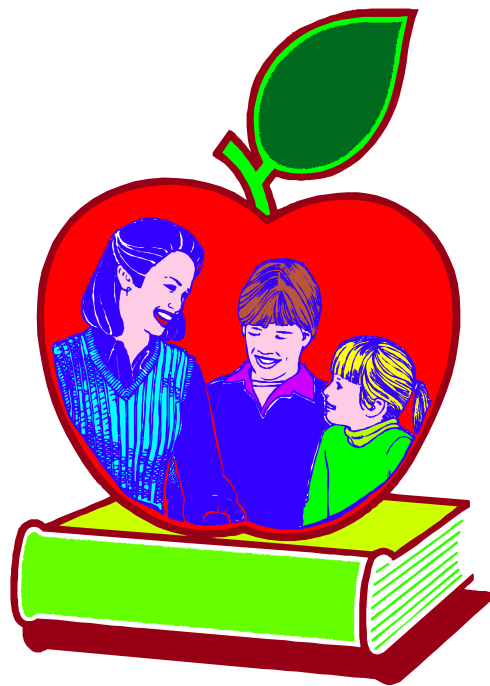


***GREEN COUNTRY  
HOME EDUCATORS  
RESOURCE  
ORGANIZATION***



**HANDBOOK  
& BYLAWS**

2004 Revision

## GENERAL INFORMATION

### WHO ARE WE?

*Green Country HERO is a Christian home school support group for families that allows non-Christian participation. The Officers must be Christians, all members must behave in a Christian manner, and our right to pray and have devotions at group functions is heartily defended.*

The family is the first and foremost educational, governmental, social, and spiritual institution created by God. In the family a child first learns how to learn, to govern himself, to develop social skills, and to establish a relationship with God. Memberships in HERO are considered to be by family. HERO was formed by five families in 1989 to provide fellowship for our children, support for one another, and activities for group participation. All five families originally lived in Glenpool; now HERO has members who live all over Tulsa and its surrounding areas.

We do not all belong to the same church or even the same faith. Our common goal of educating our children at home is the tie that binds us together. We do not require new members to sign a statement of faith, and we will not force others to subscribe to the religious or political beliefs of the majority or leadership of the group. However, our religious belief was a major consideration when many of us chose to homeschool. HERO occasionally offers opportunities with a decidedly Christian viewpoint, and we will pray at our various functions.

Because of the Christian identity of the group as a whole, all members are expected to uphold Christian standards of behavior at all support group functions, regardless of their personal beliefs. This includes personal discretion, kindness to others, and respect for authority. Those in leadership in the group must be professing Christians who are experienced home schoolers and persons of integrity currently teaching their own children.

### WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP?

As a resource organization, we provide a wide variety of social and educational opportunities including field trips organized by members, social events for children and adults, topical discussions or presentations, and regular meetings for mutual support. We also provide a membership directory, a monthly newsletter, a lending library, an HSLDA discount, and OCHEC affiliation. Information is passed quickly to members through e-mail updates or the emergency phone chain, and the HERO contact number is available for requesting information from the Officers.

**Monthly Newsletter:** The deadline for submissions to the HERO newsletter is listed on the information page of the newsletter. Members of HERO are welcome to submit articles relevant to home schooling in general or HERO in particular, but all submissions are subject to the editor's approval. If a submission is not published, the submitter is welcome to contact any Board member for reconsideration. At that point, the Board will determine future action. Advertisements may be placed in the newsletter at the discretion of the editor and subject to space availability. HERO members may place educational ads at no charge.

**Lending Library:** The HERO Resource Library is available to home schooling families, including both HERO and non-HERO members. A separate maintenance fee may be required at the discretion of the librarian and HERO Board. Library users are expected to commit to following the HERO library policies and participating in its success. A library list will be available for perusal at HERO business meetings. A copy of the list will be available for each member at the beginning of the operational year. Updates to the list may be available throughout the year for a per page charge or may be provided free through e-mail.

