years to come.



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