



# AHEM News

Advocates for Home Education in Massachusetts, Inc.

**What  
you  
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to  
know  
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it**

## Clearing Our Throats ...

### What do you think of when you hear the word “portfolio”?

The American Heritage Dictionary defines a portfolio as:  
“A portable case for holding material, such as loose papers, photographs, or drawings.

The materials collected in such a case, especially when representative of a person’s work: *a photographer’s portfolio; an artist’s portfolio of drawings.*”<sup>1</sup>

A portfolio implies a comprehensive package of materials, like the “case” described in the above definition.

Sometimes, homeschoolers use the word “portfolio” to refer to the method of evaluation they use. The fact is, the word “portfolio” does not appear in Massachusetts homeschooling law. *Charles* says that school officials and parents should agree on one method of evaluation and states the following as choices: testing, periodic progress reports, or dated work samples. (*Charles* at 340)

No portfolio required.

You may ask, isn’t a portfolio just a bunch of dated work samples? It could be — or it could be more dated work samples than a homeschooler needs to provide, along with written text that might qualify as a progress report. It could even include test results. With the help of computers, the Internet, and other tools, some homeschooling parents are fashioning digital portfolios for submission to school districts. A portfolio may well contain more than Massachusetts homeschooling law requires parents to submit to schools for the purpose of evaluation.

### Let’s look at the reasons people may submit more than is required, then examine whether it matters.

- *New homeschooler jitters* Families who’ve recently started homeschooling may feel nervous about whether they will receive approval. Sometimes, these nerves lead people to submit more. Talking to other homeschoolers, reading up on the law, and checking out the sample evaluations on the AHem website can help provide a sense of security.
- *My kid is awesome!* Parents may rightfully be excited about all the cool things their kids are doing. Keeping records and compiling portfolios can be both personally rewarding and important for some purposes like preparing for college or other applications, or sharing accomplishments with family members and friends — but not for reporting to your school district.
- *Confusion* Some homeschoolers may not be sure what the law requires, and may think that a portfolio is what’s

necessary. Familiarizing ourselves with the law helps clarify our responsibilities.

### Why does it matter if some families submit portfolios? Shouldn’t people do what feels comfortable?

When people over report, it can affect other homeschoolers by raising the expectations of school officials for all families in town. AHem has received reports of cases in which one family in town submitted extensive portfolios for their kids, and the district then pressured other homeschoolers in town to submit similar information for evaluation. While some families may feel fine about handing in a large portfolio, other families may have reasons for not doing so, such as philosophical opposition to testing, or a homeschooling style that focuses on process more than product. Consider that submitting more than necessary also sets up heightened expectations in future years for yourself, when circumstances may have changed and you may not have as much time as now.

Over reporting can also have consequences over the longer term. Here’s an example: *Charles* does not specifically state the required frequency for submission of education plans. Annual submission has become the norm. Some homeschoolers may even think submitting an education plan once a year is required by law. It’s not. But in a legal challenge, common

Portfolios continued on page 2

## Current State Scene ...

### Legislative Update

On June 14th, some bills that AHem has been watching, S 245, S 270, H 355, and H 363, were all “reported favorably” by their respective House and Senate committees, redrafted/incorporated into a new bill, H 4753, “A BILL RELATIVE TO HIGH SCHOOL DROPOUTS,” and referred to the House committee on Ways and Means. The House Ways and Means committee studies the financial impact the bill would have on the Commonwealth should it become law.

H 4753 revises and amends MGL Ch. 69 to require the Board of Education to set the age for school attendance to no younger than 18. (It is 16 now.)

H 4753 also revises and amends Ch. 76 by striking language that allows exemptions from school attendance for 14-16 year olds who are employed. It adds many provisions intended to lower the dropout rate such as language requiring districts to help regular school students make up exams and assignments

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## Legislative

*continued from page 1*

when they have missed a lot of school days during a given term; requirements for school committees to establish pupil absence notification programs; requirements for school administrators to give pupils 18 and older who have not graduated and are absent from school "information about the benefits of earning a high school diploma and non-traditional educational programs and services available to the student"; and so on.