Materials may be checked out during library hours for one month periods (maximum ten items per family). Materials may be renewed monthly as long as there are no requests for the items and they are not due for inventory. No fines will be assessed, but no one with an overdue item will be allowed to check out materials until the item is returned. All materials are to be returned by June 30 for inventory before the close of HERO's operational year. Items not returned by June 30 should be replaced or a similar item donated as per the librarian.

### WHAT IS REQUIRED OF MEMBERS?

*HERO offers many opportunities for homeschooling families, but every family must be responsible for the following:*

**Acquiring materials from activity coordinators** – HERO may provide things like fair tickets, Book-It coupons, testing materials, etc. but each family must make arrangements for picking these items up or providing the coordinator with appropriate postage. The coordinator is not responsible for delivering or mailing such items to members.

**Arranging personal transportation** – Families must make their own arrangements for getting to and from activities.

**Honoring RSVP commitments** – Many field trips offer group rates or a limited number of spaces. If a family commits to attending an activity or field trip, that commitment should be honored or the coordinator should be contacted as soon as possible. If a fee was required, the family is responsible to pay the fee even if they cannot attend.

**Observing the HERO “Rules of Conduct” and other policies** – Adults are responsible for their own conduct as well as the behavior of the children in their care when participating in HERO events. (See Article IV of the Bylaws for further details.) Members must be careful to observe group policies and to respect the authority of the HERO Board in matters pertaining to HERO. Any member may contact the Board with suggestions or comments concerning any HERO issue.

*Additionally, members who desire more active involvement in the group, including voting and becoming eligible to serve as an Officer, must meet the following two participation requirements:*

**Providing two activities or services for the group** – There are many activities which require several people to plan them. Members new to the group or to the area should sign up for these if they are uncomfortable with planning an activity on their own. The Vice President can provide a list of activities which need coordinators as well as ideas for field trips and forms with guidelines for planning them. In addition to arranging activities for the group, there are many services which members can provide for the group, such as assisting the newsletter editor or providing testing materials. Some activities occur on a monthly basis and require an ongoing coordinator. Coordinating one ongoing activity, providing one ongoing service, or serving as an Officer also fulfills this participation requirement for the school year.

**Attending at least three business meetings** – The heart of HERO is in member relations and the support we give to one another. Members who rarely come to meetings do not know what the group is about and how they can help fulfill its purpose. Therefore, responsible members should be able to attend at least half of the business meetings, which amounts to three per year. Occasionally circumstances arise which prevent a member from attending a meeting. Under these circumstances the member should contact one of the Officers and request the minutes of the missed meeting prior to the next following business meeting. The Board will refer to “Robert’s Rules of Order” as a guideline to the proper conduct of organizational business.

## **HERO ACTIVITY GUIDELINES**

HERO activities are NOT "drop off" events -- children must be accompanied by an adult. Everyone is expected to maintain a high standard of behavior at all HERO events, but the activity coordinator is responsible for determining “appropriate” behavior for their particular event and for enforcing it. (See Article IV of the Bylaws for details.) The coordinator is also the one who decides how an activity will operate. Coordinators are responsible for checking the HERO calendar to avoid scheduling conflicting activities. They need to notify the Newsletter Editor before the news deadline if they want to have their activity announced in the newsletter, although spontaneous events can be announced through e-mail or the phone chain. Coordinators may also decide if they need to collect money ahead of time, how necessary materials will be distributed, and whether refunds can be given. Members who need ideas for activities may contact the Vice President.

*Below is a list of activities that have been provided through HERO in the past. Not all activities will be available every year as members choose what to plan for the group according to their individual interests.*

**Annual Activities:** Back To School Picnic, Camp-Out, Christmas Parade, Christmas Party, Cookie Exchange, Field Trips, Geography Fair, Science Fair, Thanksgiving Feast, Track/Field Day, Year-End Program.

