INSTRUCTION

Homebound Instruction

Homebound instruction may be provided for students enrolled in Prince William County Public Schools (PWCS) who are physically or emotionally unable to attend school as certified by a physician, licensed clinical psychologist, or nurse practitioner. Homebound instruction is not intended to supplant school services and is by design temporary.

“Homebound instruction” means academic instruction provided to students who are confined at home or in a healthcare facility for periods that would prevent normal school attendance, based upon medical certification of need by a physician, licensed clinical psychologist, or nurse practitioner. For the purposes of homebound instructional services, “confined at home or in a healthcare facility” means the student is unable to participate in the normal day-to-day activities typically expected during school attendance; and absences from home are infrequent, of relatively short duration, or to receive healthcare treatment.

A determination of eligibility for homebound shall be made by the Office of Student Services. Approval of services is based upon a completed medical certification of need. The medical certification of need is the healthcare provider’s documentation of the student’s illness, treatment plan, and the estimated length of recovery time. The certification must be fully completed, including parental permission to contact the treating physician, licensed clinical psychologist, or nurse practitioner, in order for the student to be considered for homebound services. The School Division reviews all requests for completeness of information and appropriateness of the request and will follow up with the treating physician, licensed clinical psychologist, or nurse practitioner to clarify the need for homebound instruction versus school-based instruction with appropriate accommodations, as necessary. Homebound services are for student illness/injury only; services are not appropriate to compensate for absences related to family care or illness.

Students with a disability must have a new Individualized Education Program (IEP) developed to meet the student’s temporary instructional needs after the referral for homebound instruction has been approved by the Office of Student Services. If the IEP team determines that homebound services are appropriate, the team must include language in the IEP that clearly defines the time period for the frequency and duration of the homebound services. The IEP may also include a statement that the IEP team will reconsider the need for continuation of services by a specified date. The IEP team should add a statement that addresses the fact that these services are temporary and thus do not constitute a permanent change in placement and are not the “stay put” placement should the IEP team and parents/guardians later disagree over the continuation of homebound services. When the student is able to return to school, the IEP team must amend the IEP to terminate homebound services in order to return the student to the school setting.
The following information applies to all general education students. Students in grades kindergarten-five are generally eligible for 20 hours of instruction per month. Students in grades six-eight are generally eligible for 32 hours of instruction per month. Students in grades nine-12 are generally eligible for 40 hours of instruction per month. Twenty hours per month are generally approved for students in grades nine-12 taking two courses or less on homebound.

Homebound instruction is delivered during regular school hours, later afternoon, or early evening and only on those days when school is in session. Instruction will not be given to homebound students when PWCS students are not in attendance (i.e., in cases of inclement weather, teacher work days, winter break, spring break, and student holidays). Under special circumstances, exceptions may be approved by the program manager from the Office of Student Services.

Students receiving homebound instruction should return to school-based instruction as soon as possible. Homebound services will typically not be approved for periods in excess of nine calendar weeks. If it is necessary for homebound instruction to continue beyond nine weeks, an extension form, including treatment plan, progress towards treatment goals, and specific plans to transition the student back to the school setting, will be required from the treating healthcare provider to document the need for extended services.

When scheduling sessions, homebound teachers will take into consideration parent or guardian requests, but not all requests can be accommodated.

The payment of teachers shall be at the hourly rate as established during the budget cycle. Payment will not be made for travel or preparation time.

A hospital/day treatment center which provides academic instruction to qualified PWCS students in a group setting shall be reimbursed for such services at the prevailing hourly homebound instruction rate. PWCS shall reimburse such instructional providers for two hours of instruction per school day for one teacher who is certified to teach in Virginia, regardless of the number of students enrolled in the group. The procedure for applying for approval for homebound services through a hospital or day treatment center is the same as for non-hospitalized students requesting homebound services. Payment will not be made for homebound services rendered prior to approval of the homebound request by the Office of Student Services.

The Associate Superintendent for Special Education and Student Services (or designee) is responsible for implementing and monitoring this regulation.

This regulation and any related policy shall be reviewed at least every five years and revised as needed.

PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS