

# AHEM News

Volume 4 • No 1 • Fall 2006

Advocates for Home Education in Massachusetts, Inc.

What  
you  
need  
to  
know  
when  
you  
need  
to  
know  
it

## Announcing . . .

### Unit Study on Massachusetts History and Government

This fall AHEM will unveil a unity study on Massachusetts history and government for homeschoolers. This unit provides a variety of activities for six weeks of study, covering topics in history, geography, economics, civics, and government such as:

- the purposes, principles, and practices of American government as established by the United States Constitution;
- the rights and responsibilities we have as citizens and how to exercise these rights and responsibilities in local, state, and national government;
- basic concepts of American government;
- history and politics of Massachusetts.

The activities have been chosen to teach the fundamental ideas each week, while appealing to a range of learning styles and ages. Parents are encouraged to individualize the unit to suit their own child's present level of knowledge and interest. Some assignments involve reading, writing, and research; others involve hands-on games, art, even music and cooking. We hope that students will let us know if they come up with an idea that we might add to the unit for future students to learn from.

Some weeks allow for choosing one or more activities; other weeks require that more than one activity be completed. Some weeks will have AHEM field trips planned that tie in with the subject matter. Students will keep a log of their accomplishments in a unit study notebook. When a student completes the unit study, we hope that he or she will let AHEM know, and give us any constructive feedback. We will then be pleased to send a Certificate of Completion.

Friends of AHEM *with email* will be notified when the unit study is published in September, in time for Constitution Day, which is September 18, 2006. The final week of the unit will be marked by a visit to the State House, and hopefully many homeschoolers across the state will visit their representatives either at the State House, or in their home offices.

## Current State Issues . . .

### Legislative Update

#### HB 4738, "An Act Relative to Public School Attendance Requirements"

AHEM has previously reported on HB 1044, "An Act Relative to Increasing the Mandatory School Age"

(<http://www.ahem.info/HB1044.htm>), and HB 1202, "An Act Relative to Public School Attendance Requirements" (<http://www.ahem.info/HB1202.htm>). These bills have now been combined with several other bills that deal with raising the age of compulsory attendance, reducing the school drop out rate, and truancy, to create HB 4738.

The new bill, **HB 4738, "An Act Relative to Public School Attendance Requirements,"** would establish a Commission "for the purpose of investigating and reporting on current efforts to reduce student drop out rates in the Commonwealth, and to recommend additional programs or policies that could reduce the drop out rate in the Commonwealth. The Commission shall explore plans, programs, initiatives, curricula, policies, including those in other states, or any other source of information, which is relevant to reducing the drop out rate in the Commonwealth." The Commission would be made up of 15 members, including members of the Joint committee on Education and the Joint committee on Children and Families. The Commission would hold four public hearings in diverse locations, would take testimony from the public, and would submit their report to the full Joint committee on Education on July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2007.

On March 6, 2006, HB 4738 received a unanimous "ought to pass" vote by the Education committee. On March 8, 2006, the bill moved to the Joint Rules committee. On March 13, 2006, HB 4738 was moved to the House Rules committee.

On June 8, 2006 the House Rules committee recommended the bill ought to pass and referred it to the committee on House Ways and Means. From the House Journal, p. 1734: "By Mr. Scaccia of Boston, for the committee on Rules, that the Bill relative to public

## Inside this issue . . .

### Announcing

Unit Study on MA History & Government ..... 1

### Current State Issues

Legislative Update ..... 1

### Meet Massachusetts Homeschoolers

Homeschooling in Spite of Ambiguity..... 2

### Law Made Easy

Homeschooling in the Northeast: RI..... 3

### Around AHEM

Highlighting AHEM County Contacts ..... 4

Not-Back-to-School Time ..... 4

AHEM Speakers..... 5

Report on AHEM's Spring Social ..... 5

JFK Presidential Library & Museum ..... 5

Spellman Museum of Postal History..... 6

State House Visit ..... 7

Become a Friend of AHEM ..... 8

Why Are You Getting This Newsletter? ..... 8

The information in this newsletter does not constitute legal advice; it is provided for informational purposes only. AHEM is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization. All donations are tax deductible.

