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A Demographic Analysis of Parents in Virginia  
Who Choose Home Instruction to Educate Their Children

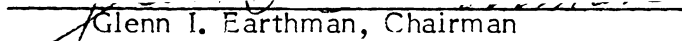
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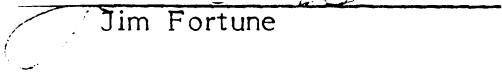
Barbara Jones-White

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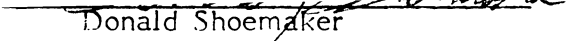
Approved:

  
Glenn I. Earthman, Chairman

  
Jim Fortune

  
David Alexander

  
Robert Richards

  
Donald Shoemaker

April 1987  
Blacksburg, Virginia

18-1-87  
H.C.B.

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## Dedication

To: Dr. Virginia Dare Moore

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Home instruction is not a new concept. Historically, the right and obligation of parents to educate their children and direct their moral development was firmly established in Anglo-American common law as the right and duty to deed, clothe and otherwise tend to the basic needs of offspring.<sup>1</sup> In 1642 the Massachusetts Bay Colony passed what is considered to be the first compulsory education law in the American colonies. This law transformed a moral obligation into a legal one by requiring parents to educate or provide for the education of their children. The failure of parents to perform their moral obligation to educate their children was viewed as a threat to the welfare of the commonwealth. In 1647 communities of certain sizes in the colony were required to provide teachers to instruct children. These laws established the authority to lay down minimal standards for the education of children and the authority to compel the establishment of these two prerogatives of the state - namely, the minimal standards themselves plus the ability to compel compliance with two minimal educational provisions. The obligation to educate one's child remained firmly placed with the parents or master.<sup>2</sup> After the Civil War states began to mandate some form of compulsory

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1. I.W. Blackstone Commentaries 450-52 (1st edition 1809), in E. Alice Law Beshoneu, "Home Education in America: Parental Rights Reasserted", University of Missouri at Kansas City Law Review, Vol. 49, No. 2 (1981) p. 191.

2. Katz, M.S., A History of Compulsory Education Laws, Fastback 75, (Indiana, The Phi Delta Kappa Educational Foundation, 1976).

school attendance.<sup>3</sup> Today, all states have some form of compulsory school attendance law.

Education is a vital function in our society. The compelling interest of the state in education has always been the welfare of the state, not the individual.<sup>4</sup> Consequently, the state's authority to compel compliance with educational requirements sometimes conflicts with the discretionary power of parents to direct their children's education. In case law pertaining to this issue, the U.S. Supreme Court has rendered decisions which balance these conflicting interests (*Fogg vs. Board of Education*, 76 N.H. 296 (1912)). More recently, the federal courts have rejected the contention that parents had an independent, non-religious and fundamental right to educate their children (*Scoma vs. Chicago Board of Education*, 391 F. Supp. 452 (N.D. Ill. 1974) and *Hanson vs. Cushman*, 490 F. Supp. 109 (W.D. Mich. 1980)).

Home instruction received broader recognition from the Virginia General Assembly in 1984. Following two public hearings and a lengthy study by a joint subcommittee, the legislature passed an amendment to the state compulsory school attendance act.<sup>5</sup> This act required all school age children to be enrolled in public, private, parochial or nondenominational schools recognized by the Department of Education or to be taught by a tutor or teacher at home who met qualifications

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3. Toback, James W. and Perry A. Zirkel, "Home Instruction: An Analysis of the Statutes, and Case Law", *University of Dayton Law Review*, Vol. 8, No. 1, Fall 1982, p. 14.

4. *Ibid.*, pp. 15-16.

5. Commonwealth of Virginia Senate Document, Report of Home Education, Richmond, VA, 1984, pp. 3 - 4.

prescribed by the state and approved by the division superintendent.<sup>6</sup> The law, effective July 7, 1984, permitted home instruction in place of school attendance if the parents met one of four criteria: (1) holds a baccalaureate degree in any subject from an accredited institution of higher education; (2) is a teacher of qualification prescribed by the Board of Education; (3) has enrolled the children in a correspondence course approved by the Board of Education; and (4) provides a program of study or curriculum that, in standards of learning objectives adopted by the Board of Education for language arts and mathematics, provides evidence that the parent is able to provide an adequate education for the child.

While it is obvious that there is much parental interest in the home education movement, a thorough investigation is needed to determine the characteristics of these parents who have chosen this form of education for their children and the reasons why they made this decision.

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6. Ibid., p. 12.

### Statement of the Problem

The study problem was to identify the characteristics of parents in Virginia who had chosen to educate their children at home under the new provision of the Virginia General Assembly, Section 22.125 and 126-127. Based on this information, it was possible to describe those parents most likely to select home instruction for their children in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

More specifically, the study analyzed the responses of the parents currently operating home schools with regard to one broad research question: What are the characteristics of parents in the Commonwealth of Virginia who educate their children at home?

The following subquestions were investigated as a part of the research to the main question:

1. What are the descriptive demographic characteristics of parents in the Commonwealth of Virginia who educate their children at home?
2. What similarities exist among characteristics of approved parents who are religious exempt and those who are not?
3. What are the characteristics of the home school programs provided by these parents and how do they differ from those of the public school?
4. What are the reasons these parents have chosen home-schooling as a form of education for their children?
5. What similarities exist among the reasons given by approved parents who are religious exempt and those who are not?

### Significance of the Study

The study identified the descriptive demographic characteristics of parents in Virginia who had chosen to educate their children at home and the reasons they had chosen this form of education for their children. Approximately 350-400 parents in Virginia were providing home-schooling for their children according to the Virginia State Department of Education and Division of Superintendents at the time of the research. However, according to the Home Educators Association of Virginia, approximately 1,000 parents in Virginia were educating their children at home. Many of these parents were doing so under the religious exception code and had not been approved by their division superintendent.

According to Section 22.1-254 of the Code of Virginia passed in the spring of 1984, parents were permitted to educate their children at home if they met one of the four requirements outlined in the law. These parents were required to submit a notice to the division superintendent stating that they were home educators or intended to become such educators and providing a description of their course of study and intended learning outcomes.

The findings of the study provided insight concerning the reported reasons these parents had chosen this form of education for their children. Also, it examined the demographic characteristics of these parents and the characteristics of the home-school programs. Finally, based on the information from the study it was possible to predict, the parents most likely to select home instruction for their children.

### Limitations of the Study

This study was limited to parents in the Commonwealth of Virginia who taught their children at home under Sections 254, 256, or 257 of the Virginia Code. The results were not intended to represent parents of other states. Therefore, the study was limited to selected parents in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

### Definition of Terms

The following terms were defined for the purpose of this study:

Home schooling: instruction in the home of a child or children by the parent, guardian or other person having control of such child or children that are not classified or defined as a private, denominational or parochial school according to Code of Virginia 22.1-254, 22.1-256, and 22.1-257.

Religious Exempt: excuse from attendance at school any pupil who, together with his parents, by reason of bonafide religious training or belief, is conscientiously opposed to attendance at school. Code of Virginia 221-257.

### Organization of the Study

The study was divided into five chapters.

Chapter I introduced the problem and significance of the study.

Chapter II reviewed the research and literature on home-schooling with a description of the place home instruction had in Virginia from the 1950's until the time of the research. The majority of this chapter described the court's opinion regarding the compulsory school attendance law and the rights of parents to train their children according to particular beliefs. Also, a general review of the literature regarding home instruction and compulsory attendance was offered.

Chapter III described the methodology of the study. Chapter IV dealt with the reporting and analysis of data, and Chapter V consisted of the summary, conclusions, and recommendations of the study.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

#### Historical and Philosophical Foundations

The beginning of home schooling in this review had to begin with the initiation of education during the colonial period, a period that lasted from the 17th century in the Massachusetts and Virginia colonies until the American Revolution. The origins of public education in the United States were traced back to the Puritan church schools in New England which "...were taken over by the cities and towns and became public schools."<sup>7</sup> The Puritans perceived their coming to America as an opportunity to build a theocracy which would be a beacon of Christianity to the world, "A Model of Christian Charity." With this intent, the Pilgrims "...brought into being at Plymouth their version of the Church-State."<sup>8</sup> The first half century of Virginia's history involved two important facts — "...the establishment of the Church of England in Virginia and the recognition of the Bishop of London as diocesan of the colonies."<sup>9</sup>

In Massachusetts the Act of 1647, the "Satan Deluder Act", depicted education as the impact of learning to read the Bible. This law went on to direct the establishment of grammar schools and the penalty, if the law were not fulfilled. It was concluded from this example that education, was motivated in large part by religious convictions. This was particularly true in the Western World with

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7. Tyack, *Turning Points in American Educational History*, Op. Cit., p. 34.

8. Marnell, William H., The First Amendment (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1964), p. 45.

9. Pfeffer, Leo, "Editorial: Issues That Divide — The Triumph of Secular Humanism", Journal of Church and State, 19 (Spring 1972) p. 208.



cultural and religious roots in Judaeo-Christian tradition. The development of home education was emphasized in family-centered Latin and Germanic cultures which were influenced deeply by the Christian faith. This was the only education available for the common man until the public schools were developed and they gradually took over the educational responsibilities of the parents.<sup>10</sup>

From the beginning of their existence as a nation after release from slavery in Egypt, the Jewish people mandated the home as the core and foundation of child training. The full range of life information skills required of Jewish children were taught in the home setting. A survey of the wilderness history of the Hebrews indicated the relative ease with which the home-schools were maintained adequately during the period of wilderness theocracy. The nation, a cohesive unit under a central authority figure, had only limited contact with other cultures, values, and practices. As each new phase of civilization unfolded, the type of societal effort to educate the population either supplemented or supplanted the home education system.<sup>11</sup>

It was understood that the home-school plan was keyed to the common worship of one God. Successive wars for the possession of the "promised land" eroded the effectiveness of the home-school. During the "dark ages" period of Judges, home-school education faded because of the Jews' preoccupation with survival. The repeated "wandering after other gods" first altered and eventually cancelled the home-school as a strong force in maintaining and transmitting the cultural and religious heritage.

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10. Parker, Samuel Chester, A Textbook in the History of Modern Elementary Education, New York: Ginn and Company, 1912, pp. 4-9.

11. Casele, E.B., Ancient Education and Today, New York: Pengiun, 1961, p. 172.

The shift from home-centered education to institutionalized training, springing from socially and religiously responsible people outside the home reached far beyond the early Hebrews. It provided an example of a basic, but often unnoticed, trend in the history of education. This transition of educational focus from home to separate educational agencies was not limited to just ancient Israel. There was traceable evidence of this practice in the Nile River Valley.

Christopher J. Lucas (1972) described his conclusions about this shift in educational emphasis and the effect on educational thoughts and practice.<sup>12</sup> First, according to him, the home school dominated education until a certain critical point of cultural development was reached. "Formal differentiated schools first arose when the complexity of cultures outstripped the capacity of its society to transmit it by informal means. When trial-and-error methods no longer sufficed, when there was simply more to learn than could be handled through personal observation and first-hand experience, and when the education potential of the family and extended kin grouping was exhausted, discrete educational agencies appeared on the scene."<sup>13</sup>

Lucas contended that the move away from home-schools dominated by family value systems to society-sponsored schools tended to fix the values of each society and bring about the stability so desired by cultures. The moment the value system of homes differed from that of its surrounding society, conflict resulted. Society came to take precedence, and the perpetuation of social and cultural values — as well as their conservation and transmission — became a higher "good" than the

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12. Lucas, Christopher J., Our Western Educational Heritage, New York: The MacMillan Company, 1972, pp. 37-38.

13. *Ibid.*, pp. 27-28.

right of the parents to instill personal and family values of a social and religious nature in their children.<sup>14</sup>

The shift from family-based education through social institutions moved inevitably toward closed societies. Each student was trained to become an obedient, cooperative part of the social structure. The maintenance and survival of the society or culture became the chief educational objective rather than the optimum development of each person's potential.<sup>15</sup>

This general trend in education did not, of course, eliminate education for the masses of common people who had no access to the elite institutions. H.G. Good observed in his book, A History of American Education (1956), that learning by doing had existed since the beginning of man as a primary mode of education. This fact grew early into the apprenticeship learning that remains even today. So strong an influence has this stream of education exerted, that present industry has developed a major thrust of education in the industrial training programs which mark a major segment of contemporary educational training.<sup>16</sup>

Apprenticeship training began first in the home-school setting like other segments of educational development. There fathers trained their sons in the family craft skills, holding craft secrets in family lines. Increasingly complex societies demanded more variety in skills, and apprenticeships grew from family-oriented to craft guild centers, in which children were apprenticed to a guild craftsman for a specified length of time. As journeymen craftsmen, they could establish their own businesses with apprentice help under guild supervision. The

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14. Ibid., pp. 27.

15. Ibid., p. 40.

16. Good, H.G., A History of American Education, New York: The MacMillan Company, 1956, p. 28.

pattern here shows the same progression: the home-school became the point of departure for other educational modes. It was a step from guild schools to professional and separate trade schools, which mark present-day education.<sup>17</sup>

Good also described another form of education accompanying the rise of civilization — the private school. Again, this approach to education rose from the home-school setting. The homes of the wealthy landowners were the setting for the first private schools: Wealthy parents hired in-house tutors for their children.<sup>18</sup> This education took place within the setting of the home environment, according to Ivan Illich, author of Deschooling Society (1970). Since tutors carried out their education under the auspices of the parents in the home, some of the value of direct parental teaching was maintained.

The private tutoring of children soon merged with private schools outside the home, either as day schools or as boarding schools. Though more directly controlled by the objectives laid down by the parents, private schools functioned as social custodians for children and separated parent value systems from school value systems. As a middle class of merchants arose, private schools for their children followed.<sup>19</sup>

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17. Ibid., p. 28.

18. Ibid., pp. 39-40.

19. Ibid., pp. 39-40.

## The Influence of the Church on Education

Good (1956) emphasizes the connection between the church and the school. With the collapse of the Roman power in Italy, the institutional church assumed an increasingly powerful role in education. During medieval times the school became an instrument of church policy by which communities and homes were influenced. Frequently, the church schools were the only schools.<sup>20</sup>

The majority of the population did not receive formal educational training. The home-school still functioned during the medieval times as the source of social and operational training in survival skills. The forces of social, religious, and cultural change that produced the Reformation and the Renaissance brought about change in education as well.<sup>21</sup> The revival of learning concentrated on the secular, cultural traditions of Greece and Rome. Institutions of higher learning began a shift from being centers for religious training to becoming more secular universities.<sup>22</sup>

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20. Ibid., pp. 40-41.

21. Ibid., pp. 277-279.

22. Ibid., pp. 278-280.

## The Protestant Reformation's Influence on Education

William Rickenbacker<sup>23</sup> discussed this relationship:

Influence by Luther, the German state of Gotha founded the first modern public schools in 1524, and Thuringia followed suit in 1527. Luther himself devised the Saxony School Plan, which was established in Saxony in 1528 through the edict drawn up by Luther's disciple Melancton, and which set up public schools in every town in the region. The compulsory attendance system was established, again under Lutheran influence, by the Duke of Wuttemberg in 1559, attendance was compulsory, detailed records were kept, and fines were levied on truants.<sup>24</sup>

It should be noted that the trend here was not toward home schools but toward public schools. It seemed as if the thrust of the Protestant ethic was to free schools from being used as a weapon of religious-political dominance and make learning available to all students. This followed naturally from the conceptual stand of Protestantism that all true knowledge originated in the Bible as the word of God. Hence, Biblical translations were produced in common tongues, and public education was established.

