

PENNSYLVANIA

HOMESCHOOLERS

A Statewide Network
for Sharing Information
about Home Education.

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HEARINGS A GREAT SUCCESS!!!!

We all did it!!! A thousand THANK YOUs to all of you who helped make the December 3rd Hearing with the House Education Committee so very successful. Your presence, your written testimony, and our unity made a strong statement about Parent Educators of Pennsylvania. It may have been a dreary, sleety day outside, but inside the Capital Building all was glowing with the energy of so many wonderful families. And all this on only 3 weeks notice!

We especially thank Representative Cowell, who chairs the Education Committee, for his excellent handling of the day. He asked thoughtful questions, listened closely, and also showed a fine sense of humour, helping everyone make it happily through the very long day. Things were kept on track (no easy job!) and Rep. Cowell made sure everyone had a chance to speak. He was also extremely kind to all of the many children present, even taking time to explain a bit about the entire legislative process just for them. We sincerely appreciate his responsive attitude, and look forward to working with him and his committee as negotiations continue about this issue.

Further, Representative Cowell has also welcomed any further information from YOU-- he invites you to jot down anything about dealings with your district, stories about your own homeschooling progress and how you are already evaluating your own programs, anything that you feel will give his committee a fuller view of home education. Especially do send on all of the good newspaper articles that have appeared this past year about homeschooling families in PA. Rep. Ronald Cowell can be reached at his home office: 789 PENN AVENUE, PITTSBURGH, PA 15221. We urge you all to also express your thanks to him and his committee for holding these hearings. As many of you know, our first Home Education Bill died in Committee because the former chairman would never even schedule hearings.

Representative Cowell also asked if we could do a survey of as many school district policies as possible, charting up for him just which districts have what types of policies. Send us your district's home education policy, or specific information about these questions:

-- What qualification requirements are there for parents? Certification? College degree? High School diploma or GED? National Teacher's Exam score? Test of basic "competence" in reading and

math? Letters of recommendation, documentation of pertinent life experiences that qualify you, personal interview? Are these requirements "written in stone", or has the district waived some requirements in specific cases?

-- What sort of evaluation/ accountability measures are involved? TELLS Testing? Yearly

achievement testing? Regular reports of progress? Portfolio? Home visits-- announced or unannounced?

We will be compiling this information for Rep. Cowell over the next month and a half, so do get your information to us as soon as possible. A special thank you to the many families who have already sent us copies of their districts policies.

- Susan Richman

SCHOOL DISTRICTS COOPERATING WITH HOMESCHOOLING FAMILIES IN PA

(NOTE: LOCAL 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, FAIR, OR ASSURED. GUIDELINES SOME FAMILIES CAN LIVE WITH WILL BE INTOLERABLE TO OTHERS)

ABBINGTON
ALLENTOWN
ALTOONA
APOLLO-RIDGE
ARMSTRONG
BANGOR AREA
BEAVER
BETHEL PARK
BUTLER
CANTON AREA
CENTRAL
CHELTENHAM
CHESTER UPLAND
CENTRAL BUCKS
COMMODORE PERRY
CONEAUT LAKE
CRAWFORD CENTRAL
CRESSON
DALLASTOWN
DOWNTOWN AREA
EASTON
EAST PENN
EASTERN LEBANON COUNTY
FAIRVIEW
FLEETWOOD
FOX CHAPEL
FRANKLIN REGIONAL
GIRARD
HAMPTON
HIGHLANDS
JEFFERSON-MORGAN
HOPEWELL
KANE
KISKI
LAKEVIEW
LATROBE
MARPLE MEWTOWN
MCGUFFEY
MILLCREEK
MT. LEBANON
MT. PLEASANT
MT. UNION
NORTHAMPTON AREA

NORTHEAST BRADFORD
NORTHEASTERN
NORTH HILLS
NORTH PENN
NORTH WESTERN
NORWIN
PARKLAND
PEN ARGYL AREA
PENN HILLS
PENN MANOR
PENNSBURG
PERKIOMEN VALLEY
PETERS TOWNSHIP
PHOENIXVILLE
PINE-RICHLAND
QUAKERTOWN COMMUNITY
QUAKER VALLEY
RED LION AREA
RIDLEY
RINGGOLD
SAUCAN VALLEY
SHALER
SOLANCO
SOUTHERN (YORK CO.)
SOUTH WEST BUTLER
SOUTHERN TIOGA
SLIPPERY ROCK
SPRING COVE
SPRING GROVE
TAMAQUA
TREDYFFRIN-EASTTOWN
TRINITY
TROY
TYRONE AREA
UNIONVILLE-CHADDS FORD
WEST BRANCH
WEST CHESTER AREA
WEST JEFFERSON HILLS
WEST MIFFLIN
WEST PERRY
WILLIAMSPORT
WYALUSING
WYOMING VALLEY WEST
YOUGH