

FHE Families for Home Education
Winter Bulletin/
January 2024

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Legislative Update

ZOOM

Our FREE zooms are back after we took a holiday break. We are excited for a new registration process through our website. Just go to Events, scroll down for the Zoom you need, and register so that we know who will be joining us. See you on the Zoom.

<https://fhe-mo.org/events>

New Homeschool
High School
Thinking Outside the Box

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<https://fhe-mo.org/>



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

By Erin and Charyti Jackson

Mid-Year Evaluations

How is your school year going? What are some things that are going great? What is something that needs to be changed or improved? Changes that need to be made now or something that you need to look at changing for next year? With the curriculum catalogs starting to arrive in the mail, it is so easy to start dreaming about next year, but first let's look at the current year.

Are you where you want to be in regard to curriculum plans and hours? Or has this year been full of unexpected events that have put school on the back burner to deal with the urgent? If it has been a rough year, let's take a look at some of the things that can help make the second half of the year better and easier, especially if things are still in survival/recovery mode. First, write down exactly where things are from what lesson number/unit each child is in of each subject, figure out where you are at with the required hours. Write down one success that each child has had – it doesn't have to be school related, just a success. Sometimes the greatest achievements have nothing to do with academics! Now let's figure out what needs to be accomplished to finish out the year. There is nothing that says that a curriculum has to be completed. It could be that you decide to put the curriculum away and work on other (cont. on page 2)



Then, in a couple of months, decide if you want to finish it next year or start something new. Or it could be the child knows the material being covered and you need to decide if you go to the next level or just decide to do something totally different for the rest of the year.

So how to get hours in when either there are a lot of hours to complete or a curriculum break is needed, but hours are still needed. One of the easiest ways is reading – you read to the child, the child reading, audio books, YouTube reading books, siblings reading to the other children (great way for one to work on reading aloud while the other works on listening skills). Some easy ways to get this time in are during mealtimes, rest time, bedtime while the child is awake – sleeping while audio books play doesn't count. Other ways are games, and don't think that games are just for elementary children. There are games for all ages and fields of learning. One field that has some great learning games is chemistry. Games are great for reviewing things that have been learned.

Another place to get hours is watching educational movies/TV. There are many fantastic educational videos on history and science. Your child may have something that they want to learn about, which gives a great reason to go explore your local library, museums, or visit with people who are in that field or have studied that specific topic.



A little of this and a little of that

Website News

FHE is always trying to be good stewards of the money you entrust to us thru your memberships. We have made 2 major upgrades to our website: Online Zoom Registration and Region Adjustments, both to better serve our membership. Also, don't forget to check the Member's Only Section of the website once you log in. We are working on a blog section and hope to have that operating soon.

FHE TURNED 40 IN 2023

THANK YOU FOR HELPING US CELEBRATE OUR 40TH ANNIVERSARY.
CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL OUR MONTHLY DRAWING WINNERS:

- January—Shauna G., Region 6w, Homeschool Journal
- February—Becky & Ryan J., Region 3, Homeschool Journal
- March—Noelle & Dustin D., Region 3, 1 Year Membership
- April—Francine & Patrick Z., Region 5, 2 Year Membership
- May— Angie S., Region 4, First Things First
- June—Teresa & Andrew G., Region 4, 1 Year Membership
- July—Rachel & Kyle H., Region 5, 2 Year Membership
- August – Jennifer S. & Jesse M., Region 6w, First Things First
- Sept – Sammantha & Chris M., Region 7, 1 Year Membership
- October – Salina & Dennis H., Region 6e, 2 Year Membership
- November – Kelly & Will N., Region 7, First Things First
- December – Collette, & Alfred J., Region 2, Homeschool Journal

Region 3 KC area: Looking for a Winter Dance and Prom for your teen? We have you covered.

Moonlight Masquerade – February 17

Prom – April 20

Graduation registration is now closed, but join us for our annual Graduation Ceremony on May 11, and consider FHE for your upcoming seniors next year.

Registration Details can be found:

[Region 3](#)

[Facebook Group Link](#)

[Senior Class Website](#)

FHE Historical Records

Families for Home Education (FHE) was founded in 1983. In late 1984, with FHE's backing, a class action lawsuit was filed to declare Missouri's compulsory education statute void for "vagueness" and "overbreadth".

