

HOME EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL

Minutes- May 21, 2013

The meeting was called to order at 3:37pm.

Members Present: Roberta Tenney, Marc Boyd, Representative Willette, Heather Wheeler, Mike Bennick, George D'Orazio, Abbey Lawrence, and Amy Gall.

Guests: Heidi Bennick, Jane Grady.

Minutes

The April meeting minutes were accepted by general consent.

Department Report

Roberta gave her report first because she had to leave early. She reported on an email from SAU 20 asking how to determine if a child is registered as a homeschool student. Several members suggested the SAU should try to contact the parent; the parent, however, has no obligation to tell the SAU what participating agency is being used. The Council discussed the problems arising from a district's concern and inability to verify a family's homeschool status.

Coordinator's Report

Abbey will give her report to the State Board of Education on Thursday, June 13. She reported on emails with a parent who has been homeschooling a 14-year-old in Gilmanton for four years. The person who has done the evaluation in the past is no longer available. She was told, incorrectly, that the school district is not obligated to provide an evaluation. The parent thought that the school would have to pay for the evaluator of the parent's choosing, but this is not the case; the principal offered to use the student's special education evaluation as the homeschool evaluation.

Presentation: Federal Student Aid

Jane Grady made a presentation about federal student aid eligibility. Current federal financial aid law states that a student may self-certify that he has completed secondary school through compliance with state homeschool law, but some colleges have additional requirements. For example, Bennington College in Maine requires "a formal certificate of completion of a home-school program from your state or local board of education" and the University of Maine requires applicants to "have earned a high school diploma or GED" and furnish the name of an approved accredited high school.

Jane explained that the GED is not an ideal solution for most homeschoolers.

Marc Boyd made a motion to direct Abbey to write to the Commissioner of Education asking that a letter be sent, upon request, to the relevant college administrator that a homeschooled student's eligibility for federal financial aid is satisfied by his self-certification that he completed secondary school in compliance with New Hampshire home education law.

George D'Orazio seconded the motion. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

Old Business

George asked for clarification about the School Board Association's sample homeschool policy that deals with evaluations performed by the school district.

Meeting adjourned at 4:27pm.