



Currents

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Your Stake in the 2009 Oregon Legislative Session

by *Rodger Williams* OCEANetwork Legislative Coordinator

The 2009 Oregon Legislature started its session on January 12th. As home educators we have a big stake in what happens in Salem. Each legislative session, the Oregon Christian Home Education Association Network joins forces with the Oregon Home Education Network to advance your rights as home educators and to protect you from attempts to pass laws which would interfere with your ability to do what is best for your children.

To understand why, we only need to think about why we educate our own children instead of letting the State educate them. What is so important that we are willing to deprive our family of a second full-time income? What drives us to, in effect, go back to school ourselves so that we can more effectively teach our children? Why do we take on the extra work of teaching academics to our own children – a job most parents in our society decline.

For one thing, we know we can give our children a good education because we can custom-tailor each child's studies to their needs.

Our children avoid a lot of peer pressure and possible bullying that are common in institutional school settings. As a result, they are more likely to become self-sufficient and even leaders as adults.

For Christian parents, home-based discipleship without a

constant message from the public school that God is irrelevant is the most important reason.

All of this depends on the opportunity to do what we know is best for our children, without government interference. And that is where the Legislature comes in.

Although government has a proper role to restrain and punish evildoers, it can also interfere with parents who are doing good for their children. And, unfortunately, there are strong political forces acting at the Legislature every session to do exactly that. This year is no exception.

1. We will be re-introducing our homeschool freedom bill, which would eliminate testing requirements for home-educated students.

2. We will be monitoring the Legislature closely for attempts to increase regulations on Oregon home educators.

3. Some families claim exemption from the compulsory school attendance law under the homeschool statute while accepting state-funded K-12 education services. This causes confusion in the Legislature. Legislators view homeschoolers as people who want freedom from accountability while simultaneously taking public education funds.

We will be working to help the legislators see the difference between Public School At Home and Private Home Education (see <http://www.hstuac.org/four-types-of-education.png>). We do not want private home educators to be

penalized with extra regulations.

4. We will work to block broader changes which would cause collateral damage to parents' ability to rear and protect their children without government interference.

We can only do this as you faithfully stand with us. Please pray for God's protection on families in Oregon and home-educating families in particular. And be prepared to encourage your state senator and state representative to support home education freedom as issues come up this legislative session. You have a lot at stake. We all do.

What's happening to the homeschool law?

Sign up for FREE E-mail Alerts and Information

The legislative season has begun; don't get left out of the loop! The Oregon Christian Home Education Association Network offers a FREE Alert and Information E-mail Service to any interested home educator. We keep you up to date with what is happening in the Oregon legislature, inform you about events for home educators in Oregon, and send you position papers on topics impacting home education. These emails are designed to serve your needs and help you protect your rights to homeschool. Please go online to our website at oceanetwork.org and sign up to keep current on the issues that effect homeschoolers in Oregon.

Apple Pie Day

Thursday, May 7th

State Capitol, Salem

Plan to take a family field trip, learn about Oregon state government and protect your right to homeschool. Mark your calendars and attend "Apple Pie Day" Thursday, May 7th at the Oregon Capitol. Make an appointment with your legislators and tell them you appreciate the freedom to homeschool in Oregon. For more information contact: Wes and Deborah Butler at 503-873-3159 or butlers@oceanetwork.org.

15th Annual OCEANetwork Conference

"For Such a Time as This"

June 12-13, 2009

Oregon Convention Center, Portland

Reserve the date. Michael and Elizabeth Smith from HSLDA and Kevin Swanson will be our keynote speakers. These are challenging times. It is important to disciple our children in the Lord, teach them to think from a biblical worldview, and work to protect our freedom. Who knows if we haven't been given the freedom to homeschool "for such a time as this."

OCEANetwork's 2009 Graduate Recognition

Saturday, June 13, 2009

Welcome class of 2009! OCEANetwork is excited to invite you to participate in the upcoming statewide homeschool Graduate Recognition at the beautiful Oregon Convention Center. Registration fees include cap, gown and diploma. You can find full details on our web site. The Commencement address will be given by conference keynote speaker, Michael Smith from HSLDA.

Space is limited so make sure to send in your registration in as soon as possible to hold your place.

Applications will be accepted on a first-come first serve basis. For more registration information email: bullocks@oceanetwork.org.

Northwest Creation Conference 2009

February 7th, Portland

Featured speakers include Eric Hovind, President of Creation Science Evangelism, and Dennis Petersen, author of *Unlocking the Mysteries of Creation*. Fees are structured so families can attend all day or just a portion. Family price for all day: \$35. For more information see the website: <http://www.creationnw.org> or call 503-590-8327.

Preparing to Homeschool High School & College Prep

Saturday, Feb. 28

Vancouver, WA

Whether our children plan to go to college or not, they need a great high school education that will prepare them for life! This seminar encourages parents to homeschool high school while keeping an eye on college preparations and to do it without fear. Sponsored by CCHO. For more information go online to <http://www.cchomeed.org/leebinzhomescholar.php> or contact: Lori at cche@cchomeed.org.

Invitation to 2009 National Men's Leadership Summit for Homeschool Leaders

Christian Home Educators of Colorado is issuing an invitation to its 2009 Men's Leadership Summit in Indianapolis March 5-7th, 2009.

"We are inviting any home school father who is a leader who plans to lead in some capacity. Of course, we would prioritize state home school organization leaders and support group leaders, but we would also extend the invitation to

pastors, elders, speakers, authors, vendors, etc. Thanks to the generous donations of several committed organizations and persons, registration, room, and board will be provided free of charge to a limited number of registrants on a first-come, first-serve basis. Men can register and get more information about the Summit online at www.2009leadershipsummit.com.

We see the objectives of this 2009 Men's Leadership Summit as follows:

1. Define a vision for the future of the Christian home education movement. With more exponential growth coming from second and third generation home schools in 2010 through 2050, speakers will address the challenges and opportunities before us. What opposition must we expect? And with the changing (and sometimes unpleasant) economic and political environments, how does the home school vision impact the future of household economics, politics, church life, etc.?

2. Develop a Christian Education Manifesto statement. After a thousand years of a secular, Greek education model (first taking the university, then later capturing K-12 childhood education,) home educators are recovering the biblical discipleship paradigm. The 2009 Summit will include discussion on this Manifesto statement.

3. Promote unity among the leaders and organizations of this precious movement that God has graciously bestowed upon us.

With God's assistance and blessing, I believe this meeting will serve to instill clarity of vision and steel the conviction and commitment of the leadership of a national movement. For such a time as this."

*Bill Roach and Kevin Swanson
Christian Home Educators of
Colorado*