

## Home Education Advisory Council (HEAC) Meeting February 17, 2022 (Approved Minutes)

Granite State College, 25 Hall St., Concord (new location)

In physical attendance: Jen Pereira, Catholics United for Home Education (presiding); Mike Koski, NH Assoc. of School Principals; Amanda Weeden, Granite State Home Educators; Shireen Meskoob, NH DOE; Heather Barker, NH School Admin. Assoc.

In remote attendance by Zoom; Althea Barton, NH Homeschooling Coalition, Allison O'Neil, Hampton Area Homeschool Group; and three members of the public.

3:43 pm Meeting called to order

December 2021 minutes approved. Motion by Amanda, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Jen

Chairman's Report – A new slate of HEAC officers was approved: Jen Pereira and Amanda Weeden as co-chairs and Althea Barton as secretary. Motion by Jen, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Shireen

Member Reports, Shireen – Most questions from the public have been related to finding resources.

- NHHC, Althea – Many questions from families choosing to homeschool because of covid, newcomers looking for resources.
- CUHE, Jen – Increase in numbers, people moving in from out of state, looking for connection.
- GSHE, Amanda – Demand for VLACS high. Looking for clarification on part-time vs. full-time VLACS. New legislation is causing confusion about the different educational pathways.
- HAHG, Allison – Questions about getting started. Discussing how to do book sales during covid.
- NH School Administrators Assoc., Heather – New to group, familiar with current legislation.
- NH Assoc. of School Principals, Mike – Nothing to report.

Legislative update

Moment to remember Rep. Barbara Shaw who passed away unexpectedly. Rep. Shaw was a wonderful member of the HEAC who worked hard for home educators and the community.

Rep. Glenn Cordelli and Sen. Ruth Ward were unable to attend.

HB 1663 sponsored by Rep Erica Layon, relative to requirements for home education students <https://legiscan.com/NH/bill/HB1663/2022>

- Jen noted HEAC is an advisory council and doesn't take a position on bills. Discussion is for informational purposes only. Sponsor Rep. Erica Layon was unable to attend.

- Amanda reviewed the bill. (Language in **bold** is new, and in [ ] is deleted.)
  - Requires that schools **shall** (not may) adopt a policy regulating participation in school programs for homeschoolers.
  - Changes the definition of Home Education to “Home education shall be provided, **coordinated, or directed** by a parent for his **or her** own child[, unless the provider is as otherwise agreed upon by the appropriate parties...]
  - Revises notification language.
  - Requires that a child with a disability shall be evaluated with the disability in mind and not in a more restrictive way than a child in a school setting.
  - Adds that home ed students enrolling in public school shall be enrolled based on age and address, not requiring student portfolios or test scores, unless schools require similar academic progress for existing students.
- Discussion ensued about the bill.
- House Education Committee will discuss the bill in executive session soon.

Commissioner’s Report – Not in attendance.

#### Old Business

- Discussed difficulties or questions about letters of intent or acknowledgement letters due to USPS delays. Recommended to send letters by certified mail and digitally to create a legal record. Printed letters can be scanned and sent to participating agencies.
- Heather and Mike clarified the process by which the SAU notifies teachers of a student switching to homeschooling. If a teacher is not sure of a student’s status, there are procedures in place to assist. HEAC home educator association representatives asked Heather and Mike whether a NH teacher will call DCYC or the police within a few days of a child being absent from class if the SAU/teacher has not been notified that the student has started homeschooling. Heather and Mike said the teacher should first reach out to his or her supervisor and the school administration in order to determine next steps such as a call home to the parents to check on the child’s wellness. Heather and Mike both agreed that it is possible but not standard practice in NH for a teacher to unilaterally decide to call DCYF or police about a missing student.
- Discussed that a parent who considers the home education program still in effect for a student who is just shy of 18 years old at the ordinary time of graduation in NH might allow that student to age out of compulsory attendance at age 18 rather than submitting a letter of certification of completion. It would seem best practice for a parent of a home education student completing their home education program at the high school level before reaching 18 to notify their participating agency in addition to the NH DOE.

## New Business

- Question asked whether Prenda Community Pod students who have notified as home education students under RSA 193-A are required to maintain a portfolio as is required in 193-A because they have so many other assessments they take. Similar questions have come up in the past related to "part-time" but full course load VLACs (online public charter school) students. Discussion ensued which will be continued at the next meeting. Shireen recommends the council communicate concerns and recommendations directly to the commissioner.

Public Comment – Comment on HB 1663 and completion of home education programs taken during relevant discussions.

Meeting adjourned at 5:02 pm. Motion Shireen, 2<sup>nd</sup> Amanda; Minutes Althea

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