**Ongoing Activities:** Art/Craft Coop, Boys Club, Bunco Group, Business Meetings, Forever Friends, Library Share Time, Little HERO's Club, Mom’s Night Out, Park Day, P.E. Coop, Other Coops (drama, history, speech, etc.).

**Service Opportunities:** Big Sister, Book-It Program, Kids Page Editor, Membership Directory, Newsletter Editor/Assistant, Resource Librarian/Assistant, School Pictures, Testing, Tulsa State Fair Tickets, Yearbook.

## **TULSA ACTIVITIES**

*The following is a partial list of activities that are generally available to all home schoolers in the Tulsa area:*

Art Classes, Chess Club, Dance Classes, Ice Skating, Geography Bee, Gymnastics Classes, Music Classes, P.E. Classes, Piano Lessons, Roller Skating, Spelling Bee, Sport Teams

More information as well as complete updates are available through a subscription to ***T.H.E. NEWS*** (published by the Tulsa Home Educators Coalition). To subscribe, contact **Linda Duntley** at ***T.H.E. NEWS***; P.O. Box 813; Glenpool, OK 74033 or e-mail her at **LDuntley@aol.com** or visit her website at **www.tulsahomeeducators.com**.

*Green Country Home Educators Resource Organization*

**BYLAWS**

*(Adopted 5-8-01)*

**PREAMBLE**

Green Country Home Educators Resource Organization was founded in 1989 and operated in accordance with loosely outlined procedures published within the body of a written instrument referred to as The HERO Handbook. Since its founding, the group has grown in its number of members, scope, influence, and resources. Therefore, in the fall of 2000 it was decided by the Board of Officers that formal bylaws by which to operate should be drafted, adopted, and published within the handbook.

**ARTICLE I. NAME**

The name of this voluntary organization shall be Green Country Home Educators Resource Organization, referred to herein simply as HERO. This organization is unique from and should not be confused with the group known as HERO of Oklahoma.

**ARTICLE II. PURPOSE**

HERO has a three-fold purpose: to represent the home school community in a manner that honors Jesus Christ, to assist those who desire to home school, and to promote home education in and beyond our community.

**ARTICLE III. MEMBERSHIP**

The operational year of HERO runs from August 1 through July 31 of the following year. Full voting membership in HERO may be granted to families who meet all the requirements listed below each year. Associate membership may be granted to individuals without children or to families who cannot meet the first two requirements listed below. Associate membership does not include voting privileges or eligibility for Officer positions. Visitors may attend up to two functions and two business meetings per year without joining the group but must abide by our "Rules of Conduct" while participating in HERO activities.

**REQUIREMENTS FOR MEMBERSHIP:**

- 1) Commit to coordinating one ongoing activity OR providing one ongoing service OR providing two individual activities/services OR serving as an Officer.
- 2) Commit to attendance at a minimum of three business meetings. If attendance at a meeting is not possible, contact one of the Officers to acquire an official copy of the meeting minutes before the next business meeting.
- 3) Agree to abide by the "Rules of Conduct" (see Article IV) during HERO activities.
- 4) Submit to the authority of the Board for the duration of membership in matters pertaining to HERO.
- 5) Complete an application containing family data and written assent to the requirements of membership.
- 6) Pay the annual dues.

**ARTICLE IV. RULES OF CONDUCT**

In order to ensure that adults and children know our standard for behavior and the consequences for non-adherence to those standards; to allow all of the group to enjoy every activity and function without major turmoil or embarrassment; to be a positive influence in the community and a favorable representation of home schoolers in general and HERO in particular; and to help our children develop strong, healthy, interpersonal relationships with other home schooled children, we have adopted the following "Rules of Conduct":

