

Fairbanks North Star Borough School District



Building Educational Success Together

BEST Handbook

2023-2024



FNSBSD Districtwide Accreditation

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Table of Contents

Important Dates for 2023-2024	4
Welcome to Fairbanks BEST K-12 Homeschool	5
What is BEST?	5
What is BEST Homeschool's Objective?	5
What Makes BEST Unique?	5
Fairbanks BEST	6
Staff Directory	6
2023-2024 Allotments	7
Technology	7
Education Specialist Role	7
Local School Classes	8
Withdrawal From Classes	8
Athletics/Activities	8
Dual High School/College Credit	8
Library Media Services	8
Tutoring	8
Enrollment with Fairbanks BEST Homeschool	10
Who is Eligible?	10
Grade Level Placement Determination	10
Enrollment Dates	10
Enrollment Process	10
The Individual Learning Plan (ILP)	10
Eligibility for School Activities	11
Re-enrollment	11
Student Withdrawal	11
Involuntary Withdrawal	11
Academics	12
Pre-Approval for Curriculum	12
Art, Music, & Physical Education	12
Faith-Based Curriculums	12
Parent-Designed Courses	12
Special Education	12
Records/Transcripts	13
AKCIS	13
Challenge Exams	13
FNSBSD Graduation Requirements	14
District and State-Wide Assessments	15

AK STAR	15
Alaska Developmental Profile (ADP	
MAP (Measure of Annual Progress) Grades 3 - 10	15
M-Class	15
Quarterly Progress Reports & Work Samples	15
Monthly Contact	16
Academic Honesty	17
Acellus Grading Guidelines	17
Year-long Courses	17
Semester-long Courses	18
Purchasing Guidelines	19
Purchase Requests	19
Reimbursement for Lessons or Courses	19
Supplies/Materials Covered	19
Supplies/ Materials Not Covered	19
Computer/Technology Reimbursement	20
Internet Access	20
Reimbursement Procedures	21
Receipt Requirements	21
Student Immunizations	22
Public Notice of Non-Discrimination	22
BEST Frequently Asked Questions	23

Important Dates for 2023-2024

Date	Event
July 1	Beginning of the 2023-2024 Fiscal Year
July 3 & 4	OFFICE CLOSED for holiday
August 11	OFFICE CLOSED for Professional Development
August 14-15	OFFICE CLOSED for Professional Development
August 17	Area Schools Start
August 31	Day 10 of First Semester, last day to drop a class.
September 1	OFFICE CLOSED for Professional Development
September 4	OFFICE CLOSED for Holiday
September 29	OFFICE CLOSED for Professional Development
October 1	Last Day to Enroll to Receive Allotment
October 13	1st Quarter Ends: Grade Reports Due for all homeschool students
Oct 30 & 31	Educational Specialist/Parent Conferences
November 23 & 24	OFFICE CLOSED for Thanksgiving holiday
December 22	1st Semester/Q2 Ends: Grade Reports Due for all homeschool students
December 25 & 26	OFFICE CLOSED for Christmas holiday
Dec 19 - Jan 5	Area schools closed for Winter Break
January 1	OFFICE CLOSED for New Year holiday
January 9	Students return from winter break
January 15	OFFICE CLOSED for MLK holiday
January 23	Day 10 of 2nd Semester: last day to drop classes at area high schools
February 19 & 20	Educational Specialist/Parent Conferences
February 21	OFFICE CLOSED for Professional Development
March 8	3rd Quarter Ends: Grade Reports Due for all homeschool students
March 11-15	Area Schools Closed for Spring Break
March 14 & 15	OFFICE CLOSED for Spring Break
March 25 - April 26	State Testing Days for all students grades 3 through 10
May 1	GRADES DEADLINE for BEST Graduating Seniors (all grade reports due and finals completed for BEST students)
May 15	BEST Graduation at Hering Auditorium 7 pm (tentative)
May 17	2nd Semester/Q4 Ends(Grades K-11): Grade Reports Due for all homeschool students
May 27	OFFICE CLOSED for Memorial Day

Welcome to Fairbanks BEST K-12 Homeschool

What is BEST?

Fairbanks Building Educational Success Together (BEST) is a school without walls where parents enjoy the primary responsibility of managing their children's education. BEST is committed to a framework in which the home is a viable educational alternative. BEST is a non-sectarian partnership between students, parents, professional staff, and community members where families and staff work together to customize an education for their children.

Students may choose from a variety of curriculum options, including traditional, online, or blended learning. They may also choose to participate in sports or activities at their attendance area school. Our students may participate in activities including art, music, yoga, hiking, and more! We offer field trip opportunities throughout the year.

Our students receive an allotment to purchase curriculum and learning materials. Allotment amounts are determined by whether a student is enrolled full-time or part-time with BEST.

What is BEST Homeschool's objective?

