

October 2014 Newsletter

NCHENZ Executive Committee Quarterly Update

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Government Liaison

by Meredith Connolly

Its been a busy year liaising with MOE and ERO! New staff and processes, having more offices processing exemptions and ERO issues. I'm looking forward to a quiet 4th term!

I really appreciate when there is an issue or a question asked, so many of our community jump on board to offer advice and support. I'm always gleaning information from so many of you and the experience you have. It is so true that many hands make light work.

With there now being 10 different offices that process Exemption Applications we may find there are a few speed bumps along the way. Please don't hesitate to let us know, so that we can keep an eye out for any particular areas that are coming across the same types of issues. This usually always comes back to it being about one or two staff members that may have certain ideas about how things should be done. When we know about these issues we can feed them back to MOE Head Office so that they can deal with their staff directly from the top.

On the 4th of October MOE will begin to collate the details from the Scoping Survey. They have told us that they'll send us their results in November. We will keep you posted. It'll be interesting to see what they feel has come out of the survey. Please, if you haven't already sent yours in then do so. Tell them every fantastic thing about Home Education. How it works WITHOUT set

curriculum guidelines, reporting systems etc etc. Let them know the good and not so good dealings that you have had with MOE during your time Home Educating. It's all fair game. They're asking ... so let's tell them. Just remember that if you do have negatives to share then provide suggestions for possible fixes. They have told us that they are open to that too.

And feel free to drop us a line yourselves about your dealings with MOE staff. Sometimes we only hear the negative and so that's the only thing that we are feeding back to Head Office. It would be nice to tell them some good feedback as well during our next meeting. I don't want to give them a complex. 😊

Take care everyone. Have a fantastic 4th term doing what you all do so awesomely!

Member Services

by Nadia Sole

A group of students started Maths-Whizz in September. We can enrol additional students in groups of ten, email mathswhizz@nchenz.org.nz to go on the list. [More information about Maths-Whizz is here.](#)

We're continuing to make [Reading Eggs available for a great discount.](#) If you already have a subscription then you will receive notification about renewing one month before the expiry date. Please check your junk/spam folder if you are not seeing these emails.

I'm always on the look out for more good programs to make available to members. Some programs already offer a discount to home educators and it always pays to ask the provider (for example, Maths Buddy offers a 60% discount to home educators but this is not advertised on their website, you need to make a request to receive the discount). If you are looking for curriculum ideas, there are lots of options in the [Teaching & Learning section](#) which have been recommended by other home educators.

Recruitment

The NCHENZ committee is looking to recruit new members. We are a team of committed volunteers, and we are looking for new co-opted members to assist with the services we offer our community. If you feel you have something to offer the home education community through volunteering your time, energy and know-how, we would love to hear from you.

What you need to know ...

- We meet monthly, online by video chat (regular attendance is a requirement of being a committee member)
- Access to Facebook is an advantage
- We need folk who are willing to ‘muck in’ where and when needed
- We need practical-minded, team-oriented, volunteers

If that sounds like you then please send an email to info@nchenz.org.nz letting us know that you are interested and what skills you feel you will be bringing to the team.

NCHENZ Bulletin Board

by Lynn Peake

We are currently working through the process of creating an NCHENZ Bulletin Board or Forum.

Our intention, at this point, is to have a mixed public/private forum as an adjunct to our website. It will provide an alternative online support forum for those who do not like to use Facebook, or email loops, and we aim to cover as many aspects of home education as possible, all housed in one convenient place.

Our hope is that this will become a useful place for the community to meet online, discuss the variety of issues in home education and share ideas.

If you are a local or regional group, small or large, formal or informal we are interested to hear if you would like a private section on the forum for use with your own members. Please send your enquiry to info@nchenz.org.nz and we can discuss the options.

NCHENZ Constitution

by Nadia Sole

We've been reviewing the NCHENZ Constitution in order to update it with regard to the way NCHENZ now communicates with members (electronically rather than by post), that individual membership is free, and to reflect the way Committee meetings are held by teleconference, etc.

There are two aspects of the Constitution review which the Committee would love your input on:

Past Home Educators

The Constitution states that only current home educators can serve on the Committee. It can be beneficial to allow past home educators to join the Committee as they have valuable experience (and sometimes extra time) to contribute to NCHENZ. If the Constitution were changed to allow past home educators to serve on the Committee, there are some things which would need to be clarified – such as, what percentage of the Committee can be past home educators vs how many need to be currently home educating; how long ago should the past home educator have held a Certificate of Exemption for their child; does it matter if they stopped home educating to put their children in school, or do they need to not have children in school ...?

Group Membership

The other aspect of the Constitution review is where group membership fits, with regard to regional and local home education support groups. Currently groups pay a membership fee of \$25 per year. Traditionally the number of group members has been low, currently NCHENZ has eight group members. Should group membership be free so that any group can join and benefit from information sharing and extended networking?

To submit your feedback on the Constitution review please [click here to complete a very short survey](#). The Committee would like to move forward on the Constitution review with the wishes of members foremost. The survey takes about two minutes (unless you want to write a lot in the Comments section).

Group Membership

by Debbie Thomas

One of our main goals for 2014/2015 is to continue improving our communication with members. With this in mind please take the time to complete the survey above ([click here](#) or in the above link under Constitution Review). We are looking at making Group Membership free to encourage ALL groups in New Zealand to join.

Stay in the Loop

by Karen Grant

NCHENZ has a [Facebook group](#) for members. This is where discussions can be started by members on issues relevant to homeschooling in NZ. We also have a [Yahoo group](#) where notices are posted about member services, etc. As part of our ongoing efforts to increase communication to our members, we are investigating the option of creating a NCHENZ forum attached to our website. This is in the early stages, but if you wish to give feedback or have the ability to assist in any way please contact me at info@nchenz.org.nz. We will shortly be having a spring clean of the membership database, where those who have been members for longer than a year will be asked to confirm whether they wish to continue being NCHENZ members. Look out for this in your inboxes shortly, and make sure you respond if you want to stay in the NCHENZ loop.