

# CHIME Getting Started Packet 2023

Welcome to the great adventure of homeschooling! You may hear that homeschooling is a lifestyle, not just a way to teach children. As a parent, it can be a blessing to learn and grow with your children. You have the freedom to build relationships in your family, share fun and exciting and ordinary moments, and live out your faith in every aspect of your day. That's not to say that homeschooling is always easy – it isn't – or everything will always go smoothly – it won't. But there are many treasures to uncover along this journey, and we pray that you will find and fulfill God's will for *your* unique family and circumstances!  
May God bless you and your family!

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## Foundations for Your Homeschool

### **Spiritual**

Pray, pray, pray, then trust that God is faithful to His Word that when God calls us to something, He provides the grace to do it. Frequent the sacraments. Call to mind often the reasons why you are homeschooling. This will help on days when it's tough.

### **Academic**

Choose a curriculum, either a pre-packaged one or develop your own and purchase wisely. Many resources are available to help in making those decisions, including from the CHIME Resources Packet and on the CHIME website. Remember that curriculum is a tool towards achieving your goals and not an end in itself. Be patient. It takes time to find what works for you and your children.

### **Goals**

Set goals for yourself and each of your children in spiritual, academic, behavioral, and social areas. Write them down and refer back to them.

### **Support**

Learning from & leaning on others is necessary to homeschool. Find a support group that best meets the needs of your family in terms of faith, activities, philosophy, and location. There are many flavors of support group. The important thing is that you don't go it alone. Do not be afraid to ask for help. CHIME's website: <https://www.homeschool-life.com/ma/chime/>

### **Home**

It is everyone's job to make the house run effectively. Even the smallest children can contribute to cleaning. Develop a structure and routine for keeping up with housework, meals, bill paying, etc. Investing the time in developing a system that works for your family will be worth it.

### **Legal**

[Legal Guidelines](#) - Our at-a-glance guide to legal issues (on the CHIME website at Resources -> Massachusetts Homeschooling Law)

[Home School Legal Defense Association](#)

# 13 Steps for Getting Started in Home School

(From the Hewitt Homeschooling Resources Catalog)

## 1. Lay the Foundation

Your decision to home school will lay the foundation for your entire home-schooling experience. Why are you making this decision? There are probably many factors: desire for a better education, a greater influence on character/discipline, dissatisfaction with the public system, and, most importantly, you feel God is calling you to this commitment. Home education is a work in progress, with great final rewards. Getting started may seem intimidating, like taking a dive into cold water. After the initial shock, though, you'll begin to warm up. You'll realize that finding what is right for your family will involve making some changes, doing some rescheduling, incorporating some new methods. Changes can be opportunities and stepping stones to learning, for all of you.

## 2. Develop Respect

Demonstrate leadership. Be in kindly control of your household and its operations. As role models for your children, give them cause to respect you as parents, and then, as teachers. Children feel more secure and less frustrated when they know who is in control and who to respect.

## 3. Establish Rules

The golden rule should be the basis of all rules. Rules should be few, simple, and reasonable. They should include rules for obedience, courtesy, and safety. Children need to know what is expected, and what the consequences of broken rules are.

## 4. Be Informed

Read information books about home-school teaching. Hewitt's *Home Education Guide and How to Home School* by Gayle Graham is an example of good information sources. As you read from several sources, select the ideas that appeal to you. Then develop your own philosophical foundation that will work for your family, one that will help you reach your major goals. Know your pupils, your children. Be aware of their learning styles, their interests, their weaknesses and strengths. Then seek the methods of teaching which will play to their strengths while also strengthening their weaknesses. Learn what your state and local school authorities require. Check with your state's home-schooling organization to see how these have best been met by others in your state.

## 5. Develop Goals

Select goals that will help your student develop an intrinsic love for learning and inspire creativity. We suggest that you place emphasis and develop goals in four major areas: character building, academics, service, and work. You will find that these may be integrated while doing work and service projects your student may practice the academic skills he is learning. True home school is not patterned after traditional public education. It includes learning practical skills, and developing the spiritual, mental, and physical aspects of education. Homeschooling will give you the opportunity to discipline consistently. It will be your joy and responsibility to help your child mold his character so that he acknowledges God in ALL his ways.