The bill would gradually phase in the rise of the age of compulsory attendance: If the bill were to pass, from the effective date until June 30, 2011 all children under the age of 16 ½ would be required to attend school if they have not graduated from high school. From July 1, 2011 until June 30, 2013 all children under the age of 17 would be required to attend school if they have not graduated from high school. As of July 1, 2013, the age of 18 would be effective.

In July, AHEM wrote a letter to the House Ways and Means committee pointing out the problems with H 4753. Raising the compulsory attendance age would be ineffective in

## Portfolios

*continued from page 1*

practice would make a difference. If submission of portfolios became the norm in Massachusetts, eventually it could make a legal difference.

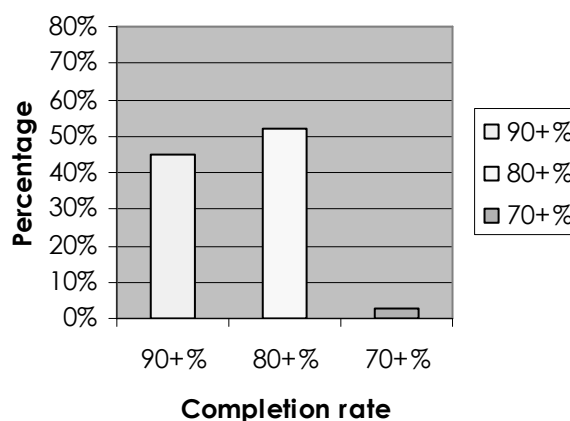
## What can homeschoolers do?

- *Read the law* Do it as many times as you need to in order to understand it. If you need help, interpretations of the law can be found on the AHEM website. Understanding the law makes us more able to advocate for ourselves and for homeschooling.
- *Don't over report* Choose the one form of evaluation that works for your family. If you pick progress report or dated work samples, carefully consider how much information is required to show your child's progress.
- *Use clear language* When discussing evaluation, avoid language that is not present in the law (portfolio), and use language that comes directly from the law (testing, periodic progress report, or dated work samples).

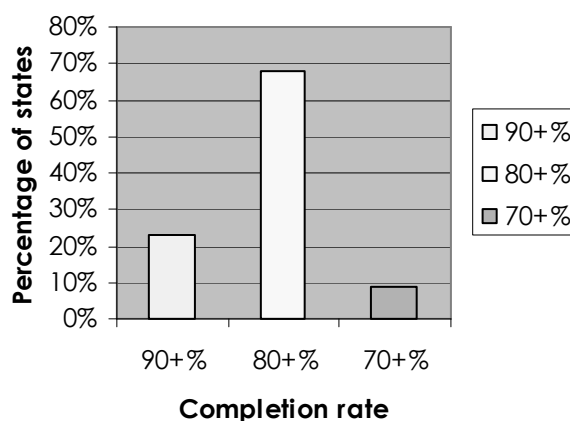
Understanding the law and making sure your education plan and evaluation do not exceed it are important ways you can help protect homeschooling freedoms for everyone in Massachusetts.

<sup>1</sup> Excerpted from *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, Third Edition* Copyright © 1992 by Houghton Mifflin Company. Electronic version licensed from Lernout & Hauspie Speech Products N.V., further reproduction and distribution restricted in accordance with the Copyright Law of the United States. All rights reserved.

**States with compulsory attendance age until 16**



**States with compulsory attendance age over 16**



reducing the dropout rate, and would result in increased spending for school departments. We noted that the recent report, "Making the Connection," (October 2009), from the Graduation and Dropout Prevention and Recovery Commission, while purporting to recommend "evidence-based strategies" to reduce the dropout rate, went on to recommend raising the compulsory attendance age to 18, despite the report's own assertion that "The simple act of increasing the compulsory age... will only retain a handful of students." Indeed, research conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics has shown that states requiring compulsory attendance until age sixteen have a higher average for school completion than those states requiring compulsory attendance until age seventeen or eighteen. States requiring attendance until age sixteen have a lower dropout rate than those states compelling attendance until ages seventeen or eighteen.

The financial ramifications that would result from extending the compulsory attendance age would include increased costs in teachers' salaries, classrooms, and transportation. If this bill were likely to achieve the desired results, the cost/benefit analysis would justify these higher costs. However, since statistics show that raising the compulsory attendance age would not result in a higher rate of high school completion, the financial burden to taxpayers and already fiscally strapped school departments cannot be justified.

