

TEACH Bulletin

Thorough Education Achieved in a Caring Home

Number 82

June 2004

Surprise Exemption Re-Write

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History

The TEACH Bulletin editor heard that the Ministry of Education (MoE) was making substantial changes to the exemption from enrolment application form on Monday and Tuesday 28-29 June. I contacted Dave Burgon at MoE head office who emailed the draft changes 29 June. The covering letter said the final version would be done by the end of that week. Unable to ascertain from the MoE if home educators would be given ample time to assess and respond to the proposed changes, I circulated the changes through several email groups with the suggestion home educators email the MoE to protest the lack of consultation and the excessiveness of the extra information the draft exemption form requested.

The MoE received hundreds of emails over the next few days, many with very articulate and detailed objections to specific parts of the draft exemption form. At the same time, the home education email discussion groups in New Zealand ran hot with comments and evaluations about virtually every aspect of the exemption process. It became clear that while the old exemption form would be welcomed back in place of the proposed draft version, there were in fact a number of long-standing issues of discontent with the exemption application form and with other aspects of the exemption procedure as well.

To its credit, the MoE responded with another draft, a re-write of the first draft, on Wednesday 7 July. While this version contained some positive items, overall the extra information required, the suspicion that much of it was not required by the Education Act, combined with the now-heightened discontent with the older long-standing issues and the lack of wide-ranging consultation in the first place, put the home education community in the mood for a more robust examination and review of the exemption process, maybe of the very nature of how the MoE and home educators relate to each other.

The MoE initially claimed they had consulted widely with home educators, but it was soon apparent the consultations were not wide enough. The MoE did not sound favourably inclined to the idea of consulting with all 3,100

+ home educating families. However one clever home educator made the following observation:

Our local council has just posted out to each dog owner in the region a letter advising that changes are afoot. Enclosed are a copy of the DRAFT Policy, the DRAFT Bylaws and a submission form which they encourage to be completed and returned to them by 5 August 2004. Now there are approximately 7,500 dogs in this region, belonging to about 5,000 dog owners. If a local council can take the time and cost to go to this effort for 'dog owners', it comes across as even more insulting that the MoE have no intention of seeking submissions or even providing the opportunity for discussion with approximately 3,100 home schooling families. I remain totally astounded at the arrogance of the MoE.

Regards,
Bruce

The one or two home educators this writer has located who were consulted say the form produced is a far cry from what they'd come up with in their consultations.

This whole draft exemption imbroglio has turned up a fair bit of ill feeling, uneasiness and discontent about the entire exemption process. Long time home educators say today's exemption process is far more involved, complicated and intimidating than it was years ago. Fine tuning is recognised as possibly needful, but not when it strays beyond the parameters of the Education Act. Some of the present draft changes proposed by the MoE fall into this unacceptable category.

If home educators do nothing about such changes, it is certain that more such adjustments will follow later, for the nature of a bureaucracy is to make its job more streamlined and easier. To have all home educators fit into one profile and agree to follow one programme would be, to the bureaucracy, ideal. It is certain, therefore, that pressure both subtle and overt will be applied to bring about a uniformity something along these lines. This is total anathema to home educators.

Home educators in New Zealand today really have only one option: to strenuously resist such changes for the sake of all those future home educators, many of them our own children and grandchildren, who will doubt-

lessly follow us.

Objections to the Re-Write

So what are the problems with this new draft exemption application?

First:

From the information letter to parents there is a section titled "Updating Information". This isn't actually new, but the additions to it make it now seem redundant. It says:

Updating Information

From time to time you may be asked to provide the Ministry of Education with an update of your homeschooling programme. This will need to take into account the changing educational needs of your child. This is intended to assure the Ministry that you are able to continue to provide an educational programme appropriate to the age and needs of your child. Requests for updated information are rare and might arise where a review by the ERO has not occurred within the usual expected cycle. In the normal course of events an update will not be sought.