Fairbanks BEST seeks to provide an educational alternative for families who want to teach state content and performance standards using the teaching methods and materials of their choice with allotment support from the district.

What Makes BEST Unique?

- We are the only local homeschool that is affiliated with the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District. As a school in the FNSBSD, we have access to resources other area homeschool programs may not have.
- As we are part of the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District, BEST students do not have to use their allotment funds to pay for classes at their attendance area school.
- Students may also participate in clubs and activities at their attendance area school with no extra charge other than activities fees charged to other FNSBSD students.
- BEST is your hometown homeschool!

Fairbanks BEST Staff

Name	Position	Extension	Email
Kara Candelaria	Head Teacher Educational Specialist	907-452-2000 X11429	kara.candelaria@k12northstar.org
Steve Brown	Educational Specialist	907-452-2000 X11204	steven.brown@k12northstar.org
Elizabeth Hilker	Educational Specialist	907-452-2000 X11230	elizabeth.hilker@k12northstar.org
Ashley Patterson	Educational Specialist	907-452-2000 X11211	ashley.patterson@k12northstar.org
Glenda Richard	Educational Specialist	907-452-2000 X11216	glenda.richard@k12northstar.org
Kimberly Livingston	Special Education Advisor	907-452-2000 X11208	kimberly.livingston@k12northstar.org
Roslyn Sandland	Reimbursements, Allotments	907-452-2000 x11209	roslyn.sandland@k12northstar.org
Joni Jackson	Admissions/Transcript Secretary	907-452-2000 x11275	joni.jackson@k12northstar.org
Cat Bennett	BEST Front Desk Secretary	907-452-2000 x11201	catherine.bennett@k12northstar.org
Vacant	Academic Tutor	907-452-2000 x11207	
Laurie Beam	Executive Director, Alternative Schools & Programs	907-452-2000 x11452	laurie.beam@k12northstar.org

What BEST Homeschool Offers Students

Fairbanks BEST combines the structure of FNSBSD, an accredited institution, with the homeschool philosophy of individualized learning. The intent of BEST is to provide an opportunity for a partnership between homeschooling parents and FNSBSD to give students a tailored, yet flexible academic experience. This provides an opportunity for students to have some, or all, of their education provided by parents in the home, by certified teachers, by private tutors or instructors, or through many other learning options.

2023-2024 Allotments

Grade Level	Student Funding
K - 12	\$2,700
Preschool	\$250*

*Scholarship with an older sibling enrolled in BEST full-time. Students must be 3 or 4 years old by Sept 1.

To receive the allotment, students must be enrolled in BEST Homeschool and have completed their ILP on or before October 1.

See page 19, purchasing guidelines, for information on how to use your allotment.

Technology

It is recommended that students have the technology (eg: computers, wifi, camera, etc) needed to support their learning experience. The education specialist can help identify the specific needs.

Students can purchase technology equipment (including computers or Chromebooks) and receive a reimbursement from BEST for **up to \$499** from their allotment. Please see the purchasing guidelines for more information.

Additionally, BEST has district Chromebooks available for students to check out and use.

Education Specialist Role

Each student is assigned to a certified education specialist who is knowledgeable about various curricula, courses, and resources, as well as BEST policies, FNSBSD, state, and NCAA requirements. They provide information about applying for college scholarships, qualifying for the Alaska Performance Scholarship, high school internships, and access to skilled trade union apprenticeships. The education specialist is a valuable resource in helping families develop and carry out their Individual Learning Plans and academic goals.

Local School Classes

A student enrolled in BEST is eligible to take up to two classes at their home-attendance area

school at no cost. It is important to request classes before the semester begins. Area schools may not always have availability in a requested class or specific class period. Please discuss this option with your specialist if you are interested in enrolling.

Note: Local classes are not required for BEST enrollment or sports and activity participation.

Withdrawal From Classes

Students may add/drop classes from their attendance area school and eLearning courses within the first 10 days of the semester with no penalty. Students will let their Ed Specialist know if they wish to withdraw from a class, so the proper paperwork can be submitted. If a student withdraws after the first 10 days, a WF (Withdraw Fail) grade will be given.

Athletics/Activities

According to district and state guidelines, students enrolled in BEST are allowed to participate in extracurricular activities at their attendance area school. ASAA rules apply to high school students. See eligibility requirements on page 10 of this handbook.

Special Activities and Events

Certified educators and local experts partner with BEST to provide superior educational opportunities through classes, mini-courses, and private tutoring. Choices change each year, but typically include field trips to performing arts shows, local attractions, science seminars, and art workshops.

Dual High School/College Credit

High school students may be eligible to earn college credit while fulfilling high school requirements through programs such as Alaska Advantage from UAF

<https://ecampus.uaf.edu/advantage/>

Pre-approved courses may be found at: [Pre-approved UAF Outside Credit Courses](#)

North Star College eligibility is available only to full-time students with a minimum 2.5 GPA. BEST sophomores and juniors will be eligible to apply in the spring. Please see the district website for details regarding the lottery and application dates. If BEST students are accepted to North Star College, they will be transferred to that school and no longer be a student in BEST Homeschool.