Two results came from this, each leading in a different educational direction: First, the basic content of commonly-held knowledge was returned to the home and with it, a renewed possibility of effective home education. The second result was the drive toward public schools.

### Philosophical Considerations

In dealing with the relationship between the home school and its place in education, several lines of philosophical thoughts can be isolated. Each line of thought holds its own view of man and his relationship to the family and to society, and therefore, each holds implications for home-school education.

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23. Ibid., p. 60.

24. Ibid., pp. 60-62.

Philip H. Phoenix edited an anthology of educational philosophies of outstanding educators representing divergent schools of educational thought and action. His book, Philosophies of Education (1961), presented a clarifying outline identifying the nature and practical implications of the Jewish, Catholic and Protestant philosophies. Rabbi Euguene Borowitz presented the basic concepts of Jewish educational philosophy. He pointed out that the Jewish educational structure is built on the home, and all outside educational activities are considered supplemental to the home setting.<sup>25</sup> Father Robert J. Henle, S.J. presented the Catholic viewpoint. He indicated that the Catholic educational philosophy centers on the concept of church as the appointed agency of God for mediating truth to society. Therefore, the church becomes the center of educational, religious and social activity. The family becomes a part of the church and responds in obedience to, and cooperation with, priorities and rules established by the church.<sup>26</sup> Merriman Cuninggne represented the Protestant viewpoint. He showed that the "protest" orientation of Protestantism has led to consistent diversity of philosophy and practice among protestants. He then related this to education. He showed how rejection of the church-centered Catholic approach has led to traditional Protestant emphasis on the family. The church becomes the agent of family groups. The educational traditions are built on the right and need of each young person to be able to seek God personally, through knowledge of the Holy scriptures. For this reason, Protestants not only emphasize education, but the best education possible.<sup>27</sup>

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25. Phoenix, Phillip H., Philosophies in Education, New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1961, pp. 87-93.

26. Ibid., pp. 77 -83.

## Educational Trends in the United States

The growth of education with its philosophical concepts was surveyed from its home-school roots. The development of both history and philosophy in the United States come next into focus. William Clayton Bower (1952) showed that education in America is only comprehensible as a process of history involving the interaction of extremely varied social factors. He further pointed out that although American education sprang from European roots, the size of the continent and the extended period of frontier life with its home-schools placed a unique mold on all aspects of American life, especially education.<sup>28</sup> It can be seen that the pattern of historical and philosophical trends repeated themselves in America. According to Butts in A Cultural History of Western Education (1955), the New England colonies were founded by religious groups seeking the ensured right to worship and train their children in accordance with their chosen religious heritage. The nature of colonial and frontier life forced the education required by the Protestant heritage to take place in homes. All members of the family had to work to ensure survival. All activities, even recreational ones, centered in the home.<sup>29</sup> Butts maintains that this necessity required the early education in basic literacy and arithmetic skills to take place in colonial homes. Some qualified man or woman would take the responsibility to bring the children in the neighborhood into a home and give the basic training necessary to meet the community

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27. Ibid., pp. 67-73.

28. Bower, William Clayton, Moral and Spiritual Values in Education, Lexington, KY: University of Kentucky Press, 1952, p. 3.

29. Butts, R. Freeman, A Cultural History of Western Education, New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1955, pp. 242-243.



standards.<sup>30</sup> Such education became a religious duty, strictly enforced in the Calvinistic communities of New England. As the size of each community increased, schools outgrew the home setting but retained the home linked agreement as to the moral, ethical, and literacy content of the teaching.

Good (1956) and Lucas (1972) both indicate that a contrast to this was the educational tradition in the Southern colonies. In the South the social structure followed the European traditions more closely. As already described, the plantation owners had private tutors, while the less affluent people had little or no formal education. What they received depended on their parents in the home.<sup>31</sup>

Good also indicated that state-supported education showed the attachment of community schools to the roots of home-school-oriented education. This especially applied to the frontier territories even when they began to develop into states. This link between homes and public schools was mirrored in the "brooding around" custom. The teacher(s) would brood at homes of parents during the school term. This saved a basic amount of money needed for teacher pay. But it accomplished one other thing -- the placement of teacher contact with the home setting and the goals of the parents. It was bound to produce a degree of continuity between the home and the classroom.<sup>32</sup>

The rapid growth of the factory and its effect on the community life began to widen the gap between the home and the public school. Manufacturing developed

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30. Ibid., p. 244.

31. Good, H.G., A History of American Education, New York: The MacMillan Company, 1956, pp. 22-23.

32. Barnard, John and Burner, David, eds., The American Experience in Education, New York: New Viewpoints, 1932, pp. 14-15.

new classes of economic activities and erased the traditional home factory in which fathers passed on skills to their children.

Thus, many of the elements of heritage that had originated in the home now became the province of the factory of businesses. This depleted the content of home education, and the transfer of this responsibility was made to the society — a trend that has reached an extreme today and is partially responsible for the new emphasis on return to home-schools.<sup>33</sup>

It seems generally supportable in the literature to conclude that our present educational system developed first from home-based schools with tutors to private schools and/or public schools. The development of the public school system was paralleled by a steady growth in private and parochial school systems in the United States during the closing half of the 19th century.

### Education for Democracy

The growing rift between public and home traditions widened further after the Civil War. Educators initiated a growing attack on the home as a center of indifference toward education. Their premise was that ignorance and lack of home interest prevented the full realization of the goal of universal education. The answer was compulsory attendance, which began in New York in 1875 and spread to other states.<sup>34</sup> This placed the responsibility of education and its guidance on the professional educators — a move away from the home and family.

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33. Meyer, Adolph E., The Development of Education in the Twentieth Century, New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1950, pp. 350-356.

34. Good, H.G., A History of American Education, New York: The MacMillan Company, 1956, p. 184.

Good suggested that one side effect of this trend was the shift from family heritage focus. The growth in the size, economy and world position of the United States was accompanied by an increase in nationalistic pride. Devotion to the "ideas of democracy" depended upon the educational system to ensure the survival of these ideas in the nation.

### Home-School Education and the Educational Bureaucracy

Rapidly expanding research into psychology and teaching methods gave birth to multiple systems of teaching materials and supplementary machines and supplies needed to apply them. Growing standardization of textbooks across the states and regions of the United States provided incentives for a learning materials industry that was both competitive and prosperous. An educational bureaucracy arose at both the state and national levels, thus increasing the proportion of national product expended on education.

These historical developments are highlighted because the public school movement represented a departure from the original home-school roots. In each generation there was some level of discontent. However, during the 1960's when the civil rights movement was at a peak, many parents found the instruction in the public schools to be poor. Such parents demanded that basic changes in education take place in their communities.<sup>35</sup>

There was no doubt that, to many people, the bureaucracy of public education is a rather threatening institution, and only a few have the courage to engage in battle. However, Robert Love, author of How to Start Your Own School (1973), encouraged parents who were dissatisfied with the options available in the

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35. Goodman, Paul, The Community of Scholars, New York: Random House, 1962, p. 21.

conventional school system to join the growing number of persons who were challenging the system. He stated that "Public schools have little meaningful competition... Traditional private and parochial schools either eagerly emulate public institutions or are coerced by the state into doing so..." p.7 Love suggested that this vacuum could best be filled by schools with no ties to state or church. The only genuine competition to the established school system could be offered only by truly independent schools.<sup>36</sup> He went on to say that education should be considered as a marketable commodity, much like soybeans or television sets.

### Arguments for Home Schooling

Such wholesale condemnation of public education generated anxiety in the hearts of many. John E. Coons and Stephen D. Sugarman<sup>37</sup> (1978) raised questions of accountability in their book, Education by Choice:

When a child's education is faulty today, who is hurt? In contemporary jargon, who is accountable? Is it the professionals? To be a teacher, a board member, or a superintendent doubtless entails responsibility of a sort for educational outcomes. If too many of their pupils fall too far below those in comparable school districts on some standard measure, the educators may be professionally embarrassed."<sup>38</sup>

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36. Ibid., p. 7.

37. Coons, John E. and Sugarman, Stephen D., Education by Choice, Berkeley, CA: The University of California Press, 1978, p. 58.

38. Ibid., p. 58.

Due to this, parents were sometimes faced with the necessity of looking for educational alternatives. In commenting on this decisional dilemma, Ralph Scott, author of Rebuilding American Education (1979), underscored the fact that parents were faced with some difficult choices in selecting the right kind of educational programs for their children. "Early childhood enrichment is important, but so are the values of parents."<sup>39</sup> Scott also pointed out that many parents were opting for private schools, and a significant number have decided to teach their children at home.<sup>40</sup>

H.S. Rowland<sup>41</sup> (1975) made an interesting point on the parental willingness and ability to assume responsibility as teachers at home without professional educational training.

The idea that most parents were capable of educating their children would have been romantic nonsense in the 1920's, but today the idea is not at all farfetched. Millions of parents who are college graduates often have more education and richer experience in the world than does the standard teachers' college product.<sup>42</sup>

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39. Ibid., p. 104.

40. Ibid., p. 104.

41. Rowland, Howard S., No More Public Schools, New York: Dutton-Sunrise, 1975, p. 39.

42. Ibid., p. 39.

## Questioning the Public School Alternative

John Holt was quoted in School at Home, Moore, Wade, and Bumstead (1980), as saying that more and more parents were turning to teach their children at home, indicating that more than 10,000 families had chosen this educational alternative. He also indicated that these parents came from many different backgrounds, representing all classes and all sections of the country.<sup>43</sup>

A growing segment of society, however, has detected serious flaws in the contemporary educational establishment and its product. In the book, Education by Choice (1978), Coons and Sugarman cited an array of critics bent on introducing new forms of learning, and urging that schools in their present form be abolished. These suggestions for reform and other demands for alternative methods of education designed to meet the "failure of state school systems:<sup>44</sup> produced a movement back to the home as a more likely setting for the effective education of children.

In Compulsory Mis-Education (1964)<sup>45</sup> Goodman agreed that every child had to be educated to the fullest extent; in order to do this, we had to refrain from the temptations to pen them up in schools in their youth.<sup>46</sup>

John Holt (1969) compared the classroom to a jail, where the students are occupied with a number of activities unrelated to learning. He pointed out that

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43. Wade, Theodore, Jr.; and Moore, Dorothy N., and Bumstead, Richard, School at Home, Colfax, CA: Gazelle Publications, 1980, p. 89.

44. Coons, John E., Education by Choice: The Case for Family Control, Berkeley, CA: The University of California Press, 1978.

45. Goodman, Paul, Compulsory Mis-Education, New York: Horizon Press, 1964, p. 172.

46. Ibid., p. 172.

this situation, where the teacher functions as a mixture of taskmaster, corrupts the relationship between the teacher and the student.<sup>47</sup> Holt's two books, How Children Fail and How Children Learn (1967), suggested that children have to overcome their fear before they can learn. Children according to him need to have a feeling of accomplishment and learn skills that will enable them to solve problems.

Home Grown Kids by Raymond and Dorothy Moore (1980) discussed how the relationship should be between independent schools and the public schools. He suggested that the states "take a positive, friendly interest in its (their) home-schools."<sup>48</sup> A better relationship could be developed by assigning some of the best teachers to help educate parents so that they may better understand their children, following the example of a number of parochial and public schools who are operating in the spirit and are "treating home-schools as satellite institutions"<sup>49</sup>

In spite of the complexity of the educational establishment, the economic problems, and the range of educational materials needed, it is logical to trace the development of education back to its origins, giving home-schooling another opportunity to solve contemporary social, religious, and educational problems.

The pattern of education in Virginia was somewhat different than in New England. Tyack noted that in colonial Virginia, "formal instruction planter or group of neighbors hired a tutor to teach their children."<sup>50</sup>

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47. Holt, John, How Children Fail, New York: Pitman Publishing Corp., 1967, p ???

48. Moore, Raymond S. and Dorothy N. Moore, Home Grown Kids, Waco, Texas: World Books Publishers, 1981, p. 25.

49. Ibid., pp. 25-26.

50. Beach, Fred Francis, The State and Non-Public Schools with Particular Reference to Responsibility of State Departments of Education, 1958, p. 2.

It has been pointed out in the literature by Kruashaar that non-public schools in America have experienced an overall growth that exceeded that of the public schools. From 1899 to 1900, only 8.2 percent of the nation's children were in non-public schools, whereas from 1952 to 1954 children attending non-public schools comprised 13 percent of the total."<sup>51</sup>

A number of reasons might be advanced for the growth of non-public schools as well as home instruction. First of all, included in the democratic ethic was the right of parents to send their children to private schools. This right was constitutionally settled by the Supreme Court in the *Pierce vs. Society of Sisters Case* in 1925.<sup>52</sup> Secondly, many individuals acting within the free enterprise system of the American economy were never completely convinced that private education is impractical. A third possible reason was found in the growing influence of the American public in the public schools. This factor along with the achievement syndrome that pervades the middle class, could have created a class consciousness that demands exclusive schools and "quality education."<sup>53</sup> A fourth reason may have been found in the rising disenchantment with the public schools on the part of a large number of parents. Silherman pointed out that the public schools had failed to effect the American dream with their growing maturity and that the schools had failed to be relevant even with regard to reform.<sup>54</sup> Many were concerned about the degree of secularism which was developing within the public

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51. *Ibid.*, p. 58.

52. Miller, Arthur S., Racial Discrimination and Private Education, A Legal Analysis, Chapel Hill, N.C., 1957, p. 9.

53. Gajendea, Verma, What Is Educational Research, Aldershot, Harts: Gower Publishing Company Ltd., 1981, pp. 57-58.

54. *Ibid.*, p. 59.



schools. The concerns over such issues as sex education, evolution, and prayer in the schools raised questions about the adequacy of a public education. There had not been much research in the area of home education.

### Compulsory Education and Home Education: Legal Implications

It was recognized that the citizens of the United States were becoming more aware of their family rights and continued to turn to the courts to argue for the right to educate their children at home.<sup>55</sup> According to John Holt, the home schooling movement in the United States was projected to grow from ten thousand families<sup>56</sup> to almost half a million before the end of the decade.<sup>57</sup>

Research in law surrounding this phenomenon revealed evidence that since 1918 all states had adopted compulsory education laws. The exceptions cited in these laws were given for only reasons of suspension/expulsion, quarantine, marriage, attendance at a private school or receiving some other acceptable form of instruction such as the recent litigation in home-schooling.<sup>58</sup>

The question presented to the Supreme Court in Pierce vs. Society of Sisters case was whether or not a state statute requiring all children to attend public rather than private schools was valid under the provisions of the Due Process Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. It was decided by the Supreme Court that a state requirement to the effect that all children of school age must attend public school, thus depriving them and their parent of the right to avail themselves

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55. Harris, John, "Outlaw Generation: A Legal Analysis of the Home-Instruction Movement", Educational Horizons, (Fall 1982), p. 6.

56. Ibid., pp. 6-7.

57. Ibid., pp. 6-7.

58. Ibid., pp. 6-7.

of private schools, was in violation of the Due Process Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment (*Pierce vs. Society Sisters* 268 U.S. 510, 1925).<sup>59</sup> The issue in this case was whether parents had a right to send their children to a private school to receive instruction. More recently this case was reaffirmed in the case of *Windsor Park Baptist Church vs. Arkansas Activities Association* (658 F 2d 619, 1981). The court held that a state may not "standardize" education by forcing children to accept instruction from only public school teachers.