"From time to time" could come to mean annually or six-monthly or whatever. It could be giving the MoE permission to have a go at any home educator whenever they like for whatever reason. It could add an awful lot of extra work writing what might start to resemble a whole new exemption application. Some states in the USA do this: require an annual filing of the programme to be used. We must not let this be introduced. We already are checked up on in three ways: First, the initial exemption applica-

tion. Once the MoE issues an exemption, we are exempt from the compulsory enrolment and attendance laws. There should be no more reason for the MoE to enquire after us, but they have interpreted the word "satisfied" from Section 21 of the Education Act to mean satisfied on a continuing basis. Consequently they check up on us by a further two methods: the six-monthly statutory declaration, and by the periodic ERO reviews. These reviews, by the way, show that home educators as a group are doing very well indeed. Asking for such updates would add to our paperwork and to theirs but add nothing to the education of our children. Who needs it?

But there is more. The MoE says here that they want assurance that we are able "to provide an educational programme appropriate to the age and needs of your child." Who determines what is appropriate in this case? While schools may use some arbitrary levels developed in the context of a state-run mass-schooling scenario, is the MoE able or competent to do this for my child who is a total stranger to them in every way? Was it not concerns about this very thing that caused many of us to home educate in the first place? The Education Act only says the child must be "taught at least as regularly and well as in a registered school." There is no reference here to age levels or needs. How many state schools pay attention to the needs of children over and above the tendency to move them along to the next grade with their age-related peers rather than keep them behind or provide a personalise programme? Also consider that "registered school" means any school, be it state, private, integrated, alternative, kura kaupapa or whatever. The variation across the entire spectrum of registered schools in New Zealand is vast, further rendering to meaninglessness this statement about "an educational programme appropriate to the age and needs of your child".

But then the MoE adds that such a request might arise if the ERO had not done a review for a while. So let the MoE ask for a review to be done. The ERO would be happy to oblige: apparently they love doing home education reviews. And then the MoE says such an update would probably not be sought. Well, then, let's just drop this entire section. This request for periodic updates appears to be outside the wording of the Act and is also thoroughly redundant.

Second:

There is a new section about special needs added to the information letter to parents. The MoE's first draft said:

Special Needs

If your child has special needs they may be entitled to additional resources. To clarify please refer to the 'Frequently Asked Question' sheet attached to this application.

The MoE's more recently released second draft of this reads:

Special Needs

If your child has special needs they may be entitled to

TEACH Bulletin

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Hear, my son, your father's instruction,
and reject not your mother's teaching.
— Proverbs 1:8

Trading Post



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Marielle (09) 479-6804

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A Beka Grade 10 Grammar and Composition IV, Student text and Teacher key.

A Beka Grade 10 World Literature

A Beka Grade 6 Language C, Student text and Teacher key.

A Beka Grade 10 History (World History and Cultures).

Saxon Maths Algebra 2 with solutions manual.

Kingfisher History Encyclopedia.

Contact:

Gea Willemse (in Australia)
homegrownkids@eftel.net.au

additional resources. There is no requirement to apply for or access resources to meet special educational needs. You may or may not choose to seek support.

In addition, the MoE adds this by way of explanation of this section: *This section is new. It is intended to alert applicants to assistance that may be available if they wish to access it, and indicates that this is optional.*

There is also a new section on special needs in the actual draft application form questions. (There was no such section as this in the old exemption form.) This was added, as the MoE points out, because right where the Act says the MoE must be satisfied the child will be taught at least as regularly and well, it also says the MoE must be satisfied that the child “who would otherwise be likely to need special education, will be taught at least as regularly and well as in a special class or clinic or by a special service” [Section 21(1)(b)(ii)].

The question in the MoE’s first draft read,

3.2.3.1 Needs – Describe your child’s educational needs with regard to maturity level and abilities. (In accordance with S21(1)(b) of the Education Act 1989 please describe any special educational needs of your child including a special education assessment and report if applicable.)

The question in the more recent second draft of this section now reads,

3.2.3.1 Needs – Describe your child’s educational needs. Please describe any special educational needs of your child. The Ministry of Education Group Special Education can assist you if assistance is appropriate and sought by you.

