

normally every nine weeks. This particular provision of the law has caused a great deal of confusion among both public school officials and home school parents in the past. A few points of clarification:

- a) This provision does not require that the home school parents submit these reports to their local school district, state department of education, or anyone else. It simply requires that they maintain the records in some sort of ongoing fashion.
  - b) HSR makes no statement concerning the form which these scholarship reports must take. The form may be a traditional report card, a portfolio of exemplary work, a narrative assessment or any one of many other forms of assessment. The point seems to be that there needs to be some reasonable record of academic accomplishment maintained by the parents in the home school.
  - c) We would recommend that whatever your preferred form of student assessment, the records be kept in a formal, organized manner for two reasons: first, this will be your child's permanent record of educational accomplishment. It is only right that the records be in a form that is concise and useful. Second, in the event your records should ever come under scrutiny by someone else, the quality of your school will be judged to some degree by the quality of your records. While it may be the case that records kept on the back of envelopes, calendar pages, or paper plates do meet the letter of the law, such a casual approach to record keeping would raise doubts in the minds of skeptics.
5. Keep an attendance book. It can be a book you obtain from writing the state, a grade book you purchase at a local office supply store, a computer log, or any other reasonable method for maintaining attendance. Be sure that you can account for at least the minimum required hours (1,050 hours) per year in your records.

Many families combine the requirements of this provision and provision #4 above in one grade book which keeps both attendance and scholarship records.

6. HSR #6 is one of the most controversial portions of the home school law in Kentucky. It provides that private schools shall be open to inspection by directors of pupil personnel or officials of the Department of Education. It is believed that this was originally written without awareness of the existence of home schools, places that were both homes and schools.

As a result, the provisions of this statute appears to conflict with the rights given by the U.S. Constitution to every American citizen against unreasonable search and seizure.

It is our understanding that "home inspections" by school personnel will stop at the threshold unless consent is given by the homeowner. In the absence of imminent threat (the house is on fire, for instance) entry into a private home can only occur with the presentation of a lawfully executed warrant. All homeschoolers should be aware of this fact.

On the other hand, if genuine concerns exist in the mind of school personnel as to the legitimacy of a particular home school, it may be in that family's interest to meet with the school official, preferably at a neutral site, in order to address any questions.

In conclusion, we recommend consideration of the following:

- a) In the event you are informed of an impending visit, talk with the official and try to agree upon a suitable time and place outside your home to review your records.
- b) In the event a home visit is unannounced or in cases where prior mutually agreeable arrangements cannot be made, we recommend that you seriously consider the ramifications of allowing government officials to enter your home without warrant. It is certainly your prerogative to invite anyone to see your home school: friends, family or local school officials. It is another thing for you to accede to their demand to review your material in your home.
- c) Furthermore, we suggest that you conduct your home school in such an exemplary manner that no one in your community will be concerned about the quality of the job you are doing.

### **Considerations prior to embarking on a home school journey**

In order to have the very best possible experience as a home schooling parent, we suggest that you take into consideration the following practical issues; responsible home education can be a daunting task and should not be entered into without due consideration. Although it affords ample opportunity for educational excellence and flexibility, it requires a high degree of commitment and

energy to be successful. Listed below are some factors that should be thoroughly considered prior to embarking on a home school journey.

Home schooling is very time-consuming. To do an adequate job the home school parent(s) must devote considerable time and energy to class preparation, instructional time, grading papers, etc. Many families have had to change their lifestyle significantly -- switching from a two-income to a one-income family, for instance -- in order to accommodate the demands of homeschooling. It is a decision that should not be made on impulse or without sufficient forethought.

Home schooling requires initiative. While excellent material is available to assist the home schooling parent, putting it together in a manageable form for a given family requires a great deal of work and creativity. Since each family is different it is clear that the final form home education takes will vary from family to family. To be a good home schooler requires a certain independent spirit, willingness to try new things and a reasonable level of self-confidence.

Home schools are not accredited by the State. Unless a home schooling family functions as a satellite classroom for an accredited school, the diploma awarded by a home school may not be recognized by other schools or agencies. Some home schooled children take the General Equivalency Diploma (GED) exam for the purpose of obtaining a standard credential. Other college-bound home school graduates take the SAT or ACT tests and usually have little problem with college admission.

For more information regarding home schooling in your area, contact Kentucky Home Education Association at P.O. Box 51951, Bowling Green, KY 42102-5891 or Christian Home Educators of Kentucky, 691 Howardstown Road, Hodgenville, KY 42748.

## **II. Best Practice Approach to Home School Verification**

In the interest of the education of all children in the Commonwealth of Kentucky, and based upon the laws as they relate to compulsory attendance of school age children and their right to an education, whether in a public or private/home school, the following best practice approach is suggested as a way both public and private/home school personnel may approach the question of insuring that all children are enrolled in a bonafide school.

**A.** Parents/Guardians of school age children, by law, must

notify the public school district of the enrollment of their child(ren) in a private or parochial school within the first two weeks of each public school year. Home school representatives of Christian Home Educators of Kentucky and the Kentucky Home Education Association and the officers of the Kentucky Directors of Pupil Personnel Association agree that in the absence of any mitigating factors the school(s) which have properly notified public school districts should be presumed to be in compliance with the law and operating a bonafide school; thus, necessitating no further investigation.

- B.** It is the responsibility of the local director of pupil personnel or his/her designee to investigate any evidence which would suggest that a child(ren) is not enrolled in a bonafide school. The investigation is for the sole purpose of determining that a bonafide school does exist and in no way is intended to investigate and approve the education provided by the school. Any investigation could include, but is not limited to, phone calls, home visits (the privacy of the home must be recognized and no visit inside the home may be conducted without the consent of an adult resident or a duly issued warrant), review of academic and attendance documents, etc.
- C.** Circumstances/evidence which would cause a public school district to have concern about whether or not a bonafide school did exist, thus causing an investigation to occur, would include, but is not limited to:
1. Notification, after the public school year has begun and at any time other than a semester break, by parent/guardian of intent to withdraw their child(ren) from the public school for the purpose of home schooling; (This would not apply to students moving in from out-of-district.)
  2. Notification by the parent/guardian of intent to home school their child(ren) when disciplinary action (i.e. truancy, expulsion, notification relative to driver's license, etc.) was being contemplated or had begun;
  3. Request from an agency or individual to determine if the child(ren) are in school. Requests from an agency concerned with child welfare (i.e. juvenile court, Department of Social Service, etc.) should be investigated as a matter of course. Requests made by a private citizen should proceed only as it relates to probable cause and/or legal requirements;