We also noted that raising the age to 18 could remove alternatives, such as early graduation, from motivated students for whom traditional public school is not working.

**H 4646 - AN ACT PERMITTING NON PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS TO TAKE MCAS EXAM** (Martha Walz for the committee on Education) The department of elementary and secondary education shall issue a report on the feasibility and costs associated with non-public school students and home schooled students in grade 10 voluntarily taking the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System exam; provided further, that said report shall be provided to the secretary of administration and finance, the commissioner of elementary and secondary education, and the clerks of the senate and house of representatives who shall forward the same to the chair of the senate ways and means committee, the chair of the house ways and means committee, and the house and senate chairs of the joint committee on education on or before June 1, 2011. H 4646 has also been referred to the Ways and Means committee to study the cost feasibility of having the Board of Education issue a report on the feasibility and costs associated allowing non-public school students to take the MCAS.

AHEM is researching how specific language in H 4753 and H 4646 could affect homeschoolers. We will keep an eye on their progress through the Ways and Means committee, and let you know if any action is needed.

**H 4855 - AN ORDER RELATIVE TO AUTHORIZING THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION TO MAKE AN INVESTIGATION AND STUDY OF CERTAIN HOUSE DOCUMENTS CONCERNING EDUCATION ISSUES** The committee is to report the results of its investigation and study, and its recommendations, if any, together with drafts of legislation necessary to carry such recommendations into effect,

by filing same with the Clerk of the House of Representatives on or before the last Wednesday of December, 2010.

AHEM is continuing to monitor these bills as the current legislative session is winding down.



## 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>.

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.

### 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 that 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.

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## Why and How to Get Connected

In this day and age, homeschoolers represent a market. There are many businesses catering to homeschoolers' needs — or perceived needs. When first starting out it can be especially tempting to sign up for a multitude of classes or experiences that are being sold to you, rather than putting your energy into a grassroots network such as a local homeschool support group. Before you know it, your days are filled with activity and you don't look back.

The intangibles you'd be missing out on — real connection with other homeschoolers and personal empowerment — might be some of the best kept secrets of homeschooling, as well as what would sustain you on this path in the end. It's worth putting some time and effort in, and yes, if shy, getting your courage up, to figure out how to insinuate yourself into a group of homeschoolers, rather than falling for prepackaged deals that leave you with a busy day void of meaningful relationships, and a depleted wallet.

### Steps to take in building connection with other homeschoolers:

- Acts create connection: give of yourself.
- Make spending time with other adults a priority; schedule it in.
- Be patient. Connections are built one relationship at a time.

### How support groups work

Support groups range in their level of organization, from loose groups of people who get together from time to time, to highly organized groups with missions and boards. Some are inclusive and welcome everyone; others cater to a certain educational philosophy or religion. It is fine to try out a few and see where you feel comfortable, or to start your own. Homeschooling support groups can act as frameworks for networking, communication and support. It is important to realize that subscribing to a newsletter or email list does not magically make you part of some deeper pre-existing community. Ready-made communities don't exist; they are an illusion. You must put time and effort in to forge friendships. You get from the experience what you put into it.

Group activities, such as field trips, get-togethers, or classes, often depend on the unique energies and interests individuals bring to the group. Events and activities can be planned by individuals, or in collaboration with others. It is empowering to realize that you, children included, can create the opportunities and experiences you want for yourselves.

When attending a meeting or event, be sure to introduce yourself as a homeschooler. A good way to meet people is to extend yourself: organize a field trip or other event, edit a newsletter, host a support meeting.

### Examples of rituals and social events you can organize:

- Camping trips
- History and science fairs
- Monthly support meetings
- Meetups at ponds, parks, playground hopping

- Indoor gym play and skating
- Potluck suppers
- Book, game and puzzle swaps
- Talent shows
- Field trips

### Swapping expertise

Another level of interaction is the swapping of expertise and interest between homeschooling parents and others' children. People have been known to organize homeschooler-led groups in literature, writing, including historical fiction and child-published newspapers, history, classic films, math, Math Counts, Destination Imagination, art, knitting/sewing clubs, pet clubs, singing, storytelling, theatre groups, and more. Some people charge a nominal fee for leading a class. Others feel that as they give, so will they receive, and gladly put their energies into the "pot." In addition to the obvious "educational" benefits of all these interactions, whole families get to know one another, lives intersect, and interdependence develops.

