

**Home Education Advisory Council
Minutes—January 10, 2012**

Chairman Abbey Lawrence called the regular meeting of the Home Education Advisory Council to order at 3:35 p.m. in room 15 of Londergan Hall in Concord, New Hampshire.

Members Present: Michael Benik, Marc Boyd, Barrett Christina, Michael Compitello, Chris Hamilton, Abbey Lawrence, Keith Pfeifer, Representative Joseph Pitre, Roberta Tenney, and Dennis Wyman.

Visitors: Lorraine Bartlett, New Hampshire Department of Health & Human Services and Jane Grady

Minutes: The Council approved the December 8, 2011 minutes by general consent after making the following corrections to the second item in the **Chairman's Report** and to the first paragraph under **New Business**:

The New Hampshire Homeschooling Coalition board voted to provide complimentary copies *of the New Hampshire Home Education Guidebook* to Council members.

Chris Hamilton reported that the New Hampshire Homeschooling *Coalition* is getting calls from parents ~~who are allegedly being pushed out of public school and required to homeschool their children~~ *with students who have problems that result in truancy and discipline issues.*

Chairman's Report:

- The State Board of Education now meets on the third Wednesday of each month.
- Abbey invited Lorraine Bartlett to discuss how the Division of Children, Youth, & Families investigates homeschooling programs charged with educational neglect.

Department of Health & Human Services: Ms. Bartlett explained the process by which DCYF investigates complaints of abuse or neglect. Of the approximately 24,000 calls DCYF receives each year, only about 8,000 calls warrant department action. Ms. Bartlett stressed that the primary mandate for DCYF is child safety and that DCYF does not get involved if a complaint is simply about the education of a child. Any claim DCYF staff receives must be sufficiently documented before the department will begin an investigation. The department does not investigate undocumented complaints, but considers them opportunities to provide information and referral. The number of cases dealing with homeschoolers is extremely small. For example, Ms. Bartlett could recall only one case in the last six months that involved a homeschooling family, but the charges did not pertain to homeschooling. Although a record of truancy would be included in the information DCYF reviews, it is the responsibility of resident school districts to deal with lack of documentation for homeschooling programs. Ms. Bartlett said that DCYF would contact the resident school district if complaints of educational neglect were made purely because of homeschooling.

Unfinished Business:

ED 315: The Council reviewed and discussed the October 12, 2011 "Initial Proposal" and the January 10, 2012 "Final Proposal" forwarded by Mary Mayo, Department of Education Program Assistant. After extensive review and discussion, the Council members present agreed to continue their review and finalize the document at the February 14 Council meeting.

The Chairman adjourned the meeting at 5:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Jane Grady
(substituting for Dennis Wyman)