## **6. Develop Order**

Plan that homeschooling will take time for interaction between you and your student. Rushing is destructive. Prioritize and eliminate activities that rob. There is a time in life for many things, but your children will never be this age again. This is the time for your children. Simplify your lifestyle by establishing what is important to your goals. Then organize a routine and schedule which meets your family's needs. When that's done, it is easy to remove the clutter in your household and your activities which are not productive to that end. Order which is effective requires that all the family members follow it. Discuss with your spouse the time-consuming things that you both can eliminate to make more time for your children. Even worthwhile things such as heavy church responsibilities or a second job that provides money for extras may need to be curtailed if they take too much time away from your priorities.

## **7. Select Curriculum**

Curriculum is not only books; it is all the things used to teach concepts. You will want to select curriculum that is "user friendly", while it meets your goals and is appropriate for your child's ability/grade level. If you need assistance in selecting books, register with a home-schooling organization (such as Hewitt) which provides such service. They will be pleased to answer your questions about home-school teaching, and give suggestions, encouragement, and advice when you request it.

## **8. Create a Learning Center**

Begin to gather resources and prepare space for your home school. Some suggested items are a table/desk, bookcase, storage space for supplies, map/globe, a dictionary/thesaurus, field guides, nature books, Bibles, good reading material on your child's level, encyclopedias (used ones if that is what you can afford), paper, pencils, art materials, etc.

## **9. Join a Support Group**

Visit home-school support group meetings in your area. Look for one in which your children can participate in group activities and socialization. It should be well-organized, with a schedule of field trips for the year. It should provide experiences for your children in reciting, demonstrating projects, and reading in group settings. You may visit more than one to find the right size or comfort zone; you may even decide to develop your own small group with several other families. If so, include in your group not only others new to home schooling, but also experienced home-schooling parents. When you hear questions from friends or relatives about how you plan to socialize your children (and you will, no doubt!), explain that this support group networking is one of the ways you fill this need. Children need socialization with more than their own age group. Home-schooled students are generally at ease socially with people of all ages and are able to converse with both children and adults.

## **10. Home School Legal Defense Association**

Join HSLDA ([www.hslda.org](http://www.hslda.org)) to obtain help in determining how to comply with the laws of your state. Although joining is optional, if you are a member and your home-school rights are threatened, HSLDA's home-school attorneys will help you. *Members of CHIME receive a discount of \$15 off a yearly membership (if paid in full). See HSLDA's site for more details on membership options.*

### **11. Build Enthusiasm**

Be enthusiastic! Children learn attitudes from parents. If you are happy, interested and excited about what you are teaching, they will, in time, be happy about learning, too. Remember, you are learning right along with them. You are learning about yourself and about your children. (Choosing the curriculum that fits your family's needs goes a long way toward maintaining enthusiasm.) Many parents declare they learn more than the children their first year of home teaching.

### **12. Be Committed**

Be firm about your commitment to home school for one year at a time. Re-assess your commitment each year and set new goals. Pray with and for your children each day. Pray for wisdom and patience in your new role. Commit yourself to God's leading, and be faithful to your commitment. Don't doubt in the "dark" (those days when you seem to accomplish nothing) what God has shown you in the "light" (the day you made your commitment).

### **13. Trust the Holy Spirit**

Year after year one home-school parent observed in her church congregation a family whose children seemed unusually well-mannered, bright, and helpful to young and old alike. As the years went by, she watched these children continue to participate in church activities. Their cheerfulness, willingness to do their best in whatever was asked of them, and respectful attitudes made her wish that her own children had more of that sweet spirit. Even during those difficult teen years, these children grew to be even more responsible. Finally, she could contain herself no longer and asked, "What is your secret to success in raising such wonderful children?" The reply was that because her children were so precious to her, every morning she went to each child's room, awakened him softly, knelt by his bed, and prayed that God would be with him during that day, and would give him the help and courage to do right, to learn, and to use the talents God had given him. She prayed for wisdom in helping him learn to live a Godly life. "If my children have been successful," she replied, "it is because God has answered my prayers."