The first part of this, “Describe your child’s educational needs,” is apparently addressed to every applicant, not just to those whose children would be considered to have special needs. This question seems a bit tricky to me. If parents become overly-zealous in divulging what is rather personal and highly subjective information about their child’s educational needs, especially in the absence of any professional assessment and especially in the case of first time home educators of a wee child about to turn six, the MoE staff reading the application could be induced to invoke Section 21(8) and/or Section 9 of the Act, which give the Secretary for Education the power to decline exemptions, revoke exemptions and direct the parents to enrol the child “at a particular state school, special school, special class, or special clinic.” The Secretary only needs to “think” the child “would be better off getting special education” in order to decline or revoke an exemption and direct the parents to enrol. No professional assessment is required. However, a professional assessment may be considered if the parents decide to appeal against the direction order of the Secretary.

In addition, the “as regularly and well” requirements of the Act do not appear to require that parents describe educational needs in order to gain an exemption. As was explained before, how can the MoE question my assessment of my child’s needs? Why should I attempt such a description when the Act does not require it in the case of a non-special needs child? Although the Act does specifically mention special needs children, one of the great liberations of home education is the liberation from labels of this kind. One of our children would have been labelled dyslexic and ADHD for sure if in a classroom situation. Even now, at age 12, crowds just set him off to where he can easily lose the weak grasp on self-control for which he has had to fight all these years.

Do registered schools ever take these things into account? If they did, surely, they would never put boys into the same classes as girls the same age, for in the primary grades especially the girls consistently average 12 to 18 months ahead.

And it is probably wise to be very wary of statements like, “they may be entitled to additional resources.” Thoughts of getting money or something else for free from the state come easily to mind with a carrot like that put in front of you. From all I’ve heard from those presently home educating a special needs child, most home educators would qualify for next to nothing, and it would be very difficult to get even that. Perhaps I am way too sceptical, but could this not be a lure to draw you in to ring them up and present the possibility that your child has special needs? Could this not cause them to have a closer look at your subsequent exemption application? Caution; caution.

The sentence from the first draft, “Please describe any special educational needs of your child” is straightforward and does address the clause in the Act about special needs children needing also to be “taught at least as regularly and well.”

Third:

Again the MoE has produced two draft versions dealing with the question of “Curriculum” on the exemption application, the second one as a result of the hundreds of emails they received when the home education community was alerted to the first version. We are very pleased to see that there can definitely be a consultation process with the MoE, that they are reasonable people willing to make adjustments when they can accurately assess what the home education community is thinking on an issue.

The first draft went like this:

3.2.3.3 Curriculum - Describe your **curriculum**. Outline what you intend to cover with your child in different areas of your stated curriculum. Explain how any special needs that you have referred to will be met. The National Curriculum Framework may serve as a guide. It lists seven essential learning areas and eight groupings of essential skills. These are listed below. You should be specific about the skills you want your child to learn within each Essential Skill. You should be clear about the maturity level and abilities of your child. There followed two lists: Essential learning areas included: language & languages, mathematics, science, technology, social sciences, the arts, health and well-being (Hauora); Essential Skills: communication, numeracy, information, problem-solving, self-management & competitive, social & co-operative, physical and finally work & study skills. After the lists came: **At senior secondary level** list and comment on the delivery of the subjects your child will be studying. Note how any relevant National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) requirements will be met.

The second draft was quite different:

3.2.3.3 Curriculum - Describe your **curriculum**. Outline what you intend to cover with your child in different areas of your stated curriculum. The National Curriculum Framework may serve as a guide but use of this is not compulsory. It lists seven essential learning areas and eight groupings of essential skills. These are listed below for your information should you wish to use the National Curriculum Framework as a guide. (Then there are the same two lists.)

For students at senior secondary level, list and comment on the delivery of the subjects your child will be studying.

Note how any relevant National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) requirements will be met. Should your child not be pursuing NCEA, simply state that this is the case. NCEA is unlikely to be relevant to primary age students. Consequently applications for primary-aged students do not require any reference to NCEA.