Library Media Services

This program, located on the second floor of the FNSBSD office building on Fifth Avenue, offers an excellent resource of materials available on a check-out basis as well as numerous online subscriptions. Speak with your education specialist to set up an account to view available materials online or in-person, or contact Library Media Services at 452-2000 ext. 11241.

Tutoring

BEST offers free tutoring for our students. Our tutor is available Monday through Friday from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm. Please contact us if your student is struggling with a class assignment, or homework, or needs assistance in reviewing for a test. Call 907-452-2000 x11207 to schedule an appointment for a Zoom tutoring session or to make an appointment to come in and work with the

tutor one-on-one.

BEST also offers virtual tutoring through the ANE department via Varsity Tutors. This is available for our Migrant and Alaska Native Education students. This is a 24-hour service that offers one-on-one, small group, homework assistance, and study aid. For details, please contact your education specialist.

Enrollment with Fairbanks BEST Homeschool

Who is Eligible?

Any student currently residing within Alaska who does not have a high school diploma may apply to enroll. FNSBSD accepts enrollment from students who are at least five years old by September 1st and under 20 years old before the start of the school year.

Grade Level Placement Determination

- Kindergarten students must be at least five years old by September 1st.
- Grade-level placements will be based on the last report card or transcript.
- High school students will be placed according to Class Standings – Policy 983.5.

Enrollment Dates

Regular enrollment will begin in March for the upcoming school year. Enrollment with an allotment will remain open until October 1. *Late enrollments are not eligible for allotments.*

Enrollment Process

- Contact the BEST office to request enrollment information at (907) 452-2000 ext. 11201
- Complete all ONLINE enrollment forms located on our website at <https://register.k12northstar.org/>
- Upload the required enrollment documents including immunization records and birth certificates. *Immunization records that meet state requirements, or an acceptable waiver must be on file for students to enroll in school.*
- Set up an electronic account through Brightways before meeting with your assigned education specialist. best.brightwayslearning.com
- The student, parent, and education specialist will work together to develop an Individual Learning Plan (ILP). Curriculum and materials will be approved for ordering at the ILP meeting.

The Individual Learning Plan (ILP)

The parent and education specialist collaborate to design an Individual Learning Plan for the student. The ILP outlines goals and objectives and lists instructional materials and methods to be used throughout the school year for each BEST Homeschool student. *All reimbursements are based on ILP content.* Each full-time student must have a minimum of four core classes.

- **Amending the ILP**

The ILP may be revised during the academic year, depending on the student's needs. To drop a class, you must contact your education specialist. Students are responsible for completing the classes listed on their ILP.

Eligibility for School Activities

This section refers to ASAA-sanctioned activities. Full-time BEST students (a minimum of **5**

courses for ASAA-sanctioned activities is required) will be required to provide proof of physical residence to determine their attendance-area school for activity purposes. Students must complete all coursework within the semester enrolled and show adequate progress and earn a minimum GPA to maintain eligibility. Transferring in or out of BEST **may** affect eligibility.

Re-enrollment

To be eligible for re-enrollment for the next school year, students must be living within Alaska, and in good standing with BEST. Good standing refers to making adequate progress and submitting grades/progress reports on time. Students who move outside the state of Alaska must follow district policy.

Student Withdrawal

Students withdrawing from Fairbanks BEST will receive a withdrawal grade based on work completed and records submitted per school district policy. **Students withdrawing before November 1 of the current school year must reimburse FNSBSD for the portion of the educational allotment they have used.** Elementary students wishing to transfer to an in-district school may do so at the end of a quarter and after speaking with the education specialist to help provide a smooth transition. High school and middle school students wishing to transfer may do so at the end of the semester. All mid-semester transfer requests must be made to the Assistant Superintendent of Secondary Schools. *(Please refer to AR 972.2, 973.1, 974.1)*

Students who live or move outside of Alaska are not eligible for enrollment with BEST Homeschool. Under special circumstances, such as a military-based move (PCS), limited extension periods may be pre-approved as long as the student maintains Alaska residency, maintains monthly contact, and submits progress reports. The extension period will not extend beyond the end of the current semester.

Involuntary Withdrawal

Students must make adequate progress in their content areas as determined by the education specialist. Families may be withdrawn/exited at any time during the year based on any of the following situations:

- An extended period of noncompliance to school requirements.
- Lack of response to contact attempts.
- Failure to turn in the required paperwork.
- Failure to abide by any of the policies or procedures outlined in the BEST Homeschool Handbook.

Academics

Pre-Approval for Curriculum

All curricula must be aligned to Alaska state standards and listed in the student's ILP with an education specialist's approval. When necessary, supplemental materials may be needed to ensure all standards are addressed. The Department of Education & Early Development website explains the key elements of Alaska's performance and content standards and grade-level expectations: <http://www.eed.state.ak.us/standards/>.

