

Good afternoon, my name is Debi Ketron, and I am the Director of Government Affairs for Indiana Association of Home Educators; we've been the source for Indiana homeschool information since 1983. Thank you for allowing me to respond to testimony from the February 17, 2016, U.S. Commission on Civil Rights Indiana Advisory Committee regarding the School to Prison Pipeline. IAHE has also submitted written testimony.

No one at IAHE was consulted before these testimonies were given. We do not believe comments in the transcript accurately reflect what we observe as we interact with home educators across the state.

However, we do agree that there is a problem in Indiana regarding students within the public school system who face expulsion, but the problem is not with home education. The problem and solution to this issue can be found within the public school system itself.

The children referred to in the transcript as being "homeschooled" cannot be homeschoolers because instruction in the home by the parent has not been provided. If the parents are not following the Indiana law, they do not qualify as homeschoolers. Rather, these children are truants. The state has laws governing the procedures for truants. In this situation as it relates to giving a parent the choice of expulsion or homeschooling,

it appears that these parents do not understand what is involved with home education.

Parents state they were told to **call IAHE by the public school**. After educating them on home education, most decide they can't or do not want to take on the responsibility. **Unfortunately, their child has already been labeled by the public school as a homeschooler before they were ever given our phone number.** We then refer them to a virtual public charter school, back to their school, or the IDOE for other options.

Expelled teens have called us seeking help. We ask to speak with a parent, but are told there is no one with whom to speak. We inform these teens that we cannot counsel or recommend home education without a parent to oversee their education. We refer the teen back to the school or the IDOE for other options.

If you look at the **Homeschool Enrollment Form** on the **Indiana Department of Education website**, you will see it says, "ONLY parents and legal guardians may complete this form." Parents have told IAHE that the school reported homeschool enrollment for the child. Some of these families decide not to homeschool.

There is general confusion between home education and virtual charter public school at home. A **home school** is a **non-accredited, non-public school controlled by the**

parent and a **virtual charter public school** is an **accredited, public school done at home but controlled by the charter school**. Many enrolled in a public virtual school **mistakenly believe they are “homeschooling”**. It is possible some of these kids are **not homeschoolers**, but public virtual students.

Time will not allow me to discuss how IAHE **serves** Indiana homeschoolers, but information may be found in our written testimony.

We would like to be a part of the **solution** and intend to speak with the Indiana General Assembly about ideas we have for correcting this **very concerning problem**.

Thank you for your time.