Whatever source of curriculum guidance you select, you should be specific about the skills you want your child to learn and you should be clear about the maturity level and abilities of your child in relation to your curriculum.

While this second draft is pretty good, not intimidating

and very clear, this last paragraph asking about the maturity level and abilities of children in relation to the curriculum seems highly problematic: again the Act’s “as regularly and well as in a registered school” just doesn’t seem to justify this request, especially recognising the incredibly vast spectrum of regularity and wellness offered among all the registered schools in New Zealand. How many registered school classroom teachers even try to take the maturity level and ability of every single one of those 20 or so children in the classroom into account? Is it even possible? Even if some did, the Act says, “as well as”, not “the same as”, for it recognises the vastness of the variety of approach among even state schools. Discovery 1 in Christchurch is a state school with a very unorthodox approach to the regularity and “wellness” of the teaching. Metropolitan College in Auckland was another state school with highly unorthodox methods: so much so, they actually failed their ERO review eight years running!! Is the state’s MoE willing to extend to home educators the same degree of latitude it extends to state registered schools staffed with state trained and state registered teachers?

Fourth:

The first draft said,

3.2.3.4 Teaching methods - It is also important to explain **how** you intend to teach your child, by outlining your method(s) of teaching for each subject area.

The second draft reads:

3.2.3.4 Teaching methods – It is also important to explain **how** you intend to teach your child, by outlining your method(s) of teaching for each subject area. This does not require you to give a detailed description of every method used in every lesson. An overview of some of the usual methods you may employ is sufficient.

The second draft also includes these explanatory comments:

This subsection (3.2.3.4) is new. Within the current application pack it is included under the heading ‘Plan’. It is intended to prompt applicants to consider their teaching methods more clearly and to include reference to these in their application, removing the need for Ministry staff to follow up should this information not be included.

As the MoE says itself, this methodology request is included in the “Plan” question coming up. That makes this one redundant. Let’s drop it.

Fifth:

This section has been in the exemption for many years:

3.2.7 Social Contact – Describe how you intend to provide for your child’s needs for **wide social contact** with others.

It is still just as irrelevant to the teaching and as outside the parameters of the Act (that the child “will be taught at least as regularly and well as in a registered school”) as it has always been. It is time to retire it permanently; the MoE has no business asking such questions.

Sixth:

Both versions read the same here:

3.2.8 Assessment and Evaluation – Outline how you are going to assess and evaluate the progress your child is making. Please include how you will also evaluate your teaching methods in terms of your children’s learning.

Assessing the progress of the child being taught may be a reasonable way to go about assessing how well the teaching is going, but it is also outside the “will be taught at least as regularly and well as in a registered school” requirements of the Act. It is the teaching, not the learning, that is being assessed in the exemption application. It seems a reasonable question to ask how one would evaluate their own teaching methods, but not against the child’s learning, for again, that is not part of what the Act is asking the MoE to do.

Just to drive this point home, let me quote from the public record of Parliamentary reports. The following is so unbelievable you will both die laughing and jump for joy that the MoE cannot ultimately make us do anything. The following paragraph is from the entry under the heading “Home schooling” which appeared on page 8 of the *Report of the Education and Science Select Committee* which was presented to Parliament on 12 February 1998. This document was itself contained within the pages of the *1996/97 Financial Review of the ERO*, the section headed “Home schooling” appearing on pages 93 and 94.

Another apparent shortcoming with home schooling reviews we¹ raised was that the teaching adults could not be assessed on their teaching performance in the way that teachers in state schools were assessed. The office² noted in response that it assessed children’s learning outcomes not teaching performance.³ This position raised for us how well taught home schooled children might be in comparison with those in state schools. The office advised us that there was no statutory requirement for any child to be well taught.

Notes:

1. “We” being the MPs of the Education and Science Select Committee of the day.
2. Education Review Office.
3. Which is, of course, contrary to the Education Act, for it requires that the MoE be “satisfied that the child will be taught at least as regularly and well as in a registered school.” While it may seem perfectly reasonable to assess the teaching by looking at the learning outcomes, this is most definitely *not* what the Act says. It says the child must be taught a certain way (as regularly and well as) but says nothing about learning outcomes. This is a most unfortunate slip on the part of the ERO, for they here apparently admit that they either operate outside the law or are unclear of what the law says.