## HOMESCHOOL GUIDELINES AT-A-GLANCE

### School Authority Oversight

Oversight of home education is a local function in Massachusetts. Because there are nearly as many ways to homeschool as there are homeschooling families, local oversight enables school authorities to exercise discretion and flexibility in evaluating home education plans and student progress. In using their oversight function, school authorities may ask for certain types of information (elaborated below), but they must not condition their approval on requirements that are not essential.

*“...the approval of a home school proposal must not be conditioned on requirements that are not essential to the State interest in assuring that ‘all the children shall be educated.’” (Charles)*

*“...the State...cannot apply institutional standards to this non-institutionalized setting.” (Brunelle)*

The courts have emphasized consistently that parents and school authorities proceed cooperatively to “expedite approval.” (*Charles, Searles, Ivan*) In cases where differences cannot be resolved cooperatively, the school authority assumes the burden of proof in any subsequent legal proceedings. School authorities should consult local counsel for legal advice.

### Responsibilities of School Authorities and Parents

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>SCHOOL AUTHORITY’S RESPONSIBILITY</b> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Enforce the compulsory attendance laws,</li> <li>2. Ensure that each student in his or her district receives an education,</li> <li>3. Expedite approval of home education plans that meet the statutory standard.</li> </ol>   |
| <b>PARENT’S RESPONSIBILITY</b>           | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Give prior notification to school authorities of their home education plan, which equals the public school’s “in thoroughness and efficiency,” (<i>Charles</i>) prior to removing their child from school,</li> <li>2. Comply with an evaluation program mutually agreed upon by school and parents.</li> </ol> |

### Approval and Evaluation

1. School officials may ask for information regarding “qualifications of the parent or parents who will be instructing the children,” (*Charles*) but the parents are not required to have any specific educational credentials.
2. School officials may inquire about subjects the child will study, length of the homeschool year, and hours of structured learning time (603 C.M.R. 27.01, *Charles*). The educational plan for a home educated student need not replicate the public school's grade equivalent educational offerings. Following a schedule is not an important consideration in a home school where “...the perception and use of time... are different” (*Brunelle*)
3. School officials may identify teaching materials, but “only to determine subject and grade level... school officials may not... use this access to dictate the manner in which the subjects will be taught.” *Charles* at 339 The Brunelle Court pointed out that“...some of the most effective curricular materials...may not be tangible. For example, travel, community service, visits to educationally enriching facilities and places, and meeting with various resource people, can provide important learning experiences apart from the four corners of a text or workbook.” (*Brunelle*)
4. School officials and parents should agree on a method of evaluation that may include one of the following approaches: standardized testing, periodic progress report, dated work samples/portfolio or third party evaluation. Home visits may not be required as a condition of approval.

# Quick Start Guide

## How to Start Basics:

1. Enroll in HSLDA (*not required but highly recommended*)
2. Determine which curriculum or set of materials you will use
3. Choose your evaluation method
4. Submit your Letter of Intent to your Superintendent before district school year starts
5. Teach your children the required subjects (see <https://hsllda.org/post/how-to-comply-with-massachusetts-homeschool-law> )
6. Evaluate your child at the end of the school year and submit results (if requested) to your Superintendent before the next district school year starts

## The Letter of Intent must contain:

1. Teacher Qualifications
2. Instructional Time
3. Evaluation Plan
4. Curriculum

## The Evaluation Method can be any of the following:

1. Standardized tests
2. Periodic progress reports
3. Dated work samples
4. Third party evaluation
5. Another evaluation method, mutually agreed upon by the parents and school district

| <b>“Massachusetts Homeschool Law at a Glance”</b><br><a href="https://hsllda.org/legal/massachusetts">https://hsllda.org/legal/massachusetts</a> |
|--|
| Options for Homeschooling: One   |
| School Required for Ages: 6–16 *   |
| Notification Required: Yes   |
| Teacher Qualifications: No   |
| State Mandated Subjects: Yes   |
| Assessment requirements: Yes   |
| Immunization requirements: No  |

\* *N.B.* – A Letter of Intent and Evaluation is only required between the ages of 6-16. See the HSLDA site for specific information.