Art, Music, & Physical Education

Fairbanks North Star Borough School District will reimburse fine arts and physical education instruction that identifies a specific course of study and where the instructor provides direct instruction that leads to measurable growth.

Faith-Based Curriculum

Faith-based curricula and materials cannot be purchased or reimbursed by BEST. However, parents or guardians may privately obtain textbooks or curriculum material not provided by BEST. Programs like Abeka and others are acceptable and credit can be awarded for these courses as long as the education specialist reviews the courses, are included in the ILP, and quarterly work samples are received. At least two courses of the student's core classes must be identified as a non-faith-based curriculum as the primary source of instruction.

Parent-Designed Courses

All parent-designed courses in all grade levels require approval from your education specialist. This approval will occur during the planning process of the ILP. The course should be aligned with the Alaska State Standards. Parents should include the tests and materials that will be used for the course in the ILP. Education Specialists are happy to help parents design courses that align with state standards. High school AP courses must be taught by College Board-approved instructors.

Special Education

Students enrolled in BEST who have an Individualized Education Program (IEP) for special education may receive their services in a variety of ways, as determined by the IEP team. FNSBSD encourages students to participate in their services at their attendance area school but parents may choose to provide the IEP services themselves in the home setting. Parents also have the right to revoke or decline consent for special education services altogether. If you suspect that your student may have a disability, please contact your BEST education specialist to discuss your concerns.

Records/Transcripts

If you are transferring to a new school, your new school will request student records as part of the registration process. Once we have received a “Request for Records”, we will forward records to the receiving school. Parents may ask for an unofficial copy of transcripts to take with them if moving out of the district.

If you would like to receive an unofficial/official copy of your transcript, please contact the Enrollment and Records Secretary, Joni Jackson, at 452-2000 x11275, or email your education specialist.

AKCIS

The Alaska Career Information System (AKCIS) is a free resource available to Alaska residents. AKCIS is a comprehensive career guidance system that provides information and career exploration tools for people throughout Alaska. AKCIS provides resources to assist your child to engage in education and career exploration to prepare them to be successful in the workforce. The program helps to identify your student’s interests, abilities, and lifestyle goals. Students will build a career portfolio, take career assessments, research career options, find colleges and universities, learn about financial aid, and more. For an [AKCIS login](#), please speak with your educational specialist for more information.

Challenge Exams

Students who have completed 8th grade and those entering grades 9 - 12, and are currently enrolled in the FNSBSD, may challenge courses for high school credit. This option is designed to allow students to demonstrate mastery through examination. It is not a process for credit recovery or course retakes. Students who have already taken a high school course are not allowed to take a challenge exam as a way to improve a grade or earn credit for a previously failed class. Students may not take a challenge exam for a course they have previously taken, or an exam for a course that has already been challenged.

Students may take up to two separate challenge exams on each testing date. Challenge exams are only available for core courses and some world languages. Please contact the Teaching & Learning department to inquire about specific course and challenge options. [Click here to go to the website.](#)

FNSBSD Graduation Requirements

Students will meet the requirements in the course catalog dated their freshman year.

To receive the regular high school diploma presented by the School Board, students must satisfactorily and fully complete a course of study that meets those requirements established by the State Board of Education and the district. Students are required to complete a minimum of 22.5 credits, distributed within the following subject areas:

English 4 credits

- English 9 -----1 credit (2 semesters)
- English 10 -----1 credit (2 semesters)
- American Literature -----0.5 credit (1 semester)
- Other Literature Course -----0.5 credit (1 semester)
- Writing-Intensive Course -----0.5 credit (1 semester)
- English Elective -----0.5 credit (1 semester)

Health 0.5 credits

Mathematics 3 credits

- Algebra I -----1 credit (2 semesters)
- Additional Math -----2 credits (4 semesters)
- Statistics*-----0.5 credit**(1 semester)

*Class of 2026 and Beyond

**Statistics credit is counted towards the "Additional Math" credit

Physical Education1.5 credits

One-quarter (.25) credit for the Physical Education requirement may be waived for each full season of participation in approved interscholastic or intramural athletic competition. The total credit waived shall not exceed one full credit. Elective credit must be earned to replace the Physical Education requirement that is waived. A waiver of credit under this section does not affect the overall minimum requirements.