Can you believe this!!!! What a hoot!! The entire school system is a total sham. And I must add, as far as the home educators I’ve known, they *do require* their children to be well taught!

Seventh:

The draft includes a privacy statement which says in part:

The information collected may be used by or disclosed to other agencies, such as the Education Review Office, the principal of your child’s current school or (in the case of a child who has never attended school) the Public Health Nurse, for these purposes. The phrase “these purposes” refers to the MoE’s objective for collecting the information in the first place, as also stated in this privacy statement: *assessing your application for exemption from enrolment at a registered school.*

I have major problems with this. If the MoE is only assessing whether my wife and I will teach as regularly and well, how is that assessment advanced by talking to a Public Health Nurse? Or a child’s current school principal? A similar statement to this is on the old exemption form, but since we’re having a close scrutiny, perhaps it is time to correct all the wrongs.

Eighth:

The draft’s checklist for exemption applications has these items:

- Child’s needs have been described**
- Principal notified of your intention to homeschool (in the case of children currently enrolled in a school)**

We’ve already dealt with the child’s needs issue. Some home educators in the past have found that notifying their child’s current school’s principal in advance of receiving the exemption caused extra hassles as the school staff turned vindictive and even started telling tales and exaggerating things to the MoE in order to, apparently, torpedo the exemption application. Of course the school requires notification once the exemption is issued. But it is unnecessary beforehand, exposes parents and child to possible vindictiveness and is not required by the Act. Drop it.

Plan of Action

Back in 1998, the government introduced the Education Amendment Bill which had over 80 clauses, only a few of which dealt with home education. They gave over-the-top powers to the ERO. Of the total of 177 submissions the government had on the Bill, 125 of them were from home educators! These submissions sparked a series of very complimentary comments about home educators in Parliament by MPs, recorded in the Hansard for 23 June 1998 (reprinted in *TEACH Bulletin* No. 19, August 1998). Once Home Educators became aware of the issues, they sought further information, ideas on what to do, and then got busy writing submissions! And in 1996 when the MoE floated the idea of us providing them with annual self-evaluation reports, the nation’s

home educators banded together locally and nationally to discuss the issue, using a consultation scheme we think could be used again (see below).

The MoE wants us to respond to their second draft by 27 August. No, it is way too soon, and there are too many issues on the table now. It is time we home educators, as a total community, took this entire exemption application process in hand and deal to it properly ourselves. After all, aspects of this exemption process have been a bone of contention for years.

Here is the two-step approach we suggest:

Step One:

Insist the MoE drop the draft changes to the exemption application for 12 months and go back to the previous application form and back to the previous reasonable policy of issuing the exemptions with minimal delay.

This step is based on two things: first, the evidence that only a small number of home educators was consulted regarding the changes. Second, because the home education community is so very diverse, the MoE has an obligation to see that the entire home education community has an opportunity to comment on any proposed changes. (From now on, we believe, and we invite you all to join us in considering this as a non-negotiable necessity: that the MoE needs to consult with us all. It can be done in at least two ways: they can trust us, given enough time, to consult among ourselves and report to them as described below; or they can send out drafts of whatever proposed changes they have in mind along with the statutory declarations or in a separate mailing, giving us ample time to make considered responses.)

Step Two:

We propose that the home education community itself come up with its own draft applications within a year's time, drafts which we all will then pass to the MoE for their consideration.

This is based on two things: First, because the home education community has been growing, developing, actively discussing and refining its understanding of the many facets, philosophies, methodologies, benefits and outcomes of the home education task over the past 20 years, it now has a vast store of theoretical and experiential knowledge, wisdom and understanding in these areas. Second, although we are very diverse among ourselves, we are willing and able to engage in very wide-ranging consultations among ourselves based on a combination of local, regional and national support groupings on the one hand, and on common interest / philosophical email discussion groupings on the other hand.