## *Sample Letter of Intent #1*

Dr. & Mrs. Roger Smith  
522 Elm Street  
North Andover, MA 01845  
(978) 123-4567

August 22, 2006

Dr. Daniel O'Connor, Superintendent  
North Andover Public Schools  
43 High Street  
North Andover, MA 01845

Dear Dr. O'Connor,

Please accept this letter as notification of our intent to home educate our children, Amy Smith, for 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, and Emily Smith, for 1<sup>st</sup> grade, in the upcoming 2006-2007 academic year. Amy turned eight years old on June 26, 2006, and Emily turned six on August 19, 2006.

We will use a classical curriculum for Amy and Emily's school year, based on the book "The Well-Trained Mind" by Susan Wise Bauer and Jessie Wise. The Well-Trained Mind website is [www.welltrainedmind.com](http://www.welltrainedmind.com). The curriculum is based on a strong language arts and mathematics emphasis, with history, science and the arts also included. Attached you will find additional information.

Qualifications:

Sandy (mother):

B.S. Worcester Polytechnic Institute;

M.B.A. The University of Massachusetts, Amherst.

Roger (father):

B.S. Cornell University;

M.S. Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute;

Ph.D. Stanford University.

Sincerely,

Roger M. Smith

Sandy A. Smith

## *Sample Letter of Intent #1*

### **Curriculum Materials for Amy Smith – 3rd grade**

#### Mathematics

- RightStart Mathematics – [www.ALabacus.com](http://www.ALabacus.com)

#### Language Arts

- Growing with Grammar – [www.GrowingWithGrammar.com](http://www.GrowingWithGrammar.com)
- Spelling Workout by Modern Curriculum Press
- Writing for Novices Class
- Lots of reading - various age-appropriate and classic books

#### Latin

- Prima Latina – [www.memoriapress.com](http://www.memoriapress.com)

#### History

- Story of the World: Vol. 3 – [www.peacehillpress.com](http://www.peacehillpress.com)
- Various supplemental reading, projects and enrichment activities

#### Science

- Noeo Science: Chemistry I – [www.noeoscience.com](http://www.noeoscience.com)
- Museum trips and supplemental reading

#### Art

- Atelier Art – [www.homeschoolart.com](http://www.homeschoolart.com)
- Museum trips and hands-on art experiences

#### Music

- Classical Kids and other CDs for music appreciation
- Violin instruction and children's choir at church

We intend to conduct our homeschool in accordance with the state and federal policies on home education. We plan 900 hours of instruction with the bulk of instruction taking place during normal school hours, augmented by evening reading and discussion. We reserve the right to modify Amy's educational plan as her needs dictate.

*Sample Letter of Intent #1*

## Curriculum Materials for Emily Smith – 1st grade

### Mathematics

- RightStart Mathematics – [www.ALabacus.com](http://www.ALabacus.com)

### Language Arts

- Grammar: Language of God – [www.chcweb.com](http://www.chcweb.com)
- Spelling Workout by Modern Curriculum Press
- Lots of reading - various age-appropriate and classic books

### Latin

- Prima Latina – [www.memoriapress.com](http://www.memoriapress.com)

### History

- Story of the World: Vol. 3 - [www.peacehillpress.com](http://www.peacehillpress.com)
- Various supplemental reading, projects and enrichment activities

### Science

- Noeo Science: Chemistry I – [www.noeoscience.com](http://www.noeoscience.com)
- Museum trips and supplemental reading

### Art

- Atelier Art – [www.homeschoolart.com](http://www.homeschoolart.com)
- Museum trips and hands-on art experiences

### Music

- Classical Kids and other CDs for music appreciation
- Children's choir at church

We intend to conduct our homeschool in accordance with the state and federal policies on home education. We plan 900 hours of instruction with the bulk of instruction taking place during normal school hours, augmented by evening reading and discussion. We reserve the right to modify Emily's educational plan as her needs dictate.