© 2006 Advocates for Home Education in Massachusetts, Inc.  
PO Box 1307  
Arlington, MA 02474  
[www.AHEM.info](http://www.AHEM.info)



school attendance requirements (House, No. 4738) ought to pass. Referred, under Rule 33, to the committee on Ways and Means." The next step should be scheduling HB 4738 for debate and an eventual vote by the full House.

**Here is the URL for HB 4738 on the General Court website:**

<http://www.mass.gov/legis/184history/h04738.htm>

**Here is the URL for the text of HB 4738:**

<http://www.mass.gov/legis/bills/house/ht04pdf/ht04738.pdf>

### HB 1220

AHEM has also been following HB 1220, a bill which would allow homeschoolers to take the MCAS at taxpayers' expense, and would require school districts to grant diplomas to homeschoolers that pass the MCAS, and request a diploma. This bill has become part of a study order, HB 4822, and has been with a study committee since April 2006. If the bill doesn't move from that committee by December 31, 2006, it will be considered "dead." You can read more about this bill at <http://www.ahem.info/HB1220.htm>.

### SB 1907 & SB 2125

SB 1907, "An Act Providing for the Denial of Driver's Licenses to Truants" and SB 2125, "An Act Relative to Eligibility for a License to Operate a Motor Vehicle" have been combined and are now included in SB 2417. This new bill authorizes the Joint committee on Transportation to make an investigation and study of certain current Senate documents relative to transportation. The Transportation committee reported favorably on this bill and the bill has been with the Senate Ethics and Rules committee since March 2006. Information about both these bills can be found at <http://www.ahem.info/SB1907.htm> and <http://www.ahem.info/SB2125.htm>.

## Meet Massachusetts Homeschoolers . . .

### Homeschooling in Spite of Ambiguity

*by Gwendolyn Atwood*

When dealing with the local school official in our town, we have found that good information has been useful in helping us hold ground confidently in the face of requests for more than one report a year. I believe our annual year-end reports have quite satisfactorily demonstrated our children's progress. I use the writing of them to satisfy myself and my own high standards on this score, since otherwise I would find it too frustrating to spend the time writing them, when there are so many other good things to do with our precious time here on earth. I'm not interested in taking time to do three, make-work, mid-year reports on our kids. I wasted too much time doing unnecessary exercises in school to have any patience left for that sort of thing! Using information provided by AHEM, we have been able to keep to a single report per year in spite of some minor pressure from the school administrator for more.

When we began reporting three years ago, we received a letter requesting information about our goals and methods. The assistant superintendent who wrote this request added that he would be in contact at "mid-year and at the end of the year for an update of the progress and reports."

Using others' old education plans and the suggestions on the AHEM website, I drafted goals for our daughter's learning, listed resources available at our home and in the larger community, spoke of how we homeschool all day, year round, "without stopping for weekends or holidays," and listed my husband's and my educational degrees as our qualifications. For evaluation, I stated

that we would submit a progress report the next summer. I deliberately did not address the request for a mid-year evaluation, knowing that in many Massachusetts towns, a year-end report on progress for each child is considered sufficient.

All of this went through the mill without a glitch, seemingly. I received a letter approving our plan, and proceeded to unschool Julia (and our other, younger children) in the manner to which we had become happily accustomed. Mid-year came and went without my, or apparently, the assistant superintendent, noticing anything amiss. Certainly, our homeschooling was proceeding full throttle!

I sent in my report on the year's progress in a timely manner, and heard nothing until a letter arrived in September by certified mail asking, "Will you please explain why I have not received [your] report?" I immediately replied in writing that I had indeed sent the report, and soon received a gratifying apology for his having "misfiled" it.

That January, I received a letter requesting a mid-year report, something I'd heard nothing about in the previous "misfiled" year. Before composing my polite letter, I called AHEM, and made use of the policy and practice database — lovingly created by your submissions and completed questionnaires, dear readers. I acquired a long list of surrounding towns where the school requires only one report a year. This I enclosed in my letter, thanking the superintendent for his interest in our child's progress but demurring on the issue of the mid-year report and stating, "Requiring just one report per year... is common practice... For example, in the seven surrounding towns the public school administrations request one report per year for each homeschooled child." I thought that was an impressive statistic.