- 1) Children must be accompanied by an adult, either a parent or another responsible figure, at every function and should stay with that adult unless given permission to do otherwise.
- 2) Adults are expected to keep a close eye on the children they are responsible for at all times. If a parent/guardian is in charge of a function, it may be advisable to secure another adult to assist with the children, since those duties may cause the responsible adult to be less attentive to the children.
- 3) No running, loud voices, or horseplay unless we are at an appropriate location for such behavior.
- 4) Children are to treat one another kindly and to treat all adults with respect.
- 5) Adults are to exemplify a Christian lifestyle at all HERO functions and refrain from any actions in opposition to the Ten Commandments or other basic Biblical precepts.
- 6) Children and adults are requested to give full attention to the adult in charge or any person speaking to the group, seeking permission to speak by raising hands.
- 7) The coordinator of an event is expected to set the standard of behavior for that event and can call upon other adults for assistance in maintaining that standard.

If a child commits a deliberate act of defiant disobedience or excessive inappropriate behavior or displays an attitude of disregard for authority, the adult responsible for the child is to be informed by the person in charge of the function or by the one who asked the child to cease the offensive behavior. If after a reasonable amount of time the behavior has not been corrected, the function coordinator or one of the Officers may request that the child be removed. If a child is dismissed from two

functions during the school year, the child will be placed on “disciplinary probation” and may not attend any more functions that school year.

If an adult exhibits any behavior contrary to law or Biblical precept during a HERO function, any other adult may request that the offending adult cease the behavior or be immediately dismissed from the function. Such behavior is to be brought to the attention of the Officers, who may confront the individual and determine whether any further action is necessary.

**DISMISSAL:** Although one does not have to be a Christian in order to be a member of HERO, members may be dismissed from the group for violation of the bylaws or for conduct which is open and known and clearly contrary to Biblical principles. Such dismissal shall occur only upon a unanimous vote of the Board, following notice to the member in question of the Board’s intention to consider dismissal. No appeal shall be permitted from any decision by the Board to dismiss a member under these conditions. Any member thus dismissed may apply for readmission to HERO at the beginning of the next operational year. The Board shall have full discretion to accept or reject any such application for readmission.

## **ARTICLE V. ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

**QUALIFICATIONS:** Officers must have home schooled at least three years and have been voting members in good standing with HERO for at least two years. They shall manifest a lifestyle which exemplifies Christian principles and which is not in opposition to the Ten Commandments or other basic Biblical precepts. Furthermore, all Officers must affirm agreement with the following statement of faith:

*We believe that the Bible is the inspired and inerrant Word of God.*

*We believe in God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.*

*We believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, born of a virgin, lived a sinless life, died on the cross for atonement of our sins, was bodily resurrected and ascended to Heaven, sits at the right hand of the Father, and will return again to judge the world.*

*We believe that salvation is a free gift by God’s grace which must be responded to individually.*

**NOMINATIONS:** The membership of HERO shall recommend candidates for office to members of the current Board. Members may recommend themselves. The current Board shall review the candidates for compliance with the qualifications listed above. The Board shall obtain the candidates’ agreement to serve, as well as signed statements affirming they will uphold the responsibilities of the offices for which they are running and will maintain their personal qualifications for becoming an Officer. If no one offers recommendations, the current Board will seek qualified candidates to fill the positions on the slate. The slate to be recommended by the current Board will be published in the newsletter prior to the final business meeting of the operational year if possible. The Board will submit the slate of all candidates to the membership for vote during the final business meeting of the operational year. Nominations may be added to the slate of candidates at the meeting if compliance with the qualifications for office can be confirmed prior to voting. If qualified candidates are not available, the Board will present alternate candidates for the vacant positions.

**VOTING:** The election of Officers will take place at the final business meeting of the operational year. Only the voting members of HERO will determine the next year’s Board by a simple majority via secret ballot. The election shall be the responsibility of the current President; two other Officers shall assist in the counting of the ballots. Absentee ballots may also be counted if submitted according to the procedure outlined in Article VIII. Members voting by absentee ballot are not guaranteed full disclosure because candidates may be added at the meeting.

