



2020 GIVING IMPACT REPORT

Making homeschooling possible

From the President

As has been often stated since 2020 began, we are certainly living in unprecedented times.

In February, there were already over two million children being taught at home in the United States. When the dust settles after COVID-19, we could see a doubling in the number of homeschooled students.

While homeschooling might not be the first choice for many of these parents, some will keep going with it when they experience the benefits of closer family relationships, kids who are more engaged in learning, and the peace of mind that comes from knowing that their children are being taught in a safe environment.

At least, that was the experience of my family—and has been for hundreds of thousands of others.

It is dramatic to think how much the homeschooling landscape has changed since 1981, when my wife and I started homeschooling. Very few families taught their own kids at the time, and the educational establishment in California, where we lived, was hostile to the idea.

But since then, homeschooling has become a widely accepted

alternative to traditional public and private education. This is due in part to HSLDA's efforts, starting in 1983, to make it legal and accessible in every state.

Today's homeschoolers face a different set of challenges than my wife and I—and thousands of other homeschooling parents—faced in the early '80s. A worldwide pandemic is forcing them to make swift decisions about what is best for their children's health and education, while technology that I could not have even imagined in 1981 is both helping and hindering the learning process.

Parents are launching into homeschooling while remaining six feet away from the fellow homeschoolers who would normally serve as close advisors and advocates and amidst restrictions that affect their children's access to socializing and extracurricular activities. Meanwhile, opposition to homeschooling still arises from family, friends, and academics.

That is a lot for homeschooling families to overcome. But together with you, HSLDA can help.

We believe we are uniquely poised at this moment in history to defend

and equip the newest members of the homeschool community. In the 2019–20 fiscal year alone, through your support of HSLDA's **Freedom work** and **Compassion Grants**, we accomplished the following:

- Sent 141 email alerts mobilizing local homeschool communities to contact their elected officials about legislation that, if passed, could have negatively affected homeschooling
- Won a court case in New York City ensuring that families won't be subject to potential truancy charges caused by district delays in processing paperwork
- Equipped **790** families with grants for curriculum, school materials, and disaster recovery
- Several companies joined the group of nearly 40 vendors that offer significant discounts to Compassion Grant recipients, helping these struggling families stretch their educational dollars even further

In the current fiscal year (2020–21), we've also taken steps to better serve the significantly increasing numbers of homeschool families:

- This summer, we partnered with the VELA Education Fund to disburse \$300,000 in Meet the Moment grants to homeschool groups across the country who



are creatively serving a growing homeschool population.

- At the end of this report, I invite you to read about what HSLDA is doing to help equip families who are beginning to homeschool because of COVID-19. We look forward to helping them accomplish their goals and successfully complete their homeschooling journeys.

We believe our efforts to protect freedom, equip families to flourish, and provide support through Compassion Grants will make the difference for many parents in choosing to continue homeschooling after the pandemic rather than send their children back to school.

Thank you for partnering with us to make all this possible. We deeply appreciate your support and prayers at this pivotal time.

Sincerely,

J. Michael Smith
President

How your donations helped last fiscal year . . .

Building Up Hope through Compassion and Service

784 low-income families received curriculum grants

1,684 children served

19 children had special needs

16 recovering families received disaster relief grants

42 children served

509 families received financial aid for HSLDA membership

99 bereaved families received gift books and sympathy notes

46 homeschool groups received education grants

46 families received grants from HSLDA Ambassadors



Learning Together—About Love and Compassion

When Renee and Bryan applied for a curriculum grant for two of their children, Renee was pregnant with their fifth little girl, Kit. Kit had been diagnosed in utero with a severe, life-threatening heart defect, and the family knew that many difficult days lay ahead of them.

Anticipating doctor appointments and hospital stays, friends strongly discouraged them from homeschooling that year. Instead of stopping, Renee and Bryan reached out to HSLDA.

In a letter that brought tears to our eyes, Renee told us, "Thank you for the grant—it encouraged us to keep homeschooling, which was the exact right fit for our family. **Because we homeschooled, I was able to bring my four other daughters to see Kit almost every day.**"

Renee described how being able to do schoolwork in the ICU room,

listen to audiobooks in the car, and use the weekend for science experiments helped the girls stay focused on their studies. It also gave them and their baby sister sweet time together, precious moments they would have lost had they gone to traditional school that year.

"I wouldn't say we made the most homeschool progress I've ever seen, but we kept learning—so much more than what was in the books, but also about love, compassion, and countless aspects of hospital life," Renee wrote.

"After our daughter Kit was born, she spent 17 days in the NICU, six weeks at home, then three months in the CICU before passing away after her open-heart surgery. **Homeschooling has been a balm to us as we've been grieving—we can take our days slow, take a break when we need to, and visit Kit's grave whenever we choose.**"

Reflecting on the last several months, Renee and Brian realized that their conviction to continue homeschooling through hardship helped bring a little more peace to their home. Without the need to shuffle the girls back and forth to school, the time pressure to complete assignments and projects, and the inflexibility of a traditional school schedule, the family has been able to grieve and heal.

A happy update on Renee and her family:

"In August, God gave us another child—our first boy—nicknamed 'Bear.' Our girls are so in love. God has blessed us."



