

Ask an Expert: Monthly Q&A with Homeschool Coaches – November 2025

Hello everybody, welcome to our November Q.

A with the coaches and with Texas Home School Coalition.

We are so excited to have you join us today.

We've got some topics we're going to go over that we think will be helpful for our home school community and just to get things started, I'll introduce myself and then we'll go around and I'll let everybody here who who we have with us today.

So my name is Lindsay and I'm the special needs specialist here at Texas Home School Coalition and one of the coaches.

So if you want to go on and schedule some time with me, if you have a a child that special needs and you have home school questions, I would love to help you with that.

So go ahead.

Jessica.

Okay.

Well, I'm Jessica mcgu and I've been here with Texas Home School Coalition for just a little over three years.

Member support, volunteer specialist and I guess my area for coaching would be like middle school, high school, college prep type need.

So definitely happy to assist however I can and hopefully this will Webar or QNA will be beneficial to you guys like to be here.

So I'm Vicky.

I'm Vicky Garcia and I have been here with our customer relations team Since 2018 and I'm always happy to help our Spanish audience on the customer relations and members support Spanish specialist and I have three kids and we've been home schooling for the last over twelve years.

So I'm always happy to help whoever comes my way.

And so we're happy that you're here with us today.

Thank you all so much and and we we are so excited.

We love getting your emails and your phone calls that come into our call center and our just our customer relations team and we do take that very seriously.

We want to try to answer your questions the best that we can and we feel like we have great support from THSC and the information that we're giving out.

So one of the things that we've been seeing come through quite a bit lately through our emails and phone calls and coaching calls has been the withdrawal process of taking your student out of the public school or really any other school setting and taking them to home school.

So we do want to make sure that we're educating you on that on just the simple INS and outs of that.

We know it can be very daunting and sometimes very over-overwhelming if these are people in your community that you know and you've worked with, or you've had your children in the school for years, withdrawing your child from the public school can be very emotional and it can be scary.

Honestly, some of the situations and stories that we've had come in lately have can get kind of interesting.

So we do want to take some time and just go over what that looks like, what are the ways that we would encourage you, what are the first few steps that we would encourage? And so Jessica, if you want to start us out on that one, Sure.

So a lot of parents just want to know how do I withdraw my child? Okay, do I go into the school, but I can't, We can let you know on our website@thsc.org.

We do have a withdrawal form or you can even go into your member portal.

It's located there in your member portal.

Or you can reach out to us the email.

We can give you a link to that withdrawal form.

So this withdrawal form has been put together by our policy team.

So it's definitely sufficient, all that's needed Now when you submit that withdrawal form with all those names, like a principal, counselor, superintendent, whoever it is that you need to send that withdrawal form to the IST, if they ever reach back out and say, oh, well, you know, I need you to fill out the form here that we have, We need to know what kind of curriculum you're using.

That's not necessary.

If you've already sent that withdrawal form, the next step would really be to send the assurance letter.

And if you don't have that already, you can reach back out to us.

We can give that link to you as well.

But prior really, Lindsay, with the withdrawal prior to withdrawing, it's always a good idea to ask for your records.

So whether your kid is prior to high school or fixing to go into high school, that's a good time to reach out and ask, you know, the email for a copy of your students records because sometimes, for whatever reason, don't know why.

Sometimes ids are a little confrontational.

I don't know what a better word for that is.

But when you ask for the records if you've already withdrawn, so it's Good To Go ahead and do that prior, especially, you know, for high school because you're going to want to transfer all their credits to now your home school, you know, transcript because now that's going to be your official transcript, but definitely just reassure you guys or if you know anybody that's going to be withdrawing, you know, it's Okay, you know, that's what THSC is here for.

You know, we've been on the front end to prepare these documents for you to use, so just reach out to us, ask us for that will be happy to give it to you, you know, kind of walk you through it Now at the schools continue to give you pushback after the withdrawal form or like the assurance letter.

That's when you can use member benefit to reach out to the policy team, you know, for intervention and they can allow them to help you, let the ISD know that you're within your rights to withdraw, you know, your student any time.

