

**NH Home Education Advisory Council (HEAC)**  
Approved Minutes of December 20, 2024 Meeting  
Granite State College, 25 Hall St., Concord, NH

**In physical attendance:** Heather Barker, Tim Carney, Dianne Nolin, Michelle Rohrbacher, Marcus Zuech and Senator Ward. Four members of the public present: Michelle Levell, Amanda Weeden, Ms. Northcutt, and a visitor who observed.

**In remote attendance via Zoom:** Lindsay Pattison (family obligations, no one in room), Althea Barton (family obligations, no one in room). Members of the public present: Catherine Meinen, Susan Smith, Frederick, and several others who observed.

**Meeting called to order** at 2:34PM by Mr. Carney

**Immediate Business:** Selection of Chair: Due to the resignation of Ms. Villani in November, a new chair had to be selected. Ms. Barker motioned to select a chair. Mr. Zuech seconded the motion. Ms. Rohrbacher asked who could be nominated as chair. Those eligible, as indicated by Mr. Carney, included Ms. Barton, Ms. Rohrbacher, Mr. Zuech, Ms. Nolin and Ms. Pattison. It was later determined that Ms. Pattison was not eligible, due to her appointment from the Commissioner.

Ms. Rohrbacher suggested that the chairperson should be from a homeschool organization exclusively representing RSA 193A families. Clarifying discussion ensued. Ms. Rohrbacher asked that each home education member representative attest to the status of their organization, who they represent, and whether the organization is exclusively representing RSA 193A.

Ms. Rohrbacher asked Mr. Carney if he could offer any guidance on the discussion of chair appointment. He stated that his response would generally be based on the specific rule of law. He mentioned that there is ambiguity in the law. For example, it does not define what a home education organization is. He pointed out that the appointing authority is required to be a home education organization within the state. The organization can nominate somebody who is not part of their organization. It does not say that you have to be a member. It was suggested that it is up to HEAC to interpret the language of the law in making the vote for what the chair should be.

Ms. Pattison joined the meeting via Zoom at 2:45PM.

Mr. Zuech was nominated by Ms. Rohrbacher. Ms. Barker seconded the motion. Roll Call: All in favor.

**Appointments/Resignations:** Aly Landrigan, DOE home education support person, was unable to attend the meeting. James O'Rourke, from the principals association, was unable to attend the meeting. Recruitment: Mr. Carney mentioned that there were vacancies on the council. The NH School Board Association will not be nominating a candidate at this time. Mr. Carney clarified that nominations for the two vacant home educator positions must come from a home education organization or association in the state. Nominations are submitted to Commissioner.

**Agenda review:** Chair reviewed. No changes made.

**Minutes:** No changes. Motion to accept September 20, 2024 minutes made Ms. Barker. Ms. Rohrbacher seconded the motion. Roll call: All in favor.

**Public comments:** Michelle Levell, Director GSHE, read a letter which she had sent to the HEAC members on December 19, 2024 ( Attachment A). Amanda Weeden, leadership of GSHE & Christian Home Educators of NH & So. Maine spoke. Ms. Northcutt, Bedford, NH, homeschool mom spoke.

Discussion ensued, stemming from Ms. Weeden's public comment. Ms. Nolin informed everyone present that she had sent the email, which became meeting materials, to Mr. Carney to inform him of the concerns contained within it, which he would need to answer. Mr. Carney apologized and suggested that the referenced materials be shredded. There were serious concerns about the production of meeting materials which are not appropriate, or properly vetted, being reproduced without permission from the author. It was recommended that moving forward, no such letter, no such communication, should be part of the preparatory materials unless the author has been contacted and has authorized such disclosure.

**Commissioner's Report:** Mr. Carney reported that the DOE saw a significant spike in notifications this year with an increase of 40% over the same period last year, measuring from October 1st to September 30th. Mr. Carney reviewed council membership, Ms. Landrigan's role at the DOE, and Ms. Wheeler's effort to address the Ed700 rule change.

**Legislative Updates:** Sen. Ward mentioned that her term had expired and her new assignment letter had not been received, but she will attend council meetings until she hears otherwise.

**Member reports:** Ms. Barton had no updates. Ms. Nolin inquired whether Khanmigo could be made available to home educators. She discussed a student resource, Major Choice, which was recently accredited through the DOE.

Ms. Rohrbacher voiced concerns that families that are participating in the tax credit scholarship program are experiencing increasingly lengthy transaction processing times. Mr Carney suggested that HEAC might consider sending a letter with these concerns to the Commissioner. The council voted to have Ms. Rohrbacher draft an advisory letter which the council will review and approve before sending it to the Commissioner. Ms. Rohrbacher then read Amanda Weeden's letter to HEAC which was received on November 18, 2024 (Attachment B). Discussion ensued and each HEAC representative revealed their personal educational status as exclusively RSA 193A.

Mr. Zuech had no updates. Ms. Pattison had no updates. Ms. Barker mentioned that she fields questions, reviews rules, and reminds others of the obligation to support home education families.

**New Business:** Ms. Villani's resignation created one vacancy per committee. Ms. Rohrbacher volunteered to serve on the Grievance Committee with Ms. Barker and Ms. Nolin. Mr. Zuech volunteered to serve on the Rules Committee with Ms. Barker, Mr. Koski, and Ms. Pattison. Motion was made by Ms. Nolin. Ms. Rohrbacher seconded the motion. Roll call: All in favor

Senator Ward announced at 4:01PM that she was leaving the meeting. Ms Rohrbacher interjected and asked Senator Ward about LSR 2025-61 regarding her sponsorship of a universal home education freedom account bill. Amanda Weeden directly inquired with Sen. Ward regarding this bill, with concerns about RSA 193A being left out of the bill.

Per Ms. Barker's request, HEAC meetings will be scheduled for the second Friday of the month, beginning in 2025. HEAC will meet on January 10, 2025, with the following meeting on February 14,

2025. All holidays were checked against the new schedule and no conflicts appear. Ms. Barker motioned. Mr. Zuech seconded. Roll call: All in favor.

**LSRs:** Mr Zuech referred to a list of pending LSRs on the agenda. Discussion ensued as to their relevancy as agenda items. No further action was taken.

**Information Items:** Ms. Zuech referenced the items as listed. Mr. Carney mentioned that HEAC is an outlet to pass this information along to the home education community.

**Announcement:** Next meeting is January 10, 2025.

**Open Board Discussions:** Ms. Barker felt that the discussions which took place during the meeting were healthy and helpful, as difficult as they may be.

**Non-Public Session:** None.

**Adjournment:** At 4:15PM a motion for adjournment was made by Ms. Rohrbacher. Seconded by Ms. Nolin.

**Attachments:** A) M. Levell letter of December 19, 2024. B) A. Weeden letter of November 18, 2024.

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