

Home Study Information and Updates

As you are aware, the AOE Home Study Team continues to work remotely from our homes and are keeping busy with reviewing End of the Year Assessments (EOYA) and Enrollments. Thanks to everyone who has reached out, provided us with information, questions and paperwork.

Please continue to send your documents electronically as we do not have access to our scanners, and we don't know how often we will be able to get our postal mail from National Life. If you have no means of electronic submissions, please contact the Home Study Team directly to problem solve.

Communication with the Home Study Team

If you need to reach the staff, please do not call us directly. While we can access our voicemail, we cannot respond using our personal phones while we are working remotely. The best way to reach us is by email at aoe.homestudy@vermont.gov. Given that we may be flooded with emails, we appreciate your patience as we respond as soon as we are able.

Processing Paperwork

It is unclear when the Home Study Team will be able to go back into the National Life building to scan and process paper submissions that have been mailed or faxed, so we will most likely miss our 14-business-day window for any paper submissions. There will be a delay in sending out complete and incomplete letters. As of Wednesday, March 18, 2020, we put the following process in place for letters:

- **Complete letters:** for families who supply us with an email address we will send families a quick email indicating that their student is complete.
- **Incomplete letters:** for families who supply us with an email address, we will send a brief email stating what is needed to complete the enrollment or EOYA

Modification of Activities and EOYA

If you have recently had to cancel activities such as music and dance lessons or if your students were taking Physical Education (PE) or physics at the local public school, please consider supplementing those activities at home as best you can. Please plan to document changes you have made in your End of the Year Assessment. For instance, if your student was taking dance lessons for the PE requirement, document what

Contact Information:

If you have questions about this document or would like additional information, please contact:
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alternative activity the student is now doing: at home yoga, playing outside, walking the dog or calisthenics.

For some academic areas, it may be difficult to replicate the curriculum at home. In these cases, simply document what other related activities the student completed. So, if the student could not complete any physics work at home, note what other science activities were completed, such as nature walks and identification of animal tracks or leaves, starting an indoor garden, or reading about volcanos and writing a report on them. Please remember to document what was modified when you submit your EOYA.

End of Year Assessments: Teacher Assessments

For teachers who regularly conduct EOYAs, one option parents can consider, is delivering, emailing or mailing student work to teachers' homes for them to review. The teacher can then call or use video conferencing with the family to discuss the work and ask/answer questions. This will avoid the need for face-to-face contact.

Another option would be to use video conferencing to review portfolios. Students could read to the teacher and show their work, while teachers could talk to the students and the family regarding progress, specific work, and any questions or concerns. This year we may need to be creative in how we conduct business. If families have other ideas, the Home Study Team would be happy to discuss them.

End of Year Assessments: Parent Report and Portfolio

Some families are concerned that they may not be able to get their student's assessments by teachers or through a testing service due to timing or financial issues. However, they can work to put together a parent report and portfolio now. If you have not been keeping work samples throughout the year, or if your student does a lot of work online, don't worry. We are relaxing the rules for the parent report and portfolio for this year and will accept student work that students have done at the end of the school year instead of requiring work from throughout the year. Take some pictures of work samples, screen shots of work being completed on the computer (make sure that there is a name on the screen or put a sticky note on the screen with the student's name and date). You will still need to include 4-6 work samples in the EOYA.

You can also find sample EOYA documents on our [website](#).

Form B for New Enrollments

We recognize that this may be a difficult time for families to access pediatricians and teachers to complete Form B. We will accept the following other options until **August 1, 2020**:

- A report card or written verification of enrollment in a Vermont independent school OR

- A report card or written verification of enrollment in an out-of-state public or independent school.

Whenever possible, we also encourage families to access teachers and pediatricians by mail and/or virtually if they need to “see” your student.

If Vermont-certified teachers want to do virtual Form B’s with families, please contact the Home Study Team and we can put your name on the list in the event a family is struggling with getting the form completed.

August 1 Deadline

At this point, we are not planning to change the deadline. Many of the testing centers appear to be online and able to complete scoring academic assessments if you are using them for your EOYA. If someone has different information, please contact me directly.

New Information

A couple weeks ago we attempted to send out a newsletter in the mail to all families. We believe that it went out in the mail, but if you did not receive one, you can access [the newsletter on the home study webpage](#).

New Documents/Resources on the Website

1. A PowerPoint presentation on how to complete a Parent Report and Portfolio (includes examples of work samples)
2. Two templates for creating a Parent Report and Portfolio (PowerPoint and Word versions)
3. A PowerPoint presentation on How to Enroll a student in a Home Study Program (includes examples of topic areas for the Minimum Course of Study (MCOS))
4. 4 different MCOS samples by age

Updated Online Submissions and Cognito Forms

The preferable way to receive documents from families is through our secure online platform called Cognito.

- We’re offering more options for submitting paperwork! You can upload everything at the same time, fill it out online or work on one form at a time. Please remember to submit everything at once.
- We removed the *Additional Information* option in Cognito, as an alternative, you can simply fill out the form you need and then upload to Cognito or email them to AOE.HomeStudy@vermont.gov as attachments.
- We will only be able to accept these types of documents as uploads: **pptx, pdf, (word) doc, docx, zip and jpg**

Tips on How to Submit Paperwork

Please Do

- Assemble the portfolio into one document
- Submit work samples using these formats: pptx, pdf, (word) doc, docx, zip and jpg
- Caption any photos to document the activity
- Consider using a work sample that can be used for multiple subjects
- Keep a copy of your submission
- Trim papers from spiral notebooks
- Put the student's first and last name and date each page
- Label the submission: last name, first name and subject (ie Mouse, Mickey EOYA)
- If re-enrolling for next year, include that paperwork with your EOYA

Please do not

- Staple or tape pages together (paper clips work best)
- Submit documents in binders or sheet protectors
- Send anything via external links such as: Google Docs, Pages, CDs, thumb drives, or Dropbox (we cannot open them)
- Send documents that are larger than 8 ½ x 11 as our scanner cannot accommodate larger pages (smaller documents are fine)
- Send original artwork or anything that cannot be scanned
- Send anything that you want returned (please make a copy for us and keep the originals)

Additional Reminders

- If you withdraw your student from Home Study and return to public/independent schools, please email us at aoe.homestudy@vermont.gov so we are aware.
- When filling out the online Cognito Forms, please remember to select the year. Right now, we have families who are enrolling for the current school year and some for the 20-21 school year.
- We strongly encourage all families to submit electronically for the next several weeks.
- Whenever possible, please submit your End of the Year Assessment and Enrollment paperwork for the following year at the same time.

Please don't hesitate to access resources offered by the [Vermont Department of Mental Health](#) if a family member needs some additional support.