

CHE Chairman's report 2019

Greetings to our fellow Home Schoolers.

This has been a very interesting year for home schoolers in the Western Cape due to the processes regarding the BELA Bill and the release of the Home Education Policy. Due to these battles that needed to be fought, on behalf of homeschoolers in the Western Cape we have had to co-opt people on the committee to assist with these functions.

Media liaison

One of our first members that we co-opted was Anelle Burger who became our Media Liaison Officer. Anelle and myself on behalf of the CHE also formed part of a National body called the "Homeschool Ambassadors". The role of this body was to get home schoolers from different parts of the country to work together and formulate a media strategy and improve communication with the media.

This is working very well and the quality of our interaction with the media has improved greatly which in turn is great for the image of home schooling in the country. A 12min Documentary was also done by Carte Blanche which presented home schooling as a representative option for all South Africans. The CHE donated R10000.00 to a local family that was involved in producing a local home school documentary.

This year the CHE was interviewed by various publications such as the The Star, Cape Argus, Voices 360 and Maroelamedia.

We had two radio interviews with Voice of the Cape and CCFM.

From these interviews and publications, we were also quoted in other media.

Most of these interviews were about the BELA bill, but others were also pertaining to Home education in general. All the media exposure seemed to be pro home education and supportive of the home schoolers cause.

General Information and networking

The CHE website and Facebook page handles homeschooling related queries on a daily basis.

The queries ranged from people requesting information to start home education and people who are selling products which are useful to the homeschooling community.

There were also many queries from families desiring to connect with other home educators in their area.

Hence the website played a very important role in supplying information and linking up families. Due to this need we co-opted Suzanne Hatting to create a database of all the different face book pages, whatsapp groups etc in the province for better communication among our community specifically due to the processes regarding the BELA Bill and the Home School Policy. Important information would then be distributed through Suzanne to all the different groups.

A representative body

The association was also asked to act as a representative body for horse riders, a Tug-of-war team, and cyclists participating under the CHE banner. We were also able to assist home schoolers with discounted prices to various events by supplying covering letters. Another interesting trend was the CHE wrote a number of covering letters for home school families that were immigrating

Legal

The CHE in conjunction with the Pestalozzi Trust had a meeting with Debbie Schafer MEC for Education in the Western Cape. The meeting was cordial and various issues were discussed, a detailed report is available on our Facebook page.

A meeting was also had with the administrator for homeschooling in the Western Cape, Deon Louw. We suggested the following three things:

- 1) That homeschooled children be allowed to partake in school sports at the local school in their area.
- 2) That the homeschool community present workshops about home education to the officials from the department who deal with home education.

3) That if the WCED has problems with a particular homeschooling family, that the CHE would be contacted first to resolve the issue amicably.

The WCED placed the new homeschool policy on their website. The CHE wrote a strong worded letter to MEC Debbie Schafer concerning this. Their response once again proved a lack of understanding on governments part of fundamental human rights.

Movement on the Bella bill has come to a grinding halt as campaigning for the elections are in full swing.

Events

The SACSSA Sports day which is managed by Lizelle on behalf of the CHE, is growing each year. There were 247 entrants this year 50% more than last year. From the provincial event 10 homeschoolers qualified for the national meet. Well done to everyone involved.

The Expo was once again a great success, the transition period was complete and Kragdag had completely managed the event. We had over 500 visitors this year. One of the current trends noticed during this expo is all the new faces at the Expo, which shows that home education is growing in the WC. The current problematic issue at present seems to be that we need a venue that is large enough to accommodate everyone and still be cost effective. Thank you once again to everyone involved in the expo.

Membership

Our membership is steadily growing and we grew from 421 member families in 2017 to 511 members in 2018. This equates to an increase of 22%. Our Facebook page has 1718 followers.

We receive a steady income from the "My School card" system as is reflected in the treasurer's report. The CHE encourages families to use the my school card system to support home schooling in the Western Cape. Thank you to Lizelle for managing this for us.

Conclusion and Thanks

As this is an election year the CHE encourages its members and homeschoolers in the Western Cape to vote for a political party which is supportive of homeschooling. Currently the ruling party and the main opposition party do not support homeschooling in general and want to destroy it through a heavy administrative burden and don't respect the parents right to choose what is in their child's best interest.

As Chairman I would like to express my gratitude to each one who served on the committee this year and sacrificed their free time and resources for the homeschooling community.