By Federal Court Order of July 5, 1985, Judge F. Nangle ruled that the portion of RSMo (1978) statute 167.031, which related to instruction at home, be and is void. The court limited its ruling only to the "vagueness" question. Since there was no alternative statutory provision for home education in Missouri, the Court transferred to the Legislature the responsibility of enacting a new statute by May 15, 1986, the final date of the 1986 Missouri Legislative Session.

In the end, the FHE proposed bill did not prevail. Instead, a much more contorted bill, Senate Bill 795, went down to the wire, and passed the legislature in the last three minutes of the last day of the 1986 session. FHE did not endorse this version of the bill, but agreed not to oppose the bill. In spite of its problems, however, this bill did give complete freedom to parents to educate their children at home within certain guidelines easily met by any conscientious home educator.

Thus, "Missouri's home educators learned for themselves the ancient lesson that freedom is never free. Our current freedom to educate our children at home is the result of many long hours of prayer, lobbying, negotiation, education, letter writing and watchdogging. In the end, and as a result of their tremendous display of unity, home schoolers secured for themselves what many have said is one of the best home education environments in the nation. It is a fact that many families have moved to Missouri because of this greater educational freedom.

There will always be those who would steal that hard won freedom if we do not remain vigilant and united. So, to you, in this day and in this hour, heed this sober warning — **Freedom is both dear and expensive. It must be fought for to be gained and vigorously defended once attained.** May God grant us the collective wisdom and strength of spirit to guard our freedom well." (*First Things First*, "Educational Freedom in Missouri", pp. 7-8)

After 40 years, Families for Home Education (FHE) continues to exist to recognize and protect the right of every parent in Missouri to educate their child at home. We seek no financial aid from any government entity, and we ask for no further restrictions on the current statute governing home education in Missouri.



WE 
HOME SCHOOL!

The Missouri home school law defines a home school as a "school" ... that has as its primary purpose the provision of private or religious-based instruction".

For more information about the history of homeschooling and FHE, head to our website. <https://fhe-mo.org/about>



"THE FUNCTION OF EDUCATION IS TO TEACH ONE TO THINK INTENSIVELY AND TO THINK CRITICALLY. INTELLIGENCE PLUS CHARACTER – THAT IS THE GOAL OF TRUE EDUCATION." MLK JR.



AMBASSADOR PROGRAM

FHE is opening up volunteer opportunities in our new Ambassador Program to work alongside our Board. Our hope is to allow a broader base of support for our Missouri homeschooling families. The Ambassador Program volunteers will not be active board members and will not have a board vote in decisions. If interested, please contact Charyti Jackson, FHE Executive Director, at info@fhe-mo.org, to receive an application.

Qualifications:

- * Must have a heart for parents and homeschooling; servant’s heart for ALL homeschooling families
- * Travel may be involved
- * Current FHE membership (or you need to renew, go to our website at <https://fhe-mo.org/>)
- * Homeschooling at least 2 years with one full year of record keeping
- * Must have a heart to learn

Help Needed, but not limited to:

- * Join our group to help share posts to your region from our FHE Facebook Business page
- * Help with regional events and/or conventions
- * Participate in training to host Homeschool Workshops in person and/or zoom
- * Other skills and/or interests

FHE reserves the right to review all applications and accept or deny as needed. Thank you so much for your interest and consideration. We appreciate you.

Used Sales & Resource Fairs

Mark Your Calendars

St Louis Regional Area Annual Homeschool Resource Fair

July 13, 2024, from 10:00-1:00
2500 Metro Blvd, Maryland Heights 63043

Free for the whole family

Kim is JUST in the beginning planning stages for our annual summer Resource Fair, so check back on our Region 5 page for upcoming details later this spring.

However, the date is set, so
MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW.

<https://fhe-mo.org/region5>

Kansas City Regional Area Used Curriculum & Resource Fair

Stay Tuned for details.