So I mean, Vicky, do you have any other input? I know you experience Yes.

Something that I also recommend is for, of course, just like what you mentioned, look at the withdrawal instructions there on our website and there's the Texas Education Agency Commissioners letter.

I, I highly recommend that you read it that will give you more, you know, confidence as well that there are instructions straight from the Texas Education Agency on how administrators should manage your withdrawal.

And it, I, I want to say it's the second paragraph or the third paragraph on that letter and it's not very, you know, sometimes we get intimidated with the wording that it might be very difficult to understand, but really it's very simple.

Just just read through that those first paragraphs and it mentions how you're not required to go in person when you would draw.

It also mentions that you're not required to present a specifics about your home school there because there's one question that parents often ask, Oh, the school asked me about what curriculum I should use or what curriculum or an accredited curriculum that and they're requesting me to let them know.

And so they, they get very anxious because they, they're not sure about what curriculum.

So in that letter it mentions specifically you're not required to to let them know about what specific curriculum you're going to be using.

So again, I highly recommend you reading in that letter the commissioners letter and it's there's a link in that withdrawal letter that we have on our website.

So yeah, that's that's one thing I just wanted to mention that's really good Vicky, thank you.

And and that's you brought up a good point just sometimes when the school districts do try to give push back and maybe even intimidate a little bit.

We've had, you know, some high school students that parents are trying to withdraw in some areas where they've been, you know, really, I think intimidated to think that hey, we're going to, we might have to code the student as a drop out or we might code this in a different way than what we're than what the parent is requesting.

And so we do want to encourage parents that you are the advocate for your for your child and you have to speak up and when something comes up that you don't quite feel right about, we're very thankful that you reach out to us at THSC, but we want to encourage you as mom and dad or guardian whoever it is over this child to be their voice, to stand up for them.

And when you know something is not going quite right, get in there and question that, you know, one of the other things with, with, with withdrawing that we also need to understand is, you know, most of our school districts and most of the people in our state are going to comply with what the parent wants to do and it's not going to be a big issue and we want to encourage you get those tablets, get the, the chrome books, all of the things that belong to the school, don't feel bad to go in and get those things turned into the school in person.

We don't want anyone to feel afraid to be in the school and do that stuff and we want to be upright.

We want to encourage our, our members and our people to be, you know, upright and kind in the way we walk through this process and so do be an advocate, feel, feel like you have the, the rights that you do have as as a as a home school parent, we want you to understand what those rights are and so also go honor, honor the Lord and how we take care of that business and be an example to our children in the whole process.

So yeah, go ahead.

What's the say something? Well, I was just going to say when it comes to the school asking you to fill out forms, it's not illegal or wrong for them to do that.

They can ask that, but it's not required by law that you come in and fill out those forms if you've used our withdrawal form on our website that our policy team is put together because that is, you know, sufficient, it is legal and the proper way to withdraw your students.

So it's not necessarily that they're wrong for asking you to do that, but if they're overstepping in a way where after you've already sent the withdrawal form and things like that, then, you know, just just send that, you know, because it's really not wrong for them to asset, but you don't have to comply with that and do that to legally.

Yeah, do all.

Oh yeah, Okay, yes, I, I would say I've even had a personal experience with that.

We withdrew our child from public school to come back.

We did public school for a semester and I withdrew him back out of the public school.

So you know, we signed paperwork, we went through there.

They didn't ask a whole bunch of questions.

They just wanted to sign a paper.

And I did that because it wasn't overstepping.

I didn't feel like at the time.

And so yes, we just want you to know your rights.

We want you to know our forms and our information is efficient.

Said that's that's exactly right.

I think one thing with withdrawing students that are special needs, I'll just touch on this for a second.

You do not have to have an art meeting to withdraw your child so you can go through this whole withdrawal process and and not they cannot require that you have an art meeting before withdrawal.

So you can take those IPS with you, the things that you have and continue that through your home school.

We do offer an ILP generator on our website that will also allow you to to create a five oh four or a behavior intervention plan and we would highly recommend those for your record keeping.