Approximately 35 states made provisions for home instruction. However, in approximately 32 states failure to comply with the specified statute in the state may result in a fine for noncompliance and a jail term in approximately 21 states including the District of Columbia.<sup>60</sup>

Harris indicated that parents had a 50% chance of successfully withdrawing children from public school and teaching them at home. Nolte cited 24 decisions in which the wishes of the parents were upheld in court and 29 cases in which the states' wishes were upheld.<sup>61</sup> The factors that were issues in these cases were: "Must the parent be certified to teach? Does the instruction in a family group constitute a private school? Are regular hours of study maintained? What is the nature of the curriculum? Must social development be considered in the equivalency requirement? and What standards exist within a district to determine equivalency?"<sup>62</sup> Many cases involved consideration of all of these factors and also whether the prevailing statute was broadly or narrowly interpreted.

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59. *Ibid.*, p. 6.

60. Nolte, M. Chester, "Home Instruction in Lieu of Public School Attendance", *School Law in Changing Times*, 1982, pp. 5-6.

61. *Ibid.*, p. 6.

62. *Ibid.*, pp. 14-15.

The statutory requirement that an instructor be certified has been upheld in courts. In People vs. Levisen<sup>63</sup> a mother was found to be qualified to teach for home instruction (constituting a private school) because she had "two years of college and some training in pedagogy and educational psychology." The father was a college graduate and a minister. Parents contended that their home constituted the climate of a private school and within the intent of the law. They further argued that a school was simply a place where instruction was imparted to the young, and that the number of persons being taught had no bearing on whether it was a school.<sup>64</sup> The court agreed with these parents based on two earlier rulings: 1) Meyer vs. Nebraska (262 U.S. at 400, 43 S. Ct. 625, 1923), where the natural obligation of the parents to provide an education for the child corresponded to a parent's right to control over the child, and 2) Commonwealth vs. Roberts, (159 Mass. 372, 34 N.E. 402, 1893), in which the determining factor was the intention that the child be educated in compliance with state statute and not the place where the child was educated.<sup>65</sup> The penalties of the compulsory attendance law was intended to punish parents who refused or failed to educate their children, not to punish those who provided equal or superior education to that obtainable in the public schools.<sup>66</sup>

This does not mean that all home instruction programs provided by parents were satisfactory. However, in a California decision, In Re Shinn (195 Cal. App. 2d 683, 16 Cal. Rptr. 165, 1961),<sup>67</sup> the parents of three children attempted to

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63. People vs. Levisen, 404 Ill. 574, 90 N.E., 2d at 215, 1950.

64. Ibid.

65. Ibid.

66. Ibid.

67. Harris, John (Fall 1982), p. 29.

keep them from attending public schools. The parents argued that their children were of such superior intelligence that they were capable of teaching them at home through the use of correspondence courses. The court held that the father, who did the actual instructing and promoting did not hold a teaching certificate for the State of California. The State of California ruled against the parent and held that their curriculum did not include California history or civics and was not taught by a qualified teacher. One case in point was Perchemlides vs. Frizzle (No. 16641, Mass. Hampshire Cty. Super. Ct. 1978). In this case Perchemlides held a Ph.D. in biochemistry. This parent submitted his home instruction plan to the school superintendent of Amherst, Massachusetts in September 1977 and kept his son home to educate him. Several months later, Perchemlides was charged with violation of the compulsory attendance laws of the state. The superintendent of the Amherst school system rejected this parent's home instruction plan because of the parent's inadequate training or background to teach the child at home, the lack of skill sequencing in the course of study, the lack of group experience "essential to a child's personal and intellectual growth," and the fact that previous home instruction did not prepare the child for the second grade.<sup>68</sup> Perchemlides appealed to the local school board, but the board refused to reconsider his plan. However, Perchemlides took his case to court in order to stop the criminal proceedings of truancy against him. The court ruled that the parents could not remove their child from the jurisdiction of the school system without permission of the board and provided certain guidelines by which the board would be bound when considering home instruction.<sup>69</sup> These included consideration of curriculum,

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68. Bumstead, Richard, "Educating Your Child at Home—Perchemlides Case", Phi Delta Kappan, (Oct. 1979), p. 99.

69. Ibid.

presentation of knowledge, books and materials used, teaching time, teacher competence, group experiences, opportunity for a curriculum identical to that offered in the public schools, the reasons why parents choose home instruction and issues bearing on whether the system set a precedent by its actions.<sup>70</sup> In 1979 the Perchemlides parents won their approval by the superintendent for their home instruction plan.

Another important case was the People vs. Noble (Mich. Allegan Cty. Dist. Ct., 1979); Mrs. Nobel used three arguments in her defense against a charge that she and her husband had violated the states truancy statute. Her arguments included "She was a college graduate and an experienced but not a certified teacher; she used correspondence courses from the Chicago Christian Academy in the education of her children and claimed exemption from attendance at public school for her children on the grounds that the school violated her Protestant fundamentalist beliefs.<sup>71</sup> The court,<sup>72</sup> in a broad interpretation of the First Amendment, found that religious freedom and the fact that Mrs. Nobel was a qualified teacher, although not certified, were enough grounds to permit her to teach her children at home.

Another case was Peter Duro vs. District Attorney Second Judicial District of North Carolina. The parents refused to enroll their five school-age children in either a public or non-public school. The parents alleged that their religious beliefs were violated by the North Carolina compulsory school attendance law. The parents were members of a religious sect called the Pentecostals. The court concluded that in this case North Carolina had established a compelling

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70. Ibid.

71. Ibid.

72. Ibid.

interest in compulsory education for the children of the state and that this interest overrode Duro's religious interest.

In 1979 in The Norfolk, Virginia School System vs. Theo and Daniel Geisy, the parents were able to circumvent the statute and teach their children at home by establishing the "Brooks School" with their four children.<sup>73</sup> Prior to this the school system brought criminal charges against the Geisy's. During that time these parents found that the private school regulations contained neither curriculum nor certification restrictions for the operation of such a school. The only requirement was that they follow the hours and days of instruction during the school year. When the school system charged that the children were not being supervised and not attending school, the Geisy's pointed with pride to their new school. Based on this, the court quickly dismissed the charges.<sup>74</sup>

Other cases in Virginia on home instruction included, Robert Grigg, et. al. vs. Commonwealth of Virginia (Virginia, 297 S.E. 2nd 799 (1982), and James O'Toole vs. Commonwealth of Virginia; this prompted the State Education and Health as well as the House Education Committees to select a Joint Subcommittee to study the need for legislative amendments to the compulsory school attendance laws of Virginia.<sup>75</sup> In 1980 the House Joint Resolution No. 94 established this committee. There were three bills introduced during the 1980-1982 session, but none were passed. However, in 1983 the legislature passed Senate Joint Resolution No. 59 to establish a Joint Subcommittee of the Senate Education and Health Committee and the House Education Committee to study home education.<sup>76</sup>

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73. Ibid.

74. Ibid.

75. Senate Document No. 14, VA 1984, p. 2.

76. Ibid.

Most of the case law dealing directly with home instruction was generated at the state level. The U.S. Supreme Court dealt with several cases regarding parental rights in education. These cases involved whether a parent had a right to send his child to public or non-public schools but not whether the parent had the right to send children to school at all.<sup>77</sup> Most of these cases were argued on the grounds of the violation of parental rights. The Meyer and Pierce cases established that the state authority to regulate education was not absolute: "A state cannot require attendance at a public school without allowing for, at the minimum, a private school alternative. Neither can the state regulate private schools so extensively as to effectively eliminate the alternatives offered by private schools", (Farrington vs. Tokushigie, 273 U.S. 284 (1927)).<sup>78</sup> The court drew yet another constitutional boundary on the state in Wisconsin vs. Yoder, 406 U.S. 205 (1972). In the Yoder case, the court had to balance the state's interest in requiring attendance in school against the parents' rights of religion.<sup>79</sup> The courts held that "...the state's interest in the education is not totally free from a balance when it impinges on the fundamental rights of parents."<sup>80</sup> The applicability of this case continued to be questionable, and it was difficult for parents to choose to teach their children at home on religious grounds to satisfy the criteria for such a successful first amendment challenge established in Yoder. However, two parents in Ohio successfully employed the Yoder defense. These are State vs. Whisner, 47 Ohio St. 2d 181, 351 N.E. 2d 750 (1976) and State ex rel. Nagle vs. Olin, 64 Ohio St. 2d 341, 415 N.E. 2d 279 (1980).

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77. Ibid., p. 4.

78. Ibid., p. 4.

79. Wisconsin vs. Yoder 406 U.S. 205 (1972).

80. Ibid.

In a West Virginia case, State vs. Riddle, the state supreme court held that the religious beliefs of parents did not free them from an obligation to report to the state the structure of their home instruction program. The parents in this case were convicted of violation of the compulsory education law.<sup>81</sup>

After reviewing several proposals and discussing various testimonies, the Joint Subcommittee concluded that home education should be permitted in the Commonwealth of Virginia.<sup>82</sup> In order for home education programs to exist the legislation determined that the home education programs include the following attributes:<sup>83</sup> (1) a statement of policy; (2) notice of intent to home school; (3) qualifications for those persons electing home-school; (4) part-time classroom instruction; and (5) a provision for testing.

The Code of Virginia 22.1-254 provided the requirement for home instruction of children. This was enacted in 1983. Virginia Code 22.1-256 and 257 provided provisions for parents' children to be exempt from school attendance for either religious or medical reasons.

It is clearly evident throughout the literature surrounding the law and litigation on home instruction that many parents, particularly those with strong religious convictions, are likely to feel that their right to direct the education of their children is hampered by regulations.<sup>84</sup> Consequently, many parents feel that this right to educate their children should not be the subject of regulation either at the national or state levels.

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81. State vs. Riddle, 285 S.E. 2d 359 (1981).

82. Senate Document No. 14, VA 1984, p. 8.

83. Ibid.

84. Ibid.



CHAPTER III  
METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to identify the descriptive demographic characteristics and reasons parents in Virginia taught their children at home under the General Assembly (Section 22:1-254). This chapter covers descriptions of the research methodology, population characteristics, instrumentation, procedures of data collection, and methods of data analysis.

The study was conducted using descriptive research techniques. According to Gajenda, descriptive research in education<sup>85</sup>

...is not exactly a method, because many approaches of data collection are grouped together. However, each of them has one element in common - each endeavors to depict the present condition of the situation.

This type of research, according to Gajendea, is primarily concerned with the nature and degree of the existing situation.

The research in this study was descriptive in nature; it used data from a questionnaire that was sent to these parents and compiled.

Population Characteristics

There were approximately 300 parents in Virginia who educated their children at home according to the Virginia State Department of Education at the time of the study. Although the State Department of Education had data regarding the number of students being taught at home, it did not have a listing by name of

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85. Gajendea, Verma, What Is Educational Research, p. 59.

individual students or parents who were teaching their children at home. This made it difficult to obtain name-specific data. However, the local school superintendents in Virginia maintained a list of parents who were approved to teach their children at home. The name-specific data was compiled from this source.

The superintendents were contacted by letter to submit a listing of the names of parents educating their children at home. Using a table of random numbers for the first sample, one hundred parents were selected from the name-specific data supplied by the superintendents in Virginia. Additionally, another sample of 10 parents was selected from the original listing. The parents in this subsample were interviewed to obtain verifying data to permit a more in-depth study.

## Instrumentation

Essential to this study was the development of an instrument. The focus of the instrument came from the review of literature and field data. Each item in the instrument was related to one of the five research questions. A list of questions and items pertinent to the study were developed.

Part I of the questionnaire was designed to collect demographic data with regard to personal characteristics of the respondents, i.e. age, marital status, family background and education. This section asked the respondent to check those personal characteristics that best described his current status.

Part II of the questionnaire contained items designed to collect data on the reasons parents selected home schooling for their youngsters.

The participants responded by checking the response that best described their perception: (1) Great extent; (2) Somewhat; (3) Very little; and (4)None.

Part III of the questionnaire was designed to collect data relative to program characteristics of the parents' home-schools. This section included open-ended questions as well as a non-exhaustive listing of factors that described possible reasons for the parents' decision to teach their children at home. Also, a random sample of parents was interviewed by telephone in order to provide more in-depth information.

To assist with the checking for content of the instrument, the individual items of the questionnaire were scrutinized prior to their use. This was accomplished by using a panel of experts who reviewed critically the questionnaire to ensure the clarity and comprehensiveness of the instrument. Members of the panel selected are listed in the Appendix K of the study. Prospective panel members received a personal letter requesting their cooperation with the study. A letter requesting the panel of experts to evaluate the instrument and a checklist

for evaluating the questionnaire is exhibited in the appendix of the study. Accordingly, the instrument was revised to reflect the reactions of the panel.

After the panel of experts reviewed the instrument and made recommendations, a pilot test using parents in the Commonwealth of Virginia who taught their children at home but who were not to be included in the study was done. Approximately 15 parents who were not drawn in the final sample were selected randomly. The purpose of the field test was to pre-test and refine the instrument and research procedures to determine if the questions used in the instrument were concise and comprehensible to parents familiar with home-schooling. The techniques for administering the questionnaire during the field test were the same as those planned for the main study. Participants in the field test were asked to complete the entire questionnaire, to comment on its readability, and to make other recommendations using the checklist that was attached to the instrument. Comments made by these parents provided specific information regarding the improvement of the instrument.

### The Interview

Borg and Gall<sup>86</sup> suggest advantages to using the interview as a research tool. The basic advantage, they indicated, was an adaptability which allowed for a more in-depth method of data collection. The interview technique permitted the researcher to followup leads and to obtain more data and greater clarity.<sup>87</sup>

The use of the interview technique provided data for specific research problems; it assisted in the assertion of reasons parents had chosen home-schooling; it helped to clarify the characteristics of the home-school program provided by the parents. The interview form was of the semi-structured telephone type; this permitted a more thorough understanding of the respondents' opinions. The parents were asked a series of questions which were followed by further probing using open-ended questions. The majority of the parents surveyed agreed to an interview. Of the parents that were interviewed, information proved to be useful. Many of the parents interviewed invited the researcher to visit their home-school program.

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86. Borg, Walter and M. Gall, Educational Research, New York, 1983.

87. Ibid.

### Data Collection

The questionnaire was mailed to a randomly selected sample of 100 parents who were approved under the Virginia State Code and parents, whose children were exempt from public school attendance for religious reasons provided under the Code of Virginia and who taught their children at home. A letter of introduction requesting the parents' participation was sent prior to the mailing of the questionnaire. Assurances of confidentiality were expressed in the letter if they consented to a follow-up interview. Several parents in the study (approximately 13) refused to answer the questionnaire. Reasons cited via letters and notation on returned questionnaires included their feeling of invasion of privacy and in their opinion none of the questions in certain instances applied to them or their home-school. A few of the parents (5) indicated they were home schooling without approval of their superintendent and another (3) were in the process of hearings to home-school based on religious grounds and didn't want to respond. Two parents indicated frankly it was not anyone's business why they were home-schooling and refused to answer. One parent invited the researcher to visit their home-school program but refused to answer the questionnaire based on their suspicion that information would be shared with their superintendent.

Also, a semi-structured interview was conducted with 10 percent randomly selected parents of the total population used in the study.

