

Homeschool Connections Program

Handbook 2026-2027

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Meade School District 46-1 Mission Statement:
"To Build Knowledge and Skills for Success Today and Tomorrow"

Disclaimer: As a handbook for a pilot program, changes may be made throughout the year as we learn what works best for students and their families. Changes made throughout the year will be highlighted in yellow. Families will be notified of changes to the handbook.

Purpose:

The Meade School District 46-1 is expanding its focus, creating access to homeschool families who choose to have their children participate. This is limited to grades K-8.

Who is Eligible?

Admittance to the program will follow a first-come, first-served approach. Factors such as capacity, student attendance, and history of student success will be considered when assessing eligibility during the enrollment process. Enrollment for the 2026-2027 school year ends on September 25, 2026.

Eligibility criteria includes:

- Residents of the Meade School District 46-1 are eligible to enroll their child (Kindergarten - 8th grade) within the Homeschool Connection Program.
- Students residing outside the district who have open enrolled into Meade School District 46-1 must have maintained enrollment for a minimum of two years, unless alternative arrangements have been approved by administration due to extenuating circumstances.

What are my students' options for enrollment?

The Homeschool Connection Program is open to Meade School District 46-1 students who are interested in part-time enrollment (online or in-person), full-time enrollment (online or in-person) or a blended combination.

- Online Self-Paced Courses
- In-person On-Site Courses
- Blended combination of online and/or in-person part-time or full-time

What is an Educational Facilitator?

An Educational Facilitator is a South Dakota accredited teacher through the Meade School District 46-1 who will support students. The Educational Facilitator will be referred to as “EF” throughout the handbook.

How do I register my student(s)?

Student registrations and enrollments will be accepted through the last Friday in September or until student capacity is reached. Applications should be submitted online through the Homeschool Connection Program located on the Meade School District 46-1 website . Once the application form has been received, the district will review the submitted application.

My student was approved for enrollment, now what?

Families will be directed to complete any additional enrollment paperwork that is needed. Once enrolled, the Homeschool Connection Program EF will schedule an orientation with the family between August 20th and prior to the first day of school. The orientation is mandatory and will provide information about program requirements. During orientation, students will receive their school issued iPad if applicable.

What are the expectations for participation?

- Meade will provide K - 8th graders with access to the online learning platform, Acellus.
- The parent/guardian is the primary supervisor and support of the student's education. The EF will support the student's learning and will provide support (either in-person or through Zoom) if needed or requested.
- Students are expected to progress through online self-paced courses in a timely manner.
- Students may complete online self-paced courses early.
- A student can complete two grade levels for core classes maximum per academic year, then will be limited to elective courses.
    - Students must pass a readiness assessment **and** pass Acellus courses with a B or higher to move into next year's coursework.
- In the event a student does not maintain the recommended academic pacing (2+ weeks behind), the EF will arrange a meeting with the family to help support the student and progress.
    - Students who do not maintain pacing may be removed from the program.

How does the In-Person On-Site Courses work?

If enrolled into In-Person, On-Site Courses, all school policies apply to students attending including any dress codes, conduct, and academic expectations.

- Homeschool students can enroll in any course/subject at any of Meade 46-1's schools.
    - The EF and in-person administrative assistants will coordinate for these enrollments.
- Once a schedule has been developed, the student will report to the appropriate building, check-in at the main office where office staff will guide your child to the appropriate room (i.e. – gym for PE course, STEM lab for STEM course, etc.). After their course, students will return to the main office for pick-up.
- Students who attend In-Person On-Site Courses will follow the pacing guidelines established by the teacher.

Communication Procedures:

- For Online Self-Paced Course students, communication will be done through email and phone calls.
    - The EF will send weekly progress reports via email.
- For In-Person, On-Site Course students, communication with the teacher will be done through the individual building's communication procedures.

