

ROADMAP TO SUCCESSFUL MICROSCHOOLING

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OVERVIEW

Welcome to the most exciting movement in American education today: microschooling. Rooted in relationships and a profound understanding of each child as an individual, microschools are flourishing across the country.

Microschooling defies rigid definitions, instead opting for flexibility to allow each leader to focus on what matters most to their families. Microschools do share common traits, these are often multi-family collaboration, a focus on engagement, and a commitment to prioritizing learning.

Microschools are driving a transformative shift in education. Flexible and adaptive, they meet children where they are in their learning journeys. Microschool leaders cultivate strong, close-knit communities and vibrant cultures.

Currently, we see microschools in four primary tracks: Independent, Partnership, Provider Networks and Public. This diversity in models ensures families can find the perfect environment where their children can truly thrive.

OBJECTIVE

The National Microschooling Center is the nation's preeminent nonprofit resource hub for microschools. We are committed to the healthy growth and evolution of the microschooling movement. We are a highly visible, tireless resource for microschooling leaders, families, policymakers, and those who can support them.

Our aim is to support you during each step of your microschooling journey and to help you reach your full potential as a microschooling leader delivering the style of educating that you choose.

We offer support for prelaunch microschools as well as operating microschools.

WHY START A MICROSCHOOL?

At the National Microschooling Center, we believe the best answer comes from the learners in your life whose needs you want to meet.

Microschooling represents the future of education—diverse, adaptable, and intentionally designed to create small, focused environments that address learners' needs in the most effective way possible.

For educators, microschools offer the freedom to bring their vision of teaching and learning to life. As a microschool leader, you have the power to make decisions based on your unique expertise, values and the specific needs of your learners, creating a truly personalized and impactful educational experience.

REASONS WE LOVE MICROSCHOOLS

1

INDIVIDUAL LEARNERS' NEEDS

The greatest strength of microschooling is in its ability to be designed entirely around the unique needs of the individual learners you serve. In today's golden age of digital resources, every decision about learning tools and methods can be customized—and revisited—with each child's growth and development in mind.

2

FLEXIBILITY

Microschooling provides unmatched flexibility for both learners and educators. From choosing curricula and determining schedules to selecting learning spaces and tailoring teaching approaches, your microschool can be crafted and adjusted for your community.

3

BUILDING COMMUNITY

Microschooling creates an environment that supports both the learners and the broader community. It fosters a close-knit group of families working together to ensure all children thrive. It also allows for community partnerships and involvement. Those leading microschools are in the community they are serving.

4

DO WHAT YOU LOVE

Microschooling gives you the chance to pursue your passion for educating young people in meaningful and impactful ways. It allows you to guide their growth and learning using methods that truly work for them. While many microschool founders and leaders are former educators, that is not a requirement for launching a microschool – just a commitment to serve the families and children well!

HOW CAN WE HELP?

We offer a variety of supports and resources, everything from start-up support, help understanding your state's frameworks, assistance with regulatory pushback, learning tools, trainings and more.

Working with us gives you access to a collective of microschool founders and leaders. We have over 500 members nationwide. Every member of our team has experience either founding or educating in a microschool.

- **START-UP SUPPORT**

Work with our team to make sure you're fully prepared to open your microschool. We can assist, both in group settings and one-on-one calls, with things like regulatory requirements, facility options, insurance questions, background checks and more. We are here to be a sounding board for your ideas as well as answer questions that you might have.

- **LEARNING TOOLS AND OPTIONS**

Collaborate with our team to gain a better understanding of the various learning options and pedagogies available for your microschool. We also offer a variety of learning tools at a bulk rate.

- **TRAININGS**

We regularly host trainings for microschooling leaders covering areas such as operational necessities, smart growth, measuring effectiveness, and more. Not seeing what you want in our trainings? Let us know!

- **FOCUSED COHORTS**

We offer small group cohorts focused on particular topics such as: high school, self-directed learning, measuring impact, pre-launch and more.

- **COMMUNITY**

Access our community of over 500 microschool leaders to share ideas and resources. We host in-person and online convenings to facilitate the exchange of ideas and best practices, as well as creating a space for community-driven questions and answers.



ROADMAP TO STARTING

START WITH YOUR IDEA

Why do you want to start a microschool? Who do you want to serve? What will your focus be (self-directed, project-based, Montessori or a combination of philosophies and approaches)? Take a look at the information on our website, microschoolingcenter.org, including our video library, and information regarding the four different tracks we see for microschooling - independent, partnership, provider network and public. Give some thought to what sounds like a good fit to you. We have different resources available for each path.

ATTEND OUR MICROSCHOOL MAKERS ON MONDAY MEETING

We host a Microschool Makers meeting once a month (typically on the third Monday). These are small group meetings designed for us to get to know you and you to get to know what the Center offers. This is a great way to connect with our team and receive the support you need.

TALK TO YOUR COMMUNITY

Talk about your idea with families in your community. Get a sense of who is interested, who your learners will be, and what their needs are (including scheduling needs). We can help you hold informational sessions and connect with families.