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## Discounted MBTA Fares for Homeschooled Students

Junior high and high school students ride the T for 50% off the price of standard T fares and are eligible for a \$20/month Student T-Pass good for unlimited travel on Bus, Subway, Express Bus, and Commuter Rail Zones 1A, 1 and 2 until 8 PM on school days. Discounted rides or passes require a Student CharlieCard or CharlieTicket.<sup>1</sup>

The MBTA issues student fare media to homeschoolers for use on the MBTA system. In August, they will be issuing magnetic plastic CharlieCards for the 2010-2011 Academic School Year.

Please complete the order request form [<http://www.ahem.info/StudentCharlieCardSchoolLetterOrderForm.pdf>] with your best estimates for the session. Simply self-certify that you are a homeschooler — no further ID is required.

Up to two children 11 and under ride for free when accompanied by a paying adult. No ID required.

Homeschool parents who wish to make additional requests or seek general information about MBTA student services should contact Will Kingkade in the Automated Fare Collection (AFC) Department at (617) 222-4545.

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<sup>1</sup> From [http://www.mbta.com/fares\\_and\\_passes/reduced\\_fare\\_programs/](http://www.mbta.com/fares_and_passes/reduced_fare_programs/)

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## Meet Massachusetts Homeschoolers . . .

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### Navigating Lyme Disease: How Homeschooling Helped

By Ari Donnelly

Every conversation I ever have with a new friend goes exactly the same way. First, the other person talks about school. Then

I will be asked about my school. When I tell them that I'm a homeschooler, and they ask why, I tell them it is because I have Lyme disease. People sometimes think it must be hard or awkward for me to tell people I have Lyme, but it has never been hard because I am never the one who brings it up. It unfailingly always comes up on its own.

I never found a tick on me. The first time I saw a tick was actually seven months ago on the lawn, nearly 10 years after I got sick. The most pronounced of my earliest symptoms were auditory processing problems. Basically, my ears and brain were working, but they weren't communicating well with each other. This made it hard for me to understand people, particularly my teachers, when I was in school. My perception was that everyone was talking too quietly, or my mind would fill in the blanks. My mom once took me to a neurologist who asked if I simply wasn't paying attention to anyone, and to test this he told me a simple phrase and asked me to repeat it. I asked him to say it four times before I could fully repeat it. He was convinced. Around that time my energy level also started to diminish.

When I was in third grade, I went to a private Montessori school because it was better able to accommodate my learning needs than the public school had been. A year later, I began to develop what continues to be my main symptom: severe, debilitating fatigue. Among the selections on Lyme's menu of ailments, I also developed headaches, light sensitivity, joint pain, chest pain, heat intolerance, and insomnia. I began missing school, as many as three days a week in fourth grade. In our search for answers to what was wrong with me, a doctor in Massachusetts eventually suggested that my parents look into Lyme Disease. That led us to a pediatric Lyme specialist in Connecticut, as we were unable to find a doctor who had answers in our home state. When we finally had the Lyme diagnosis for my siblings, me, and lastly my mom, my parents looked into our backyard with a dawning realization: "It's here. It's always been right here."

In the beginning, I was able to keep up with school. Then I got worse, unable to attend regularly. My sister introduced me to the concept of homeschooling (she had been doing it for a while) and gave me a book about it called *The Teenage Liberation Handbook* by Grace Llewellyn. Homeschooling would allow me to set my own pace, and remove the stress of having to keep up with a full school schedule, impossible at that point. Although I feared I'd lose whatever social life I had left, I decided to give it a try.

Four years later, I see it as the best decision I've ever made. It was an adjustment at first. After having been isolated and homebound, my re-entry into a new social world was especially jarring. I felt like I had missed some crucial social learning period that everyone else had accomplished with flying colors. Gradually I began to feel more comfortable, although it didn't happen all at once, and not everyone was as accepting as they could have been. But every step of improvement builds on itself, and going into my fifth year of homeschooling, I've never felt happier. Academically, I'm able to set my own pace, and I have the freedom to make my health my top priority. It also helps to know that I have the

support of a community that respects me and doesn't doubt my illness.