## *Sample Letter of Intent #2*

Dr. V. James Marini, Superintendent  
North Andover Public Schools  
43 High Street  
North Andover, MA 01845

Dear Dr. O'Connor,

This letter is to inform you of our intention to provide home education during the 2007-2008 school year. Our daughter, Leah, age 13 on 5/9/08, will be entering the eighth grade.

An overview of our educational program is attached.

Carrie Johnson will be the primary educator. She has a BS from Boston College. William Johnson will augment Leah's education as her interests lead. He has a BSET from Wentworth Institute of Technology and a MSEE from the University of Lowell.

Sincerely,

William N. Johnson

Carrie M. Johnson

## Sample Letter of Intent #2

### **Leah Johnson, Grade 8**

This year we will be using an interdisciplinary curricula based on best in class resources to meet Leah's particular areas of interest via a unit study/project approach. We plan to utilize many resources in the area including, but not limited to, local libraries, museums, historical societies, the internet, and a weekly cooperative with other home schooling families. We reserve the right to modify Leah's educational plan as her needs dictate.

### **Mathematics**

Larson, Ron. *Algebra 1*. Evanston, Illinois. McDougal Littell, 2001

### **Language Arts**

Leah will take a Literature Class at New Hope Tutorials ([www.newhopetutorials.com](http://www.newhopetutorials.com)). This class focuses on reading classic literature, poetry, and plays while developing students' writing skills. A book list is below.

Berquist, Laura M. *The Harp and Laurel Wreath: Poetry and Dictation for the Classical Curriculum*. NY, NY: Ignatius Press, 1999.

Institute for Excellence in Writing: Writing Program

Hodkinson, Kenneth & Adams, Sandra. *Wordly Wise 3000: Book 7*. Cambridge, MA: Educators Publishing Service, 2007

Hodkinson, Kenneth & Adams, Sandra. *Wordly Wise 3000: Book 8*. Cambridge, MA: Educators Publishing Service, 2007

Lundsford, Andrea, eds. *The St. Martin's Handbook*

Twain, Mark. *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*

Brontë, Charlotte. *Jane Eyre*

Hemingway, Ernest. *The Old Man and the Sea*

Dickens, Charles. *A Tale of Two Cities*

Benichou, Paul, abridged and edited. *Les Miserables*

Lee, Harper. *To Kill a Mockingbird*

Shakespeare, William. *Romeo and Juliet*

### **Science**

McLaughlin, Thompson, Zike. *Physical Science*. NY, NY. Glencoe McGraw-Hill 2002.

### **Foreign Language**

Leah will continue her study of Spanish this year at New Hope Tutorials.

### **Social Studies**

Leah will follow a literature based-study of the American History. She will study geography in conjunction with history topics and will participate in the National Geographic Geography Bee. Local libraries will be used extensively in addition to the materials below.

## Sample Letter of Intent #2

- Hakim, Joy. *History of US*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press. 1993.
- Hatcher, Carolyn. *Let the Authors Speak: A Guide to Worthy Books Based on Historical Setting*. Joelton, TN. Old Pinnacle Publishing. 1994.
- Smith, Kenneth. *Mapping the World by Heart*. Watertown, MA: Tom Snyder Productions, 1999.
- Bauer, Susan Wise. *Story of the World, Volume 3: Early Modern Times*. Charles City, VA: Peace Hill Press. 2005.
- Bauer, Susan Wise. *Story of the World, Volume 4: The Modern Age*. Charles City, VA: Peace Hill Press. 2005.
- Zehnder, Christopher. *From Sea to Shining Sea: The Story of America*. San Francisco, CA: Ignatius Press, 2003.

### Art & Music

Leah will participate in art experiences related to unit studies using a variety of media; study of selected artists and their work especially as it relates to the study of the 1800-1900s; exposure to various types of music, composers and instruments. She will take private instruction on the guitar.