How would we consult among ourselves?

It would seem to be a reasonable assumption that any and all home educators who are at all interested in what is going on are either involved in at least one local support group or belong to at least one email discussion group. With this assumption in mind, here's how we see a way to proceed:

1. Each of these groups could decide within itself if they would like to collectively thrash out their ideal exemption application form. This implies that each moderator / leader / co-ordinator of each group would need to raise the issue with the whole group and work out if they'll proceed and how. This would probably need to happen within the next week or two. I know there are some groups (both geographical and electronic email ones) who would not want to, or could not do so because of their constitutions, or whatever. Fine. Interested individuals within such groups could soon find other groups to join, groups who had decided they are definitely going to look at this exemption application issue.
2. Groups deciding to take this on could decide for themselves how they would proceed: appoint a sub-committee to do the job; have each person come up with a draft and pool their efforts; have a series of meetings (or emails!) to work things out; or whatever. You could take a holistic approach or work through the issues/questions one by one, and I'm sure there are other ways of doing it. There are probably some starting points that would need to be decided: for example, is a child's education the responsibility of the parents primarily or of the government? We would need to become clear about what the law requires: the "at least as regularly and well" clause, etc. We would want to clarify the relationship between the MoE and home educators, which I suppose is ultimately defined by the items in the exemption application.
3. The Home Education Foundation (HEF), the National Council of Home Educators of NZ (NCHENZ), and I know there are others, both individuals and groups, who could provide an overview of the issues as they see them. These could be circulated among the email lists and in local, regional and national newsletters.
4. As each email group is already electronic and as there must be at least one person in every local/regional/national group who is connected to the Internet, each of these groups could receive copies of each other's draft exemptions. This means all groups could theoretically trade thoughtful and collectively constructed draft exemption application forms with every other group, right across the home education spectrum. The Home Education Foundation set up an eForum a few years ago to facilitate this very thing. Therefore if each group joined this eForum (it's on yahoogroups.com, just like all the others, and works just the same), then as soon as it finished its draft exemption application, it could send these drafts to the eForum. In this way all the other participating groups would automatically receive every other group's draft exemption application, and each group would then have the opportunity to benefit from every other group's insights, understandings and points of view. The moderator of the eForum acts only to screen those joining so we can know who we are all trading ideas with and to ensure we don't have MoE people on there. While the membership is restricted, the membership list is open for all other members to know who is on the list. To sign

up to this eForum, just send a blank email to: TEACH-eForum-subscribe@yahoo.com .

5. We suggest we all aim to have our first exemption drafts done by 15 October 2004, by which date each group will have sent their draft to the TEACH-eForum email address. With all this extra material each group now has from every other group, we can all go back and repeat step 4: that is, work on our drafts within our respective groups again to adjust, add, subtract, modify however we see fit in the light of all these new ideas we each would have received from all the other participating groups. We anticipate this to be a fairly challenging assignment for a large number of us, so we want to allow plenty of time. And we're all very busy already anyway. And we want to do a decent, thorough job of it all, too.
6. We suggest we all aim to have our second exemption drafts done by 25 February 2005 and posted to TEACH-eForum by then. (Now, there is no reason why each group can't submit more than one draft. In fact, maybe we could suggest that the MoE consider having on hand 2 or 3 different exemption forms, all acceptable to the MoE, in order to present prospective Home Educators with a set of optional forms. Prospective Home Educators, when making their exemption application with the MoE, could then choose the one form which they felt was most user friendly to them!)
7. We all repeat step 4 one more time and aim to be done by 10 June 2005. At this point we can all send our *final* drafts to TEACH-eForum, but more importantly, we each send our own final drafts to the Ministry of Education for their consideration of our co-ordinated, yet still separate and independent efforts.

By doing all this we simply hope to facilitate what we think could be a very effective and productive consultation process among the widest spectrum of home educators possible. From what I've already read in the deluge of emails we've had recently, I am excited by the brilliant ideas and insights we will all see surfacing soon. At the end, we each submit our own final draft exemption application forms directly to the MoE ourselves. Perhaps by this time a number of us would have adopted each other's drafts or ended up with drafts very, very similar, reducing the number the MoE has to sort through.