Many people don't understand what homeschooling actually is. I sometimes have to stifle a small aneurysm when someone asks me the typical question: "Oh so your mom teaches you?" My mom doesn't teach me. I take groups and classes, go to a co-op, have a math tutor, and more. Mom's job has been to drive me everywhere, and now that I have my license she doesn't even do that. Many people also think that being a homeschooler means I have no social life, and while I don't see people as daily as I would if I were in regular school, that assumption is completely false. In homeschooling, I've found everything from an ultimate frisbee team, to anime clubs, writing clubs, game nights, monthly dances, and even a prom.

Now that my health is significantly improved, I can recognize that my Lyme journey has brought me some gifts. Someone once told me that when your life changes so irrevocably, the things you've lost have a way of coming back to you in the form of strengths. You will have abilities that other people who have not had to endure such trials do not possess. I'm not saying I'm happy I got sick, but what meaning would our suffering have if we couldn't channel it into something good? For example, when I was too sick to leave the house, I watched a lot of movies. This became a passion, and the free time that Lyme and, later, homeschooling, afforded me allowed me to pursue this interest with full force. Today, it has grown into a strong interest in movie production and filmmaking technique. I am currently teaching two film classes, one at my homeschool co-op focusing on contemporary film, another at my house following U.S. history. I also plan to go to a film school for college.

I am 17 now. Even after 10 years of serious illness, I don't feel that Lyme robbed me of my life. While it did make things more difficult, it also led to my opening new doors that I would not have found if I had never been challenged by this illness. Perhaps above everything else, I think my experiences have given me a perspective and maturity most kids aren't allowed at my age, and that people can sense it in me. I believe we all have the potential to take what we lose, and become stronger than before.

*This article first appeared in Lyme Times, Winter 2009/2010, Number 58. [www.lymedisease.org](http://www.lymedisease.org)*

## Yo Jo! . . .

### "Why Didn't Your Sons Use Drugs?"

By Joanne Casiello

Now that my four homeschooled sons are men living out in the world I am sometimes brave enough to ask them their opinion of their education. It takes bravery because my husband and I invested our time, our money, our love, our total commitment to helping them grow to adulthood, and I have to be very sure I really want the answers.

Recently we shared the sorrow of friends whose son died of a drug overdose. This homeschooled child was just as beloved to

his parents as our sons are to us. They were just as invested in him and his education as we were with our boys. He was just as full of potential as a child as they were. I am sure that my sons had opportunities to abuse drugs. I asked them recently what made them choose not to. All four told me their involvement in competitive sports kept them from abusing drugs.

### Pursuing Goals

Two said that they had worked really hard to reach top physical form and they weren't going to mess it up by doing drugs. They developed natural skill and physical ability by long hours of training. They watched their nutrition, their exercise, their mental readiness. They ate to grow strong skeletons upon which they could layer strong muscles. They developed increased lung capacity, broad shoulders, and agility. They appreciated their own bodies as fine tuned machines.

### Energetically Engaged

All four said sports kept them too busy to hang around with the kids who had time to hang around doing drugs. When some of their friends were beginning to experiment my sons had to get home to sleep to be on the road bright and early to the next tournament, race, or meet. They became so used to the more intense activity level that they couldn't understand how some of their friends could, "sit around and do nothing."

### Being Present

I once saw two sons lose a highly contested match. They sat on the field, post game, exhausted both physically and emotionally and cried. A friend, upset at their reaction, said, "Why do you do this to yourselves? Why play at this level if losing hurts so badly?" They turned to her in surprise and one said, "I love the intensity. If I didn't play at this level I would have to use drugs to experience the intense highs and lows." They loved seeing how far they could push themselves. How fast can a body really go? How long can you play? How tough is your mind? Winning taught them that you could be high in life one day and that the next was another day to train for the next level. Losing taught them that you could feel incredible pain and survive.

I asked them why not performance drugs then, to see how far, how high they could go, increase the intensity. They said it was because they wanted to see what they themselves in their own bodies could accomplish. They were aware of performance drug side effects and not interested in cheating.