### Questionnaire Coding

The final questionnaire was mailed without any precoding in order to preserve the integrity of the investigation and to keep faith with the respondents that their answers would be kept confidential and anonymous. Every returned questionnaire was numbered. Data from the questionnaires were then transferred to a computer using SPSSX software procedures and coding. The response to the open-ended items on the questionnaire were tabulated by hand and were never part of the computer run.

Analyzing the responses to the open-ended questions on the questionnaire and interviews provided a special challenge in that careful attention to objectivity had to be maintained. After sorting, the open-ended responses and interview schedules were scrutinized for their relationship to other items in the questionnaire and then tabulated. These were not entered into the computer data but were used to confirm respondent "tone."

Data Gathering Timetable

Preliminary questionnaire	January 1986
Field Test conducted	February 1986
Modification and printing of questionnaire	April 15-28, 1986
Cover letters typed	May 1-3, 1986
Cover letters, questionnaires and return envelopes mailed	May 30, 1986
Second mailing (Follow-up)	June 15, 1986
Cut off data for questionnaire return	July 15, 1986
Randomized phone calls	August 15-19, 1986



Method of Data Analysis

The major variables in this study were the characteristics of the parents who chose home schooling and the reasons these parents chose this form of education for their children. Investigation of the parents' characteristics and their reasons was accomplished in two ways: (1) by the analysis of open-ended questions (Part I & Part III), and (2) by an attitudinal survey (Part II). The computer program for the analysis of variables was selected from the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSSX). Descriptive statistics were utilized for Part I, Part II and III; the instrument used to operationalize this study sought to gather both quantitative and qualitative data. The instrument consisted of three parts: Part I was predominantly demographic in nature and consisted of twenty questions while Part II consisted of an attitudinal survey of six statements designed with a Likert-type summated rating scale while Part III consisted of eight open-ended questions. Descriptive statistical treatment for Part I was used to answer research questions #1 & 2 — What are the demographic characteristics of parents in the Commonwealth of Virginia who educate their children at home? and What similarities exist among characteristics? The data from questions 1 through 20 were reported by descriptive measure as the frequency per response and the percentage of certain responses.

Part II was used to answer research question #3 — What are the characteristics of home-school programs provided by these parents and how do they differ from those of the public school? Questions 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33 were open-ended questions which allowed for free responses not covered in the structured items in the instrument. The questions were also reported by descriptive measures as frequency and percentages.

Part II Question 34 and Part III were used to investigate the answers to research questions #4 and #5 — What are the reasons why these parents chose home-schooling for their children? and What similarities exist among the reasons

given by approved parents who are religious exempt and those who are not? These questions were reported by descriptive measures of frequency as well as percentage. This part consisted of six statements related to their attitudes concerning various aspects of their rationale to home-schooling. Also, a list of factors that may have led to their decision to home-school was given. Parents were instructed to respond to each of the attitudinal statements with varying degrees of intensity on a Great Extent Norm Scale.

A look at statistical comparisons among religious exempt parents versus total sample was done throughout the analysis section. Simple frequency distributions with percentages were considered the most appropriate method of tabulating and reporting the data. Tables are presented in the analysis section of Chapter IV to help the reader to visualize the findings.

## Chapter IV

### Results and Analysis of Data

#### Introduction

The results of the questionnaire and the analysis of data are presented in this chapter. The data are analyzed in five sections to answer each of the five research questions posed in Chapter 1. Additionally, a sixth section represents the information gathered from parent interviews.

Seventy-four parents in the Commonwealth of Virginia participated in this study. These seventy-four parents represented most of the range geographically throughout the commonwealth. Out of 127 school divisions participating in the state only 25 indicated no children were approved for home schooling. The seventy-four parent questionnaires were used in the data analysis. Not all 74 instruments were useable in their entirety. Even though some responses to certain items were missing, use of these particular instruments was not rejected.

Research Question 1: (What are the descriptive demographic characteristics of parents in the Commonwealth of Virginia who educate their children at home?)

Table 1 shows a comparison of the marital status of the religious exempt and non-religious exempt parents who participated in the study. The majority of parents in the study were married. Ninety-eight percent of the non-religious exempt were married and ninety-one percent of the religious exempt parents were married.

Most of the parents lived in urban areas. As indicated in Table 2, 29.7 percent of the families lived in areas populated with 100,000 - 499,999 people.

Of the 74 parents included in the study the majority 54.1 percent had one to two children at home involved in home-schooling (Table 3).

Six categories of religious persuasion were indicated by the respondents (Table 4). The majority of the respondents 68.9 percent selected Protestantism as their religious preference. Fifteen of the respondents indicated a different religious preference without being specific. The remaining 8.1 percent were Roman Catholic.

Table 1

A Comparison of the Marital Status of  
 Religious and Non-Religious Exempt Parents  
 All Participants

Non-Religious Exempt			Religious Exempt Parents		
Marital Status	Frequency	Percent	Marital Status	Frequency	Percentage
Married	61	98.4	Married	11	91.7
Divorced	1	1.6	Divorced	1	8.3
No Response	-	-	No Response	-	-
Total	62	100.0	Total	12	100.0

Table 2

A Comparison of Residential Population Size  
of Religious and Non-Religious Exempt Parents  
All Participants

Residential Population Size	Religious Exempt Frequency Percent		Non-Religious Exempt Frequency Percent		Total Participants Frequency Percentage	
500,000 and over	2	16.8	10	16.1	12	16.2
100,000 - 499,999	4	33.3	18	29.0	22	29.7
50,000 - 99,000	4	33.3	7	11.3	11	14.9
10,000 - 49,999	-	-	8	12.9	8	10.8
0 - 9,999	2	16.8	3	4.8	5	6.8
No Response	0	-	16	25.8	16	21.6
Total	12	100.0	62	100.0	74	100.0

Table 3  
Distribution of Family Size  
All Participants

Number of Children In Family	Frequency	Percent
1 to 2	40	54.1
3 to 4	31	41.9
5 to 6	3	4.0
Total	74	100.0

Table 4  
Religious Preference Cited by Parents  
All Participants

Religion	Frequency	Percent
Protestant	51	68.9
Roman Catholic	6	8.1
Jewish	-	-
Other	15	20.3
None	-	-
No Response	2	2.7
Total	74	100.0



The level of education of the respondent families was high (Table 5). Over 25.0 percent of the religious exempt mothers had a college education and (31.1 percent) of the total sample had a college education. In addition, over 50.0 percent of the religious exempt mothers had post graduate experience and 12.2 percent of the total sample. It was interesting to note that over 20.0 percent of the religious exempt and non-religious exempt parents did not complete college education. The fathers (Table 6) of religious exempt had a college education (16.7 percent) and total sample (25.7 percent). The majority of the religious exempt fathers (8) had post graduate education experience and (20) total parents had post graduate experience.

One would expect these high percentages since one of the requirements for home-schooling was that the parent was expected to hold a baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution of higher learning. Thus, the respondents were generally well educated.

The ages of mothers who were home-schooling ranged from 35-49 (47.5 percent) years of age; the ages of the fathers also ranged from 35-49 (57.4 percent) years of age (Table 7).

The majority of the respondent parents were white (Table 8 and 9).

Tables 10 and 11 showed the occupation of the respondents. Half of the mothers who were religious exempt (6 out of 12) were executive or professional workers. The other (5) were homemakers. Thirty-seven of the total number of participants were homemakers.

Fathers of the total sample were mostly executives and professional workers. Forty of the total sample fathers were executive/professional workers, and 10 of 12 fathers of the religious exempt category were executive/professional workers.

Table 12 indicates that the majority of the religious exempt parents earned incomes of \$35,000 and over. Thirty-two out of 74 of the total sample earned

\$35,000 (over 52.5 percent). Thus, it appears that many of the parents who home-school were socio-economically middle class in as much as income is concerned.

Table 5

A Comparison of the Mothers' Educational  
Level of Religious and Non-Religious Exempt Parents  
All Participants

Level of Education	Religious Exempt		Non-Religious Exempt		Total Participants	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percentage
Elementary grade	-	-	-	-	-	-
High School Incomplete	-	-	1	1.6	1	1.3
High School Complete	-	-	11	17.7	11	14.9
Technical, trade	-	-	1	1.6	1	1.3
College Incomplete	3	25.0	13	21.0	16	21.6
College Graduate	3	25.0	20	32.3	23	31.1
Post Graduate	6	50.0	3	4.8	9	12.2
No Response	-	-	13	21.0	13	17.6
Total	12	100.0	62	100.0	74	100.0

Table 6

A Comparison of the Fathers' Education  
Level of Religious and Non-Religious Exempt Parents  
All Participants

Level of Education	Religious Exempt		Non-Religious Exempt		Total Participants	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percentage
Elementary grade	-	-	-	-	-	-
High School Incomplete	-	-	2	3.2	2	2.7
High School Complete	-	-	8	12.9	8	10.8
Technical, trade	2	16.7	0	0	2	2.7
College Incomplete	-	-	9	14.5	9	12.2
College Graduate	2	16.7	17	27.4	19	25.7
Post Graduate	8	66.7	12	19.4	20	27.0
No Response	-	-	14	22.6	14	18.9
Total	12	100.0	62	100.0	74	100.0

Table 7  
A Distribution of Parent Age for  
Religious Exempt Parents

Age	Father's Age		Mother's Age	
	Religious Exempt Percentage	Total Participants Percentage	Religious Exempt Percentage	Total Participants Percentage
Less Than 25	33.3	39.3	33.3	50.8
35 - 49	66.7	57.4	66.7	49.2
50 - 64	0	3.3	0	0
No Response	0	0	0	0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Table 8

A Comparison of Female Parents' Race of  
Religious and Non-Religious Exempt Parents  
All Participants

Race	Religious Exempt		Non-Religious Exempt		Total Participants	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percentage
White	11	91.7	46	74.2	57	77.0
Black	1	8.3	2	3.2	3	4.1
No Reponse	-	-	14	22.6	14	18.9
Total	12	100.0	62	100.0	74	100.0

Table 9

A Comparison of Male Parents' Race  
of Religious and Non-Religious Exempt Parents  
All Participants

Race	Religious Exempt		Non-Religious Exempt		Total Participants	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percentage
White	11	91.7	47	75.8	58	78.4
Black	1	8.3	2	3.2	3	4.1
No Reponse	-	-	13	21.0	13	17.5
Total	12	100.0	62	100.0	74	100.0

Table 10

A Comparison of Female Parent Occupation of  
Religious and Non-Religious Exempt Parents  
All Participants

Occupation	Religious Exempt Frequency	Percent	Non-Religious Exempt Frequency	Percent	Total Participants Frequency	Percentage
Executive and Professional	6	50.0	11	17.7	17	23.0
Skill Non-Manual and Manual	1	8.3	3	4.8	4	5.4
Semi- and Unskilled Workers	0	0	1	1.6	1	1.4
Public Asst. or Unemployment	0	0	2	23.2	2	2.7
Homemaker	5	41.7	32	51.6	37	50.0
No Response	-	-	13	21.0	13	17.5
Total	12	100.0	62	100.0	74	100.0



Table 11

A Comparison of Male Parents Occupation  
of Religious and Non-Religious Exempt Parents  
All Participants

Occupation	Religious Exempt Frequency    Percent	Non-Religious Exempt Frequency    Percent	Total Participants Frequency    Percentage
Executive and Professional	10            83.3	30            48.4	40            54.0
Skill Non-Manual and Manual	2             16.7	13            21.0	15            20.2
Semi- and Unskilled Workers	0             -	3             4.8	3             4.0
Public Asst. or Unemployment	0             -	1             1.6	1             1.3
Homemaker	0             -	2             3.2	2             2.7
No Response	-             -	13            21.0	13            17.5
Total	12            100.0	62            100.0	74            100.0

Table 12  
 A Comparison of  
 Family Income of Religious Exempt  
 Parents and Non-Religious Exempt Parents

Income Levels	Religious Exempt		Non-Religious Exempt		Total Participants	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percentage
\$35,000 and over	7	58.3	25	40.3	32	43.2
\$25,000 - 34,999	3	25.0	14	22.6	17	23.0
\$15,000 - 24,999	1	8.3	8	12.9	9	12.2
Under \$15,000	1	8.3	1	1.6	2	2.7
No Response	-	-	14	22.6	14	18.9
Total	12	100.0	62	100.0	74	100.0

Question 2: (What similarities exist among characteristics of parents who are religious exempt and those who are not?)

The data indicate these parents had similar characteristics in all demographic areas. Their profiles are the same with the exception of income level. The religious exempt parents' income was slightly higher.

Question 3: (What are the characteristics of the home school programs provided by these parents?)

Tables 13 and 14 show the type of learning environment provided. Both parents who were religious exempt (41.6 percent) as well as the total sample (46.0 percent) indicated that they provided an informal learning environment for their children. The respondents did not favor a formal environment — half (50.0 percent) religious exempt and the total sample (52.7 percent) Table 13.

Table 15 shows the parents' home-school had a subject-centered environment (43.3 percent). However, the religious-exempt parents (66.6 percent) indicated that they put a little more emphasis on subject-centered environment in their home-school program.

The parents' home-school programs had a structured learning environment. Half of the parents, both religious exempt and total sample, indicated (50.0 percent) and (47.3 percent) respectively, that they prefer this type of environment (Table 16).

Table 17 shows the sources of instructional material that the parents were using in their home-school programs. The religious-exempt parents were using materials developed for conventional schools (41.7 percent) while 35.1 percent of the total sample indicated that they are using commercial materials prepared especially for home-school programs. Only a few (three) of the religious-exempt parents and 18 of the total sample prepared their own materials.

Table 18 shows the achievement tests used by the parents. The majority of the parents indicated that they were using the SRA test. This is not surprising since this is a requirement by the state. Parents must make arrangements for their child to be tested with the SRA.

Table 13

A Comparison of Preference for Formal School  
Environment of Religious and Non-Religious Exempt Parents  
All Participants

Formal Environment	Religious Exempt		Non-Religious Exempt		Total Participants	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	5	41.7	17	27.4	22	29.7
No	6	50.0	33	53.2	39	52.7
No Response	1	8.3	12	19.3	13	17.5
Total	12	100.0	62	100.0	74	100.0

Table 14  
 A Comparison of Preference for  
 Informal School Environment of Religious and Non-Religious Parents  
 All Participants

Informal Environment	Religious Exempt Frequency	Exempt Percent	Non-Religious Exempt Frequency	Exempt Percent	Total Participants Frequency	Percentage
Yes	5	41.6	29	46.7	34	46.0
No	7	58.3	20	32.3	27	36.4
No Response	-	-	13	21.0	13	17.6
Total	12	100.0	62	100.0	74	100.0

Table 15

A Comparison of Preference for  
 Subject-Centered School Environment of  
 Religious and Non-Religious Exempt Parents  
 All Participants

Subject-Centered	Religious Exempt		Non-Religious Exempt		Total Participants	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	8	66.6	24	38.7	32	43.3
No	4	33.3	25	40.3	29	39.1
No Response	-	-	13	21.0	13	17.6
Total	12	100.0	62	100.0	74	100.0

Table 16

A Comparison of Preference for  
 Structured School Environment of  
 Religious and Non-Religious Exempt Parents  
 All Participants

Structured	Religious Exempt		Non-Religious Exempt		Total Participants	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	6	50.0	29	46.8	35	47.3
No	6	50.0	20	32.3	26	35.1
No Response	-	-	13	20.9	13	17.6
Total	12	100.0	62	100.0	74	100.0



Table 17

A Comparison of Sources of Instructional  
Materials of Religious and Non-Religious Exempt Parents  
All Participants

Source	Religious Exempt		Non-Religious Exempt		Total Participants	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percentage
I prepare all the material	3	25.0	15	24.2	18	24.3
I use materials developed for conventional schools	5	41.7	15	24.2	20	27.0
I use commercial materials prepared especially for home schools	2	16.7	24	38.7	26	35.1
Other	2	17.0	0	0	2	2.7
No Response	-	-	8	12.9	8	10.8
Total	12	100.0	62	100.0	74	100.0

Table 18

A Comparison of Achievement Test Used  
of Religious and Non-Religious Exempt Parents  
All Participants

Achievement Test	Religious Exempt		Non-Religious Exempt		Total Participants	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percentage
California	1	8.3	0		1	1.3
SRA	8	66.7	32	51.6	40	54.1
Metropolitan	1	8.3	2	3.2	3	4.1
Other	1	8.3	15	24.2	16	21.6
None	1	8.3	0	0	1	1.3
No Response	-	-	13	21.0	13	17.6
Total	12	100.0	62	100.0	74	100.0

Question 4: (What are the reasons these parents have chosen home-schooling as a form of education for their children?)

