

## **Meeting of the Home Education Advisory Council --notes**

**January 28, 2021**

### **Meeting held remotely via Zoom**

Chairperson Kitty Michelotti called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m. (Not sure I have the times for start and adjourn correct)

Members present: Kitty Michelotti, Jen Pereira, George D’Orazio, Sen. Ruth Ward, Stefanie Marsh, Michael Koski. Member of the public: Michelle Levell

Sen. Ruth Ward asked if it was necessary to read the text of the [Governor’s emergency order #12](#) before proceeding.

### **Minutes**

There was not a quorum, so minutes were not approved.

### **Chairperson’s Report**

Kitty reported that the updated home education rules, Ed 315, were approved by JLCAR (Joint Legislative Committee on Administrative Rules) on Dec. 17, 2020 and will take effect 45 days after passage.

Relative to the IHBG policy for homeschoolers put forward by the NH School Boards Association—SDGA (School District Governance Assn.) requested they consider an alternate policy and wrote one for them. This was made available on line and sent to all NH school board members.

### **Member Reports**

**Jen P. (CUHE)**- reported new homeschooler activity has slowed down.

**George D. (CUHE)**- thought it was a good sign that Army recruiters had reached out to HEAC and homeschooling groups to invite them to an online Lunch and Learn session about opportunities in the army.

**Stef M. (NHHC)**- said she has been in conversation with the Commissioner of Labor about correcting unclear information regarding Youth Employment Certificates. Forms on the DoL website still tell employers that young people (age 12-15) must get their certificates from the school, even though a 2016 law change now allows parents to issue these certificates. Stef has been working with them to correct links and rewrite their forms. She’ll keep the HEAC updated.

She expressed concern that the College Board was abolishing SAT subject tests which homeschoolers have used to confirm their academic preparation for competitive colleges. Homeschoolers can take AP tests, but have to decide in November to take a test in May, and many homeschooled students like to wait to see how their learning and interests are developing before deciding what subject areas they want final tests in. Other Council members had heard similar concerns. Another option is general subject tests through the ACT program.

Stef reported that there is once again a statement on the Department of Education website explaining that NH is a self-certifying state and does not issue credentials for high school completion. This statement used to be on the site, but was removed in a recent rebuild. It's helpful for parents to be able to direct college admissions officials to that page, to confirm that they may certify high school completion for their child, and thus meet federal financial aid requirements.

**Fred F. (Higher Ed)**—reported through Kitty that Thomas More College has been holding in person classes. They are very pleased with the achievements of their homeschooled first-years, who were reading Virgil at a faster pace than the upperclassmen.

**Mike K. (School Principals)**-said that the NH School Principals Assn. was opposed to the upcoming HB20 which allows for the state money for a pupil to be placed in an educational freedom account and used for a wide variety of options, including private school tuition, tutoring, online programs, and therapies. The bill recognizes learning opportunities outside of the public school system. The Principals Assn. has the usual concerns of money leaving the public school system and parents not following through on their child's education. The hearing on this bill is Feb. 2 at 1:15.

Discussion moved into how to attend hearings online and testify. Information is on the General Court site at <http://gencourt.state.nh.us/misc/House%20Remote%20Testimony%20Directions.pdf>. **Rep. Cordelli** (who was not present) also wanted Council members to be aware of upcoming bills and how to attend the hearings. People wanting to testify via Zoom should register early. Email testimony can also be submitted.

**Sen. Ward** discussed legislation that would allow charter schools to have priority in utilizing unused space in public school buildings. This works in New York.

### **Announcements**

Kitty presented information about Schoolhouse.world, a partnership with Khan Academy and the NH Department of Education, providing free small-group tutoring sessions. NH is a beta test location for this. We should encourage high school homeschoolers to try out the program and report their result to the HEAC or the Commissioner.

Michelle L. gave us an update on happenings at Granite State Home Educators. Many people tried remote learning for the first semester, but are now switching to homeshooling. GSHE has an early college planning session tonight and a careers in trades event on Feb. 11. They, and Latitude Learning, are recipients of a VELA grant to help with outreach during the pandemic.

Meeting adjourned at 4:30.

Notes recorded by Stefanie Marsh