Those are not things that you are required to have as a home school parent, but it is a great way to continue that.

Record keeping is especially if your child might be college bound and you need to show those modifications and accommodations that have been happening in the school that you've continued that in home school as you prepare for college.

So great, those are great discussion.

Is there anything else I can think of in regards to withdrawal? I was thinking in regards to like what you were saying with the special needs

because I, I know from what you and Heather said, Since you are special needs specialist, what I've learned from you all is that you really if you have Accommodation and modifications for your student, you have to keep those five oh four records up.

So when they go into college, it can go with them because if you, if you don't have that paperwork, ongoing and current active, then you know the colleges won't be able to continue that service.

Is that is that right? Yes, that's true.

That's, you know, you can't just show up to college and say we'd not created to do modifications or provide accommodations for a child.

There really needs to be a record, a trail, paper trail for that.

And so a paper trail that's backed up by assessment.

So we do need to, you know, colleges aren't just going to be handing out extra accommodations and modifications for students that come in.

So if you do want to go that route, they're going to want to see that you've had testing, some sort of assessment done in the past to prove that that child has a either a medical need or an educational need for those accommodations to continue.

And you know, a college is not a public education, they're not required to provide any of that.

But if they offer any of those things, you're going to want to have that documentation going into college.

So there's the difference between the FA and ILP, Right.

I mean, ILP from my understanding, that's just a way for you to keep track of the goals for your student or the five oh four, that's where the paperwork comes into play that goes on with them for the accommodations, right? And yeah, it could, yes, and I think both would be, would be fine.

A 504 usually falls under students that have like medical needs or you know, they need accommodations and modifications that.

Aren't strictly because of like a learning disability, it could be that they have a medical diagnosis that has caused them to be behind the grade level that they should be in And so they need those, those accommodations to help, you know, be back on grade level or to function on grade level.

So yeah, those are all all good documentations and things that we would recommend if you're dealing with a student that has special needs At Home.

And really at the end of the day too, just to understand when you're teaching a child At Home with special needs, you are the teacher, you're the administrator and you can decide with or without an IP or an ILP that we provide, you can give your child accommodations and modifications to be successful.

We have lots of students that are home schooling in our state who are not special needs, but they, they may just struggle, they may be, you know that reading is difficult and so we're going to help with that.

We're not going to, you know, as mom, you don't want to just struggle, struggle, struggle all day long.

You want to help your children with with the things that they, you, you see them struggling with.

So if they need that extra little push or maybe shortened assignments or they need you to read it to them, do that.

You're not doing anything wrong to help them that.

And so we always want you to feel encouraged to teach them the way that you see fit.

We think that your home is the best environment and we want parents to feel comfortable in that regard.

So yeah, was there anything else to talk? Yes, Well, I was going to say because that ILP generator is provided, it's in the member portal and it's for premium members.

So I mean, if you are an advanced member, you can always upgrade to have access to that because on the left there's a menu in your member portal and you can click on a home schooling tools and then there'll be tabs there and that ILP generators found there on that page.

But if you have a premium membership, you have access to that.

So it would be easy to upgrade if you advance to have access to that if you need it.

Right? A 100% yes.

And we would highly recommend that, you know, being able to do the IP that looks very similar to what you would find in your public school.

So if you need help walking through that process, we're here to do that to help walk you through or send instructions or helpful hands as you do that.

understood.org is a great website for goals and objectives and things that you want to add to that ILP generator.

So again, we're here for you if you have a student in your home special needs your child and it can be very exhausting, very overwhelming if you are teaching a child that struggles to be mom and to be teacher is a very fine line and it can be exhausting.

And so really, that's one of the next things that we wanted to talk with you about today is to kind of jump to another topic.

How do you balance that? How we get phone calls with our member coaching calls that we provide for our premium members and lifetime members get unlimited coaching calls with us.

We, we are primarily encouraging parents and trying to say, Hey, you can do this, but how, ladies, how would you all encourage a mom that's trying to balance supper and laundry and cooking and behavior and being a wife all at the same time? How would you encourage them? Vicky? I let you go.

