

PENNSYLVANIA HOMESCHOOLERS

issue #
23

Spring 1988

A State wide Network for Sharing
Information about Home Education

Subscriptions: \$8.00/year/4 issues

Editors: Howard & Susan Richman
BackPack - Madalene Murphy

KIDS! WE NEED YOUR HELP AGAIN TO CHANGE THE LAW!
from Susan and Howard Richman

On Wednesday, May 18th, Parent Educators of Pennsylvania will be hosting its Fourth Annual Legislative Breakfast in Harrisburg and trying again to convince our state representatives and senators to pass a good homeschooling law. And just like last year, we will be relying on kids to show why homeschooling is important and a very good way to learn.

Kids, please write a speech that you would be willing to give at the legislative breakfast. It should only be about 5 minutes long. If you need help with editing what you write, ask your parents or someone else to help you, then write or type it up neatly and send it by April 20th to:
Madelene Axford Murphy
823 Church Rd.
Hatfield, PA 19440

Some essays will be chosen to be read by their authors at the breakfast. You will be notified by May 1st if your essay is chosen. Some others will be published in an expanded issue of the "Backpack" in this summer's Pennsylvania Homeschoolers. Please start on this project right away as we don't have much time.

Some of last years' speakers told of their unique educational experiences-- running home businesses, participating in special medical research programs, organizing local litter pick-up projects, or researching topics of special interest. Others told of how they felt about their homeschooling "social life", or about how their families had been prosecuted for their homeschooling decision inspite of excellent educational progress. Choose a topic that YOU feel will give legislators a clear view of what homeschooling means to you, and why we all feel it is a positive way to be educated in Pennsylvania.

Some idea starters might be: Tell about a project you have engaged in at home which shows how unique or special home education is. Tell about how you interact with your community through your homeschooling (volunteer work, scouting, etc.). Tell how you go about learning at home-- the breadth of subjects you cover, how you use your time, how you receive help in your work, etc.

We look forward to receiving your essays, and just know that once again our homeschooled students will help make the difference in convincing our legislators that homeschooling deserves legal protection 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)

THANK YOU TO ALL WHO SENT IN INFO ABOUT THEIR LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS' POLICIES!

It is not too late to send in info on your school district, as we are still in the process of compiling this information for Rep. Cowell. One thing that is striking in looking over all these policies, and your comments, is how very differently each district treats parents. Some districts have officially, on paper, very restrictive policies (parent must be certified or college graduate, etc), BUT when parents go in to secure permission for hometeaching and demonstrate their sincerity and competence, the local superintendent says something like, "Oh, this policy statement about degrees and qualifications isn't meant for YOU, we see that YOU are just fine, but we wanted to scare off those who weren't REALLY committed." That seems positive enough, but the clinker comes when other districts then copy these policies (xerox machines get a real work-out when districts put together their local policies), thinking EVERYONE ELSE really holds to these criteria. The new district may allow NO flexibility whatsoever. Upper Darby even includes a quote from the school code about the possible jail term if the "private teacher wilfully refuses or neglects to comply with the provisions of this act." Our school code definitely needs a change to protect families that choose to responsibly teach their own.

SCHOOL DISTRICTS COOPERATING WITH HOMESCHOOLING FAMILIES IN PA

ABBINGTON	INDIANA	PINE-RICHLAND
ALLEN TOWN	JEFFERSON-MORGAN	QUAKERTOWN COMMUNITY
ALTOONA	JERSEY SHORE	QUAKER VALLEY
APOLLO-RIDGE	KANE	RED LION AREA
ARMSTRONG	KEYSTONE CENTRAL	RIDLEY
BANGOR AREA	KISKI	RINGGOLD
BEAVER	LAKEVIEW	SAUCAN VALLEY
BETHEL PARK	LATROBE	SHALER
BUTLER	MARPLE MEWTOWN	SOLANCO
CANTON AREA	McGUFFEY	SOUTHERN (YORK CO.)
CENTRAL	MILLCREEK	SOUTH WEST BUTLER
CHELTENHAM	MONTOURSVILLE	SOUTHERN TIOGA
CHESTER UPLAND	MT. LEBANON	SLIPPERY ROCK
CENTRAL BUCKS	MT. PLEASANT	SPRING COVE
COMMODORE PERRY	MT. UNION	SPRING GROVE
CONEAU LAKE	NORTHAMPTON AREA	TAMAQUA
CRAWFORD CENTRAL	NORTHEAST BRADFORD	TREDYFFRIN-EASTTOWN
CRESSON	NORTHEASTERN	TRINITY
DALLASTOWN	NORTH HILLS	TROY
DOWNINGTOWN AREA	NORTH PENN	TYRONE AREA
EASTON	NORTH WESTERN	UNIONVILLE-CHADDS FORD
EAST LYCOMING	NORWIN	WEST BRANCH
EAST PENN	PARKLAND	WEST CHESTER AREA
EASTERN LEBANON	PEN ARGYL AREA	WEST JEFFERSON HILLS
FAIRVIEW	PENN HILLS	WEST MIFFLIN
FLEETWOOD	PENN MANOR	WEST PERRY
FOX CHAPEL	PENNSBURG	WILLIAMSPORT
FRANKLIN REGIONAL	PERKIOMEN VALLEY	WYALUSING
GIRARD	PETERS TOWNSHIP	WYOMING VALLEY WEST
HAMPTON	PHOENIXVILLE	YOUGH
HIGHLANDS		
HOMER CENTER		
HOPEWELL		

Can your district be added?
Let us know! Thanks, Susan Richman