Table 19 shows how the respondents ranked reasons for home schooling. When asked why they were home-schooling their children both religious exempt and the total sample ranked poor instruction first, the curriculum in public or private schools second, and the lack of moral standards in school third.

When deciding on who would make the decision to home school, the majority of both parents of religious exempt and the total sample indicated both parents played a role in the decision making (Table 20).

Tables 21 to 26 show the attitudinal response of the religious exempt and the total sample regarding other aspects of why they home-school. The religious exempt parents indicated that they thought the public/private schools were a threat to their children's moral health (58.3 percent) and that home schooling provided a safer environment for their children (58.3 percent). The religious-exempt parents indicated that they thought their children's interest in learning was increased in the home-school environment (50.0 percent) and that public/private school did not aid in the character development of their children (25.0 percent).

The total sample of parents indicated that they thought the interest in learning was better in the home-school environment (43.2 percent) and that home-schooling provided a safer environment (41.8 percent). The respondents indicated (32.4 percent) that they thought public/private schools were a threat to the moral health of their children. Thirty-one percent of the total respondents indicated

the school did not aid in the character development of their children.

Question 5: (What similarities exist among religious exempt and those who are not?)

Table 19 shows that both the religious and non-religious exempt parents indicated that they thought poor instruction, the curriculum and the lack of moral standards were their main reasons for home-schooling. Other similarities existed in their beliefs: home-schooling provided a safer environment, Table 22; children's interest in learning was better in the home-school, Table 23; public/private schools were a threat to moral health, Table 24; and public schools did not aid in character development, Table 24.

Although the respondents chose to home-school, suprisingly both (religious and non-religious exempt) felt that their children's exposure to different social, ethnic and social backgrounds was essential to their children's education (Table 25); this included over 60 percent of the parents in both groups. The respondents also indicated that their children did not have problems getting along with other children while attending public or private schools (Table 26).

Table 19

A Comparison of the Ranking of Reasons Parents Choose  
for Selecting Home Schooling

Reason	Total Participants Rank	Religious Exempt Rank
Poor instruction in public or private schools	1	1
Curriculum in public or private schools	2	2
Lack of moral standards	3	3
Violence and drugs	5	4
Poor student achievement	4	5
Religious exemption	9	6
Integration/busing	7	7
Large schools/surroundings	6	8
Distance to school	8	9
Medical	10	10

Table 20

A Comparison of Family Decision Maker  
of Religious and Non-Religious Exempt  
All Participants

Decision Maker	Religious Exempt		Non-Religious Exempt		Total Participants	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percentage
Father	1	8.3	1	1.6	2	2.7
Mother	-	-	6	9.6	6	8.1
Both	11	91.7	42	67.8	53	71.6
No Response	-	-	13	21.0	13	17.6
Total	12	100.0	62	100.0	74	100.0

Table 21

A Comparison of Religious and Non-Religious Parents  
Citing Moral Health as a Reason for Home Schooling  
All Participants

Level of Degree	Religious Exempt		Non-Religious Exempt		Total Participants	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percentage
Great Extent	7	58.3	17	27.4	24	32.4
Somewhat	4	33.3	20	32.2	24	32.4
Very Little	1	8.3	3	4.8	4	5.4
None	-	-	9	14.5	9	12.2
No Response	-	-	13	21.0	13	17.6
Total	12	100.0	62	100.0	74	100.0

Table 22

A Comparison of Religious and Non-Religious Exempt Parents  
Citing Safe Environment as a Reason for Home Schooling

Level of Degree	Religious Exempt		Non-Religious Exempt		Total Participants	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percentage
Great Extent	7	58.3	24	38.7	31	41.8
Somewhat	5	41.7	15	24.2	20	27.0
Very Little	-	-	5	8.1	5	6.8
None	-	-	5	8.1	5	6.8
No Response	-	-	13	20.9	13	17.6
Total	12	100.0	62	100.0	74	100.0



Table 23

A Comparison of Religious and Non-Religious Exempt Parents  
Citing Interest in Learning as a Reason for Home Schooling  
All Participants

Level of Degree	Religious Exempt		Non-Religious Exempt		Total Participants	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percentage
Great Extent	6	50.0	26	41.9	32	43.2
Somewhat	5	41.7	19	30.6	24	32.4
Very Little	1	8.3	4	6.5	5	6.8
None	-	-	-	-	-	-
No Response	-	-	13	21.0	13	17.6
Total	12	100.0	62	100.0	74	100.0

Table 24

A Comparison of Religious and Non-Religious Exempt Parents  
Citing Character Development as a Reason for Home Schooling

Level of Degree	Religious Exempt		Non-Religious Exempt		Total Participants	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percentage
Great Extent	3	25.0	20	32.2	23	31.0
Somewhat	8	66.7	17	27.4	25	33.8
Very Little	1	8.3	7	11.3	8	10.8
None	-	-	5	8.1	5	6.8
No Response	-	-	13	21.0	13	17.6
Total	12	100.0	62	100.0	74	100.0

Table 25

A Comparison of Religious and Non-Religious Exempt Parents  
that Believe Exposure to Different Social, Ethnic and Racial Backgrounds  
Is Essential to Education

Level of Degree	Religious Exempt		Non-Religious Exempt		Total Participants	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percentage
Great Extent	8	66.7	38	61.3	46	62.2
Somewhat	4	33.3	3	4.8	7	9.4
Very Little	-	-	7	11.3	7	9.4
None	-	-	1	1.6	1	1.4
No Response	-	-	13	21.0	13	17.6
Total	12	100.0	62	100.0	74	100.0

Table 26

A Comparison of Religious and Non-Religious Exempt Parents  
 Agreeing that "My Children Did Not Get Along With Other  
 Children in Public or Private School"

Level of Degree	Religious Exempt		Non-Religious Exempt		Total Participants	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percentage
Great Extent	3	25.0	7	11.3	10	13.5
Somewhat	3	25.0	3	4.8	6	8.1
Very Little	-	-	8	12.9	8	10.8
None	6	50.0	31	50.0	37	50.0
No Response	-	-	13	21.0	13	17.6
Total	12	100.0	62	100.0	74	100.0

### The Interview

Ten parents were selected at random out of the 74 questionnaires returned. These parents were asked specific questions (See Appendix C) with regard to their reasons for home-schooling and their reasons for the success of their home school program.

Seven out of 10 parents expressed dissatisfaction with public, private and parochial schools because, in their opinion, it was unnatural to confine learning to the hours between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. The parents had a strong conviction that learning was something that was natural and occurred throughout the day in day-to-day living. Also, they believed in relating the subjects to each other and to real life, not in the abstract. This, they felt, could be achieved by providing practical and real life experiences for children. Another reason given for selecting home-schooling was their dissatisfaction with the large class sizes found in private, public and parochial schools.

Parents were convinced that with smaller teacher-pupil ratios, less structuring for students could be done. Additionally, their programs were geared to provide real life experiences, not memorizing information for a test only to be forgotten later.

Also, the parents felt home-schooling allowed the student to progress at his own rate and tackle a subject, that he was interested in, which might not be allowed in a particular grade. For example, one parent indicated that his/her children who were 9th and 6th graders, were learning to speak Latin and Japanese from pen pals in other countries.

Two parents indicated that they were home-schooling their children, now 4th and 5th graders, because they never received good teaching of the basics while attending public schools, themselves.

Several parents (four) indicated their desire for their children to be educated in private Christian schools rather than in the public schools during their formative years. They were planning for them to be in Christian education through elementary and middle school; however, they would be permitted to attend public high school. These parents expressed the intention to isolate their children from negative pressures until they had developed their character and value systems.

The parents of all the children indicated dissatisfaction with the public or private school prior to home-schooling. When asked why they enjoyed having their children home, all of the parents indicated the flexibility and nonstructuring of the learning environment as reasons. Also, they wanted their children to explore fully things that puzzled or intrigued them. They enjoyed watching them discover and experience at their own speed without teacher, peer group, textbook, or system to get in their way or to hold them up or push them on. Parents wanted their children to realize the pleasures of being alone and accepting themselves and to have a deep, permanently embedded sense of family, loyalty, pride, shared responsibility and most of all, total acceptance of each other without judgment. This the parents believed would be obtained through home teaching.

There were other reasons cited by parents. These included the following:

1. Home-schooling strengthens the family.

2. God's world holds us as parents, responsible for the education of our children.
3. Home-schooling has taken the pressure off my children.
4. Children who are in home school do well academically and are more independent and creative.
5. Methods of teaching at home.
6. Public school or private school hours are too long.
7. Not enough personal attention by teachers in public or private schools.
8. Child fears failure in public school.
9. Better results in learning at home.
10. The environment of public school is a threat to the moral health of their children and a hindrance to their character development.

Throughout the interviews parents expressed concerns for mental health and emotional well being as a primary reason for home-schooling. They indicated they had never felt comfortable about sending their children from home approximately nine hours a day to be influenced during their formative years by people they did not know personally and whose morals and values differed from their own.

One parent indicated that during the five years of her son's education in the public schools she had become increasingly more concerned about the quality of his education. His report cards during the first, second and third grades consistently showed above-average grades; the parent-teacher conferences always had a positive tone. However, the boy was bored with the classroom setting. As a result, his grade level achievement dropped, far below his potential. While this parent did not necessarily mean to criticize the public school system, she believed that the boy could not survive in the classroom situation. He was bored and unmotivated. Although school educators expressed concern to the parents about their son's socialization if removed from the public school, the parents' observations of social life in public school was negative. The parents felt that the drug

problems in schools were alarming, that the moral values of our young children were astonishing, and that the lack of respect for teachers and other authority figures were beyond their comprehension. The parents wanted an environment where a loving atmosphere is provided; one in which the individual needs of their child could be recognized and one which provided more proficient learning.

In summary, it appeared that the parents interviewed all share a common belief that home schooling provided a better education for their children. This was primarily attributed to a "better learning environment" at home. Also, they all contended that their home-schooled children were getting better moral teaching which they believed was important.



## Chapter V

### Conclusions and Recommendations

#### Introduction

Presented in this chapter is a summary of the research with conclusions and recommendations drawn from the findings. The study dealt with the demographic characteristics of parents who chose home schooling in the Commonwealth of Virginia. Additionally, the reasons parents selected home-schooling as an alternative form of education for their children were identified.

This was a descriptive, analytical study aimed at investigating the characteristics of parents in the Commonwealth of Virginia who educated their children at home. More specifically, two subquestions were investigated as part of the main question. These questions emerged from an extensive search of the related literature covering most aspects of home education with emphasis on the following areas: (1) the historical and philosophical aspects of home-schooling and (2) educational trends in the United States.

#### Literature Review

The review of literature was divided into nine sections. The first reviewed the influence of organized religion on education. The influence of the home-school as the core of education in the Protestant Reformation was also presented.

The philosophical backgrounds of present educational thought were presented from Protestant and Jewish viewpoints. The implications of these philosophical attitudes were related to home-schooling. The home-centered nature of the Jewish tradition made the home the major teaching environment. The educational activities for the Jewish children emerged from the home as a basis for educational reference.

The Protestant tradition emphasized the home as the focal point of education for children. The emphasis in education from the Protestant viewpoint was to educate children to become independent persons who would assume a personal responsibility for the development of a relationship to God.

The influence of these trends and philosophies were traced in education in the United States. The high parental dissatisfaction with the public school performance was noted, and the major areas of criticism were documented. The increase in the educational bureaucracy was one of the key criticisms by parents. Other negative reactions were concerned with the standardization of teaching procedures, lesson content, and materials, which were all perceived as contrary to strong home traditions and values. Many parents indicated that they were concerned about the inadequate teaching taking place in the public schools today. Consequently, they believed that the schools were not preparing their children at the academic level that they felt was adequate.

Another section dealt with the legal aspects concerning home-schooling. A discussion of the compulsory attendance issue was given with special emphasis on the purpose of this attendance law and how the attendance laws had set educational tradition in the public schools. Research in this area revealed that all states had adopted compulsory education laws.

Court cases challenging the attendance laws were noted. Several cases involving parents who chose to home-school were also noted. Most of the case law dealing with home instruction had been generated at the state level with the major thrust being on the parental rights in the education of their children.

Due to the very limited research on home-schooling, a descriptive survey instrument was developed for gathering data essential to answer the research questions in this study. The research design utilized in this study was descriptive in nature.

The major purpose of the research was to examine the demographic characteristics of parents in Virginia who home-school and their reasons for doing so.

### Procedures

A sample of 100 families was selected from approximately 300 names of families on file with the division superintendents in Virginia who were currently home-schooling. The names included in the sample were qualified on the basis of being approved by the local school superintendents to home-school under the Virginia Code.

Data for the study were obtained through a mailed questionnaire. This instrument was revised and piloted before the final version was mailed. By the predetermined cut off date, 74 questionnaires were returned which were used in the final analysis. Data from the returned questionnaires were coded, then entered into the computer using programs from the SPSSX program. Due to the limited number of religious-exempt parent cases, cross-tabulations were not done. However, an analysis of parent profile similarities was given.

### Findings

The major findings of this study as related to the problem defined in Chapter I were as follows:

1. Thirty-six percent of the parents lived in urban areas.
2. Forty or 54.1 percent of the parents had 1-2 children.
3. Fifty-one or 66.4 percent of the parents were Protestant.
4. The level of education was high for both groups. The religious exempt mother (50.0 percent) had post graduate experience and the majority of the fathers (8) had post graduate experience.

5. Of the four age groupings used to classify respondent age, the parents between 35-49 comprised the largest group in the sample. (Almost 50.0 percent)
6. The occupational levels of parents were mostly executive/professional workers. However, 60.7 percent of the mothers were homemakers while 65.6 percent of the fathers were executive/professional workers.
7. The income level of the majority of parents was \$35,000 and over. Thirty-two of the 74 or 52.5 percent earned \$35,000 and over. However, 58.3 percent of the religious-exempt parents earned \$35,000 and over. The religious-exempt parents earned slightly more than \$35,000 and over.
8. The type of learning environment provided by parents in their home schools was an informal (55.7 percent), subject-centered (52.5 percent), structured (57.4 percent) learning environment.
9. The majority 42.6 percent of the parents were using commercial materials especially prepared for home school.
10. The majority of parents were using the SRA test (60 percent) to test their children's achievement.
11. The decision to home-school their children was made by both father and mother (86.9%).
12. The parents ranked poor instruction as first, the curriculum in public school/private schools second, and the lack of moral standards third, when asked why they were home-schooling their children.
13. Half of the respondents (52.5 percent) indicated that home-schooling had stimulated their children's interest in learning.
14. Half of the respondents (50.8 percent) indicated that home-schooling provided a safer environment for their children.

