

# Return of the One Room Schoolhouse?

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Many parents with school-age children can attest to the changes in our present school system. Within the past one hundred years, our society has seen the one-room schoolhouse evolve into neighborhood schools, children placed into grade levels according to age, assessments used to determine student and teacher accountability and home economics replaced with technology and college-prep courses. Presently, there is another change in education earning more respect within the last decade. Some may call it a return to the curriculum style of the one-room schoolhouse, or a parent's rebellion over so much emphasis placed on Connecticut Mastery Tests preparation. Many just describe this 'new again' academic endeavor as home schooling.

The discussion of home schooling raises many eyebrows at Board of Education meetings, dinner parties and college interviews. The array of questions includes: How are parents held accountable to provide a structured and enriching educational environment? Are parents required to show student mastery of subjects? Are children adequately prepared to meet the demands of college or the 'outside world'? Are children lacking social skills?

Parents who decide to home school their child must be prepared to conduct research on their state graduation requirements, possible yearly mandated assessments or portfolios and constantly up-dating their knowledge regarding new educational laws and support services. The task of home schooling a child should be decided with great care and a commitment to become a highly qualified teacher. Parents must remember public school teachers are always continuing their education and attend professional workshops or collaborate with peers. The parents of children who are home schooled must develop their own support group and surround themselves with people of an educational background, continual learners or parents who have successfully home schooled their child.

The demands to adequately prepare a child for college and the 'outside world' are costly and time-consuming. Parents must be willing to invest in academic materials, hands-on experiences such as field trips to museums, provide up-to-date technology, pay for possible special services or private assessments and maintain a structured learning environment. In recent years, the Internet has seen a dramatic increase in distance learning programs, such as [calvertschool.org](http://calvertschool.org) or [cosmeo.com](http://cosmeo.com). These home school curriculum providers are assisting over 700,000 students in kindergarten through grade twelve that seek this learning option to complete their education.

Community involvement and volunteer projects are requirements to graduate in many school systems. Colleges are reviewing an applicants SAT scores with the same diligence as with their extra-curricular activities. Children who are home schooled must seek community activities and social groups to develop relationship skills, interest in the arts and maintain physical fitness. Parents may seek advice from their town recreation department, community center, community college, place of worship or read local newspapers, such as the Parent Planner, for businesses offering such things as pottery classes, karate lessons or instrument lessons.

Although home schooling is becoming less taboo, a parent's decision to home school their child is still not an easy task. A parent must honestly reflect on their reasons to home school, list the strengths and weaknesses of home schooling as it pertains to their child and acknowledge whether they are financially and emotionally prepared to meet the demands of a quality home school experience for their child. You may learn more about websites regarding home schooling by visiting [www.LandMEducationalConsultants.com](http://www.LandMEducationalConsultants.com)

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