Science3 credits

- Physical Science -----1 credit (2 semesters)
- Biological Science -----1 credit (2 semesters)
- Additional Science -----1 credit (2 semesters)

Social Studies3.5 credits

- Alaska Studies -----0.5 credit (1 semester)
- World Studies -----1 credit (2 semesters)
- American Studies -----1 credit (2 semesters)
- Contemporary Government Studies -----0.5 credit (1 semester)
- Contemporary Economic Studies -----0.5 credit (1 semester)

Electives7 credits

TOTAL22.5 credits

Program Requirements

Required Assessments

Per Alaska state law, all public school students must participate in required assessments, including:

- **AK STAR**
 - As a public school, BEST is required to have a 95% participation rate.
 - Grades 3 - 9 will be assessed in English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics
 - Grades 5, 8, 10 will be assessed in Science

 - **What data is collected from AK Star**
 - Basic student information and student assessment scores are reported to the Alaska Department of Education & Early Development (DEED). DEED does not collect any sensitive information.
 - Individual student data is not reported publicly. DEED collects and summarizes the data for public reporting purposes.

- **Alaska Developmental Profile (ADP)**
 - Kindergarteners and new 1st graders participate.
 - The Alaska Developmental Profile (ADP) is to be completed for each child entering kindergarten as required by state law as part of the statewide comprehensive system of student assessments.
 - The purpose of the ADP is to identify, record, and summarize the skills and behaviors students demonstrate at the beginning of their kindergarten year, based on teacher/parent observations.

- **MAP (Measure of Annual Progress) Grades 3 - 9 (twice a year)**
 - Reading
 - Language
 - Math

- **M-Class**
 - Grades K-3
 - Screenings up to three times per year
 - Screening tool to identify students who may need additional reading instruction support

Quarterly Progress Reports & Work Samples

Parents must submit progress reports (grades) and upload work samples at the end of each quarter in Brightways Learning. Samples must include work from each class listed on the ILP. Samples may not be e-mailed. If you are having problems uploading work samples, please contact your education specialist. Grade reports serve as the historical record of your student's academic progress, and as such should be completed in a timely fashion. If we do not receive the grade report, BEST is mandated by state law to mark failing grades for the quarter, and no credit will be recorded on the student's transcript. Grading guidelines can be found on Brightways under the Resources tab, or click here: [BEST Progress Report Requirements](#).

Lack of progress reports will impact a student's ability to participate in activities at the high school level.

- **Incomplete grades**
 - An Incomplete (Inc) may be issued during a quarter if the grade is unavailable.
 - An "Inc" will be changed to an "F" after 10 days if the grade has not been updated.
- **Fairbanks North Star Borough School District Grading Scale**

Kindergarten

C=Consistent P=Progressing N=Needs Practice

Grades 1-3:

H=Honors S=Satisfactory N=Needs Improvement

Grades 4-12:

A	=	90-100%	-Excellent
B	=	80-89%	-Above Average
C	=	70-79%	-Average
D	=	60-69%	-Below Average
F	=	0-59%	-Failing

PE:

Elementary and Middle School: A-F

High School: P/F

- **Quarter Grade Due dates for 23-24 school year**
 - **Quarter 1: October 13, 2023**
 - **Quarter 2/Semester 1: December 22, 2023**
 - **Quarter 3: March 8, 2024**
 - **Quarter 4/Semester 2: May 17, 2024**

Monthly Contact

Fairbanks BEST Homeschool requires monthly contact between the parent/guardian and their educational specialist. This contact is made to ensure progress is being made and students have the materials needed for their classes. Contact may take place by telephone, email, in-person, or Zoom.

Academic Honesty

Fairbanks BEST expects all students to demonstrate academic honesty. If a parent or student is found to submit work that is not the student's own, no credit will be given and the student will receive a failing grade. The expectation is that all work and grades should result from the student's effort and understanding. Parents should discuss plagiarism at the beginning of each school year and explain the importance of creating and submitting original work.

Acellus Grading Guidelines

Please see the charts below for grading guidelines (**ONLY** for those students using Acellus online courses).

Year-Long Courses

Date	Progress through Acellus	Action to be taken by teacher
Quarter 1 Midterm Progress	12% or more	No action is needed
	Less than 12%	Alert the parents and provide more monitoring/coaching
End of Quarter 1	20% or more	Acellus grade remains as is
	15% - 19%	Acellus grade is reduced by one letter grade
	10% - 14%	Acellus grade is reduced by two letter grades
	Less than 10%	Acellus grade is reduced to an F
Quarter 2 Midterm Progress	35% or more	No action is needed
	Less than 35%	Alert the parents and provide more monitoring/coaching
End of Quarter 2 (Semester 1)	45% or more	Acellus grade remains as is
	40% - 44%	Acellus grade is reduced by one letter grade
	30% - 39%	Acellus grade is reduced by two letter grades
	Less than 30%	Acellus grade is reduced to an F
Quarter 3 Midterm Progress	60% or more	No action is needed
	Less than 60%	Alert the parents and provide more monitoring/coaching
End of Quarter 3	65% or more	Acellus grade remains as is
	60% - 64%	Acellus grade is reduced by one letter grade
	55% - 59%	Acellus grade is reduced by two letter grades
	Less than 54%	Acellus grade is reduced to an F
Quarter 4 Midterm Progress	85% or more	No action is needed
	Less than 85%	Alert the parents and provide more monitoring/coaching
End of Quarter 4 (Semester 2)	90% or more	Acellus grade remains as is
	85% - 89%	Acellus grade is reduced by one letter grade
	80% - 84%	Acellus grade is reduced by two letter grades
	Less than 80%	Acellus grade is reduced to an F

