

## Dept of Ed: PHAA Grads can Teach Own

from Howard Richman

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In a letter to Pennsylvania Homeschoolers Accreditation Agency (PHAA), the PA Department of Education has issued an opinion that the diplomas of PHAA (and those of the other six organizations whose diplomas they recognize -- see list on page 25) are the equivalent of a school diploma giving PHAA graduates the credential needed to teach their own children.

They also noted that a letter from the local school superintendent would function as the equivalent of a high school diploma if that letter indicated that the student had completed the requirements for graduation from a home education program.

Specifically, in an April 3, 2001, letter to PHAA, Sarah J. Pearce of the School Services Unit at the PA Department of Education wrote:

It is the opinion of the Pennsylvania Department of Education that individuals who either receive a diploma from an organization recognized by PDE to award a home education diploma or receive a letter from the superintendent of the resident school district indicating completion of the requirements for graduation from a home education program per §13-1327.1(d) of the Pennsylvania School Code are qualified under §13-1327.1(a) to become a Supervisor of a home education program. Section 13-1327.1(a) defines a "Supervisor" as "the parent or guardian or such person having legal custody of the child or children who shall be responsible for the provision of instruction, provided that such person has a high school diploma or its equivalent." The diploma from a recognized organization or letter from the superintendent are "equivalent" to a high school diploma and thereby qualifies an individual to be a Supervisor of a home education program.

### **Background**

Pennsylvania's Home Education Law requires that the parent have a high school diploma or its equivalent. In the past, the PA Department of Education has held that the PHAA diploma, and those issued by the other six homeschool organizations whose diplomas they recognize, are the equivalent of a high school diploma as far as scholarship grants and college admissions are concerned.

Now they have confirmed that they are also the equivalent as far as teaching one's own children under the PA Home Education Law is concerned.