

PENNSYLVANIA HOMESCHOOLERS

A Statewide Network for Sharing
Information About Home Schooling

Editors:
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Newsletter (17)

You can see by our masthead that something new has happened! Two homeschooling networks in the state, WESTERN PA HOMESCHOOLERS and PENCIL (the Pennsylvania East Network for Children Independently Learning) have now joined together to produce one joint newsletter, PENNSYLVANIA HOMESCHOOLERS. The joint newsletter will still come out quarterly, roughly in early September, November, February, and May of each year, and the yearly subscription fee will continue to be \$8.00. (Check your mailing label now to see when YOU need to renew). We hope to represent the whole state as far as sharing news of homeschooling, events, cooperative school districts, the latest legislative happenings, legal updates, and good places to visit in the state. The bulk of the newsletter will, of course, be for indepth sharing about our homeschooling experiences with our

children. I know the newsletter has really succeeded when it gets YOU itching for a pencil so you can jot down some of your thoughts and wonderings and observations about living and growing with your own children, ready to share with all of us. I've heard that some homeschooling newsletters in other states have had trouble "getting" people to write about their own experiences. I'm glad to say that has never been a problem in PA, and that getting the mail is a high point of my day because I hear from so many of you. Of course, I know how many of you hear me say, when you've finished telling a good story about your family, "Hey, that would make a GREAT piece for the newsletter! Hope you write that one up!" I know how hard it is to find time to write in the busy-ness of raising a family, and really appreciate the effort so many of you have made to keep in touch and share your insights and ideas.

Susan
Richman

SCHOOL DISTRICTS COOPERATING WITH HOMESCHOOLING FAMILIES IN PA.

(NOTE-- POLICIES VARY WIDELY, BUT THESE DISTRICTS HAVE DEALT WITH HOMESCHOOLING-- YOU WON'T BE A FIRST CASE IN THESE DISTRICTS, ALTHOUGH WE ARE NOT SAYING APPROVAL WILL NECESSARILY BE EASY OR ASSURED.)

ALLENTOWN	MARPLE NEWTOWN
ALTOONA	MILLCREEK
APOLLO-RIDGE	MT. LEBANON
ARMSTRONG	MT. PLEASANT
BANGOR	MT. UNION
BEAVER	NORTH HILLS
BETHEL PARK	NORTH PENN
BLACKHAWK	PARKLAND
BUTLER	PEN ARGYL AREA
CHESTER UPLAND	PENN HILLS
CENTRAL BUCKS	PETERS TOWNSHIP
CONNEAUT LAKE	PINE-RICHLAND
CRAWFORD CENTRAL	PITTSBURGH
CRESSON	QUAKER VALLEY
DOWNINGTOWN AREA	REDBANK VALLEY
FAIRVIEW	RINGGOLD
FOX CHAPEL	SHALER
FRANKLIN REGIONAL	SOUTH BUTLER
GIRARD	SOUTH WEST BUTLER
HIGHLANDS	SLIPPERY ROCK
JEFFERSON-MORGAN	TAMAQUA
HOPEWELL	TRINITY
KANE	UNIONVILLE-CHADDS FORD
KISKI	WEST CHESTER AREA
LAKEVIEW	WEST JEFFERSON HILLS
LATROBE	YOUGH

THE FOLLOWING IS THE COMPLETE TEXT OF THE NEW REGULATIONS PASSED BY THE PA STATE SCHOOL BOARD THAT APPLY TO HOME EDUCATED STUDENTS. Note that this is NOT statute (a state law passed by the legislature), but a regulation passed by a state mandated Board. All sections in [brackets] are being DELETED from the regulation, and everything underlined is being added. Do notice that we are now somewhat free of the school calendar, as long as we can document 900 or 990 hours of instruction throughout the school year. Also interesting to note that the lawyer for the Dept. of ED viewed the new language as being a HELP to parents, a protection against arbitrary decisions from superintendents. We'll soon see.

EXCUSALS FROM PUBLIC SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

SECTION 11.31. Pupils not enrolled in public schools due to private [instruction] tutoring.

Private tutoring by a properly qualified tutor shall be subject to the annual approval of the district superintendent of schools. Such instruction shall include [the subjects and activities designated and prescribed by statute and shall be conducted daily throughout the period that the public schools of the district are in session.] for elementary school level students: English, including spelling, reading and writing, arithmetic, geography, the history of the United States and Pennsylvania, science, civics, including loyalty to the State and National Government, safety education, and the humane treatment of birds and animals, health, including physical education and and physiology, music and art. For secondary school level students, such instruction shall include: art, English, health, mathematics, music, physical education, science and social studies (including U.S. and PA history). Such instruction shall be given during the school year for a minimum of 180 days of instruction or for a minimum of 900 hours of instruction for an elementary level student and a minimum of 990 hours of instruction for a secondary level student as the equivalent of 180 days of instruction. The superintendent's approval of the tutor shall be by acceptable evidence of the tutor's ability to teach such program to the pupil and by written assurance from the parent that the instructional requirements listed above shall be met. If approval is granted, the superintendent may afterwards also require such evidence as is deemed necessary to demonstrate that the pupil is making satisfactory progress in the tutoring program and that the required subjects are being taught for the time prescribe!

PLEASE KEEP US UP TO DATE ABOUT COOPERATIVE SCHOOL DISTRICTS-- THERE ARE 501 DISTRICTS IN PA, SO WE CLEARLY DON'T KNOW ABOUT ALL OF THEM. ALSO DO SEND ON COPIES OF YOUR SCHOOL DISTRICT'S HOME TEACHING POLICY. THANKS!

"Pennsylvania Homeschoolers" masthead lettered by Jesse Richman, age 9.

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