Semester-long Courses

Date	Progress through Acellus	Action to be taken by teacher
Quarter Midterm Progress	20% or more	No action is needed
	Less than 20%	Alert the parents and provide more monitoring/coaching.
End of Quarter 1	45% or more	Acellus grade remains as is
	35% - 44%	Acellus grade is reduced by one letter grade
	30% - 34%	Acellus grade is reduced by two letter grades
	Less than 30%	Acellus grade is reduced to an F
Quarter Midterm Progress	70% or more	No action is needed
	Less than 70%	Alert the parents and provide more monitoring/coaching
End of Quarter 2 (Semester)	90% or more	Acellus grade remains as is
	85% - 89%	Acellus grade is reduced by one letter grade
	80% - 84%	Acellus grade is reduced by two letter grades
	Less than 80%	Acellus grade is reduced to an F

FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH B.E.S.T. HOMESCHOOL POLICIES MAY RESULT IN AN ALLOTMENT FREEZE AND YOUR STUDENT(S) MAY BE WITHDRAWN FROM BEST.

Purchasing Guidelines

All purchases must be justified within the Individual Learning Plan (ILP) and be an economical use of district funds.

Purchase Requests must follow these steps:

- First, discuss the purchase with your education specialist to ensure it is appropriate.
- Complete the Purchase Requisition Form which can be found on Brightways under the Resources tab or [click here](#).
- Forward the completed order form to your education specialist at the BEST office.
- Funds are not available until July of the academic year, and after your ILP has been approved.

Reimbursement for Lessons or Courses must follow these steps:

- First, discuss the purchase with your education specialist to ensure it is appropriate.
- You can purchase the service(s) or course(s) with your own money or get approval for a Purchase Order.
- Keep your receipts until they total a minimum amount of \$75.00 for submission to request reimbursement.
- Attach the **original receipt(s)** to the Reimbursement Request Form and submit it to your education specialist.

Supplies/Materials Covered

BEST can pay for a wide range of curricular supplies that are educational and complement the student's goals and Individual Learning Plan. Curricular materials may include textbooks, workbooks, CDs or DVDs of an educational nature, art materials, science kits, general and consumable school supplies, online courses, college courses, community-based learning opportunities, performing arts experiences, computer games of an educational nature, and other materials or resources that meet the student's needs. Please discuss this with your education specialist.

Supplies/ Materials Not Covered

BEST cannot purchase or reimburse for any faith-based curriculum. If you are uncertain as to whether something may or may not be covered, you are strongly encouraged to consult your education specialist *before* purchasing.

- 4 AAC 33.421 (h) A correspondence study program may not pay for or provide money for services or materials that do not reasonably relate to the delivery of the student's instructional needs (i.e., Repair to any curriculum materials, supplies, or technology)
- 4 AAC 33.422 (d) The fund account may not be used by the district or parent to supplant district funds or obligations for IEP services.

Computer/Technology Reimbursement

Students can purchase their technology equipment and receive reimbursement from BEST for up

to \$499 per device, per student. For example, if you purchase a laptop for school use and it costs \$899, \$499 from your allotment funds will be reimbursed, which would make your cost for the laptop equal \$400. This technology reimbursement can be used for computers, printers, digital cameras, or other computer equipment with the approval of your education specialist. It is understood that students who purchase computer equipment will own that equipment and assume responsibility for maintaining it. Funds will come out of your student allotment.

Internet Access

BEST will reimburse for monthly internet costs while a student is enrolled with BEST if using an online learning program in the ILP. Parents are responsible for finding an internet provider and maintaining connectivity. Funds will come out of student allotment.

Reimbursement Procedures

- Discuss the purchase with your education specialist to ensure it is an appropriate purchase and aligned with the ILP.
- Purchase the item(s) using your own money.
- Do not highlight or cross-through items on receipts.
- Attach the original, itemized receipt(s) from the vendor to the Request for Reimbursement Form from Brightways under the resources tab or [Click Here](#). Complete the form and submit/email it to your education specialist **and** the BEST administrative secretary, [Roz Sandland](#)
- **Please note:** canceled checks and credit card statements cannot be accepted as receipts.
- If the receipt does not list items, please identify specific titles on a separate sheet of paper.
- **We are not able to reimburse without receipts, or receipts that are not legible.**
- *Please allow a minimum of 4 weeks for payment reimbursement.*
- **Please be aware if you are refunded for a dropped class or any other education expenses paid for by your allotment, you will be required to pay that money back to your BEST allotment account.**

Receipt Requirements

- Must be an original receipt, not a copy.
- The vendor's name must be on the receipt.
- How was it paid? (ie. cash, credit card, or check).
- Date of purchase.
- The receipt needs to be itemized.
- Must show the balance has been paid.
- Credit card statements are not receipts.
- Handwritten receipts have the same requirements.
- Do not highlight or mark through line items.