- Kistler, Mark. *Drawing in 3-D*. NY, NY: Simon & Schuster, 1998.
- Watt, Fiona. *The Book of Art Skills*. Tulsa, OK: EDC Pub., 2003.
- Essential History of Art*. Bath, UK: Parragon Publishing, 2000.
- Plazy, Gilles. *The History of Art in Pictures*. NY, NY: Michael Friedman Publishing Group, Inc., 2001

### Phys Ed

This year Leah will take dance lessons, fencing lessons and participate in the town wide volleyball program. She will participate in a Gym & Swim program run by a local home school support groups as available.

### Weekly Schedule

We intend to conduct our home school in accordance with the state and federal policies on home education. We plan 900 hours of instructions with the bulk of instruction taking place during normal school hours, augmented by evening reading and discussion.

## **Additional Notes on the Letter of Intent**

An optional addendum to protect privacy of student records may be added to the Letter of Intent. See <https://www.ahem.info/privacy.html> for more details.

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### **Privacy Addendum to Letter of Intent**

We do not want [School District] to disclose directory information from our child's education records to any outside organizations without our prior written consent. This includes any of the following information that the [School District] may have designated as directory information: student's name, address, telephone listing, electronic mail address, photograph, date and place of birth, major field of study, dates of attendance, grade level, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, degrees, honors, and awards received, and the most recent educational agency or institution attended.

Pursuant to 603 CMR 23.00, the information contained herein is private and must be kept in a secure location. This information may not be released to any person who does not work directly with the student in an administrative or diagnostic capacity. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education may conduct reviews to insure compliance with 603 CMR 23.00. The school committee and the specific school(s) involved shall cooperate to the fullest extent with such review.

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Some school districts may request intent to homeschool information in a specific form. For example, many years ago homeschooling families in Billerica worked with the Billerica School District to construct a form that was acceptable to the District, as well as compliant with state legal guidelines. You may want to check with other homeschooling families in your town to see if you have similar guidelines. Otherwise, it is sufficient to submit all legally required information in the sample forms shown in this document.

*To maintain good relations with your school district, it helps to keep all communications in writing, and consider sending Letters of Intent and Evaluations by certified mail.*

## **High School Athletics**

### **Home Educated Students: Requirements for Participation in Interscholastic Sports Programs**

*The MIAA (Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association) will permit a home educated student to participate in interscholastic athletics if the following conditions are met:*

The local school committee of a MIAA public school member institution has adopted a policy regarding participation of Home Educated students on the high school sports teams. The local building principal has indicated such on the annual MIAA membership form and included all home schoolers in the annual MIAA enrollment report.

The Educational Plan for the home educated student has been approved by the public school Superintendent or his/her designee.

The principal has determined appropriate high school grade level placement (9-12) for each home educated student in conjunction with chronological age and educational plan.

The student resides in the school district that serves the high school and must be living with his/her parents or legal guardians in the family residence. In multiple school districts, a home educated student must be assigned to the school of record in the same manner as other students.

The Principal is satisfied that the student meets the guidelines for athletic participation required for all other students as defined in the current MIAA Blue Book. This should include, but not be limited to, those rules governing transfers, academic eligibility, age requirements, and the number of consecutive seasons of athletic eligibility beyond grade eight.

MIAA requirements relative to academic eligibility must be reviewed by the Principal at the same times that all other student athletes are to be certified as academically eligible.

If the Principal determines that all eligibility standards detailed above have been met, the Principal may declare the student immediately eligible to participate in interscholastic competition. The rights, privileges, and responsibilities associated with all other student athletes attending MIAA member schools will apply to home educated students who have satisfied the requirements above.

## About HSLDA



**Home School Legal Defense Association** is a nonprofit advocacy organization established to defend and advance the constitutional right of parents to direct the education of their children and to protect family freedoms. Through annual memberships, HSLDA is tens of thousands of families united in service together, providing a strong voice when and where needed.

**HSLDA advocates on the legal front** on behalf of our members in matters which include conflicts with state or local officials over homeschooling. Each year, thousands of member families receive legal consultation by letter and phone, hundreds more are represented through negotiations with local officials, and dozens are represented in court proceedings. HSLDA also takes the offensive, filing actions to protect members against government intrusion and to establish legal precedent. On occasion, HSLDA will handle precedent-setting cases for nonmembers, as well.