I guess the superintendent did not. Or maybe he wasn't sure. Maybe he misfiled the letter. He's obviously busy with other things. In any case, I never heard anything back. That summer, I sent in my evaluation for the year for our oldest, and a plan for her and our middle child who was turning six. I received an approving reply, with no mention of the mid-year evaluation issue. But then a letter arrived in January once again requesting a mid-year evaluation. This time in my polite reply I could express surprise since he hadn't mentioned in his approval letter that he would be seeking a mid-year report this year. In his reply, the assistant superintendent referred to the school policy document that he had sent at the outset of our reporting career, in which a

mid-year report is requested, but he also acknowledged that he had approved our plan with only the year-end report. So we proceeded within that ambiguity.

This summer, I sent in my year-end evaluations and plans. I thought we would have a clear resolution this time of whether he was going to require the mid-year report or not. Instead, I received back a temporizing letter stating, "I grant approval for you to proceed. I will communicate with you about submitting updates on your progress." I wonder if he's planning to talk to his counterparts in the surrounding towns? Or if he's going to try to find some counterparts in towns where they do require a mid-year evaluation? (Maybe hard to do, since he doesn't have AHEM to call). Maybe he's just planning to finesse this issue indefinitely with continued rounds of thrusts and parries such as we've had over the last two years? Maybe he needs more time to think about it and is going to let us off the hook? Maybe he's planning to change the policy for the whole town, having seen that a mid-year report is an unnecessary and inconvenient formality? With support from AHEM, I will politely hold my ground on this minor but meaningful issue. With a clear understanding of the *Charles* guidelines coupled with civil, firm communication, it's been possible to homeschool supplying the amount of information I feel comfortable with.

## Law Made Easy . . .

### Homeschooling in the Northeast: Rhode Island

*Second in an occasional series examining homeschool laws in neighboring states.*

Rhode Island and Massachusetts share the distinction of being the only two states left which require approval in order to homeschool.

Rhode Island's compulsory attendance statute, § 16-19-1, requires that children between the ages of 6 and 16 attend school "or a course of at-home instruction approved by the school committee of the town where the child resides" (General Laws of Rhode Island § 16-19-1(a)). So, like Massachusetts, homeschoolers in Rhode Island report to their local districts. Another similarity to Massachusetts is that local districts have varying requirements of homeschoolers from town to town.

Rhode Island law states that the period of at-home instruction be "substantially equal" (General Laws of Rhode Island § 16-19-2) to that of the public school. Rhode Island law also requires that parents keep an

attendance register, and that they teach certain subjects “substantially to the same extent as these subjects are required to be taught in the public schools and that the teaching... shall be thorough and efficient” (§ 16-19-2). This part of the law is similar to the equal “in thoroughness and efficiency” (Care and Protection of Charles & others, 399 Mass. 324 (1987) at 337) requirement in Massachusetts. However, in Massachusetts we do not have any specific requirement regarding attendance in the home school, and we are not required to keep attendance records.

In RI, if the plan is not approved, the parent has the right to appeal the action to the department of elementary and secondary education. The commissioner of education schedules a hearing and decides the appeal at no cost to the parties involved. According to the law, the decision made by the Department of Education (DOE) at the hearing is final (§ 16-19-2). This is quite different from Massachusetts, where if a homeschooling plan is not approved and the school wishes to pursue the matter, the school must take legal action in the courts and consequently assume the burden of proving either that the plan is not equal in thoroughness and efficiency to that of the public school, or that what the school is asking the family to provide meets the standard of “essential” in regard to assuring the state interest in the child’s education.

There have been some rulings by the Commissioner of Education that affect homeschooling in Rhode Island. Much of these decisions involve fine points of evaluation methods and the nitty-gritty of homeschool oversight. None of the rulings change the compulsory attendance statute.

So, while Rhode Island and Massachusetts are similar in that both require approval of homeschooling by the local district, there are differences. The DOE is not at all involved in homeschooling in Massachusetts, unlike in Rhode Island where the board of regents makes final decisions on homeschooling plans in question. Also, in Rhode Island the parent must appeal the disapproval of the plan, while in Massachusetts the burden shifts to the school if a plan is disapproved.