**TERM AND TRANSITION:** The normal term for Officers of HERO is the same as the operational year: August 1 through July 31 of the following year. The period between the election of Officers and the beginning of the new term is a transitional time during which the current Board is to train and inform the new Board. Sufficient meetings for a smooth transition may be required at the discretion of the current Board.

**REPLACEMENT:** In the event that any Officer is unable to complete the normal term or becomes unfit or ineligible for office, the Board will seek qualified candidates to fill the position and a replacement will be elected at the next business meeting. If two-thirds of the voting members are dissatisfied with any or all of the Officers, they can follow the procedure outlined in Article VII to call a special meeting for a vote of “No Confidence” (see Article VIII). Any Officers removed by this vote are to be replaced at the same meeting by eligible candidates who meet the qualifications listed above.

## **ARTICLE VI. RESPONSIBILITIES OF OFFICERS**

The HERO Board is a five-person Board which must work together to uphold the group bylaws and to establish group policies not specified in the bylaws. Each Officer has an equal vote on issues and is accountable to the entire Board for upholding the responsibilities defined in these bylaws. The entire Board is accountable to the membership at large, which may seek to have any or all Officers removed from their positions for failure to properly execute their duties (see Article VIII). Except to the extent otherwise stated in these bylaws, Board decisions shall be by a four-fifths majority of the entire Board. Officers shall not be paid for their labor but should be reimbursed for any out-of-pocket expenses incurred in fulfilling their responsibilities. In addition to the specific duties of each position, the Board members share the responsibility for disseminating information and answering questions. The following positions are to be filled for the Board to be complete:

- 1) **PRESIDENT:** Presides over all business meetings; handles complaints; oversees internal workings and needs of the group; trains Vice President to take over presidency.
- 2) **VICE PRESIDENT:** Serves a two year term, the first year as Vice President, the second as President. Presides at business meetings in absence of President. Secures and oversees coordinators for ongoing programs and activities; encourages member participation; and assists Treasurer in verifying membership status.
- 3) **SECRETARY:** Presides at business meetings in absence of President and Vice President. Takes notes at all business meetings; maintains an archive of past minutes, newsletters, and written policies; and places duplicates in the HERO library for permanent record. The Newsletter Editor is accountable to the Secretary for following newsletter policies established by the Board. In the event that the Secretary is the Newsletter Editor, the Secretary is accountable to the Vice President in matters pertaining to the newsletter.
- 4) **TREASURER:** Presides at business meetings in absence of President, Vice President, and Secretary. Keeps a supply of membership applications; receives applications submitted by prospective members; verifies that applicants meet the requirements for membership; and works with the Vice President in maintaining current membership records. Receives dues, disburses payments, and provides an accounting of this activity at each business meeting. Decisions for expenditures over \$25 are to be approved by Treasurer and President; expenditures over \$50 shall be brought before the entire Board for majority approval.
- 5) **OUTREACH OFFICER:** Presides at business meetings in absence of President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. Refers prospective home schoolers to appropriate resources; supervises the provision of hospitality for HERO members; and coordinates the HERO phone tree and e-mail loop. The Librarian is accountable to the Outreach Officer for following library policies established by the Board. In the event that the Outreach Officer is the Librarian, the Outreach Officer is accountable to the Treasurer in matters pertaining to the library.

#### **ARTICLE VII. MEETINGS**

HERO shall meet for business in August, September, November, January, March, and May, with at least one Officer present. Members should make every effort to attend these meetings in order to facilitate the purposes of HERO and maintain their commitment to it. The business meetings are open to all members. Non-members are permitted to visit up to two business meetings without joining HERO.

Special meetings may be called by the Board or by a third of the voting membership. If the meeting is called by the voting membership, a special meeting request with the required number of signatures should be submitted to the Treasurer for verification of membership status, with one member designated as the representative of the petitioning members. A request for a special meeting should include the date, time, location, and purpose of the meeting.