15. Thirty-nine percent of the respondents indicated that the schools (public/private) were a threat to the moral health of their children.
16. Thirty-seven percent of the respondents reported that the public/private schools did not aid in the character development of their children.
17. Similarities exist among the religious-exempt parents versus the total sample in demographics.
18. Similarities exist among the religious exempt and the total sample in the reasons for home-schooling.

### Discussion

The majority of the parents in the study believed that home-schooling was a better educational alternative for their children. The parents felt that the public or private school was a threat to their children's moral health. Therefore, to ensure that their children were getting the kind of moral values teaching that they wanted home-schooling enabled them to accomplish this goal. Also, achievement was a big concern of most parents included in the study; 16.4 percent of the parents indicated that poor student achievement was a primary reason for home-schooling.

It was surprising that the parents of the religious-exempt group did not put lack of moral standards as an important factor in their decision to home-school. In response to a question asking about the degree to which moral standards were important, one would expect all the religious-exempt parents to have indicated a "Great extent."

The literature revealed that parents were dissatisfied with public/private school education for their children primarily because of the lack of achievement, the presence of sex education and religious reasons.<sup>88</sup> The majority of the parents in this study also indicated negative opinions of public and private schools for lack of student achievement and moral standards.

The impact of the Virginia Code 254-256 for parents in the state was evident in this study. Due to the number of parents who were home-schooling, it appeared that parents were very interested in home-schooling in Virginia.

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88. Gajendea, Verma, What Is Educational Research, Aldusht, Harts-Gewer Publishing, 1981.

The majority of the parents were pleased with the type of home-school programs that they were providing for their children.

Two parents felt strongly that they could not list the factors that led to home-schooling since none of the factors applied to them, and they would not give an answer.

There were strong agreements among parents of religious exempt and not exempt regarding their reasons to home-school. Also, factors that led to their decision were given: Only the religious exempt parents felt achievement was not as great a factor since their children were "A" and "B" students while attending public schools. These parents were more concerned over the teaching of moral standards. There was also strong agreement among both groups of parents regarding factors that led to their decision to home-school. Out of all of the factors given, parents were least concerned about medical reasons for home-schooling.

There was also strong agreement among parents regarding the lack of socialization for their children while home-schooling. The majority of the parents interviewed felt that this was not a major concern since most of the parents planned trips/events that included socialization with other children. Parents also indicated that the children expressed no real desire to be around other children. This probably was due to the children's enjoyment of the individual attention they received in home-school programs.

It appeared from the results of this study that the parents of the religious exempt and those not having similar demographic characteristics differed. The majority of the parents included in the study were well-educated and had incomes of \$35,000 and over. It appeared that because these parents were well-educated and upper middle class, they would be more apt to home-school. This was largely due to the fact that they kept better informed and were in a better position to

home-school since both parents did not need to work. In the majority of the cases, only one parent was employed.

Results from the study indicated that the parents who home school in Virginia lived in larger cities as opposed to small rural settings. Perhaps, recent evidence of poor student achievement in our schools in larger cities as well as the violence and overcrowding in such schools accounted for their decision to home-school.

It appeared from the results of this study that parents were very eager to discuss their reasons for home-schooling. This was based on the fact that the majority of the parents included in the study were willing to discuss home-schooling. From the ten parents interviewed, the investigator believed that legitimate responses and true opinions were obtained. This means that they were pleased with their decisions to home-school and were proud of the progress their children were making in this alternative educational program made available to them in Virginia.

Over all, the investigator expected to find significant differences in the home-school program as compared with those programs of public or private schools and differences among the religious-exempt parents as compared with the parents not exempt.



### Conclusions

Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that a portion of the home schooling movement represented a movement away from the public/private school because of parent dissatisfaction with these institutions.

In Virginia, the majority of the parents who chose home schooling for their children were white, protestant, upper middle income college graduate parents who lived in urban areas. The general characteristics of home schools revealed that the school environment was structured and informal.

Parents in the study also believed that public/private schools are a threat to their children's moral character and that home schools provide a better learning environment. Reasons cited by the parents provide some answers to the growth of home schooling in Virginia. The parent perceptions of poor instruction, poor curricula and lack of moral standards in public/private/parochial schools presents a challenge to administrators and teachers in these institutions not to overlook one of the major historical objectives of education - character education and moral development.

The growth in the movement of home schools raises a question regarding social development: do children who are home schooled suffer in their social development? The parents included in the study indicated that social development of their children was in no way hampered and cited examples of ways they found to enhance this area of their development. However, we do not have enough research to support this. Additional research should be undertaken in this area of socialization.

Finally, although there was no difference in demographic characteristics and reasons to home school in religious exempt and non-religious exempt parents, there is a question in the mind of the investigator regarding the honesty of reasons for

home schooling from the religious exempt parents. One would expect these parents to indicate religion as a basis for their reason to home school. However, these parents in the study did not indicated this as a primary reason. Perhaps the attitudes of these parents reflect one thing and their behavior still another.

The parents' answers to the research questions indicated their overwhelming preference for a home-schooling program for their children. Further, the findings of this study suggested that the parents home-school because of their strong opinions regarding inadequate conventional educational programs and love for their children as a stimulating factor in their decision to home-school. Parents felt that public/private education had overlooked one of the most important objectives of education—character, i.e., the moral development of children.

With more and more private schools as well as public schools facing financial problems, home-schooling may increase. Thus, this is not a momentary phenomenon in education, but something that can be viewed as a possible trend.

Again, the home-school programs were not different from public or private schools. However, parents consistently felt that it was the way subjects were taught that made the difference. Notes and letters written in response to question 22 on the questionnaire revealed the parental concern over textbooks, instructional materials, orientation to sex and humanism in both public and private schools.

Further, the findings in this study suggested that with all the parents' characteristics, their overall profile was that of very committed, determined parents who were very willing to develop their own home-school programs as an alternative to conventional education.

## Recommendations

According to the literature and findings of this study, there is a need for additional research in the area of home schooling. The following recommendations are suggested for further research and actions to be taken by educators:

### Recommendations for Research

1. It is recommended that a longitudinal study be conducted with home-school students to evaluate their academic achievement and social performance;
2. a comparative study be conducted to compare the academic achievement and social performance of students attending home schools, public schools, private schools and parochial schools;
3. additional home school research be conducted of home schooling parents using other states, to ascertain parents' perceptions of the value of home schooling;
4. additional home school research be conducted of home schooling students using other states, to ascertain students' perceptions of the value of home schooling;
5. research be conducted to determine the adverse effects of home schooling;
6. the social maturity of student be evaluated after home schooling occurs.

### Recommendations for Educators

1. It is recommended that the school division approving home school programs systematically monitor the program for student achievement;

2. the school division approving the home school program schedule meetings with home school parents periodically, to inform them of modification in the school division curriculum ;
3. the State Department of Education maintain an updated list of approved home school programs in each school division ;
4. guidelines be developed for school division's personnel to evaluate home school programs.

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## APPENDICES

APPENDIX A  
CORRESPONDENCE



## COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

P.O. BOX 60

RICHMOND 23216-2060

May 7, 1986

Ms. Barbara Jones-White  
1425 Fourth Street, SW  
Washington, D. C. 20024

Dear Ms. Jones-White: -

At the request of Dr. S. John Davis, I am replying to your letter of April 22, 1986, requesting the names and addresses of parents who have received approval to educate their children at home.

I am very sorry to advise you that this information is not available from the Department of Education. We do not receive the addresses of persons who have received approval to educate children at home. Also, the names of such persons are considered part of the students' scholastic records and are protected under provisions of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act.

We tried numerous times to contact you by phone after 4 p.m., as suggested in your letter, but we were not successful.

I am sorry we could not be of assistance.

Sincerely yours,

/ Harry L. Smith

HLS/ch

Dear

Thank you for your assistance with my research by consenting to be a panel expert. Please review the enclosed questionnaire and return to me on or before May 15, 1986.

This questionnaire has been constructed for approved parents in Virginia who are educating their children at home.

I am researching why these parents have chosen this alternative to Public Education as well as doing a demographic analysis.

Your ideas and recommendations for modification of the instrument is appreciated.

You may contact me at \_\_\_\_\_, after 4:00 p.m. should you have questions.

Sincerely,

Barbara Jones-White

1435 4th Street  
Apt. 712 A  
Washington, DC 20024

April 22, 1986

Dear

Currently, I am a doctoral student in Educational Administration, at Virginia Polytechnic Institute & State University.

My research is on "A Demographic Analysis of Parents in Virginia who Choose Home Instruction to Educate Their Children." In order to pursue my investigation of this study, I am requesting your assistance by providing me separate lists of parents' names and addresses currently approved by you in your division to educate their children at home under the religious exception code of Virginia and those parents who are educating their children under Virginia Code 22.1 - 254 to home school. I would appreciate these lists on or before May 15, 1986. Dr. S.J. Davis, State Superintendent in Richmond, has been contacted regarding my research in this area. Your cooperation in this matter is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Barbara Jones-White



1425 4th Street S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20024  
Apt. 712 A

July 21, 1986

Dear

Thank you for sending out the enclosed questionnaire to the parents in your school division who are teaching their children at home.

Your cooperation in this research is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Barbara Jones - White

## VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE AND STATE UNIVERSITY

*Blacksburg, Virginia 24061*

DIVISION OF ADMINISTRATIVE AND EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

May 21, 1986

Dear

Earlier this month I requested your assistance in my research on Home-Schooling in Virginia by sending me a list of your parents who have chosen this form of education for their children.

Understanding your position regarding the privacy act of your school board policy concerning the release of this information, I am requesting you assist me by sending my questionnaire directly to your parents if I provide you with materials and postage.

If this request is approved, please reply as soon as possible, because I would like to administer the instrument to parents before summer vacation.

I would also appreciate it if you indicate on your return the number of parents so that you will receive the correct number of questionnaire materials.

Thank you in advance for your assistance in this research project.

If you have questions please contact me at  
or Dr. Glenn Earthman at

Sincerely yours,

Barbara Jones-White

5600 Apt D Foxridge  
Blacksburg, VA 24060  
August 3, 1984

Dr. Carl L. Riehm  
Associate Supt. for Curriculum  
& Instruction  
State Department of Education  
P.O. Box 6Q  
Richmond, VA 23216

Dear Dr. Riehm:

I would like to express my sincere thanks to you for your assistance on last week. As indicated to you, I am extremely interested in pursuing a dissertation topic in the area of the home instruction movement. I look forward to discussing this matter with you in September after more information is available to us regarding approved home instruction cases in Virginia.

Sincerely,

Barbara Jones White

1008 Lockwood Ct.  
Virginia Beach, VA 23464  
August 8, 1984

Carol Buchanan  
Asst. Supervisor for Proprietary School Services  
Department of Education  
P.O. Box 6Q  
Richmond, VA 23216

Dear Carol:

Thank you for your assistance earlier this week with information relative to home instruction in the state. As I indicated to you, I am currently enrolled as a doctoral student at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in the area of Education Administration. I would appreciate any additional information that you or Mr. Finley have on this subject.

I would also like to schedule an appointment with you and Mr. Finley in September at the State Department. Please indicate a date that will be convenient for both of you.

I am looking forward to meeting with you and Mr. Finley. Again, your assistance is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Barbara Jones White

cc: Mr. Finley

5600 Apt D Foxridge  
Blacksburg, VA 24060  
August 3, 1984

Mrs. Norma Szahal  
Staff Attorney  
Division of Legislative Services  
General Assembly Building  
Richmond, VA

Dear Mrs. Szahal:

Currently, I am enrolled as a doctoral student at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in the area of Education Administration. At the present time, I am gathering information pertinent to the home instruction movement. I would appreciate any information you have regarding the House Bill 535 and other information you feel would be helpful. I would also like to have an opportunity to discuss this matter with you at your convenience. Please indicate when you would be available to meet with me in August or September.

Dr. Riehm of the State Department of Education referred me to you as a possible source with this matter. Your assistance is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Barbara Jones White



# COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

JOHN A. BANKS, JR.  
DIRECTOR

DIVISION OF LEGISLATIVE SERVICES

General Assembly Building  
910 Capitol Street

POST OFFICE BOX 3  
RICHMOND, VIRGINIA 23

IN RESPONSE  
THIS LETTER TELEPHONIC  
(804) 786-3

August 13, 1984

Ms. Barbara J. White  
5600 Apartment D Foxridge  
Blacksburg, VA 24060

Dear Ms. White:

Your request for information concerning home education has been referred to me for response.

I have enclosed for your perusal a copy each of the compulsory school attendance statutes, §§ 22.1-254 to 22.1-256 of the Code of Virginia, Senate Document No. 14 (1984), the Joint Subcommittee Report on Home Education, and the Summary of Education and Health Legislation passed by the 1984 General Assembly.

I will be available to discuss this issue with you any time during the week of August 20th and from August 28th through August 31st.

I hope that this information will be useful to you.

Sincerely,

Brenda H. Edwards  
Research Associate

BHE:mec

enclosures

1008 Lockwood Ct.  
Virginia Beach, VA 23464  
August 8, 1984

The National Coalition for  
Public Education  
1201 Sixteenth St., N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20036

Gentlemen:

Currently, I am enrolled as a doctoral student at Virginia Poly-  
technic Institute and State University in the area of Education  
Administration. At the present time I am gathering information  
pertinent to the home instruction movement. I would appreciate any  
information or resources you have regarding this subject.

Your assistance is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Barbara Jones White

1008 Lockwood Ct.  
Virginia Beach, VA 23464  
August 8, 1984

Lynne Silverberg Master  
Washington Office  
P.O. Box 6656  
Silver Spring, MD 20906

Dear Ms. Master:

Currently, I am enrolled as a doctoral student at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in the area of Education Administration. At the present time I am gathering information pertinent to the home instruction movement. I would appreciate any information or resources you have regarding this subject.

Your assistance is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Barbara Jones White



January 8, 1986

Mr. Richard L. Adams  
10020 Greenbrook Ct.  
Manassas, VA 22110

Dear Mr. Adams:

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you in advance for your support and assistance with my research endeavor on "A Demographic Analysis of Parents in Virginia Who Choose Home Instruction to Educate Their Children."

As I indicated to you during our meeting on January 2, 1986, I will contact you on or before February 3, after I have had an opportunity to meet with my committee members.

Sincerely,

Barbara Jones-White  
Graduate Student

1425 "4th" Street, S.W. #712A  
Washington, D.C. 20024  
May 30, 1986

Dear Parent:

Earlier this month your Superintendent agreed to participate in a study I plan to conduct for my dissertation at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg, Virginia.

Please assist me in this endeavor by completing the enclosed questionnaire and return it to me by June 10, 1986. Also, please indicate if you are willing to be interviewed by me. Please be assured your interview will be confidential.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Barbara Jones-White

/cdw

APPENDIX B  
PARENT QUESTIONNAIRE

## PARENT QUESTIONNAIRE

**PURPOSE:** This questionnaire is designed to obtain information about you and home schooling. Please respond to all items as instructed throughout the questionnaire.