Enrollment Percentage/State Assessment:

If Homeschool Connection Program students enroll at 50% or greater in grades 3rd-8th, students will be required to complete State Assessments and will receive a notice from the district. A student's enrollment percentage will be determined by the following criteria:

- For In-Person, On-Site Courses, the student's enrollment percentage will be determined by the same calculation listed below.
- For Online Self-Paced Courses, the student's percentage will be determined by matching the course (i.e. English, Math, Social Studies, or Science) to its in-person equivalent.

Enrollment Percentage Quick Check:

K-4 Core Classes:

- Language Arts/Reading - 25%
- Math - 15%
- Science - 5%
- Social Studies - 5%
- iReady- 10%

K-4 Online Electives:

- STEM -10%
- Ecology - 10%
- Art Concepts - 5%

K-4 In-Person Electives:

- STEM - 10%
- PE - 5%
- Music - 5%
- Art - 5%
- Library - 5%
- Counseling - 5%

5-8 Core Classes:

- Language Arts/Reading- 26%
- Math 13%
- Science - 13%
- Social Studies - 13%

5-8 Online Electives:

- Earth Science - 13%
- Ancient Civilizations - 13%
- Introduction to Geography - 13%
- STEM (coding) - 13%

5-8 In-Person Electives:

- STEM - 13%
- PE - 13%
- Choir - 13%
- Band - 13%
- Art - 13%
- Spanish - 13%

Required Progress Monitoring:

Students in the K–5 grade band will use the following tools for progress monitoring in ELA and math:

- Ready Assessment: A tri-annual diagnostic assessment used to measure student proficiency and growth in both ELA and math (completed 3 times a year)
- iReady Personalized Instruction: Personalized learning practice aligned to each student's diagnostic results, providing targeted practice in ELA and math based on individual need.
- Expected use: For students enrolled in the corresponding course students will complete the beginning, middle, and end of year benchmark assessment. Students will also be required to complete 30 minutes of iReady personalized practice per week in ELA (if enrolled in an ELA class) and 30 minutes per week in math (if enrolled in a math class).

Students in the 6–8 grade band will use the following tools, organized by content area:

- ELA: CommonLit 360 Reading Comprehension: Tri-Annual Benchmark Assessments — used to measure student growth and proficiency in reading comprehension over the course of the year.
- Math: Pear (Progress Assessment Reporting) Platform: Tri-Annual Benchmark Assessments -- used to measure student growth and proficiency in math at three points during the school year.
- Expected use: Students enrolled in the corresponding course will complete the beginning, middle, and end of year benchmark assessments.

How is my students' attendance tracked?

- The teacher will take attendance each regular class period for in-person courses.
- The EF will take attendance for Online Self-Paced Courses by monitoring students' work completion.
    - Students are expected to follow a four-day instructional week. Attendance for each week will be determined by the completion of the daily steps set in Acellus.
        - Daily steps are subject to change throughout the year.
    - Students may work any day during the week, provided they meet the four-day goal requirement.
    - At the end of each school week, the EF will notify parents via email if a student needs to complete additional steps to meet attendance requirements.
- Share planned extended absences due to vacations or other circumstances with your EF or teacher so they can modify pacing recommendations to meet your family's needs.
- Per district policy, anything over 7 (seven) absences per trimester is considered excessive.

Truancy & Removal from Program:

If a student has missed 17 consecutive school days (no activity logged within the Online Self-Paced Course), the student will be dropped from the school district per SD Admin Rule 24:17:03:06.

SD Admin Rule 24:17:03:06: Student count for state aid purposes. No student who has an unexcused absence of 15 consecutive school days may be included in the count of the attendance center for state aid purposes, retroactive to the last day the student attended school or had an excused absence. An excused absence, for purposes of this section, includes medical illness and enrollment in a short-term group care education program for up to 90 consecutive school days. Nothing in this section supersedes the student due process requirements referenced in SDCL chapter 13-32, article 24:07, or other applicable law.

School-Issued Device:

If requested, students may receive a school-issued device for their online learning. This device is to be used exclusively for academic purposes and is not a family and personal device. See the Electronic/Laptop Device handbook for further information.