Either the Board or the petitioning representative will take the responsibility of notifying members of a special meeting. Notification must include phone communication to all member families at least one week prior to the special meeting. A message left on an answering machine or by computer e-mail is considered a phone contact. If no one can be reached after two attempts on two different days, then the phone requirement is waived.

#### **ARTICLE VIII. VOTING**

When it is necessary for the membership to vote on an issue, only one vote is allowed per family. At least three Officers must be present to conduct the vote, and at least one-third of the voting members must be present to provide a quorum. Meeting minutes and financial reports may be accepted without a quorum if three Officers are present. Absentee votes will be accepted if a member first makes personal contact with an Officer at least 24 hours ahead of time and then submits the vote in writing prior to the meeting at which the vote will be taken.

**NO CONFIDENCE:** If a special meeting is called (see Article VII) to hold a vote of “No Confidence” against any or all of the Officers, such vote may be held with or without the presence of the Officers. If three Officers are not available to conduct the vote, at least two-thirds of the voting membership must be present and shall choose a chairman and two election monitors from among their assembly. The vote against each Officer in question must carry by at least two-thirds of the entire voting membership of HERO. Eligible candidates to replace each deposed Officer should then be offered for election. A simple majority of the voting members in attendance is all that is required to install these replacement Officers, their term being effective immediately upon election through the end of the operational year.

#### **ARTICLE IX. DUES AND FEES**

Each member shall pay annual dues to cover basic operating expenses in the amount recommended by the Board and approved by the voting membership at the final business meeting of the operational year. An additional fee may be required for participation in activities. If a fee has been charged for an activity and a family fails to provide sufficient notice of its intention not to participate, the fee will be forfeited.

#### **ARTICLE X. AMENDMENTS**

These bylaws may be amended by first proposing and discussing the changes in a business meeting, then publishing the proposed changes either in the newsletter, through e-mail, or by separate mailing at least one week prior to the next business meeting. The changes are to be discussed at the meeting and then tabled or voted on. When voted on, each proposal must be passed by a two-thirds majority of the entire voting membership.

*Green Country Home Educators Resource Organization*  
**OKLAHOMA STATE HOME SCHOOL LAWS**

*The HERO Board recommends membership in HSLDA (Home School Legal Defense Association). For a yearly membership fee, HSLDA provides legal counsel and representation in the area of home schooling. Membership must be acquired before any problems occur. Contact them at 1-540-338-5600 and get a HERO GROUP DISCOUNT by using our group number: 299691.*

**A Legal Analysis**

(Provided by Home School Legal Defense Association — current as of September 2004)

**Compulsory Attendance Ages:** "over age of five (5) years and under the age of eighteen (18) years." *Oklahoma Statutes Annotated Title 70, § 10-105(A)-(B).*

**Required Days of Instruction:** 180 days. *OK Stat. Ann. Tit. 70, § 1-110.*

**Required Subjects:** None, strictly speaking. However, some courts have suggested that home school education should be equivalent or comparable to public school education. Teaching the following subjects is therefore strongly recommended: math, language arts, science, and social studies. *OK Stat. Ann. Tit. 70, § 11-103.6.*

**Home School Statute:** None.

**Alternative Statutes Allowing for Home Schools:** *OK Stat. Ann. Tit. 70 § 10-105(A).*

1. It is unlawful for a parent of a school aged child "to neglect or refuse to cause or compel such child to attend and comply with the rules of some public, private or other school, unless other means of education [i.e., home schooling] are provided for the full term the schools of the district are in session."

2. Oklahoma is the only state with a constitutional provision guaranteeing the right to home school. Section 4, Art. 13 of the Constitution of Oklahoma guarantees the home school exemption by stating that the legislature "shall" provide for the "compulsory attendance at some public or other school, unless other means of education are provided of all children in the State who are sound in mind and body, between the ages of eight and sixteen, for at least three months each year."