**HSLDA advocates on Capitol Hill** by tracking federal legislation that affects homeschooling and parental rights. HSLDA works to defeat or amend harmful bills, but also works proactively, introducing legislation to protect and preserve family freedoms.

**HSLDA advocates in state legislatures**, at the invitation of state homeschool organizations, by assisting individual states in drafting language to improve their homeschool legal environment and to fight harmful legislation.

**HSLDA advocates in the media** by presenting articulate and knowledgeable spokesmen to the press on the subject of homeschooling. HSLDA staff members are regularly called upon for radio, television, and print interviews, and their writings are frequently published in newspapers and magazines across the country. HSLDA's own bimonthly magazine, *The Home School Court Report*, provides news and commentary on a host of current issues affecting homeschoolers. And its two-minute daily radio broadcast, *Home School Heartbeat*, can be heard on nearly 500 radio stations.

**HSLDA advocates for the movement** by commissioning and presenting quality research on the progress of homeschooling. Whether it's in print, from the podium, or on the air, HSLDA provides insightful vision and leadership for the cause of homeschooling.

**Home School Legal Defense Association . . .** tens of thousands of American families working together with HSLDA to preserve each other's right to homeschool . . . together, "Advocates for Family & Freedom."

[www.hslda.org](http://www.hslda.org)

*Note: Homeschoolers belonging to a support group receive a discount on HSLDA membership. For information on joining, click "join" on the homepage. Be sure to have your support group's discount number available.*

## How CHIME Works

CHIME is a parent run group. Anything that happens in the group happens because a parent or parents volunteered to do it. If a member wants to run a field trip and open it to the wider CHIME community, no permission needs to be asked. All we ask is that the member consult the calendar on the website and to avoid planning it on the same day as another event (unless the events are so far apart that they won't draw the same people). There is also no obligation to open up a field trip or event to the wider community, for example a member offering a class in their home wouldn't put it on the CHIME calendar.

CHIME also uses a Service Team model, a 5 member team which has four main functions:

1. To take a big picture view of the needs of the group (i.e. website, spiritual director, etc.)
2. To facilitate the planning of activities for the upcoming academic year.
3. To discuss and act upon on any issues which concern the group as a whole.
4. To serve as a direct channel and arbiter for the resolution of issues or conflicts within the group.

The Service Team is not a governing body. All decisions that affect the membership as a whole are brought to the membership for a vote. There are also many smaller auxiliary roles for which CHIME members volunteer. See the website for more info under [Organizational Info -> Current Service Team & Auxiliary Positions](#).

*All members are encouraged to volunteer to help the community in any way they can. It is the parent power of CHIME that keeps it vibrant and strong!*

### **What membership dues cover & what they don't**

The membership dues cover only those expenses associated with being part of CHIME – insurance, website related expenses, and any other small expenses related to such. Field trips, Co-Op, Fellowship Friday, parties, and special events are not covered by dues, but are charged separately. This way, members who are not able to participate in some events don't pay for them.

### **A Sampling of activities that have been held in the past**

Covid restrictions in MA challenged our ability to gather as a community. Therefore, many events that had taken place regularly were put on hold. The following is a list of activities that have been run by CHIME families over the years. We encourage you to volunteer to run an event to help build the community.

- **Co-op** – runs for 6 weeks in the fall and again in the spring. CHIME parents run classes for the children. Classes are interactive and hands on. All parents are expected to share teaching responsibilities with other parents over the 6 weeks. Participation in Mass beforehand and lunch and recess afterwards is encouraged.
- **Fellowship Friday** - This is a faith-based gathering for the whole family. Mass is held on the First Friday of each month, with lunch and other activities following.
- **Field Trips** – CHIME parents offer field trips to the membership at varying times throughout the year. Some tend to happen every year (i.e.: Topsfield Fair or apple picking), others are impromptu as members volunteer.

**Leadership Guidelines and Behavior Guidelines**: are in effect for all CHIME events. The membership adopted these guidelines in order for all members to understand the expectations participants. See website under [Organizational Info -> Behavior Guidelines](#).