If competitive sports kept them off drugs during their teen years, then the years we gave to it were worth it. It was worth the money, the driving, the trips to emergency rooms. In the midst of those years I often worried if it was all too intense. My sons tell me it was good.

*Send Joanne your question about homeschooling. Either email [info@ahem.info](mailto:info@ahem.info) with Attn: Joanne in the subject field, or write to Joanne, c/o AHM, PO Box 1307, Arlington, MA 02474.*

## Around AHM . . .

### Barnes & Noble Bookfair Report

Thanks to all who came out to support AHM at the Bookfair & Celebration of Homeschooling at Barnes & Noble in Framingham, MA on May 14, 2010. The presentations and performances by homeschool students were wonderful and inspiring. It was great to make connections, put faces to names, and to meet new homeschoolers or people who are considering homeschooling. A lot of fun! We have posted a few photos on our Facebook page. To see the pictures, visit: <http://www.facebook.com/album.php?aid=170815&id=254637964479&l=c5e78abf64>



The ship with its creators, May 14, 2010



[facebook.com/AHEM.ma](https://www.facebook.com/AHEM.ma)

### AHEM Field Trips & Events

#### Info regarding all AHM trips & events:

If you sign up for a field trip or event, please do your best to attend. Remember:

- When you sign up, you are reserving a spot that then cannot be given to someone else.
- It is disrespectful of our host and reflects poorly on all homeschoolers when we reserve space, and a large part of our group doesn't attend the event.
- If you sign up and do not show up, AHM reserves the right to no longer treat your reservation request on a first come, first served basis for future AHM events, only assigning you a spot should there be room after the deadline has been met.

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

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## Museum of Science High School Science Series Lectures

Advocates for Home Education in Massachusetts has reserved space for ages 14 - 18 at two Museum of Science High School Science Lectures. You are welcome to come to one or both of them. The lectures each last 45 minutes and you can enjoy the museum exhibit halls until closing.

**Friday, October 8, 2010**

**(checks must be postmarked by September 17)  
Celebrate Local Food**

Through talks and activities, learn about the latest in the growing local food movement. Hear from scientists about health and nutrition concerns, including obesity-related issues. Develop an understanding of how urban planning impacts local growers, and what culinary anthropologists know about the environmental and societal impacts of food. Participate in hands-on activities — including a healthy cooking challenge — that relate to food and health, and offer ideas and opinions in small group forums. **(MEET AT 9:15 AM in Lobby; we will enter the lecture as a group.)**

**Thursday, March 24, 2011**

**(checks must be postmarked by March 4)  
Green Chemistry Day**

Introduce students to the concepts of green chemistry with real-world industrial examples of sustainable practices, materials and products. Learn about local issues and what chemists and researchers from the Warner Babcock Institute are doing to improve the quality of consumer products for the sake of our health and the environment. Engage in small group forums on topics that relate to solar energy, bio-based materials, and cosmetics; learn about the environmental and health implications of traditional consumer products; and make recommendations for future green chemistry research projects. Scientists and volunteers from Beyond Benign will be on site to assist in hands-on activities related to green chemistry research. Activities and scientists' presentations: 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 PM; lecture: 11:15 AM **(MEET AT 9:15 AM in Lobby; we will enter the Museum as a group.)**

For more details on either of these lectures, see [http://www.mos.org/educators/field\\_trip\\_resources/field\\_trip\\_activities/high\\_school\\_science\\_series](http://www.mos.org/educators/field_trip_resources/field_trip_activities/high_school_science_series).

**Cost is \$10/person (teen and adult) 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 AHM.

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

- the number of teens and adults,
- name of responsible adult \*\*\*
- ages of teens,
- your address, and
- email and phone number.

\*\*\*Teens need an adult to be responsible for them — either a parent, or another adult with whom the parent has made prior arrangements.

Space is limited and spots are allotted in the order checks are received; **checks must be postmarked by:**

- **September 17<sup>th</sup> for Celebrate Local Food.** No refunds after September 17<sup>th</sup> except those made to attendees *at the museum on October 8<sup>th</sup>*.
- **March 4<sup>th</sup> for Green Chemistry Day.** No refunds after March 4<sup>th</sup> except those made to attendees *at the museum on March 24<sup>th</sup>*.