I was going to say you go first, Jessica, you're you are veteran.

Oh, well, I would say that I have learned to just well, my kids are already in high school, so it was a process.

So when you first start, you just have to take it Little By Little.

I've had my kids with me.

I mean, I have been home schooling all their life.

So what it helped me is just to have a schedule for them, even if you have little ones, nap times were sacred.

So starting from, you know, when they were little, I am, I try to have a a pattern, you know, they would wake up, I would play a little bit with them, I would spend time with them, and then I knew nap time, it was my time to organize things At Home, you know, or I would send them to bed early, you know, and that's that quiet time was for me.

So if you have little ones, I think that's what's important.

Take advantage of nap times, you know, and as they grow older when, well, I'll say take advantage of those things that they start to getting to get engaged more in, you know, activities, puzzles or even play time.

There are some things that they start working independently and then you know that that's very good for them to have that engaging time so you can move on to other things and do a little bit of laundry there, you know, things like that.

And as they grow older, I'm saying probably in first grade to third grade that you try to get them involved in the activities At Home, you know, doing chores, pick up your the trash.

So here in our home, I have different responsibilities.

I divided the this restroom is for my, my oldest daughter, she takes care of that and she cleans it every she used to do it to two times a week and she would do it so well, I, I, I had to tell her, you know, let's move it to just once a week because you're, you're going to, you know, it's the the wood and the things are going to No.

So I said, you know, let's do it as yes, yes and and and that's, I think that's because I started them getting get them involved while they were younger.

And you know, you, you know that your child and what he's capable of.

So the same for The Kitchen.

I have one child doing the the dishes for the morning after breakfast, another child doing the dishes after, you know, dinner.

And they know, they know and I know it takes, you know, pushing a little bit when when you start, but you just give them little jobs and then once they, you know, graduate from that task, you add another task and so that way you don't have everything in your hands.

Well, right now, I don't cook breakfast, they manage their own breakfast, you know, But no, I don't have to worry about the restroom because they, they manage that.

So, so you just have to plan strategically and just start giving them little chores here and there and in one day you will wake up and say, Hey, they're helping me a lot.

So that that has been my experience.

So yeah, I'll let you share you, you ladies.

Well, I was actually just going to say on the heels of what you're talking about. Since my kids are all out of the house, you know, I have had that feedback where they've actually are thankful and grateful they might, they weren't in the moment like you say when you're given them these, these activities due to kind of help you as a parent balance, you know, home, school and home life and you know, marriage and just the kids and all that kind of stuff.

But when they get older, it's good that they can see the benefit of that because now you're, you're basically just equipping them for real life, aren't you real life skills, you know, to be able to serve their family, to serve their spouse, to serve their kids when they have kids.

And so it may seem a little chaotic in the middle of it, but you know, base on the, on the back end, you know, they they will appreciate because you're going to help them learn how to balance their their home life, you know, I think that was a good point that you brought it to kind of help us balance that.

I totally agree.

Yeah, and I think that structure, that routine scheduling is also very important and being consistent with that in and day out when your kids are little, especially because they're not going to fluctuate with change quite as nicely as an older student might do that.

And so one of the things that I've seen coming through our questions and just some of the interactions I've had with people already recently has just been, what about my special needs student or child who is struggling to behave because of their disability? The issues that we deal with day in and day out man, and I just want to encourage you moms that are out there who are raising a special needs child who has behavior difficulties, but also because of their disability, they are not adapting as easily as some kids would anyways.

And so just know that you're not forgotten, you're thought about, you're prayed for, we we know it's exhausting and one thing that I would encourage you with is to get your spouse involved if you're married, attack home school as a team, it is very overwhelming at times it's it is parenting overload to home school.

And so we do want to offer good tips and tricks for those who are home schooling and especially children with special needs.

So I would just say just on a practical level for students that have special needs, if you can make visual charts and maybe calendars or check off lists that are visual that have pictures of each chore or each station of the day or each thing that you're going to do on your schedule and maybe give your child close pin where they are moving it from one thing to the next.