It seems quite evident that the "other means of education" language is directly applicable to home schooling since it was added for the specific purpose of protecting the right of parents to choose home schooling. In 1907, during the Oklahoma Constitutional Convention, one of the delegates, Mr. Buchanan, proposed that the phrase "unless other means of education be provided" be added to Article 13, Section 4. Favorably responding to Mr. Buchanan's proposal, another delegate, Mr. Baker stated, "I think Mr. Buchanan has suggested a solution. A man's own experience sometimes will teach him. I have two little fellows that are not attending a public school because it is too far for them to walk and their mother makes them study four hours a day." As a result of this discussion on home schooling, the "other means of education" language was added to Article 13, Section 4.

3. Oklahoma law does not require parents to use certified teachers or state-approved curricula, initiate contact with, register with or seek approval from state or local officials, test their students or permit public school officials to visit or inspect homes. If a parent is teaching his children the basic subjects for at least 180 days, the law requires nothing more.

4. Home schools are not regulated, since the framers of the Oklahoma Constitution specifically intended "other means of education" to include home schooling and gave the state no authority to regulate that exemption from compulsory attendance. In *Snyder v. Asbery* (No. 78,045, Oklahoma Court of Appeals, Div. 2, May 18, 1993), the Oklahoma Court of Appeals returned two children to the custody of their home schooling father, reversing a lower court decision. On page 4 of the decision, the Court agreed with the home schooling father, stating "...the State Department of Education has no jurisdiction in home schooling. See 70 O.S.1991 § 3-104 ... OK Const. Art. 13, § 5...."

5. In the case, *Sheppard v. Oklahoma*, 306 P.2d 346 (OK Crim. App. 1957), the court held that requirements of school attendance laws could be met even though children were not attending public or private school. The court said "education may be furnished without attendance at any school." *Sheppard*, at 353. The court also emphasized "it was incumbent on the state to offer proof" that "no other means of education was provided." *Sheppard*, at 356. In other words, the state failed to carry its burden of proof since it failed to prove that "other means of education" was not being provided. The court indicated further that, if the state finds other means of education are being provided, then they must prove that the means of education is not "adequate and comparable" to instruction in public schools. *Id.* at 356. The court also suggested the state could inquire about the curriculum in two areas: period of instruction and subjects taught. *Id.*

6. The Oklahoma Supreme Court in *School Brd. Dist. No. 18 v. Thompson*, 103 P. 578, 24 OK 1 (1909), upheld parental rights against the public school's authority. "Under our form of government ... the home is considered the key stone of the governmental structure. In this empire, parents rule supreme during the minority of their children ... they may ... withdraw them entirely from public schools and send them to private schools, or provide for them other means of education."

7. According to Attorney General Opinion No. 73-129 (Feb. 13, 1973) Oklahoma law recognizes the right of parents to carry out this responsibility through home schooling "so long as the private instruction is supplied in good faith and equivalent in fact to that afforded by the State." "Equivalency" has never been defined by any court or Attorney General opinion, nor is equivalency mandated by law. However, it seems clear that the point of the Attorney General opinion is that home schooling must not be used as a subterfuge for truancy. See *Wright vs. State*, 209 P. 179 (1922).

8. Under Sec. 10-109(A), an attendance or police officer may detain and assume temporary custody of a child "except for children being home schooled pursuant to Section 10-105."

**Teacher Qualifications:** None.

**Standardized Tests:** Not required by statute.

**Religious Freedom Act (RFA):** (Oklahoma Statutes, Section 251 of Title 51) The RFA, passed with the help of HSLDA members, gives religious home schoolers another legal means to protect their right to home school. If the operation of a home school comes into conflict with a state requirement, the parents may use the RFA as a defense or file an offensive suit against the state. Under this statute, the burden is on the state to prove, with evidence, that its requirement is "essential" to fulfill its compelling interest that children be educated and it is the "least restrictive means" of fulfilling that interest. This Act restores the highest protection of the individual's right to freely exercise their religious beliefs that was taken away by the U.S. Supreme Court in its 1997 *City of Boerne* decision.

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