RESEARCH YOUR STATE AND LOCAL FRAMEWORKS

If you will be operating a microschool, it is important that you understand your obligations as they relate to licensing, background checks, and other requirements. Familiarize yourself with your local and state policies. Consider if it makes the most sense for you to open as a nonpublic school or a learning center serving homeschooling children. Consider what this means for business licensing, zoning, etc.

WRITE A PLAN

Begin your business plan. Think through your vision and mission. Begin budgeting (be mindful of planning to start small and grow - most microschools stay small until the second semester). Consider a timeline for launch. Think through your teaching and learning tools, facilities, creating a handbook and more.

FIND A FACILITY

Secure a facility. Keep in mind, depending on how you choose to open, you might need certain approval before opening and you might not be able to get these approvals before signing a lease. Try to have a clause in your lease that lets you out of the lease if the space does not pass all inspections.

ROADMAP TO STARTING CONT...

ATTEND TRAININGS THAT WORK FOR YOU

The National Microschooling Center has a series of free trainings designed with the unique needs of microschooling leaders in mind. These trainings are created to help guide you from pre-launch through growing your microschool.

SELECT LEARNING TOOLS

We are constantly studying a variety of world-class learning tools and curricula in order to offer you the best insight possible. We also have access to different licenses for learning tools, allowing you to use these top-of-the-line tools at an affordable price. We can help you understand what options might be best for your learners, and if you decide you don't want to use a curriculum or digital learning tools, we are happy to help you think through a solution that works for you and your learners!

LEARN WITH OTHERS

Connect with other microschools near you. Learning with others can be the best way to open a microschool. Not sure of microschools near you? The National Microschooling Center can help you find them!

MARKETING

Think through ways of marketing your microschool (and be mindful of regulations and how you are opening, if you receive regulatory pushback, please reach out to us!). Microschool founders have seen success with: weekend workshops, farmers markets, school choice fairs and more. Hold regular microschooling meetings to help educate the general community on what microschooling is (we have resources to help with these meetings). Be consistent and open to feedback.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Have you thought about insurance? What about sick days (both for you and your future students)? Staffing and background checks?

These are just a few of the other considerations to think through when launching a microschool

LEARNING TOOLS

While your options are vast, the choices below are some of the most popular curricula and learning tools that we have a high seen microschools thrive with. Several of these tools are available to you through our Learning Tool Program, which allows you to use district-bulk pricing while only purchasing what you need. Other tools listed are ones that are committed to working with microschools and have partnered with the Center to offer you a discount.

A beautiful strength of microschooling is the ability to build a program to meet the academic needs of individual learners exactly where they are, which can often mean switching curricular components mid-year.. With that in mind, here are some of our favorite tools. we are happy to work with you to integrate these into your model, along with any others you might be considering:



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



DO I NEED TEACHING EXPERIENCE?

You don't need to be a licensed teacher or have teaching experience in order to open a microschool. Many high-quality microschools start with passionate parents and individuals from a wide variety of professional backgrounds. The majority of microschool leaders are former educators who have found that a microschool allows them to thrive alongside of their students.



WHERE CAN I HOST A MICROSCHOOL?

The options can be endless. Many microschools are hosted in store fronts, dance or art studios, Houses of Worship, homes and more! Some microschools are mobile, others meet outdoors. The possibilities are endless. Remember to be mindful of your local regulations and zoning laws.



DO MY OWN CHILDREN NEED TO ATTEND?

Not necessarily. You can host a microschool without enrolling your own children. While many start as an option for the founder's own children, plenty of microschool founders do not have their children in their microschool. T



HOW MUCH DOES IT COST?

Depending on the format and services provided by you to your learners, the cost for students will vary. We can help you with budgeting needs.



CAN I USE SCHOOL CHOICE PROGRAMS IN MY STATE?

This depends on the state you live in, the requirements of the program and what flexibilities you need. Our team can help you navigate your state's school choice program.



WHAT ARE INNOVATIVE WAYS I CAN MEASURE THE IMPACT OF MY MICROSCHOOL?

We love this question! Microschools measure their impact in varied valid ways. Our team is happy to help you find or develop measurement tools that reflect what is important to you.

CONTACT US

HELPFUL RESOURCES

Looking for more information? Take a look at the following resources that can be helpful to you as you gather more information.

The [National Microschooling Center's blog](#) has timely articles that can be helpful for you to review, including articles on creating a handbook, working with your board, the difference between operating as an LLC and nonprofit along with many more.

Our [video library](#) contains videos about microschooling that can be helpful for you and your community. Feel free to share these videos or use them in a parent information night if helpful!

Take a look at our leading and latest [research here](#). These reports contain trends that we are seeing across the country. This can be a helpful way for you to learn more about the possibilities in microschooling.

Subscribe to our [Google Calendar](#) in order to stay in the know about all of our trainings, meetings, events and more.

Become a [member of the National Microschooling Center](#)! Take a look at the membership page and let our team know if you have any questions or would like to inquire about a scholarship (the cost is \$100 per campus for a full year - this covers everyone at your campus!).



CONTACT US

ARE YOU READY TO GET STARTED?

If you have any questions, concerns, or if you would like to learn more, please reach out!



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VISIT US AT MICROSCHOOLINGCENTER.ORG