And we're, we're gradually getting through our schedule, we're gradually getting through our day and it's going to be the same every single day and we're not going to vary from that.

Those students who struggle with change that is going to just bless their life because they're going to, they're going to crave that, they crave that routine and that structure.

So and before you know it, mama, you're going to crave that routine and structure because you get better.

So you know, and just understand your kids are going to melt down, your kids are going to have bad days, you're going to have bad days, and you know, it's it's Okay to have struggles and it's Okay to have the bad days if we can just continually tell, tell ourselves, this is not a personal attack.

This is my child learning how to grow up in this world and it is my responsibility to do that.

Deuteronomy 6 through 10 are some verses that talk about loving the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength and to teach that diligently to your children, you know, hang it on the the doorpost of your home and talk about it when you walk or when you sit.

And I'm paraphrasing all this, but those verses were pivotal for me in my life.

I mean, they just made such an impact on me as a mom and and as a home school mom that God's word needed to play a part in everything that we did in our home.

And so I just encourage you if you are struggling with your kids or struggling just with balancing that home, just know that the Lord is with you, that he has put you in this position for a reason and he's equipped you with everything that you need to take care of those kids and to do what you're doing.

And so we're here for you.

We want to help, bless you through this time and encourage you.

So does anybody have anything else you want to say? We're kind of getting wrap up and we've got some reminders that we wanna let you all know about, But I don't want to keep anybody from saying anything.

If you've thought of something, Well, I was actually just Gonna say in the member POR of there are past web or videos you can find those for just for encouragement to equip you as a parent and to dealing with all sorts of situations, whether it's special needs, high school, I mean computer, I mean, they're all kind of technology.

So I mean there's a lots of variety.

So there are resources in your member portal.

But like we've talked about before, I mean, that's what all three of us are here for.

You can schedule co, you know, coaching calls, so we can talk you through that, you know, And if you have a premium membership, you do have the unlimited one.

So don't feel like you're ever alone.

So if you don't have, if you're not connected to a group in your area, you know, you can lean on us, you know, we're happy to do that.

But also, like Lindsay said, you know, getting your spouse involved, you know, you may have already had an agreement.

Okay, mom's doing this, dad's doing this, But I would always just make sure you're keeping that line of communication open with your spouse because such is life, things change.

So that structure of how you are conducting your home school may need to change and just make sure you're united, you know, with your spouse on how things are going to be played out and you know, the roles that everybody's going to play so the kids can see that unity.

But definitely, you know, that's what THSC is here for as well just to help you balance, you know, that home school and work because a lot of mommy's and you know, guys are both working nowadays.

So it's easy, even harder than it used to be when sometimes you know that one spouse that was going to do the home schooling stayed At Home.

So very true and that's so good.

And we, we hope that some of the things that we've talked about today have been helpful for you.

Maybe if nothing else is encouraged you, but we are here for you and that is.

By far, the thing that we're the most excited about is that we are all home school moms and we are ready and willing and able to hopefully extend a little bit of wisdom or experience that we've had in our past home school for kids and my oldest is currently in college.

So I've got one in middle school all the way up through college.

So we've been there a little bit, we've experienced some things and so we're very excited to do that.

And I know one other thing I wanted to mention for the coaching calls, the one-on-one is that we are very blessed to have Vicki as a Spanish speaker available on our team to help coach.

And so Vicky, if you want to talk about that and just explain what that what that means.

Yes.

So I'm my first language is Spanish.

You probably can tell that.

But the one concern that we have that I have heard from Spanish speaking parents is that they get they feel inadequate because they do not speak English.

And I just want to say it, you can learn along with your child if you do not speak the language.

That's what I always encourage these parents.

So if you have friends, if you have even yourself, if you feel limited that your kids are not gonna get all that they need, Well, there are different resources that we can, you know, lean on, there are videos.

I mean home schooling does not have to be mom doing all the teaching all the time.

So we, we are very grateful that there are lots of resources that that we can utilize.