Any time you are in doubt and have questions about your allotment or any reimbursement procedures, please contact Roslyn Sandland at 452-2000 ext. 11209 or via email at roslyn.sandland@k12northstar.org.

Student Immunizations

Alaska State Law requires that schools receive a current copy of every child's immunization record **before** the first day of school. Plan to obtain these records ahead of time and bring a copy with you at the time of enrollment.

These shots should include:

- 4 or 5 DtaP, depending on spacing and age
- 3 or 4 Polio, depending on age
- 3 Hepatitis B
- 2 Hepatitis A
- 2 MMR (Measles, Mumps, Rubella)
- 2 Varicella (Chicken Pox) required for grades K through 6 only

The Director of Nursing Services will review your child's record to determine what, if any, immunizations are needed.

To attend school, the state requires that all students are appropriately immunized, or have a valid medical or religious exemption on file with the school district. All FNSB Schools strictly enforce a "No Shots – No School" policy following state regulations.

Public Notice of Non-Discrimination

The Fairbanks North Star Borough School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, ethnicity, color, religion, creed, sex, age, national origin, physical or mental disability, marital status, changes in marital status, pregnancy, parenthood, sexual orientation, gender identity, veteran status, or any other basis prohibited by local, state, or federal law.

The Fairbanks North Star Borough School District does not discriminate on the basis of sex in violation of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 in the educational programs or activities in which it operates.

The Fairbanks North Star Borough School District does not discriminate on the basis of disability in violation of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. This includes admission or access to, or treatment or employment in its programs, services, and activities.

Individuals requiring further information should contact the designated compliance director:

Michelle Pippin, Employment and Educational Opportunity Officer

520 Fifth Avenue,
Third Floor, Suite A
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701
(907) 452-2000 x11466
Fax (907) 451-6008

[Public Notice of Nondiscrimination](#)

BEST Frequently Asked Questions

How is BEST different from other homeschools?

- BEST offers resources from the second-largest school district in the state.
- Up to two free classes at your neighborhood school.
- Sports eligibility at attendance-area schools without having to take a class there.
- Access to Library Media's resources including hundreds of educational kits, books, puppets, and DVDs.
- Free eLearning courses for high school students.
- Discounted Acellus courses for K-12. \$300 for unlimited classes/year.

How do I get started at BEST?

There are three steps:

1. Register at the district website: <https://www.k12northstar.org/enrollment>.
2. Fill out your student's demographic information and learning plan in BEST's online platform: <https://best.brightwayslearning.com/programs/1/signups/new>
3. Schedule a telephonic, Zoom, or in-person meeting with an educational specialist.

What are the allotment amounts?

- K-12 \$2,700
- Pre-K w/older sibling \$250
- Pre-K w/IEP approved by the district \$2700

I have a child who is too young to go to school but participates in some of our family's educational activities. Are there any funds for him/her? Yes.

- Younger siblings of BEST enrolled students who are at least 3 years old may be eligible for a \$250 stipend
- Otherwise, students can enroll with BEST as a kindergartener if they are 5 years old on or before September 1st. See also.: <https://www.k12northstar.org/kindergarten>

I am attending a private school, can I enroll? Yes.

- Private school students can enroll part-time (2 classes) and get half the allotment.
- Or private school students can attend full-time (minimum of 4 classes) and get the full allotment.
- The classes must be listed on the Individual Learning Plan and be secular.
- Students will need to complete school district enrollment forms, submit immunization records, and enroll in BEST's online platform, Brightways Learning.

What can I use the allotment for?

- As long as the expense can be linked to the student's Individual Learning Plan (ILP), most purchases can be reimbursed.
- Typical expenses include curriculum, educational apps, educational games, music lessons, musical instruments, tutoring, sports equipment, sports instruction, lab equipment, educational kits, and museum/ zoo entries.

Can I buy a computer with my allotment? Yes.

- BEST reimburses for up to \$499 on any one item (excluding curriculum). The student's family is responsible for making up the difference in the cost of the item.
- This allows the student to become the purchase owner instead of having to return it at the end of the year.

Can I homeschool and take some classes at my Fairbanks neighborhood school as well? Yes.

- Students may take up to 2 courses for free at their local FNSBSD school if space is available.
- An education specialist will make the arrangements with the school.

How does the allotment work?