## Around AHEM . . .

### Highlighting AHEM County Contacts

While we at Advocates for Home Education in Massachusetts love people to make use of the wealth of information about homeschooling in Massachusetts from our website, we also realize that

sometimes there is no substitute for a live person to provide information and one-on-one support, to help with questions about the *Charles* guidelines, or to act as a sounding board for concerns in dealing with school officials. This is what AHEM County Contacts are ready to do. AHEM's resources allow County Contacts to have a broad overview and solid understanding of how homeschooling works in Massachusetts as well as an awareness of hot spots and trends.

### County Contacts

- **Barnstable, Dukes, Hampshire, Nantucket & Plymouth Counties**  
Sophia 781-641-0566
- **Berkshire, Middlesex & Suffolk Counties**  
Milva 781-648-5579
- **Bristol, Hampden & Norfolk Counties**  
Suzanne 508-883-3913
- **Essex, Franklin & Worcester Counties**  
Cheryl 978-532-5778

If you prefer email, contact us at [info@ahem.info](mailto:info@ahem.info).  
We always welcome your calls, emails, and letters.

### Not-Back-to-School Time

If you are a support group leader or otherwise homeschool outreach person, this time of year you’re experiencing a flood of inquiries regarding getting started homeschooling. In the interest of helping both local support networks and potential new homeschoolers, we at Advocates for Home Education in Massachusetts have a couple of ideas:

#### Not-Back-to-School Event listing

A treat that we homeschoolers experience during the “Back-to-School” season is the feeling of heading off to a beach or park on a glorious September day when the rest of the world has settled back into closeting themselves indoors at school again. If your group hosts a “Not-Back-to-School” event at which you’d welcome newcomers, we invite you to send details about it to list on our special page of such events  
<http://www.ahem.info/Not-Back-to-SchoolEvents.htm>.  
So far gatherings in Brookline, Concord, Framingham, New Bedford, and Saugus are listed.

It is fun and inspirational to see the myriad of events that take place across Massachusetts at this time of year, from Cape Cod homeschoolers heading to the beach to Western Mass. homeschoolers atop of mountains, (or go ahead — break the stereotype!) and everything in between. We hope you will send us your listing (See contact info on page 2.).

## AHEM brochures

We appreciate that sometimes the role of support person is thrust upon otherwise busy homeschoolers, and we hope that by partnering with you we can help to make that role, whether warmly embraced or not, a bit easier. If you would find it helpful, AHEM would be happy to provide you with copies of our brochure which introduces AHEM and has information on how to get started homeschooling in Massachusetts (.pdf version here: <http://www.ahem.info/Trifold03.pdf>).

While we are not in the business of recruiting people to homeschooling, it is in all of our best interests that those who choose this path are well informed about Massachusetts homeschool guidelines. These brochures would be appropriate to hand out at informal gatherings like picnic or park days, at support meetings, information nights, or mailed to individuals who contact you looking for more information. The pamphlet format allows for a few to be stashed in a glove compartment or backpack so that they're on hand when you need them.

If you'd like some, send us your name, address, and number of pamphlets desired and we'll get them right out to you.

---

## AHEM Speakers

Last June, Milva McDonald and Sophia Sayigh, two of AHEM's founders, were on a panel, "Skipping School," sponsored by North Suburban Home Learners. In November, Sophia will visit with the South Shore Home Learners at their monthly support meeting.

We are willing to travel if you would like to invite us to a support group meeting or other gathering to talk about how homeschooling works in Massachusetts, AHEM's mission and goals, and how you can stay informed or get involved. We always enjoy meeting with real live Massachusetts homeschoolers. If you would like to host a gathering, contact us to find a mutually agreeable time.

---

## Report on AHEM's Spring Social

On Saturday, May 6, 2006, AHEM hosted a Spring Social and fundraiser. Homeschoolers brought books, CDs, and videos to swap. Leftovers were donated to charity. Our homemade pasta dinner was fabulously finished by ice cream and cookies donated by Bob Sargent of Flora Restaurant in Arlington, MA. Presentations highlighting the accomplishments of teenage homeschoolers included performances of piano and guitar pieces, a karate kata, a skit by the Model UN Club, and a rapper dance by *Scrambled Six*. Teenage homeschoolers who felt they had reached a milestone in their lives were publicly

recognized and presented with a small gift from AHEM. Our Silent Auction featured a wide assortment of donations from Massachusetts museums and businesses, as well as from homeschoolers. The night was rounded out by dancing for all ages, Frisbee on the lawn, and plenty of lively conversations with other homeschoolers. All proceeds benefited AHEM. Thanks to all who volunteered to make the event possible, as well as to all who came and gave life to the party!