So I'm here as a, you know, speaking with the Spanish audience or if you have, if you're planning on incorporating a bilingual, you know, home schooling, I have talked to parents, you know, when they they have these, they want to use Spanish as a as a second language.

So I have other resources that you can use and and so I'm, I'm always happy bilingual home.

It's it's like, I don't know you have two perspectives for something and and it's just the love of learning that it, it, it's it's just a wonderful world, you know, to get diving into.

So yeah, I'm here to help and so schedule with me and I'll be glad to help you with resources.

Awesome.

Because we Vicki's able to email in Spanish and meet member coaching calls in Spanish as well, which is just such a huge for our for our home home school coalition and for our home school community.

So we're very grateful for that, Vicki and then also Jessica, we have the convention coming up this year.

And so I was going to let you share just all the information on that coming up.

Yeah, Well, this is definitely a great way for you to find community as well and to find the support that you're needing.

So E definitely happy to share with you a little bit of information about our convention coming up.

The dates for it is going to be made the 28th through the 30th.

So in the next spring and that's going to be in the Woodlands, Texas.

That's where our statewide convention is going to be.

If you're wanting to find the registration information updates, you can go to our website@thsc.org At the top they'll be a banner and you basically just click on events.

It's going to have a whole list of events like our web, NARS, graduations, conventions, leader summit.

So just scroll down to you find, you know, the Woodlands convention, just click on that.

It'll give you updates and also whenever the rollout for registration that'll appear there as well.

But this is a an event that's for the whole family.

You know you and your spouse can go.

So it can just be a couple event or just the parent that's doing the main home schooling can go.

So whatever fits your budget, you your family's time.

I mean, so, but if the whole family wants to go, it is definitely for the whole family.

There'll be things for everyone to do in the exhibit hall.

There's you know, hundreds of exhibitors.

So whether it's books or curriculum, college representation, you will find what you need there, absolutely will find what you need there.

And also there's seminars throughout, workshops throughout the weekend.

And so basically, you know, just to encourage you to feel refreshed, to equip you, you know, on your home school journey because usually this time of the year you're kind of planning for the next year.

And so definitely, I would encourage all if you haven't gone, definitely go for our members, you do get discounts and all that information will roll out and you'll see that information in your member portal.

So check your member portal, log into your member portal and check there or again.

You can check on our website@thsc.org and just click on advance up there in the top.

But I definitely highly recommend it.

You know, before I work for THSC, you know, we always went and kind of head is a mini vacation.

It was so fun, awesome, very good.

We're so excited about that.

Hope that you'll join us for convention this year.

Couple of other announcements that we have as we just finish up our time today.

Tomorrow we actually have a webinar with Brianna Cardiff Hicks.

She's going to be coming in and doing a lesson in generosity, a living book and craft experience.

So that's from 01:59 P.M.

Tomorrow is a free event to attend that we just we'll try and drop that link in our chat here in just a second for you to be able to jump on there and register and be a part of that tomorrow.

We hope you can join us for that And we also have in our upcoming newsletters we have some our new coaches corner is going to be coming up for December newsletters have be looking for that email to come through your email box as well as our December coaches Q and A again in December on December 10.

So we hope that you'll join us again for that as well.

And we're just really excited looking forward to the holiday season.

We hope that you have lots of fun activities planned for your children and for your family through Thanksgiving and Christmas.

And we are always excited to share some ideas and tips and things that we've done over the years.

So if you want to reach out to us anytime, go to your member portal.

You can reach out to us that way, or you can go to thsc.org and scroll down to The Bottom hit contact and email us that way.

So again, we're just so grateful that you joined us today.

We hope that the information was helpful and just pray blessings over your family and over your home school journey.

We hope you'll have a great rest of the day the before we go.

I just, I just want to say that I did put in that that quick link to the feedback today or that watches this later.

They can click that and give give their feedback please do we need that? We would appreciate that so much filling out those surveys and we send those on our emails as well.

So anytime you have any feedback for us, we would greatly appreciate that so much.

So they thank all ladies and I think we'll call in a day.

So thank you so much.

Have a good day.