<https://fhe-mo.org/region3>





WINTERTIME BLUES



By Kim Quon, Region 5 Director

It's hard to get back into the swing of homeschooling after the holidays, especially if you are not a winter person like me. No sunshine. Cold, windy, and snow are all in the forecast. Ugh, I'm sitting here as I write on a day of zero and subzero temperatures already dreaming about spring. So, what can we do to get over the wintertime blues?

Hunker down with some great literature books for family reading time and break out the hot chocolate, blankets, and warm cookies.

Set up some board game nights for lots of family time and some learning to go along with it. Reading and spelling skills, memorization, and following directions are all part of Language Arts. Basic math skills, counting dots on the dice, spatial recognition (puzzles), strategy/critical thinking (Chess, Risk, etc.) and game banker are all Math. Other games more specific to Social Studies or Science count too.

Push to get book work done in anticipation of taking time off in the spring to go outside to play, explore, splash in the rain puddles, and start your gardens. No since in a math lesson taking precedence over the good stuff. And yes, math is important, but we tried to get as much done as possible while we had to stay inside.

Have the kids write thank you notes or simple homey letters for older relatives and friends now that the holidays are over. Great for writing practice and counts for Language Arts.

Make bird feeders to place in the back yard. Then identify the birds that stop by, graph the numbers especially if you have 2 different kinds of feeders and food, research the family's favorite birds to know their characteristics and migration. Lots of Science in this fun project.

Break out the reams of paper and create an amazing history timeline or family tree. Our timeline used to circle our kitchen and down the stairs to the family room. Then I started putting it into a 3 ring binder when it just got too big.

Make some memories and stay warm this winter. Happy New Year!!



Convention time is coming soon. My children are grown now, but I still love convention time, even though I have nothing left to purchase. Between the various vendors and workshops, there is something for just about everyone. Here are some tips and tricks I learned over the many years of attending as a homeschool parent. Enjoy! And don't forget to stop by the FHE table. For GHC, please use discount code GHCMO24 when registering.

1. Wear comfortable clothing and bring a sweater if you get cold easily. Sometimes the rooms are a bit chilly.
2. Bring a cart on wheels. Books and supplies can get very heavy, especially if you can't get to your car/van right away.
3. Create stick-on address labels at home so that you can easily attach them to the giveaway forms at the vendor tables. So much easier than handwriting the same information at so many tables.
4. Take a look at the schedule of workshops and vendors ahead of time to get a lay of the land so to speak. Get some ideas of who you want to visit and what workshops you want to attend. Things can and probably will change over the course of the weekends, but at least you have a game plan going in.
5. Try not to be overwhelmed, especially if you are a first timer. Think through what curriculum and supplies you know you have to look at, and go to those vendors first. Then check out the rest. That way you are not distracted and can stay focused on the must haves.

Join FHE for our ANNUAL Homeschool Day at the Capitol – March 5, 2024

Homeschool Day at the Capitol has always been a favorite for our family. What a great field trip day and all hours count towards Social Studies, core. Our FHE program starts at 12:15 in the beautiful Capitol Rotunda with music from one of our homeschool groups, Watson School of Music, in St James, MO. If you have not heard them before, you are in for a treat. Then the program will start at 12:30 and run until around 2:00. Our lobbyist will give a update on what is happening in Jefferson City in regards to bills that may affect our homeschool law. And we will have visits from legislators, most who were either homeschooled as children and/or are homeschooling their own children. They are in the trenches with you and know exactly what you are dealing with. Come hear the words of encouragement. We will also have a Q&A time towards the end if time allows.

However, that is not all that is in store for you that day. Set up a tour of the Capitol, but call early since these generally fill up quickly. <https://mostateparks.com/page/55179/capitol-tours>

Visit your legislators and let them know you are there for the day. They love to see families. Homeschoolers are also a valuable voting voice, so don't be afraid to let them know you are at the Capitol and introduce your family to them. Contact them at least 2 weeks ahead of time to get on their calendar. Maybe they can introduce your family on the floor chamber or arrange for you to go to the top of the dome. If you are not sure who your legislators are, this is a helpful link. <https://www.senate.mo.gov/LegisLookup/Default>

And there are 2 amazing museums on both sides of the Rotunda. Also, go to the Secretary of State's Office for a free copy of the Missouri Constitution. It's a great addition to your homeschool library and resources.

