



Nevada Homeschool Network

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May 11, 2009

Dear members of the Nevada State Assembly,

Nevada Homeschool Network represents homeschooling families throughout the state. We are writing today regarding SB378 - Early Childhood Education. Very simply, we believe that so-called "early childhood education" initiatives such as SB378 extend the role of government while decreasing the role of parents. Plato thought a child should be the property of the state, thereby relegating parents to the role of custodian of the child. Is this what the citizens of Nevada also believe?

The Nevada Constitution calls for the Legislature to "encourage education". To that end, existing law requires school attendance between the ages of 7-18. Traditionally, Kindergarten (ages 5 to 6) is meant to make children "ready" for first grade. So now we must prepare children for Kindergarten with "Pre-K" programs? When does it stop? The responsibility for the early childhood education has been, and should be, left to the parents of the child.

The amended version of this bill **requires** the Department to apply for "any available grants of money from the *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009*". Indeed, it appears that the motive for this bill is to expand the role of government in education solely to obtain Federal dollars, ignoring the many studies that show early childhood education either harmful or valueless to Nevada's children.

In a Washington Times op-ed dated 3-17-2009, J. Michael Smith, President of the Home School Legal Defense Association wrote,

What is surprising about Mr. Obama's education initiative is his priority on early childhood education. His "Zero to Five Plan" targets early care, beginning with infants. States will be given grants to begin moving toward universal preschool.

In a 2005 Stanford University/University of California study that focused on children attending preschool, it was confirmed that attendance in preschool centers, even for short periods of time each week, hindered the rate at which young children developed social skills. These findings refuted the assertion by many that for children to develop socially, they must be involved in a classroom setting at a very early age.

*The Southwest Policy Institute concluded: "Contrary to common belief, early institutional schooling can harm children emotionally, intellectually and socially, and may later lead to greater peer dependency."
<http://www.hslda.org/docs/news/washingtontimes/200903170.asp>*

SB378 is the first step towards "universal" preschool. Homeschool parents reject the notion that the state should be involved in early childhood education. This time should be preserved as parental time in a child's life. **Further, when funding from ARRA runs out the burden to fund programs shifts to the state.** We therefore, respectfully request that you VOTE NO on SB378.

Sincerely,

Nevada Homeschool Network Officers

Frank Schnorbus (Douglas), Chair · Barbara Dragon (Douglas), Treasurer · Elissa Wahl (Clark), Secretary
Carl Lucas (Pershing) · Laura Siegal (Clark) · Kelley Millard-Radow (Washoe) · Missy Pique (Churchill)