Financial Information

Freedom Fund and Compassion Ministry*

April 2019–March 2020

REVENUES

Private gifts and grants to Freedom	\$650,323
Private gifts and grants to Compassion	\$1,484,768
Noncash contributions	\$40,251
Investment income	\$28,199
Other income [†]	\$38,146
Total Revenues	\$2,241,687

EXPENSES

Program Expenses

Ministry and compassion to homeschool families in need	\$1,162,477
Legal defense and protecting homeschool freedom	\$574,091
Total program expenses	\$1,736,568

Support Services

Fundraising and development	\$122,282
Management and general	\$56,159
Total support expenses	\$178,441

Total Expenses **\$1,915,009**

Cash Surplus **\$326,678**



*Supplemental information from audited financial statements adjusted for joint costs

[†] Includes HSLDA contest revenue and royalties from retailers

Program Expenses



- **Curriculum Grants** to families—\$567,116
 - Widows and widowers—\$95,215
 - Single-parent families—\$166,885
 - Military families—\$33,315
 - Other families in need—\$271,701
- **Freedom Fund** for legal defense—\$574,091
- **Student service awards**—\$6,600
- **Educational grants** for groups—\$43,900
- **Ambassador grants** to families—\$29,152
- **Disaster Relief** and other home emergency grants—\$24,540

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How your donations helped last fiscal year ...

Safeguarding a Foundation of Freedom

1,859 government officials contacted

797 discrimination cases represented

9,877 general legal questions answered

179 state email alerts sent

21 court appearances by HSLDA attorneys

[] **countries** received support from our global team



Two years after HSLDA sued Virginia's Franklin County School Board for demanding more homeschool documentation from the Sosebee family than the law required, the Virginia Supreme Court ruled in favor of the family, affirming that parents who comply with the commonwealth's home instruction statute have a legal right to teach their children at home.

On June 11, 2020, the Supreme Court of Virginia ordered the Franklin County Circuit Court to declare the board's policy of requiring additional documents unlawful and to issue an injunction that will prevent the board from enforcing it against families in the future. The decision was unanimous.



We could not have faced last year's challenges without the help of the HSLDA team. You took a toxic legal situation and completely turned around the outcome, calming my fears in the meantime. A simple thank-you is not enough. Please know that I have the highest respect for what you do for homeschoolers every day. Thank you again.

— Kate, homeschooling mom
Name changed to protect privacy

[article]



[photo for article]

Our programs make homeschooling possible . . .

Your gift helps **HSLDA** carry out each aspect of our mission:

- **Defend** thousands of families each year from discrimination and the illegal demands of local schools
- **Litigate** cases in which government officials threaten homeschool freedoms
- **Monitor** state homeschool laws and equip concerned citizens to respond to proposed legislation
- **Promote** homeschooling abroad and help defend families globally from invasive search and seizure
- **Educate** lawmakers and the public about the immeasurable value of a personalized education

. . . in hard times.

Through your support of **HSLDA Compassion**, we are able to help struggling homeschoolers in the following ways:

- **Offer curriculum grants** to help low-income parents such as widows, single parents, military personnel, and others afford educational expenses, including testing and therapies for children with special needs
- **Provide disaster relief grants** to families recovering from natural disasters
- **Equip volunteer HSLDA Ambassadors** to personally help homeschoolers in their own communities



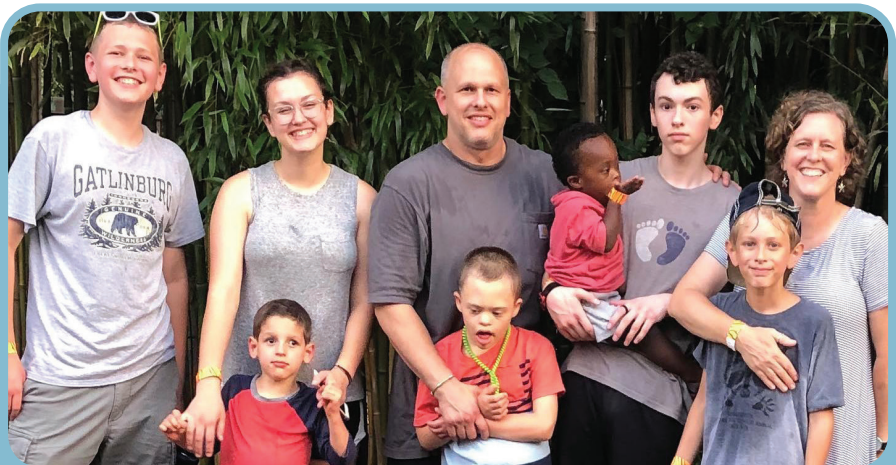
I cannot express our gratitude to you for providing financial assistance to our family. With three children with profound disabilities, having therapy equipment and curriculum in our home makes it possible to homeschool all of them. We are thankful every time we use something that we were able to purchase because of the grant!

— Christi, Curriculum Grant recipient
(family pictured right)

COVID-19 and Homeschooling: Poised for Action

Here is how HSLDA is responding to the effects of COVID-19 on education:

- Revamped **MomPossible.org** to become a crisis-specific microsite with videos, downloads, and other content focused on helping parents make decisions about their school options
- Created a free-to-join **mentoring group**, where new or prospective homeschool moms can connect with experienced homeschoolers to learn about getting started
- Closely **monitoring** state testing and evaluation requirements and notifying constituents when requirements are altered because of the coronavirus
- Partnering with the VELA Education Fund not only to assist **homeschool groups**, but also to offer more **free memberships** to low-income families who are new to homeschooling
- Hosting a how-to-homeschool **webinar series** to help new homeschoolers plan their fall
- Continuing our daily work of advancing **homeschool freedoms** and making **legal and educational resources** available to homeschoolers both in the U.S. and around the world
- Launched **YouCanHomeschool.com** to provide information about homeschooling to families considering it due to school closures





I love HSLDA. It's such a relief to know that they're looking after families like my own and the right to homeschool. I feel like they truly care about their work and all of us!

– Amanda, HSLDA member and donor



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