

FAMILY TIMES

A Home-school Newsletter for New Testament Christians
Edited by Bev & Dave Hewitt and Karen & Dave Pratte



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SEPTEMBER-NOVEMBER, 1995

EDITORIAL FAMILY NOTES

Well, here we go with another year of *Family Times*! This year both the Hewitt and the Pratte families are schooling one child fewer than we were last year. Our families are “shrinking.” Dan Hewitt and Tim Pratte are now both freshmen at Florida College. This leaves the Hewitts with just Jenny and Emily at home, and the Prattes have just Susan!

Abi Hewitt, the Hewitts’ oldest, has graduated from Florida College on the Honor Roll. She hopes to get a degree in nursing, but meanwhile she is also planning a wedding this December to a young man she met while at F.C. Sharon Pratte, the Prattes’ oldest graduated *summa cum laude* from the University of South Florida. She has a job in Tampa working as an English technical writer, and is dating a fine young man she met at F.C.

THANK YOU NOTES

Thanks so much to those who have submitted material for this issue. We especially thank Donna Craig and Linda Maydell for their family profiles, Kelia Ballou for her material on strong-willed children, and Karl Hennecke for the material on homosexuality in public schools.

Please remember the Maydells in your prayers. Les is preaching the gospel in South Africa. They are isolated from “home” and trying to home school under trying circumstances. Their address is: Les and Linda Maydell, P.O. Box 12201, Clubview 0014, Rep. of South Africa.

HOMOSEXUAL AGENDA IN DES MOINES

— submitted to *Family Times* by Karl A. Hennecke

Earlier this year a battle ensued in Des Moines, Iowa, over a proposed curriculum for the city’s public schools. The proposed curriculum suggested by the Sexual Orientation Advisory Committee would have put into place a tool designed to present the homosexual lifestyle in a positive light to school children at all levels. The document, which follows, outlines the goals of this educational plan. On January 24, 1995, the school board announced they that would not implement this plan. At that same meeting School Board member, Jonathan Wilson, announced that he was gay. This makes him the highest ranking openly gay public official in Iowa. The Des Moines Register reported that gay leaders from around the country are trying to raise \$50,000 for Wilson’s re-election campaign.

Notes: The curriculum outline was initially found on a local Internet bulletin board, subsequently I contacted Deb Pendleton at the office of the Des Moines Public Schools and she faxed me a copy of the proposed curriculum on 7/21/95. The documents were identical.

The information about Jonathan Wilson was found in the Des Moines Register, 5/14/95, p. 6c.

DES MOINES PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Teaching and Learning Division
Office of Intercultural Programs

Proposal for Infusion of Sexual Orientation Issues in the Multicultural Nonsexist Education Plan

The District’s Multicultural Nonsexist Education Plan states that the educational program shall be characterized by practices which provide equal opportunity for all participants regardless of age, race, creed, color, sex, marital status, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, or disability. The following represents the collective thoughts of the Sexual Orientation Advisory Committee. The following goals are

designed to ensure that the issues related to gay/lesbian/bisexual people are thoughtfully infused in the educational program and activities.

I. Long Range Goals

A. To provide the opportunity for students to learn the history and contributions of gay/lesbian/bisexual persons by infusing appropriate information into courses in all appropriate subject areas and all grade levels.

B. To promote equality and justice for all people.

C. To use the instructional materials selection cycle to infuse information regarding gay/lesbian/bisexual issues into the curriculum.

D. To avoid heterosexual bias in language.

E. To infuse sexual orientation into the Multicultural Nonsexist Education Plan

F. To include, but not be limited to, the following in the elementary, middle, and high school curriculum:

1. a presentation of diverse and honest biographical information about the contributions and famous gay/lesbian and bisexual people.

2. a discussion of the dynamics of individual autonomy versus institutionally imposed social or political conformity.

3. a discussion of the nature of families including same gender families and parenting.

4. a presentation of information on gender/sexual orientation and the natural diversity present in human beings.

5. a discussion of how homophobia impacted the governmental response to HIV disease.

6. a presentation of information about the history of gay, lesbian, and bisexual issues and their impact on political, social, and cultural movements throughout history which may include:

- * the influence of industrialization and urbanization on changing gender roles and the rise of same-gender oriented communities.

- * information on the post-World War II persecution of "homosexual" persons and the political use of homophobia.

- * information and discussion of the 1948 Kinsey Report and the issue of scientific "objectivity", political influence on scientific inquiry and social conservatism.

- * the use of homophobia to discredit the women's movement and civil rights movement.

- * a discussion of the mid-1950s and 1960s counter-culture movements and the influence of gays, lesbians, and bisexuals on the Beat movement, etc.

- * a discussion of the organized homophile movement and similarities and differences with other social change movements.

- * information on the Stonewall riots of June, 1969.

- * a discussion of the influence of the gay liberation movement on the history and cultural life of America and the world.

- * a discussion of the Bowers v Hardwick case and the right to privacy.

- * information on the National Marches on Washington for Lesbian and Gay Rights.

- * information on the civil disobedience demonstration at the United States Supreme Court in 1987.

G. To encourage staff and student attendance at the annual A Matter of Justice and Compassion: Servicing Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual Youth Conference.

H. To emphasize gay/lesbian/bisexual issues in the mandatory cross-cultural awareness training.

II Short Range Goals

A. To provide the opportunity for students to learn the history and contributions of gay/lesbian/bisexual persons by infusing appropriate information into courses in all appropriate subject areas and all grade levels.

B. To create student awareness of homophobic thinking and behavior and to compare these with other forms of prejudice and oppression. To provide students with information regarding the psychological roots of homophobia.