Hannah and others watching the entertainment at the AHEM Spring Social. More photos from the evening can be viewed here: <http://www.ahem.info/SpringSocialPhotos.htm>.

---

## John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum <http://www.jfklibrary.org/>

Advocates for Home Education in Massachusetts is planning a program for ages 8 - 14 at the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum on **Friday, September 29<sup>th</sup>, 2006**, at Columbia Point, Boston, MA.

This field trip ties in with the second week of the AHEM unit study on Massachusetts History and Government. (See page 1). You are welcome to join us whether or not you plan on doing the unit study.

The John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum is dedicated to the memory of our nation's thirty-fifth president and to all those who through the art of politics seek a new and better world. Located on a ten-acre park,

overlooking the sea that he loved and the city that launched him to greatness, the Library stands as a vibrant tribute to the life and times of John F. Kennedy. The Museum, which portrays the life, leadership, and legacy of President Kennedy, conveys his enthusiasm for politics and public service, and illustrates the nature of the office of the President.

**For ages 8 - 14: Presidential Campaigns and Elections, 10:00 – 12:30, (MEET AT 9:45 AM in Lobby)**

Using the 1960 election as a case study, students learn the steps to becoming President of the United States. Students explore objects, photographs, and documents in the museum to discover important information about the 1960 election. The last part of the visit includes an interactive game based on the steps to the presidency. A final discussion draws on students' hopes and ideas to guide the next President of the United States. (The teacher will tie in information about state and local elections as well.) Parents are welcome to accompany children in the program, but adult participation (i.e. answering questions, etc.) is not encouraged.

**Cost is \$5/person to reserve your spot; the full price will be refunded to you at the Museum, making your visit FREE.** If you don't show up, your money will be donated to support the non-profit mission of AHEM.

**If you want to go:** Mail a check made out to *Advocates for Home Education in Massachusetts* to AHEM, PO Box 1307, Arlington, MA 02474. Please include:

- the number of children and adults,
- ages of children,
- your address, and
- email or phone number.

Those with email will receive confirmation about a week before the visit.

Space is limited; **checks must be postmarked by September 15<sup>th</sup>**. No refunds after September 15<sup>th</sup> except those made to attendees *at the Museum on September 29<sup>th</sup>*. Email [FieldTrips@AHEM.info](mailto:FieldTrips@AHEM.info) for more information or call 781-641-0566.

### **Lunch**

The Museum Café serves light meals and beverages from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM daily. There is an indoor dining area for use of people who purchase lunch from the Café. If you bring your own lunch, there is an outdoor picnic area you can use.

### **Directions**

The Library and Museum is easily accessed by public transportation. Take the MBTA Rapid Transit, Red Line (any red line train) to JFK/UMASS Station. There is a free shuttle bus to the Library every 20 minutes beginning at 8:00 AM and running until Museum closing. Please take the buses marked "JFK."

The Library and Museum is located on Columbia Point in Boston close to Route I-93.

- From the South by automobile  
Take Route 3/I-93 (Southeast Expressway) to exit 14. At the end of the ramp, merge onto Morrissey Boulevard. Follow the signs to the JFK Library and Museum and the University of Massachusetts.
- From the North by automobile  
Take Route I-93 or I-95 south to Boston and onto the Southeast Expressway (Route 3/I-93). Take exit 15 and follow the signs to the JFK Library and Museum and the University of Massachusetts.
- From the West by automobile  
Take the Massachusetts Turnpike (Route I-90) to "Expressway South" (Route 3/I-93), southbound to Exit 15. Follow signs to the JFK Library and Museum and the University of Massachusetts.

### **Parking**

There is a large parking lot right outside the museum doors. It is free to all visitors.

Field trip participants will be added to the Friends of AHEM list unless they specifically opt out.