The Supreme Court Building is on High Street across from the Capitol. You can schedule a tour by calling 573-751-4144. Also, the State Highway Patrol Safety Education Center and Museum is on East Elm and tours can be scheduled there as well, but may require at least 10 in the group. Call 573-526-6149 to set up that tour. The Governor's Mansion also has tours that you can schedule. It's just a block or so down the street from the Capitol, a leisurely walk without having to find another parking place.

<https://mostateparks.com/page/55182/missouri-governors-mansion-tours>

And speaking of parking, arrive early. Parking can be a bit tricky, so you have to plan for it. If you are in Metered Parking, don't forget your quarters. Our website has a map and information about parking that will be helpful to look at as you plan your visit.

Lots of information and stay up to date regarding the day by checking our website. Hope to see you on March 5! <https://fhe-mo.org/2023fhehomeschooldayatthecapitol>



Homeschool Day in the Capitol Rotunda

March 5, 2024

12:15-2:00 PM



WHAT FHE REGION ARE YOU IN?

One of the changes we made lately to the website was to revamp the counties within the regions. Changes in **Bold**. Some didn't make sense and others just needed to be moved due to their location. FHE is here to help all of you around the state, but for local information, it's easier to break the state into regions. Head over to our Regions link for updated information in your area. <https://fhe-mo.org/regions>

Region 1/Northwest: Andrew, Atchison, Buchanan, Caldwell, Carroll, Clinton, Daviess, De Kalb, Gentry, Grundy, Harrison, Mercer, Holt, Livingston, Nodaway, Worth

Region 2/Northeast: Adair, **Chariton**, Clark, Knox, Lewis, **Linn**, Macon, Marion, **Monroe**, Pike, Putnam, Ralls, **Randolph**, Schuyler, Scotland, Shelby, Sullivan

Region 3/KC MO: **Bates**, Cass, Clay, **Henry**, Jackson, Johnson, Lafayette, Platte, Ray

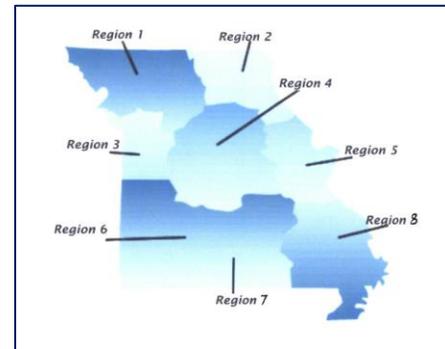
Region 4/Jeff City: Audrain, Benton, Boone, Callaway, Camden, Cole, Cooper, Howard, Maries, Miller, Moniteau, Morgan, **Osage**, Pettis, Saline

Region 5/St Louis: Franklin, Gasconade, Jefferson, Lincoln, Montgomery, St. Charles, St. Louis, Warren

Region 6 (old 6w)/Southwest: Barry, Barton, Cedar, Christian, Dade, Greene, Hickory, Jasper, Lawrence, McDonald, Newton, Polk, St. Clair, Stone, Taney, Vernon

Region 7 (old 6e)/Mid-South: Crawford, Dallas, Dent, Douglas, Howell, Laclede, Oregon, Ozark, Phelps, Pulaski, Shannon, Texas, Webster, Wright

Region 8 (old 7)/Southeast: Bollinger, Butler, Cape Girardeau, Carter, Dunklin, Iron, Madison, Mississippi, New Madrid, Pemiscot, Perry, Reynolds, Ripley, Scott, St. Francois, Ste. Genevieve, Stoddard, Washington, Wayne



2024 Conventions—Mark Your Calendars

<p><u>Great Homeschool Conventions</u> St. Charles March 21-23, 2024 Discount Code: GHCMO24</p>	<p><u>Midwest Parent Educators</u> Kansas City April 5-6, 2024</p>	<p><u>Teach Them Diligently Conference</u> Branson May 16-18, 2024</p>
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By Sheryl Schmidt, FHE Lobbyist

Traditional Home School

During the 2023 legislative session the Missouri Senate Education Committee brought forward a new school designation, the FLEX School (Family Led Education eXperience). To be clear, FHE did not come up with the idea of two legislative categories of homeschool families.