PART I DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <p>1. <b>Marital Status</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> married</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> divorced</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> separated</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> widowed</p>   | <p>2. <b>How many children in family</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 1-2</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 3-4</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 5-6</p>   |
| <p>3. <b>Age range of father</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> less than 35 years</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 35-49</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 50-64</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 65 or older</p>  | <p>4. <b>Age range of mother</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> less than 35 years</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 35-49</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 50-64</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 65 or older</p>  |
| <p>5. <b>Race/ethnic of father</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> White</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Black</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> American Indian</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other</p>  | <p>6. <b>Race/ethnic of mother</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> White</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Black</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> American Indian</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other</p>  |
| <p>7. <b>Mother's occupation</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> executive and professional</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> skilled non-manual &amp; managers</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> semi and unskilled workers</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> public assistance or unemployed</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> homemaker</p>   | <p>8. <b>Father's occupation</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> executive and professional</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> skilled non-manual &amp; managers</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> semi and unskilled workers</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> public assistance or unemployed</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> homemaker</p>   |
| <p>9. <b>Mother's religious preference</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Protestant</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Roman Catholic</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Jewish</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> None</p>   | <p>10. <b>Father's religious preference</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Protestant</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Roman Catholic</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Jewish</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> None</p>  |
| <p>11. <b>Mother's Educational Level</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Elementary grade</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> High school incomplete</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> High school complete</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Technical, trade</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> College incomplete</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> College graduate</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Post-graduate</p> | <p>12. <b>Father's Educational Level</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Elementary grade</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> High school incomplete</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> High school complete</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Technical, trade</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> College incomplete</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> College graduate</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Post-graduate</p> |
| <p>13. <b>Income of head of household</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> \$35,000 and over</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> \$25,000 to \$34,999</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> \$15,000 to \$24,999</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> under \$15,000</p>   | <p>14. <b>Size of county or city</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 500,000 and over</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 100,000 - 499,999</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 50,000 - 99,999</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 10,000 - 49,999</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 0 - 9,999</p>  |
| <p>15. <b>Number of years taught child at home and year started</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 1-2</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 3-4</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 5-6</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Year</p>   | <p>16. <b>What is the public school grade level your child (ren) would be assigned for SY 1986-87</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> K-3</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 4-6</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 7-8</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 9-12</p> <p>Child (ren) birthdate (s) _____</p>  |
| <p>17. <b>Person making decision for home schooling of child</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Mother</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Father</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Both</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other (pastor, or extended family members, psychiatrist)</p>   | <p>18. <b>What grades did your child receive if he/she attended public school?</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> A</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> B</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> C</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> D</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> F</p>   |

19. Number of years child (ren) has completed in public school
- 0
  - 1-2
  - 3-4
  - 5-6
  - 7-8

20. I am teaching my child (ren) at home under the religious exempt Code of Virginia
- Yes
  - No

PART II. ALTERNATIVE SCHOOLING RATIONALE

Directions: Circle the appropriate response.

	Great Extent	Some-what	Very Little	None
21. I feel that exposing my children to different social, ethnic and racial backgrounds is essential to their education.	4	3	2	1
22. Public and private schools are a threat to the moral health of my children.	4	3	2	1
23. My child (ren) did not get along with other children in public or private schools.	4	3	2	1
24. Public and private schools do not aid in desirable character development.	4	3	2	1
25. In teaching my child (ren) at home the environment is safer than public school.	4	3	2	1
26. The home schooling atmosphere has stimulated my child (ren) interest in learning.	4	3	2	1
27. I am a member of the local community association for Home Teaching as well as the Virginia Association of Home Educators.				
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes				
<input type="checkbox"/> No				

PART III. HOME SCHOOLING PROGRAM

28. Up to what age do you anticipate teaching your child (ren) at home? \_\_\_\_\_
29. How many hours a day do you instruct your child (ren)? \_\_\_\_\_
30. How many hours a day do your children independently study in addition to your regular teaching? \_\_\_\_\_

31. What achievement test do you use in your home school?
- a. California
  - c. Metropolitan
  - e. None
  - b. SRA
  - d. Other \_\_\_\_\_

32. Which of the following statements characterize the nature of the instructional program provided in your home school? (Please check any that apply.)
- I prepare all of the materials myself.
  - I use materials developed for conventional schools.
  - I use commercial materials prepared especially for home schools.
  - Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

33. Indicate type of home school characteristics
- formal
  - subject centered
  - structured
  - informal
  - child-centered
  - unstructured

34. Here is a list of factors which might be used in your decision to teach your child at home. Number them 1 to 15 in the order of importance. Assign a number 1 to the most important and assign a number 15 to the least important. Use each number only once.
- Poor classroom instruction in public or private schools
  - Curriculum in public or private schools
  - Violence and drugs in public or private schools
  - Distance to school
  - Poor student achievement
  - Integration/busing
  - Large schools/overcrowding
  - Lack of moral standards
  - Religious exemption
  - Medical

35. Are you willing to be interviewed by me on the telephone?
- Yes
  - No
- Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

When you have completed this questionnaire, please check to see if you have responded to all items and return in the self-addressed envelope. May I express my appreciation for the time and careful attention that you have given to the completion of the questionnaire.

APPENDIX C  
PARENT INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Interview Number \_\_\_\_\_  
Interview Date \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Interview Schedule

1. Did your child (ren) express to you dissatisfaction with the public or private school prior to your decision to home school? \_\_\_\_\_

2. Why do you enjoy having your children learn at home? \_\_\_\_\_

3. What reasons do you give regarding the success of your home school? \_\_\_\_\_

4. Additional Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

APPENDIX D  
CHECKLIST FOR VALIDATION



CHECKLIST FOR VALIDATION

If you make reference to specific item in your comments, please indicate the specific question in the questionnaire.

1. Are the directions to the respondents (parents) clear, concise and correct?

- a. Yes
- b. No

If no, please indicate item number and comment.

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2. Does each question have sufficient answers for an accurate reply?

- a. Yes
- b. No

If no, please indicate item number and comment.

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3. Are the questions clearly stated so that only one interpretation is possible?

- a. Yes
- b. No

If no, please indicate item number and comment.

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4. Are all the terms and words clearly understood by the parents (readability level)?

- a. Yes
- b. No

If no, please indicate item number and comment.

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5. Are there any recommendations you have to improve this questionnaire?

- a. Yes
- b. No

If yes, recommendations:

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If necessary, please use the remainder of this page.

Thank you!

APPENDIX E  
COMPULSORY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE CODE

## CHAPTER 14.

## PUPILS.

## Article I.

## Compulsory School Attendance.

Sec.

22.1-254.1. Declaration of policy; requirements for home instruction of children.

§ 22.1-254.1. Declaration of policy; requirements for home instruction of children. — A. When the requirements of this section have been satisfied, instruction of children by their parents in their home is an acceptable alternative form of education under the policy of the Commonwealth of Virginia. Any parent of any child who will have reached the fifth birthday on or before September 30 of any school year and who has not passed the seventeenth birthday may elect to provide home instruction in lieu of school attendance if he (i) holds a baccalaureate degree in any subject from an accredited institution of higher education; or (ii) is a teacher of qualifications prescribed by the Board of Education; or (iii) has enrolled the child or children in a correspondence course approved by the Board of Education; or (iv) provides a program of study or curriculum which, in the judgment of the division superintendent, includes the standards of learning objectives adopted by the Board of Education for language arts and mathematics and provides evidence that the parent is able to provide an adequate education for the child.

B. Any parent who elects to provide home instruction in lieu of school attendance shall annually notify the division superintendent in August of his intention to so instruct the child and provide a description of the curriculum to be followed for the coming year and evidence of having met one of the

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criteria for providing home instruction as required by subsection A of this section. Any parent who moves into a school division after the school year has begun shall notify the division superintendent of his intention to provide home instruction as soon as practicable and shall comply with the requirements of this section within thirty days of such notice. The division superintendent shall notify the Superintendent of Public Instruction of the persons approved to provide home instruction.

C. The parent who elects to provide home instruction shall provide the division superintendent by August 1 following the school year in which the child has received home instruction with either (i) evidence that the child has attained a composite score above the fortieth percentile on a battery of achievement tests which have been approved by the Board of Education for use in the public schools or (ii) an evaluation or assessment which, in the judgment of the division superintendent, indicates that the child is achieving an adequate level of educational growth and progress.

In the event that evidence of progress as required in this subsection is not provided by the parent, home instruction shall cease and the parent shall make other arrangements for the education of the child which comply with § 22.1-254 of the Code of Virginia.

D. For purposes of this section, "parent" means the biological parent or adoptive parent, guardian or other person having control or charge of a child.

Nothing in this section shall prohibit a pupil and his parents from obtaining an excuse from school attendance by reason of bona fide religious training or belief pursuant to § 22.1-257 of this Code.

E. Any party aggrieved by a decision of the division superintendent may appeal his decision within thirty days to an independent hearing officer. The independent hearing officer shall be chosen from the list maintained by the Executive Secretary of the Supreme Court for hearing appeals of the placements of handicapped children. The costs of the hearing shall be borne by the party appealing. (1984, c. 426; 1986, c. 215.)

The 1986 amendment, in subsection B, near the end of the first sentence and inserted substituted "subsection A" for "paragraph A" the present second sentence.

#### ARTICLE 4.

##### *Triennial Census.*

#### § 22.1-281. Triennial census of school population.

Editor's note. — Acts 1986, c. 221, the appropriations act, provides on p. 32 that notwithstanding the provisions of this section the Department of Education shall deduct the locality's share for the education of emotion-

ally disturbed and mentally retarded pupils confined in institutions within the Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation from the locality's Basic Aid Appropriation.

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## ARTICLE 1.

*Compulsory School Attendance*

§ 22.1-254. **Ages of children required to attend.** — Every parent, guardian, or other person in the Commonwealth having control or charge of any child who will have reached the fifth birthday on or before October 31 of the 1980-1981 school year and September 30 of any school year thereafter and who has not passed the seventeenth birthday shall, during the period of each year the public schools are in session and for the same number of days and hours per day as the public schools, send such child to a public school or to a private, denominational or parochial school or have such child taught by a tutor or teacher of qualifications prescribed by the Board of Education and approved by the division superintendent or provide for home instruction of such child as described in § 22.1-254.1.

Instruction in the home of a child or children by the parent, guardian or other person having control or charge of such child or children shall not be classified or defined as a private, denominational or parochial school. (Code 1950, § 22-275.1; 1952, c. 279; 1959, Ex. Sess., c. 72; 1968, c. 178; 1974, c. 199; 1976, cc. 681, 713; 1978, c. 518; 1980, c. 559; 1984, c. 436.)

**Cross references.** — For constitutional provision as to compulsory education, see Va. Const., Art. VIII, § 3. As to requirements for home instruction of children, see § 22.1-254.1.

The 1984 amendment added "or provide for home instruction of such child as described in § 22.1-254.1" at the end of the first paragraph and added the second paragraph.

**Law Review.** — For discussion of school cases in federal courts and the United States Supreme Court, see 45 Va. L. Rev. 1402 (1959). For article entitled "In Aid of Public Education: An Analysis of the Education Article of the Virginia Constitution of 1971," see 5 U. Rich. L. Rev. 263 (1971).

This section is a proper exercise of the police power of the State. *Rice v. Commonwealth*, 188 Va. 224, 49 S.E.2d 342 (1948).

And it does not violate the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, providing that Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof. *Rice v. Commonwealth*, 188 Va. 224, 49 S.E.2d 342 (1948).

But section cannot be applied so as to require citizen to relinquish constitutional rights. — This section cannot be applied as a coercive means to require a citizen to forego or relinquish his constitutional rights. *Dobbins v. Commonwealth*, 198 Va. 697, 96 S.E.2d 154 (1957).

Where town closed its Negro high school and made arrangements to transport pupils to Negro county school, defendant who requested enrollment of his child at town's white high

school was not guilty of a violation of the compulsory attendance law for failure to send his child to county school, where his request for child's enrollment in town's white high school was denied on grounds of race. Under the circumstances, defendant's conviction for violation of this section was improper and denied him equal protection of the law. *Dobbins v. Commonwealth*, 198 Va. 697, 96 S.E.2d 154 (1957).

**Exempt categories are separate and distinct.** — In this section, the General Assembly clearly created separate and distinct categories of exemption from public school attendance — private schools and home instruction representing two such categories. With respect to these two categories, it was the obvious legislative intent that one exemption should operate in one set of circumstances and the other in a different set, else there would have been no reason to create both exemptions. *Grigg v. Commonwealth*, 224 Va. 356, 297 S.E.2d 799 (1982), decided under former § 22-275.1.

Statutes set out all the valid reasons of which parents can avail themselves for not sending their children to school. *Rice v. Commonwealth*, 188 Va. 224, 49 S.E.2d 342 (1948).

Religious beliefs of defendants do not exempt them from complying with the requirements of this section. *Rice v. Commonwealth*, 188 Va. 224, 49 S.E.2d 342 (1948).

And the fact that they harbored no intent to commit a crime does not constitute a defense to a prosecution for violation of this section. *Rice v. Commonwealth*, 188 Va. 224, 49 S.E.2d 342 (1948).

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The 1985 amendment substituted "September 30" for "December thirty-one" in subdivision A 5.

§ 22.1-257. Excusing children who cannot benefit from education or whose parents conscientiously object; excusing children for reasons of health or apprehension for personal safety. — A. A school board:

1. May, on recommendation of the principal and the division superintendent, with the written consent of the parent or guardian, excuse from attendance at school any pupil who the school board determines, in accordance with regulations of the Board of Education, cannot benefit from education at such school;

2. Shall excuse from attendance at school any pupil who, together with his parents, by reason of bona fide religious training or belief, is conscientiously opposed to attendance at school;

3. Shall, on the recommendation of the juvenile and domestic relations district court of the county or city in which the pupil resides, excuse from attendance at school for such period of time as the court deems appropriate any pupil who, together with his parents, is opposed to attendance at a school by reason of concern for such pupil's health, as verified by competent medical evidence, or by reason of such pupil's reasonable apprehension for personal safety when such concern or apprehension in that pupil's specific case is determined by the court to be justified;

4. May, on recommendation of the juvenile and domestic relations district court of the county or city in which the pupil resides, excuse from attendance at school any pupil who, in the judgment of such court, cannot benefit from education at such school.

B. The court in reaching its determination as to whether the concern or apprehension referred to in paragraph A 3 of this section is justified shall take into consideration the recommendation of the principal and division superintendent.

C. As used in paragraph A 2 of this section, the term "bona fide religious training or belief" does not include essentially political, sociological or philosophical views or a merely personal moral code. (Code 1950, §§ 22-275.4, 22-275.4-1; 1954, c. 638; 1959, Ex. Sess., c. 72; 1968, c. 178; 1970, cc. 162, 451; 1976, c. 692; 1980, c. 559.)

Law Review. — For survey of constitutional law in Virginia for the year 1975-1976, see 62 Va. L. Rev. 1389 (1976).

§ 22.1-258. Appointment of attendance officers; notification when pupil fails to report to school. — Every school board shall have power to appoint one or more attendance officers who shall be charged with the enforcement of the provisions of this article. Where no attendance officer is appointed by the school board, the division superintendent shall act as attendance officer.

