

FHE wants to take a moment to thank you all for your vigilance and hard work in answering the summons to contact your state senators about SB255, which would establish a government-funded educational savings account program. Supporters of FHE know that the purpose of FHE is to protect the inalienable rights of the parents of Missouri to teach their own children at home without further state regulation and control. We believe that your voices are being heard by the Legislature.

The senators came back from spring break the week of March 20, and there has been an enormous amount of flurry and negotiations around SB 411 & SB 230, the "Homeschool Activities Bill". FHE has remained neutral on these bills in the past mainly due to it not affecting our actual homeschool law. However, new language has been added to the bills that have enabled FHE to change our position to be in support of the bill as currently written. The amended version of these bills will protect homeschoolers by creating clear distinctions between homeschoolers that choose to participate in public school activities and events or participate in the MOScholars program and those that do not. This bill will also repeal RSMo 167.042 from the Statutes removing the optional, but often misunderstood, "Written Declaration of Enrollment" of intent to home school.

UPDATES as of March 23, 2023: The Senate Education and Workforce Development Committee voted "Do Pass" on SCS SB 411 & 230 this morning. The vote was 5 to 4; however, some of the "no" votes were made due to the lateness of the bill amendments getting sent out to the committee and not enough opportunity to actually review the changes.

It is the "Homeschool Activities Bill". Families for Home Education has been neutral on these bills in the past; however, the current version of the bill has changed FHE's position on the bill from neutral to support. As you read through the provided bill links or the bulleted list of the changes, please remember that these are not yet laws. The bills in the legislature have a long way to go in order to become a law. At this time, watchful waiting is recommended.

***Bill with amendments:**

<https://senate.mo.gov/23info/pdf-bill/SCSfromResearch/SB411.pdf>

Current bill summary with its amendments:

https://senate.mo.gov/23info/BTS_Web/Bill.aspx?SessionType=R&BillID=419482

Understanding Legislative Language:

[Understanding Legislative Language | Families for Home Education \(fhe-mo.org\)](#)

***When reading the bill,** it helps to understand that several statutes that are already law are in the bill because they required some adjustments in the wording. Look for the parts that are underlined (new wording to be added to the statute) and shadowed out [words to be taken out of the statute]. Those are the parts being changed or added.

Highlights of the changes:

1. SCS SB 411 & 230 removes Home School from the MOScholars program. To do this the bill is creating a new school designation, a Family Connected School.
2. The bill will also remove RSMo 167.042 from the statutes. RSMo 167.042 is the optional "Declaration of Enrollment" of intent to Home School. This is one of the most contentious aspects of withdrawing a child parents have with the school districts. FHE has promoted removing this section of the statutes for several years.

Further Clarification:

A Home School will remain with the same definition, but will not be able to participate in public school activities and events or participate in the MOScholars program.

A Family Connected School will be able to participate in public school activities and events and participate in the MOScholars program.

Both a Home School and a Family Connected School will be required to keep the same records: plan book or diary; portfolio of examples of child's work; record of evaluations; and offer 1000 hours of instruction.

* Unlike the MOScholars program, the rules for participating in public school activities and events are already established in the bill and do not delegate the responsibilities of establishing new rules to the Treasurer's Office.

* Since we do not register as home schoolers, there is nothing in this bill that requires a family to "register" as a family connected school.

* The school cannot prevent a student from trying out for a sport or participating in a program and will need to treat the family connected children the same as they do the public school children. The schools cannot create one set of rules for the public school children and a different set for the family connected students. Equal footing, equal opportunity.

* They also cannot require the classes that MSHSAA and many of the schools require currently. Pages 28-30

* The parent or guardian is responsible for the academic standard of the student. (Page 30 Number 6), not the public school or district.

* The school is allowed to create attendance requirements that are standard across the board for all students. Obviously, if you do not show up for practices, you may lose your opportunity to participate. That is only fair.

This will help to protect the freedoms of the traditional homeschoolers while allowing for those that desire to be a part of public school activities and/or the MOScholars program which is overseen by the state.

Since SCS SB 411 & 230 will protect a traditional home school by removing a home school from the MOScholars program, distinguish between those participating in public school activities and events, and remove 167.042 from the statutes, Families for Home Education is supporting SCS SB 411 & 230.