It also seems reasonable to us that any individuals or groups not wanting to trade draft forms with others can still be on TEACH-eForum to at least read what others are coming up with. And of course any individual or group would also be encouraged to submit its own draft of its ideal exemption application direct to the MoE without any reference to this consultation process.

All this means the outcome is far from certain. We may find we all ultimately agree on a number of key points, or we may find some major divisions among us. Either way, we all end up far more accurately informed and far more aware of the issues facing us.

So here is our suggested game plan: If you like the looks of Step One and Step Two above, then consider doing the

things here below:

Let us all communicate once again to the MoE by email:

kay.phillips@minedu.govt.nz
david.burgon@minedu.govt.nz
howard.fancy@minedu.govt.nz
tmallard@ministers.govt.nz

and/or to their snail mail addresses:

Kay Phillips, c/- MoE, PO Box 1666, Wellington;
David Burgon, c/- MoE, PO Box 1666, Wellington;
Howard Fancy, Secretary for Education, c/- MoE, PO Box 1666, Wellington;
Hon Trevor Mallard, Minister of Education, c/- Parliament Buildings, Wellington (no stamp required on this one);

and/or fax them:

Kay Phillips, Fax (04) 499-1327
Dave Burgon, Fax (04) 499-1327
Howard Fancy, Fax (04) 499-1327
Hon Trevor Mallard, Fax: (04) 495-8448

....saying in your own words that this two-step process is what we home educators respectfully urge the MoE to accept as the best way forward, and that you eagerly await their (hopefully) affirmative reply:

Step One:

Insist the MoE drop the draft changes to the exemption application for 12 months and go back to the previous application form and back to the previous reasonable policy of issuing the exemptions with minimal delay.

Step Two:

We propose that the home education community itself come up with its own draft applications within a year's time, drafts which we will then pass to the MoE for consideration.

These two steps are surely both reasonable and helpful. We are committing ourselves to a lot of work, research and dialogue to solve what in the end has been for many, many home educators (though certainly not all) a long-standing dissatisfaction with the exemption application form and the exemption process.

Please: email / write / fax today! Keep the pressure on! We've seen it work: over the last **7 days** the MoE rewrote a near final draft, incorporating your suggestions!

(Continued from page 8: **Coming Events**)

Details

Time: 11am-3pm

Co-ordinated by Auckland Home Educators Inc

A popular gathering of 200+ parents, kids & supporters.

Let's see how big we can make it for 2005! Fabulous opportunity to mix 'n' mingle, buy/sell resources, enjoy a sense of belonging, play games, etc. If you're investigating the home education option, come and see first-hand what we're all about. Also refer to the poster in your local library & check out our website at www.home-education.org.nz

Enquiries: Dawn at burgins.of.auckland@xtra.co

Coming Events

Wed, 28 Jul 2004

Home Education - A Lifestyle Choice!

Venue: Greenlane, Auckland
(venue to be advised on booking)

Cost: \$5 per person/couple

Contact: Dawn Burgin Tel: (09)
274-3296 Mob: 025-358922

Details

Time: 7.15pm to 9.30pm

Provider: Auckland Home Educators, Inc.

A basic information session to kick-start your research journey into the Home Education option. What's out there, how & why it works, socialisation, qualifications, community relationships, etc. Relaxed format based on Qs & As. Also refer to the poster in your local library & check out our website at www.home-education.org.nz

Bookings: Dawn at burgins.of.auckland@xtra.co.nz

Sat, 31 July 2004

Wanganui Home Educators Workshop

Venue: Wanganui East Baptist Church, cnr Moana and Nixon Streets, Wanganui

Cost: \$10.00 per person/couple

Contact: Marice Hill, 10 Urquhart St, Wanganui, Phone (06) 345-3660, jmmmhill@xtra.co.nz

Programme

9.00am Arrival

9.15am Welcome

9:30am 1. Home Education: Getting things into perspective and Keeping Going When the Going Gets Tough - Craig and Barbara Smith