---

## **Spellman Museum of Stamps & Postal History**

<http://www.spellman.org/>

Advocates for Home Education in Massachusetts is planning a program for ages 6 - 12 at the Spellman Museum of Stamps and Postal History on **Friday, October 13<sup>th</sup>, 2006**, at 235 Wellesley Street, at Regis College, Weston, MA.

This field trip ties in with the fourth week of the AHEM unit study on Massachusetts History and Government. (See page 1). You are welcome to join us whether or not you plan on doing the unit study.

The Spellman Museum of Stamps & Postal History is a center of learning and activity that enables those of all ages to appreciate diverse cultures and peoples by exploring the ways they communicate through the world's postal systems. Central to the museum's philosophy is that real objects, direct experience, and enjoyment are gateways to understanding and learning.

**For ages 6 - 12: Massachusetts on Stamps, 10:00 – 12:00, (MEET AT 9:45 AM in Lobby)**

The program focuses on the history and geography of Massachusetts. Activities include:

- An overview of postal history from the first stamp ever made in 1840 to the present
- A scavenger hunt of stamps that relate to Massachusetts history
- A map activity using stamps to help children learn about locations of famous events that have happened in the state, and birthplaces of famous Bay Staters
- Tips on how to start a stamp collection
- Reading of the children's story *Mailing May*
- All children receive a free packet of stamps to take home plus additional stamps are available for sale in the museum's gift shop
- An opportunity to design a stamp related to Massachusetts history that will be displayed in the museum
- A picture taken of each child on a mock postage stamp
- A tour of the museum's gallery

**Cost is \$10/child.** Adult chaperones are free.

**If you want to go:** Mail a check made out to *Advocates for Home Education in Massachusetts* to AHEM, PO Box 1307, Arlington, MA 02474. Please include:

- the number of children and adults,
- ages of children,
- your address, and
- email or phone number.

Those with email will receive confirmation about a week before the visit.

Space is limited; **checks must be postmarked by**

**October 2<sup>nd</sup>.** No refunds after October 2<sup>nd</sup>. Email

FieldTrips@AHEM.info for more information or call 781-641-0566.

The museum is handicapped accessible and groups may bring a lunch to eat after the program. Refrigeration is available.

**Directions:**

- Traveling north on Route 95/128  
Take exit 24 to Route 30 West; continue approximately two miles and make a right turn onto Wellesley St. turn left at the first entrance to the college at the sign for the museum.
- Traveling south on Route 95/128  
Take exit 26 to Route 20 West; continue approximately one mile and make a left turn onto

Wellesley St.; turn right at the third entrance to the college at the sign for the museum.

- Traveling east on the MassPike (I-90)  
Take exit 14 to Route 30 West; continue approximately two miles and make a right turn onto Wellesley St.; turn left at the first entrance to the college at the sign for the museum.
- Traveling west on the MassPike (I-90)  
Take exit 15 to Route 30 West; continue approximately two miles and make a right turn onto Wellesley St.; turn left at the first entrance to the college at the sign for the museum.
- Public Transportation from North Station or Government Center in Boston  
Take the Green Line, Riverside or D train; get off at Riverside, the last stop; take the Regis College shuttle to the Spellman Museum (call the museum for a current shuttle schedule 781-768-7331).
- For a complete information concerning Boston area public transportation, go to [www.mbta.com](http://www.mbta.com).

**Parking**

There is ample free parking next to the museum.

Field trip participants will be added to the Friends of AHEM list unless they specifically opt out.

---

## State House Visit

One of Advocates for Home Education in Massachusetts's organizational goals is to encourage self-advocacy and legislative awareness. Cultivating relationships at the State House is a key component to achieving this goal. In developing these relationships, we will have a base of state legislators to work with in the event of a legislative challenge to homeschooling. To this end, AHEM sponsors periodic State House field trips throughout the year. During a typical visit, the group tours the State House with a guide who details the historical significance of the building. For representative government to work, we need active participants. We strongly encourage families to participate in these events.

Advocates for Home Education will sponsor a State House visit on Thursday, October 26<sup>th</sup>, at 1:00 PM.

Children are welcome. Our tour will begin promptly at 1:00 PM, so please plan to meet in Doric Hall (2nd floor) at 12:45 PM. If there is a legislative session going on that day, we will be able to sit in for part of the session.