Whenever any pupil fails to report to school on a regularly scheduled school day and no indication has been received by school personnel that the pupil's parent or guardian is aware of the pupil's absence, a reasonable effort to notify by telephone the parent or guardian shall be made by the attendance officer, other school personnel or volunteers organized by the school adminis-

APPENDIX F  
SUPERINTENDENT OF  
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION MEMOS



COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
P. O. BOX 6Q  
RICHMOND, VIRGINIA 23216

SUPTS. MEMO. NO. 105  
June 6, 1984

INFORMATIONAL

TO: Division Superintendents  
FROM: S. John Davis, Superintendent of Public Instruction  
SUBJECT: Home Instruction

The 1984 General Assembly amended Section 22.1-254 of the Code to provide for home instruction as an alternative to compulsory school attendance and enacted a new Section 22.1-254.1 governing the conditions under which home instruction may be conducted. The provisions of the Act are quite specific, and we do not anticipate a need for any implementing regulations to be issued by the Board of Education. A copy of the Act is attached. It is suggested that it be referenced in the school division policy manual and copies be provided to each school with instructions to refer any applicants to the division superintendent's office.

The Act is in five parts designated A through E. The following comments address each part in turn, restating the basic requirements and offering suggestions for interpreting and applying the provisions of each part.

PART A. Home Instruction Options Available to Parents

The new Act does not change Section 22.1-262 which requires the attendance officer to refer to the juvenile and domestic relations court any parent who violates Section 22.1-254 (compulsory attendance) but it provides some more specific alternatives which can and must be recognized by the division superintendent. These alternatives permit parents to provide home instruction in lieu of school attendance if they meet any one of the following four conditions. Note that in the first 3, approval is automatic so long as a proper notice is filed.

1. Hold a baccalaureate degree in any subject from an accredited institution of higher learning.

Accreditation would include that conferred by any state or regional accrediting agency or by other agencies which administer a program of accreditation for institutions offering a baccalaureate degree. No evaluation or judgment is required on the part of the division superintendent.

2. Meet the qualifications for a teacher prescribed by the Board of Education.

1. A description of the curriculum to be followed for the coming year.

This can be the same as the program of study mentioned under option 4 of Part A, but if option 1, 2, or 3 is chosen it does not have to satisfy the judgment of the division superintendent with regard to the use of SOL objectives or the parent's ability to provide an education. It can be a simple outline of what is to be taught. The division superintendent is responsible for determining whether or not a curriculum exists but should not attempt to evaluate the curriculum or approve it.

2. Evidence of having met one of the criteria (options) named in Part A.

Option 1 can be satisfied by presenting a diploma or other statement from the college or university certifying that the parent has been granted a baccalaureate degree. Option 2 can be satisfied by a copy of a statement from the Department of Education saying that the parent could qualify for a certificate. Option 3 can be satisfied by a statement of acceptance or receipt for tuition or similar evidence from an approved correspondence school, and option 4 by the method described under that option in Part A above.

After August 31 of each year, the division superintendent is required to notify the Superintendent of Public Instruction of any persons who have been approved for home instruction. A reminder will be sent with the annual call for the fall membership report and this information may be returned with that report.

#### PART C. Evidence of Achievement

The parent is required to submit by the following August 1 evidence of the child's achievement in either of the following ways.

1. Results of a battery of achievement tests from the same series from which tests are selected for the Virginia State Assessment Program.

The Department of Education will supply the SRA achievement test for the appropriate grade level at no cost to the school division on request. The school division should notify the parent of the time and place that the SRA test is to be administered in the schools and invite the parent to have his child tested at the same time. If the parent prefers, he may have the test administered at his cost by an agency or person acceptable to the division superintendent. This may be done at any time between the regular testing date and the following August 1.

Only the composite score from the currently adopted SRA battery is needed for this purpose, but it would be helpful to the parent to administer the entire battery. If the composite score is at the fortieth percentile or less, the parent may not continue home instruction and must be notified to make other arrangements

**NOTICE OF INTENT TO PROVIDE  
HOME INSTRUCTION**

I hereby certify that I am the parent or guardian of the children listed below and intend to teach them at home for the coming school year in lieu of having them attend school.

Names of Children

Birth Dates

Grade Levels

School Year: 19\_\_-19\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ A description of the curriculum to be followed for the coming school year is attached for each child.

I wish to be recognized as eligible to provide home instruction on the following grounds. (Check one)

\_\_\_\_\_ I have a baccalaureate degree. (Attach copy of diploma or certificate from college.)

\_\_\_\_\_ I have the qualifications prescribed by the Board of Education for a teacher. (Attach statement to this effect from the Virginia Department of Education.)

\_\_\_\_\_ I have enrolled the children in a correspondence course approved by the Board of Education. (Attach notice of acceptance or receipt for tuition showing name and address of school and the courses in which each child is enrolled.)

\_\_\_\_\_ I have attached to this notice a program of study for the coming year which includes the state standards of learning objectives for language arts and mathematics and states why I am able to provide an adequate education for my child or children.

I understand that by August 1 of next year, I must provide evidence of educational achievement as prescribed in Section 22.1-254.1 of the Code of Virginia which defines the requirements for home instruction.

Check if desired:

\_\_\_\_\_ I would like a copy of Section 22.1-254.1 on home instruction.

Print or type name and address:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Sign: \_\_\_\_\_  
Parent or Guardian

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Soc. Sec. No. \_\_\_\_\_

**PROCEDURE FOR IMPARTIAL  
DUE PROCESS HEARINGS  
CONCERNING HOME INSTRUCTION**

11. A parent wishing to appeal a decision of the division superintendent relative to home instruction may do so by requesting the local school board to arrange a hearing.
12. The hearing shall be conducted by an independent hearing officer who shall be appointed by the local school board from a list maintained by the Department of Education.
13. Any party to a hearing shall have the right to:
- a) Be accompanied and advised by counsel and by individuals with special knowledge or training;
  - b) Present evidence and confront, cross-examine, and compel the attendance of witnesses;
  - c) Prohibit the introduction of any evidence at the hearing that has not been disclosed to the other party at least 5 administrative working days before the hearing.
  - d) Obtain a written or electronic verbatim record of the hearing.
  - e) Obtain written findings of fact and decisions.  
(The school board shall transmit these findings and decisions to the Department of Education.)
14. The parent involved in a hearing must be given the right to:
- a) Have the child who is the subject of the hearing present; and
  - b) Open the hearing to the public.
15. The hearing officer shall submit written findings of fact and decision(s) to both parties to the appeal, the local school division superintendent and to the Department of Education, in the manner prescribed.
16. A decision made by the hearing officer is final, unless a party to the hearing appeals. The appeals process for any party aggrieved by the findings and decision in the hearing is as follows:
- a) If there is an appeal, the Department of Education shall conduct an impartial review of the hearing. The official conducting the review shall:
    - 1) Examine the entire hearing record;

- d) Each hearing and each review involving oral arguments must be conducted at a time and place which is reasonably convenient to the parent and child involved.

9. The child's status during proceedings shall be as follows:

- a) During the pendency of any administrative or judicial proceeding regarding a complaint, unless the school board and the parent of the child agree otherwise, the child involved in the complaint must remain in his or her present educational placement. While the placement may not be changed, this does not preclude using normal procedures for dealing with children who are endangering themselves or others.

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
P. O. BOX 60  
RICHMOND, VIRGINIA 23216

SUPTS. MEMO. NO. 21

August 2, 1984

REGULATORY

TO: Division Superintendents

FROM: S. John Davis, Superintendent of Public Instruction

SUBJECT: Correspondence Courses for Home Education

On July 20, 1984 the Board of Education approved the first list of correspondence courses (schools) which may be used to comply with Section 22.1-254.1 (A), Option (iii) of the Code of Virginia (Reference SUPTS. MEMO. NO. 105, June 6, 1984). The list is attached for your information.

This list, valid until June 30, 1985, will be updated and schools added on a periodic basis. It should be made available to parents or other interested parties upon request.

Parents wishing to use courses from schools not appearing on the list should contact the school requesting that they forward the following material to the Department for review:

1. A catalog or brochure listing the courses offered by the school, the school's method of instruction and evaluation of students' work or if a catalog or brochure is not available, the information may be submitted in narrative form by letter or other means.
2. Schools must submit a letter indicating that the school is either a correspondence school meeting the definition of the Board or a home study school which furnishes curriculum materials to parents for use in teaching their children (See attached regulations).

Parents who wish to use material from schools not on the list must submit the curriculum to your office for review in accordance with the requirements of Option (iv) of 22.1-254.1 (A).

Questions regarding correspondence courses (schools) should be directed to the Supervisor of Proprietary Schools at (804) 225-2031.

SJD/swf

Attachments

Regulatory Authority: Section 22.1-254.1 of the Code of Virginia

- 2 -

The Board of education urges (but does not require) parents to examine the courses selected using the following criteria:

1. Is the school offering the courses financially stable?
2. Is the school accredited or approved by the state in which it operates?
3. Are the courses comprehensive and comparable to the Standards of Learning Objectives in Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies and Science?
4. Is the support offered by the school (testing, follow-up on lessons, advice and grading practices) acceptable?
5. Does the school require a signed contract or specified period in which the child must complete the course?
6. Does the school have a published refund policy for use if the course is discontinued prior to completion?
7. Does the school employ staff qualified to perform the services it provides?
8. Have past graduates of the school been successful in furthering their education or entering the world of work?
9. Does the school issue a credential upon completing the course or program of study?
10. Does the school maintain and transmit student records as a service to parents and the student?

The approval of the Board does not guarantee that a school has a refund policy for uncompleted courses. The Board of Education assumes no liability for damages or financial loss to parents using any course to meet Option (iii) of the home study legislation.

## REGULATIONS GOVERNING THE APPROVAL OF CORRESPONDENCE COURSES FOR HOME EDUCATION

### I. CRITERIA

- A. The courses shall not be in conflict with state or federal laws or regulations.
- B. The courses shall be offered by a school meeting the definition of a correspondence school currently contained in Board regulations. ("Correspondence School - A privately owned and operated educational organization which for a consideration, profit or tuition, teaches or instructs in any subject through the medium of correspondence between the pupil and the school by which the school transmits printed or typewritten matter to the pupil.")
- C. The courses shall be only from schools that evaluate the students' progress based on the review of units of work performed by the student on lessons (units, tests, etc.) transmitted to the pupil on a periodic basis.

### II. DISCLAIMER STATEMENT

The Board of Education approval of correspondence courses does not mean an endorsement of the program as a substitute for public school programs nor is it an endorsement of the educational or operational philosophy of the school. Additionally, the approval of courses is not a determination of the quality of the courses nor is it a determination that they are appropriate to meet the educational needs of the student or the assessment required by Section 22.1-254.1 of the Code.

It is manifest that parents who choose to educate their children at home through a correspondence course are directly responsible for the educational progress of their children and the adequacy of instruction. The General Assembly has provided a mechanism to ensure that a child is receiving adequate instruction at home by requiring annual competency testing or evaluation. This testing program or evaluation is a measure of educational adequacy and the determining factor in the decision regarding the continuation of home study.

The Board of Education urges (but does not require) parents to examine the courses selected using the following criteria:

1. Is the school offering the courses financially stable?
2. Is the school accredited or approved by the state in which it operates?
3. Are the courses comprehensive and comparable to the Standards of Learning objectives in Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies and Science?



-2-

4. Is the support offered by the school (testing, follow-up on lessons, advice and grading practices) acceptable?
5. Does the school require a signed contract or specified period in which the child must complete the course?
6. Does the school have a published refund policy for use if the course is discontinued prior to completion?
7. Does the school employ staff qualified to perform the services it provides?
8. Have past graduates of the school been successful in furthering their education or entering the world of work?
9. Does the school issue a credential upon completing the course or program of study?
10. Does the school maintain and transmit student records as a service to parents and the student?

The approval of the Board does not guarantee that a school has a refund policy for uncompleted courses. The Board of Education assumes no liability for damages or financial loss to parents using any course to meet Option iii of the home study legislation.

## CORRESPONDENCE COURSES APPROVED FOR HOME EDUCATION

Academic courses offered by the schools listed below have been approved for use by parents who choose Option (iii) of Section 22.1-254.1 of the Code of Virginia pertaining to home education as an alternative to compulsory attendance:

American School, The  
850 East Fifty-Eighth Street  
Chicago, Illinois 60637

Calvert School\*  
Tuscany Road  
Baltimore, Maryland 21210

(\*Provided the parent subscribes to  
the Advisory Teaching Service  
offered by the school.)

Cambridge Academy  
1553 N. E. Arch Avenue  
Jensen Beach, Florida 33457

Christian Liberty Academy Satellite Schools  
202 East Camp McDonald Road  
Prospect Heights, Illinois 60070

Home Study International  
6940 Carroll Avenue  
Takoma Park, Maryland 20912

ICS - International Correspondence  
Schools/Newport-Pacific High School  
Administrative Offices  
Scranton, Pennsylvania 13515

Pensacola Christian Correspondence  
School  
P. O. Box 13000  
Pensacola, Florida

## DISCLAIMER STATEMENT

The Board of Education approval of correspondence courses does not mean an endorsement of the program as a substitute for public school programs nor is it an endorsement of the educational or operational philosophy of the school. Additionally, the approval of courses is not a determination of the quality of the courses nor is it a determination that they are appropriate to meet the educational needs of the student or the assessment required by Section 22.1-254.1 of the Code.

It is manifest that parents who choose to educate their children at home through a correspondence course are directly responsible for the educational progress of their children and the adequacy of instruction. The General Assembly has provided a mechanism to ensure that a child is receiving adequate instruction at home by requiring annual competency testing or evaluation. This testing program or evaluation is a measure of educational adequacy and the determining factor in the decision regarding the continuation of home study.

APPENDIX G  
PANEL OF EXPERTS

PANEL OF EXPERTS

Dr. William F. Cox, Professor  
CBN University  
Virginia Beach, VA

Dr. Nora Cartledge-Cheek, Principal  
Baltimore, MD

Dr. Houston Conley, Professor  
VPI & SU  
Blacksburg, VA

Mrs. Alexzene Williams, Principal  
Keene Elementary School  
33 Riggs Rd., N.E.  
Washington, D.C.

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A Demographic Analysis of Parents in Virginia  
Who Choose Home Instruction to Educate Their Children

by

Barbara Jones-White

Committee Chairman: Dr. Glenn I. Earthman

Educational Administration

(Abstract)

The purpose of this study was to analyze the demographic characteristics and validate reasons why parents in Virginia choose home schooling to educate their children. Approximately 300 approved parents in Virginia are currently providing home schooling for their children.

A questionnaire and interview schedule was developed to provide information on the characteristics and reasons associated with this form of alternative educational program being provided by parents.

This descriptive study addresses the population of parents in Virginia who educate their children at home. A questionnaire was sent to 100 randomly selected group of parents who are approved by the state to teach their children at home. Additionally, an interview was conducted with 10 randomly selected parents from this total population who received the questionnaire. The data in the study consisted of responses by 74 parents. Data was tabulated and reported using descriptive and inferential status. all computations were done on an IBM computer using the statistical package for the social services (SPSSX).

The following are the conclusions made as a result of the findings: As participants in home schooling, parents believe that public/private schools are a threat to their children's moral character. Also, that home schooling provides a better learning environment since parents are able to give more time (individual attention) and love to their children while learning.

Major reasons for home schooling are lack of good moral and character development public poor quality of public school education and desire to extend parent-child contact.

General characteristics of parents revealed by the responses indicate parents are small family structured averaging two children, upper incomes, providing a more child-centered program.