- An account is created for each student and/or family at BEST.
- Education Specialists can order curriculum and classes for the student and have the money deducted from the student's account.
- Or, the family can purchase curriculum or supplies and submit a reimbursement form.
- The remaining balance is displayed on the parent dashboard of the Brightways Learning Account.
- There is no deadline to request reimbursements from your allotment, providing there is money remaining and your student is still enrolled in BEST.
- Remaining allotment funds roll-over from year-to-year until a student graduates or is no longer enrolled in BEST.

What do I need to submit a reimbursement?

- All financial forms are accessible in the Brightways Platform under "Resources."
- You will need a W-9 form on file so BEST can issue a reimbursement to you.
- Complete an Electronic Funds Transfer form if you wish to have reimbursements directly deposited into your bank account.
- Complete the reimbursement form and submit original receipts with it.
- Allotments are reimbursed by family, so you may combine purchases on the same reimbursement request. Simply put each expense on separate lines of the form.
- Documents and digital copies of receipts can be submitted via email to roslyn.sandland@k12northstar.org.
- You may also mail them to BEST Homeschool, 397 Hamilton Ave, Fairbanks 99701
- BEST mails reimbursement checks and makes EFT deposits directly to the family. The name listed on the W-9 is the name that must be either printed on the check or listed on the bank account that allotment funds are being transferred into.

Can I use faith-based curricula? Yes.

- Families can use religious curricula, but a non-religious curriculum must be identified as the primary source of curriculum for at least two core subjects.
- Core subjects are Language Arts, Math, Social Studies, Science, Technology, and Foreign Language.
- BEST cannot pay for or reimburse any religious materials.

How do I choose a curriculum for my student?

Parents may choose curriculum from a variety of sources depending upon age and ability/interests. Most curricula fall into 4 basic categories:

- Online
- Book-based
- Combination of the above
- Enrichment/extracurricular activities

To explore some of the many options for a homeschool curriculum click on the following link: [Curriculum Options with BEST](#)

However, the best resource for helping to choose a curriculum is your **educational specialist**. They are familiar with a variety of curriculum and will help you to select curricula that works best for your child and you.

What goes in an Individual Learning Plan (ILP)?

Once you start working on putting together your child's Individual Learning Plan (ILP), please consider the following subjects. Full-time homeschool students need to work on at least four subjects (including at least two core classes). However, six subjects would be considered best practices. For example, an Elementary ILP could include the following subjects.

- English Language Arts (core)
- Math (core)
- Science (core)
- Social Studies (core)
- World Language (core)
- Technology (core)
- PE/Health; optional but best practice.
- Art Exploration (which could include music, performing, and visual arts); optional.

I am new to BEST, and I want to get a headstart. When can I start summer courses?

- The allotment period begins July 1st.
- If parents/students want to start before that, they can.
- They need to have registered with Brightways and PowerSchool parent portal.
- Keep receipts of materials and curriculum purchased.
- **If the student withdraws from BEST before the end of October the family will need to re-pay BEST for any used portion of the allotment.**

I am moving out of Fairbanks, but staying in Alaska. Can we enroll? Yes.

- BEST serves all of Alaska.
- BEST will ask students to participate in state-mandated testing.

I am moving out of state. Can we enroll part-time or full-time? No.

- No, BEST cannot enroll students who do not have an Alaska residence and who are not residing within the state. We must follow district policy regarding students who move out of state.

My child has an IEP. Are they able to attend BEST Homeschool?

Yes, your child is welcome to attend BEST Homeschool. Your student's IEP services will be provided at their attendance area school unless more specialized services through district-wide special education programs in a different district-assigned school location are required.

While the school district encourages students to participate in their special education and related services at their attendance area school building, the home educator may choose to deliver some or all of their child's special education and related services themselves. Alternatively, it is always your option to revoke or decline consent for special education.

How would it work if I choose to have my child receive services in their attendance area school building?

You will collaborate with the attendance area school building staff and special education providers to establish a schedule for service delivery. You will be responsible for transporting your child to and from any agreed-upon services.

What are my responsibilities if I choose to deliver IEP services myself?

As the home educator, you will be responsible for attending IEP meetings, planning and providing home instruction, collecting data on your child's progress on IEP goals and objectives, and reporting progress data to BEST's special education advisor on a quarterly basis. The BEST special education advisor will receive and compile progress data you provide into quarterly progress reports.

In regards to special education, what are the responsibilities of BEST Homeschool staff?

If your student is participating in special education services at their neighborhood school the BEST special education advisor can help you begin that process.

If you are choosing to provide home instruction for special education rather than access through a neighborhood school location, the BEST special education advisor will maintain and manage all IEP paperwork. They will conduct special education evaluations and hold eligibility meetings. The BEST special education advisor will schedule and hold annual IEP meetings with the parents, education specialist, district representative, and related service providers (as needed).

There are so many curriculum choices out there. How will I know what homeschool curriculum to choose for my special needs child?

As with any student, BEST's education specialists will meet with families to develop a learning plan. That is a home educator's opportunity to ask questions and get information on appropriate and approved curriculum choices based on a child's individual needs.