What would the two school designations mean?

A “traditional” home school would continue on as it has by providing a private or religious based education. The record keeping requirements and hours will continue as they have since 1986. No changes. A traditional home school would not participate in the public school activities or the MO Scholars program. This category is where most home educating parents probably fall.

The FLEX school students will be those students participating in the public school activities and/or the MO Scholars program. They will also be required to keep the mandated homeschool records and hours.

For all practical purposes the home school and the FLEX school students will continue to interact in co-ops, home education activities, etc. just as they do now. The difference will be a legislative difference.

Every year is unique in leadership, members, issues, etc. This makes each session full of uncertainties. Therefore, we can never be certain about what comes through the legislative process. These separate categories (Traditional Home School and FLEX) as outlined in several current bills *might* help to protect a traditional home school from encroachment by the law makers. There are no guarantees in this process, but the distinctions now *could* help in the future.

So, if future legislatures seek to impose more restrictions on families participating in public school activities/classes or MO Scholars while agreeing to protect traditional home school families, their efforts could more easily be directed to the one (FLEX) while protecting traditional homeschool families from those same restrictions.

Since the two categories of homeschooling families present no harm, FHE does not oppose the concept.

The FLEX school along with the non-traditional student participation in public school activities is included in 3 bills this year: SB 819 sponsored by Senator Ben Brown, SB 902 sponsored by Senator Nick Schroer, and HB 1905 sponsored by Representative Josh Hurlbert.

Non-Academic Involvement in Public Schools – FHE’s policy

When dealing with non-academic involvement with public schools such as sports competitions and extracurricular activities or clubs, FHE must consider all dynamics. The three primary issues to balance are:

- 1.) Home school students having the equal opportunity to play on teams in their school district, or participate in programs or clubs with or without competitions.
- 2.) Home School sports teams afforded equal and fair access to play against public and/or private school teams of similar size and matched according to the same guidelines as other brick and mortar school teams. (cont. on page 9)

Report from the Capitol (cont. from page 8)

3.) First and foremost, adequate safeguards that home school sports or extracurricular participation does not result in additional regulatory schemes over home education.

FHE has no specific policy or legislative agenda in this arena other than to guarantee that no proposed legislation is advanced without appropriate protections against regulations.

Current public school policies are highly discriminatory against home education students in middle and high school grades. Participation in sports programs or non-academic extracurricular clubs and activities require a combination enrollment (enrollment in a home school and in the public school) of at least two hours of public school classes, but the local school may require more hours. This allows public schools to collect extra funding for those students, but it also creates an unfair and oppressive restriction on home school students and families.

While FHE recognizes these complications as unjust and discriminatory, we will not support any changes to the law unless it is balanced and guarantees home school freedoms. FHE will not support changes that only benefit some home school families and pit those who participate on home school teams against those who wish to join public school teams. Most importantly, FHE will not support any legislation that places home education or families at regulatory risks. Public school teachers who give qualifying grades to students to play on teams are never challenged, thus home schoolteachers must be treated the same.

Therefore, FHE is neutral on the non-academic involvement in public schools portion of the bills.

There are numerous other bills we are reading and watching. Stand by, check our website for Capitol report updates, and be ready to write an email or make a call if needed.

[Capitol Report Website Updates](#)

Thank you for your support and prayers as we travel through this session of the legislature. Hope to see you at our Home School Day at the Capitol on March 5th.

[Annual Homeschool Day Information](#)

FHE Membership	FHE Board of Directors and Staff
1 year membership—\$20	Erin and Charyti Jackson, Executive Directors/ Region 1 Directors
2 year membership—\$35	Don and Kim Quon, Asst Executive Directors/ Region 5 Directors
Autorenewal after 1st year—\$18	Sheryl Schmidt, FHE Lobbyist
<i>First Things First</i> —\$10 donation + \$5 shipping Homeschool Journal—\$20 donation + \$7 shipping	(All FHE Board & Staff are uncompensated, volunteer positions)
Join/Renew/Order https://fhe-mo.org/	