



5 Questions To Ask When Interviewing Homeschool Programs



TALK WITH US

Chugach School District
9312 Vanguard Drive, Suite 100
Anchorage, AK 99507
Office: 907-522-7400
Fax: 907-522-3399

LOCATIONS

Statewide Support
Fairbanks
Anchorage
Mat-Su Valley / Eagle River
Valdez

Why Ask Questions?

Alaska offers many options for families considering homeschooling. FOCUS wants families to be able to ask the important questions to make sure that we are a good fit for your family. The questions below will assist you in making informed and confident decisions regarding your children's education.



Where do I start?

Connecting with a program via phone or in person is the best way to see if you connect with the teacher and that your family aligns with the program educationally. If you ask each program the same questions, you will be able to evaluate your options more consistently.

FOCUS Homeschool wants to ensure that we are the best fit for each family that enrolls. This is why we encourage families to do their homework before choosing a program.

1) What is the average number of students assigned to each teacher?

The number of students a teacher serves will impact response time, individual attention and the ability to meet your family's needs. Ask what the teacher-student ratio is rather than the staff-student ratio.

FOCUS Homeschool is committed to maintaining a low teacher-to-student ratio, to assure that our Advisory Teachers are available to give your family prompt assistance. On average, each FOCUS teacher serves about 70 students. You can be assured personalized attention to your needs. At FOCUS our students are more than a number, our teachers know their students by name.

2) What are my curriculum options and do I have the freedom to choose my child's curriculum?

It's important to know if you can use any curriculum you choose. Some programs allow families to choose any curriculum, while other programs require families choose from an approved list or preferred recommendations. Some programs will limit the use of faith-based curriculum or require additional coursework if faith-based curriculum is used.

At FOCUS we allow parents total freedom in selecting the curriculum best suited for each of their children's needs. Our staff is here to help you learn and explore the many options available. We will help you understand your child's learning style and find curriculum and materials to meet their needs. We respect the parent as the teacher, and believe that you know your child's needs the best.

We are here to support YOU!



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3) **Does your program offer activities, workshops, clubs, and field trips? Please list a few examples.**

Some programs offer a wide variety of opportunities and activities for students to participate in outside the home. You will want to know what is available. Some programs will offer staff organized activities and fieldtrips based on student's interests; others require parents to organize, plan, and host all classes and activities.

FOCUS Homeschool offers a wide variety of PreK – High School activities and events to help you enrich your child's education. Because we are here to help you individualize your child's learning experience, our staff welcomes family input on the activities we offer each year. Activities are intended to peak or build your child's interest in academic areas, recreation, arts, job skills, career explorations, PE and more.

4) **What is the allotment per student?**

When you choose to homeschool through a public school district in Alaska, an educational allotment is provided to offset the cost of providing a quality education for your child. Parents, the primary teachers, have the freedom to spend these funds based on their child's individual educational needs and have the responsibility of using allotment funds wisely to benefit the academic development of their child. The allotment is provided for you to invest in your child's education. Each program differs in the allotment amount and how it can be spent.

FOCUS Homeschool attempts to offer as many free learning experiences that we can. We call this Allotment Plus. When you call FOCUS be sure to ask about the Allotment Plus opportunities.



5) **What do you offer to prepare students for school-to-life transition?**

This question is important because you want to know that a program is invested in your child from when they are young all the way through and beyond highschool.

FOCUS Homeschool offers a unique opportunity for students to attend the district's **Voyage School (7th-12th Grade)** – This is a free resource for students who are enrolled in our school district. Voyage School is a short-term residency program that provides intensive career and trade training. Transportation, food and lodging are all paid for by the district. Student have the option of applying for a variety of phases throughout the year. Past phases have included culinary arts, driver's ed, snow science, natural resource management, outdoor education, advanced culinary arts. *(These offerings may vary each year.)*

Other questions you may want to ask include:

- What makes your district and homeschool program stand out?
- How do you individualize for students?
- What is the enrollment process?
- Can my child dual enroll?
- What if I want to change my child's curriculum in part-way through the year?
- Is there anything else you think I should know about your program?

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