

PENNSYLVANIA HOMESCHOOLERS

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• A Statewide Network
Sharing Information on
Home Education •

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Guide to PA Homeschool Law

from Howard Richman

Guide to PA Homeschool Law by Howard and Susan Richman is now available! It includes all of the information you will need to file affidavits, keep records, turn in documentation, and keep medical records. It includes many affidavit forms and medical appointment record forms which you can photocopy and use. It also includes sample evaluations and sample daily log and portfolio pages from Susan's portfolios to help people envision how they could keep their own. The chapters are:

1. How to file an affidavit.
2. Resources for writing objectives including the TELS math objectives, and other objectives recommended to schools by the Department of Education. At the end of the chapter it lists the clear and simple objectives actually submitted to her school district by homeschooler Barb Snider.
3. Extra Requirement for Handicapped children which includes a sample letter written by a special education teacher to accompany a homeschooler's affidavit.
4. Keeping a portfolio which explains how to keep a daily log and portfolio album and includes photocopies of daily log and portfolio album pages from Susan's portfolios.
5. Testing Options.
6. Evaluations, which includes two sample written evaluations and a sample contract between evaluator and parent.
7. Other procedures including high

school graduation requirements and procedures that click into place when you move, when you receive a documentation request midyear, or when you go into due process hearing procedures with your school district.

8. Health records to maintain on file which clearly presents all of the health checkup requirements of the new law and forms you can take to your dentist or doctor.

Susan and I began putting the guide together right after we had taken Issue #27 to the printer. We started out to make a booklet with help for writing objectives, but it turned into a full fledged guide to the whole law. You may have noticed a little sticker in your last newsletter indicating that our guide was now available. We put that sticker into Issue #27 after our newsletter came back from the printer.

We have already sold about 800 copies of the *Guide* and the response has been very positive. One homeschooler writes:

You made the new law so easy to understand. I appreciate it because a lot of people are making it sound so hard! I was about to give up!

Guide to PA Homeschool Law by Howard and Susan Richman is a bargain at just \$4 plus 24 cents tax. Order directly from PA Homeschoolers. We pay postage.

The New Law so Far

from Howard Richman

Except for one case, which was dismissed at the magistrate's level, the new law has ended the prosecution of homeschooling families in Pennsylvania. In the six months that it has been in place, to our knowledge, **no documentation has been judged by school superintendents to be inadequate, no due process hearings have been scheduled and no one has been denied permission to begin, or continue to homeschool in Pennsylvania.**

The only problem that I have noted is that the school districts have demonstrated a tremendous reading disability. (I say this as a former public school reading specialist -- I just resigned in June.) I have yet to see one synopsis of the new law which got the facts right. Time and time again, parents have had to explain the new law to their school districts, and time and time again they have had to call Joseph Bard at the Department of Education so that he would explain the new law to their school districts.

To our knowledge, the only family who has been prosecuted filed an affidavit under the new law with only one objective attached even though the new law requires that the objectives be by subject areas. This family's objective went something like, "The student will work to the best of her ability." After charges were filed with the local magistrate, this family did turn in a more complete list of objectives, and the local magistrate dismissed the case.

NASTY DISTRICTS BEING TESTED

Since the new law had a "grandfather clause" where people with friendly school districts could continue under the old law, a large proportion of the people who have been complying, are from school districts that virtually prohibited home schooling under the old law. Here is how some of those school districts have reacted:

Turn Around at Blackhawk. When Elaine Smith moved to Beaver County several years ago she got permission from her school superintendent. Then that superintendent retired and she continued to homeschool under the acting superintendent. Then the school district hired a new superintendent who denied her permission because she did not have a college degree. When Elaine and her son Matthew took their portfolio in to her district this June, she met with the assistant superintendent who was the same person who had permitted her to homeschool when he was the acting superintendent. He was friendly and kind, even showed her son Matthew two magic tricks. He photocopied the evaluation and sent her home with the portfolio and no further problems. (continued next page)

Attention Support group leaders!

Official meeting of officers and steering committee of PEP
from Tom Eldredge

On October 21, 1989 at 10:30 AM, the fall meeting of Parent Educators of PA will be held at the West Shore Evangelical Free Church near Harrisburg. (Directions: Take Exit 17 from Turnpike. Go South about 1 mile on Route 15 to Mechanicsburg Exit. Turn right on Route 114. First left on Old Gettysburg Pike at traffic light. Go 3/10 of a mile to Bumble Bee Hollow Road. Turn left on Bumble Bee Hollow Road. Church is on left.)

This meeting will be held to officially adopt the proposed statement of purpose and organization printed in issue 27 of the *PA Homeschoolers* newsletter and to elect officers for the coming year.

Between now and the October meeting you are encouraged to consider whether your support group would like to participate in the direction and activities

of the state organization. If your support group is interested, please send a representative from your group to represent your group on the steering committee.

Your representative should be willing to accept this responsibility for the coming year to give PEP some continuity. It may be that you may wish to be your group's representative. PEP will not prescribe how local support groups select their representatives. It only requires that the steering committee be composed of active representatives from subscribing local support groups and recognized state homeschool leaders.

If you have any questions please call me, Tom Eldredge, at 717-252-0286 or write to our new address: R.D. 2 Box 141, Wrightsville, PA 17368. ●

Masthead lettered by
Jacob Richman, age 9.

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