Those with email will receive confirmation about a week before the visit. You can purchase lunch at the cafés, or bring your own to be eaten outside. Call 781-641-0566 for more information.

**Directions:** See [http://www.mos.org/visitor\\_info/maps\\_and\\_directions](http://www.mos.org/visitor_info/maps_and_directions).

**Parking:** With a chaperone sticker, parking is \$3 per car payable at the box office in the main lobby before you exit.

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## Homeschooling High School to College

**Monday, September 13, 2010, 7:00 - 9:00 PM**

This workshop is intended for DIY homeschoolers who operate without an outside curriculum, who keep their own records, and who are looking toward college. The program will be held in Arlington, MA on Monday, September 13, 7:00 - 9:00 PM.

Topics to be covered include a timeline for homeschooling high school with college in mind, figuring out where to apply, keeping records, grades, testing, and preparing a portfolio, resumé, and transcript. Handouts will be available and an opportunity for questions will follow the presentation.

The program will be presented by Sophia Sayigh, a founder of Advocates for Home Education in Massachusetts, Inc., a non-profit 501(c)(3) charitable educational organization that gathers and disseminates information about homeschooling in Massachusetts through education, advocacy, and events. Sophia's children never attended school and were accepted at their first choice colleges with merit scholarships.

**Cost** is \$15/person (teen and adult) to reserve your spot; the full price will be refunded to you at the workshop, making your participation FREE. If you don't show up, your money will be donated to support the non-profit mission of AHM.

**If you want to go:** Download the registration form found here: <http://www.ahem.info/HomeschoolHighSchoolRegForm2010.pdf> and return it to AHM, PO Box 1307, Arlington, MA 02474.

Space is limited and spots are allotted in the order registration forms are received; **forms and checks must be postmarked by September 3<sup>rd</sup>**. No refunds after September 3<sup>rd</sup> except those made to attendees at the workshop on September 13<sup>th</sup>. Those with email will receive confirmation about a week before the

workshop, with detailed directions and parking.

After September 3, call 781-641-0566 or email [info@AHEM.info](mailto:info@AHEM.info) to check availability. Walk-ins will be accommodated on September 13, if space allows.

**What:** *Homeschooling High School to College*

**Where:** Jefferson Cutter House, Arlington center (directions will be sent when you register)

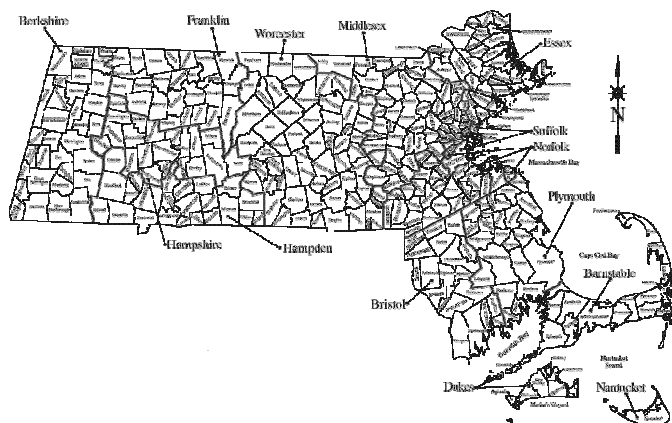
**When:** Monday, September 13, 2010, 7:00 – 9:00 PM

**Fee:** Free, but send registration form and check for \$15 to reserve your spot. Your registration fee will be returned to you at the workshop on September 13. If you don't attend, the fee will be donated to support the non-profit mission of AHEM.

**Contact:** 781-641-0566

## 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 web site, 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, Nantucket & Plymouth Counties**  
Sophia 781-641-0566
- **Berkshire, Essex, Middlesex & Suffolk Counties**  
Milva 781-648-5579
- **Bristol, Hampden & Norfolk Counties**  
Suzanne 508-883-3913
- **Franklin & Hampshire Counties**  
Stephanie 781-646-4541
- **Worcester County**  
Roberta 617-872-5145

## Become a Friend of AHEM

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

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.

## 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!

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**If you don't wish to receive this newsletter,** 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. Thanks!