10.30am Morning Tea

11.00am 2. Four electives

2a. Choosing a Curriculum - Craig Smith

2b. Raising our Daughters to be Godly Wives and Mothers - Barbara Smith

2c. Improving Behaviour through Diet - Sharyn Wylie

2d. The Exemption Process - Marice Hill

12.30pm Lunch - byo - hot drinks provided

1.30pm 3. Four Electives

3a. An Introduction to History Alive and Diana Waring's Material -

Catherine Sandbrook

3b. Getting Started - Marice Hill

3c. Raising Our Sons to Be Godly Providers, Husbands and Fathers - Craig Smith

3d. Educating through Secondary, Preparing for Tertiary and the Workforce - Barbara Smith

3.00pm Afternoon Tea

3.30pm 4. A Vision for the Future

4.30pm 5. Question and Answer session with some of our local Homeschooled children/teens.

Question and Answer session also with our speakers.

5.00ish Finishing up.

Sat, 31 July 2004

Whangarei Home Educators Annual Conference

Contact: Kathy Derrick: PO Box 1610, Whangarei, kderick@xtra.co.nz

Programme

9.00-9.30 - Registration and Resource Viewing

9.30-10.45 - Keynote (Heather Bell / Carol Munroe / Andrea Munroe)

10.45 -11.30 - Morning Tea and Resource Viewing

11.30 -12.30 - Session 1 Electives

1a. Career Services - Rina Hudson

1b. 6Rs of Homeschooling - Deb Crook

1c. ERO - Heather Bell

1d. Unschooling - Kerrin Taylor

12.30-1.00 - Lunch and Resource Viewing

1.00-2.00 - Session 2 Electives

2a. Northland Polytech - higher school education (eg pre-tertiary courses)/certificates/diplomas/degrees/etc.

2b. Literature - Heather Bell

2c. The Beginner Home Educator - Carol Munro

2d. Life Balance - Kathy Derrick

2.00-3.00 - Session 3 Electives

3a. The Trade Approach - getting qualifications as you work, apprenticeships, etc.

3b. Reading Problems: how to deal with them and how to recognise dyslexia - Sheryn Comrie

3c. Trials, Treasures, Toils and Triumphs - Sharyne Jaunay and Kathy Smith

3d. Craft - Wendy Hamilton

3.00 - 3.15 Afternoon Tea

3.15 - 4.15 - Session 4 Electives

Interesting Dynamic Exciting Achievable Solutions for Successful Home Educating

4a. Maths - Deb Crook

4b. Language - Kathy Derrick

4c. Social Studies/Unit Studies - Karen Grammer

4d. Art - Robyn Williams

4e. Science - Kathy Smith

4f. Music - Regine Hagg

4g. Life Skills - Michelle Jones

Mon-Sat, 11-17 Oct

Home Education Awareness Week

Tue-Fri, 18-21 Jan 2005

Christian Worldview Conference

Venue: Willowpark, Auckland

Contact: Carol: Ph. (09) 410-3933,
Email cesbooks@intouch.co.nz

Keynote speaker: Dr R C Sproul, Jr., a totally committed home schooler, a graduate of Reformed Theological Seminary, Grove City College and received his D.Min. from Whitefield Theological Seminary. R.C. is the editor of *Tabletalk Magazine*, associate pastor of teaching of Saint Peter Presbyterian Church, and the director of the Highlands Study Center. He has written or edited nine books, and contributed to several others. The important thing is that he is the husband of Denise, and the father of home educated children Darby, Campbell, Shannon, Delaney, Erin Claire, and Maili. At the Highlands Study Center, R.C. teaches the Tuesday Night Bible study for the community, most of the Highlands Academy classes, the resident students, and serves as senior editor of *Every Thought Captive*.

Mon, 31 Jan 2005

5th Annual Home Education Celebration

Venue: Auckland venue to be confirmed

Contact: Dawn Burgin Tel: (09)
274-3296, Mob: 025-358922

(Continued on page 7: *Coming Events*)