C. To start with the psychology and sociology high school courses that are up for review during the 1994-95 school year. This could include the evolution of the modern gay/lesbian/bisexual identity; cross-cultural representations of homosexuality; current gay and lesbian issues in the world including civil rights, medical issues, activism, and politics, etc. To provide students with information regarding the psychological roots of homophobia.

D. To include information about gay/lesbian/bisexual issues into the proposed ninth grade course.

E. To provide information as discreet units in module form. This could be valuable for ad hoc use by teachers in a variety of courses or fully integrated into the study of an historical or literary period.

F. To substantially increase accurate gay/lesbian/bisexual materials in school libraries and multimedia centers.

G. To include gay/lesbian/bisexual issues as a component of the MCNS presentation to the instructional material review committees as they begin their work.

H. To provide information about why gay/lesbian/bisexual teenagers are considered youth at risk (i.e., suicide rate, drop-out rates, drug and alcohol abuse, etc.) and explain the rationale for addressing these issues.

I. To provide support for gay/lesbian/bisexual staff members

J. To continue with current strategies to support gay/ lesbian/ bisexual youth.

1. Advertise the Gay and Lesbian Resource Center (GLRC) in school newspapers.

2. Provide posters for counseling offices of secondary schools.

K. To initiate new strategies to support gay/ lesbian/ bisexual youth.

1. Talk with the youth support group at the GLRC and the Outreach Group to determine the problems that should be addressed at school and in the educational programs and activities. To apprise students of their right to be free from harassment.

2. Develop problem-solving strategies to assist youth without jeopardizing their personal need for confidentiality.

3. Provide the opportunities for student newspaper staffs to conduct interviews with the District Sexual Harassment Coordinator to increase the awareness of harassment curriculum including harassment based on sexual orientation or perception of sexual orientation.

[Editorial note: Karl also included a statement issued by the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF) following the refusal of the school board to “immediately implement the plan.” The Task Force has made it their goal “to challenge the forces of intolerance and organize for their freedom.” However, we have omitted this statement due to lack of space. We deep appreciate Karl’s eye-opening material.]

MORE ON F.C. & GED.

Based on information we received from readers about the GED at various colleges, we contacted HSLDA for a clarification of federal law. Based on their response we have written again to President Caldwell at Florida College. Excerpts from our letter are reproduced below.

Several readers have expressed interest in F.C.’s position regarding home schoolers. Despite our disagreement with the GED requirement, we are convinced understanding of home schoolers is increasing rapidly. From our records alone we know of at least 7 home-school high school graduates who enrolled as freshmen at F.C. this year!

The best argument home schooling has is our kids. Doubts about home schooling are dispelled as people have opportunity to see the results. College is one of the least barriers to fall because they are among the last to see the kids! We are convinced the GED requirement will fall. It is just a matter of time.

Meanwhile, our advise is: be patient and courteous. Remember we are pioneers and pioneers make sacrifices. These are brethren in Christ. Let us show them we know how to act as Christians.

Now the excerpts from our letter:

Dear Colly:

Last March I wrote you regarding investigations I had done into the GED requirement for home schoolers ... I find the information I sent you before is significantly inaccurate and incomplete and places an unjustified “thorn in the side” for home schoolers. (In other words, I was mistaken and I need to correct myself!)

In my March letter I wrote: “As a result of our inquiry we learned that there is a federal law which mandates that colleges require students to have a high school diploma or the GED if the college offers federally insured loans to students. This being the case, of course you must require home schoolers to take the GED or you would be in violation of the law ... We suggest that you investigate to determine for sure that this is the law ... When the federal law changes, then we hope FC will drop their GED requirement.”

As stated in my previous letter, my comments were based on advice from a lawyer, but neither he nor I had actually seen the law. Since that time I have accumulated statements from several colleges that do

receive home schoolers without necessarily requiring them to take the GED. I am enclosing copies for your consideration.

This naturally led me to wonder how these colleges could legally do this. I presented this problem to the lawyer who had advised me, so he researched the actual law involved and sent me a copy of it. I am enclosing copies of the pertinent parts of the law for your study ...

[After studying the law,] I wrote to the lawyer summarizing my conclusions about the law. He has sent me an e-mail message confirming that my conclusions are correct.

You will see from the law ... that Florida College has other options for home schoolers besides the GED. If a student is beyond the age of compulsory school attendance in Florida, then the GED requirement does not apply. That option alone would eliminate the GED requirement for our son and the vast majority of other home school applicants. Even students who are subject to compulsory attendance laws could be accepted provided you had a written policy establishing what constituted an advanced student.

Frankly, Colly, after my excursion into the mire of federal regulations, I am back where I began. I honestly still see no good reason for FC to have a blanket requirement that all home schoolers take the GED.

1. The GED is NOT legally required. There are valid alternatives that satisfy the legal requirements.

2. Other colleges, including those who are your primary "competition," do not routinely require the GED for home schoolers.

3. FC could accept home schoolers on the basis of their high school transcripts as confirmed by ACT or SAT scores, as other colleges do. Home-school students could be required to score above certain levels on the ACT and/or SAT for acceptance without a GED, but if a particular student's scores were not high enough, then he/she could be required to take the GED (instead of the current blanket requirement for all home schoolers).

Again, Colly, I believe that FC's policy categorizes home school graduates with people who have **not** completed their high school course requirements. I can understand requiring the GED for students who have not completed high school requirements. But when home schoolers have completed their high school course requirements, to categorize them with these other groups would be to fail to give them credit for the work they have accomplished ...

— David E. Pratte