This trip ties in with the sixth week of the AHEM unit study on Massachusetts History and Government. (See page 1). You are welcome to join us whether or not you plan on doing the unit study.

Participants are encouraged to contact your own senator and/or representative and let them know you will be visiting the State House on October 26<sup>th</sup>. Your legislator will arrange to come down and meet with your family. They are always very enthusiastic about meeting constituents. Visit [www.ahem.info/ContactInfoforFedStateLocalReps.htm](http://www.ahem.info/ContactInfoforFedStateLocalReps.htm) for contact info for your representative. For those that would like to share their experiences of meeting their reps, we will meet at 3:00 PM at Caffè Bella Vita, 30 Charles St., Boston. They serve gelato as well as coffee, tea, and other hot drinks. If it's a nice day, we can get takeout and remove to the Public Garden, a short walk away. To get to Caffè Bella Vita from the State House, exit the State House onto Beacon St. Walk a few blocks to the right (Boston Common will be on your left). Make a right onto Charles St.

**If you want to go to the State House:** Space is limited. Please RSVP to [FieldTrips@AHem.info](mailto:FieldTrips@AHem.info) or call Cheryl at 978-532-5778 to sign up. Please include:

- your name,
- the number of children and adults,
- the ages of children,
- your address, and
- email or phone number.

#### **Directions:**

Find directions to the State House at <http://www.sec.state.ma.us/trs/trsdir/diridx.htm>. We recommend taking the T: Take the Red Line to Park Street Station. Once outside the station walk up Park Street toward the State House.

**If you drive, there is parking at the Boston Common Garage.** The entrance to the Boston Common Garage is located on Charles Street, directly across from the Public Gardens. For directions to the garage, see [http://www.mccahome.com/Garage/commons\\_garage\\_directions.html](http://www.mccahome.com/Garage/commons_garage_directions.html).

Field trip participants will be added to the Friends of AHem list unless they specifically opt out.

---

## **Become a Friend of AHem**

Advocates for Home Education in Massachusetts (AHem) is a nonprofit, independent, grassroots, volunteer-run, educational organization that gathers and disseminates information about homeschooling in Massachusetts through education, advocacy, and events. We believe that informed and active homeschoolers are their own best advocates in maintaining the right to independently homeschool. We welcome and value the

participation of anyone interested in homeschooling in Massachusetts.

Friends of AHem keep abreast of legislative and other issues that affect Massachusetts homeschoolers via an announcement-only email list or this newsletter. Friends of AHem with email get special notice of AHem events, field trips, and get-togethers.

Be proactive: become a Friend of AHem. Even if your involvement is simply to stay informed, that strengthens all of us.

To become a Friend of AHem and receive email updates, send your name, address, and email address to [info@AHem.info](mailto:info@AHem.info). To become a Friend of AHem and receive *AHem News* by US mail instead of email updates, send your name and address to AHem, PO Box 1307, Arlington, MA 02474. Donations to offset cost are appreciated.

Advocates for Home Education in Massachusetts, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization. All donations are tax deductible.

---

## **Why Are You Getting This Newsletter?**

You are receiving this paper copy of the newsletter through the mail instead of our timely announcement-only emails because we have you listed as a Friend of AHem, but either the email address we have for you has been bouncing, or we don't have an email address for you. We'd appreciate hearing from you with an updated email address in order to conserve paper and postage, and to keep our costs down.

If you would like to keep receiving this paper version of the newsletter, please consider making a tax deductible donation to AHem to support efforts like sending this newsletter to Massachusetts homeschoolers who don't have computer access. And please pass your newsletter on to a friend or leave it in your local library when you're done with it. Thanks!

**If you don't wish to receive this newsletter anymore,** please take a moment to let us know and we will stop sending it. Either email [info@ahem.info](mailto:info@ahem.info), call 781-641-0566, or drop us a line at AHem, PO Box 1307, Arlington, MA 02474. We really appreciate your help in keeping our lists current.

**To become a Friend of AHem, send your name and address to AHem, PO Box 1307, Arlington, MA 02474, or email [info@AHem.info](mailto:info@AHem.info). It's free!**

- 
- 
-