



*Nebraska Christian Home Educators Association*

# HOMESCHOOL FREEDOM AND MONEY

By David Lostroh<sup>1</sup>, NCHEA Leg. Coordinator

Freedom is what makes homeschooling true homeschooling. Homeschooling without freedom becomes another institution that might better be called “shackled homeschooling.” Shackled<sup>2</sup> homeschooling cannot realize the important benefits of true homeschooling. Homeschooling without freedom puts a homeschool under the authority of another who is not the one ordained by God to educate children.

## WHAT IS HOMESCHOOL FREEDOM?

Homeschool freedom consists of many things, including the following:

1. The freedom to adjust how you homeschool for each of your children because 1) you know what will/might work best for each child, 2) you love your children more than any teacher, and 3) since studies continue to prove that home educated students are scholastically better, socialized better, and more civic minded than public school students, you should be free to choose the better system for your children.

**CHRISTIAN HOMESCHOOL FREEDOM** adds the following:

2. The freedom to acknowledge in your actions that God, not the state, is ultimately in charge of your homeschool.
3. The freedom to not place your homeschool under the atheistic and humanistic religious indoctrination control system of the government (State Department of Education). The courts have removed God’s name and influence in the public schools. God warns in His Word to shun false teachers and their doctrines, and not to be influenced by them.<sup>3</sup>
4. The freedom to obey God’s Word in the content and methods of educating one’s own children rather than being pressured to use content and/or methods contrary to the same.

## FORCES IMPACTING HOMESCHOOL FREEDOM

1. **GOD-ORDAINED INSTITUTIONAL FORCES:** God created three institutions that have authority on the earth:
  - a. **The Family.** God has given rights and duties to parents regarding the upbringing of their children, including providing food, shelter, clothing, and **education**. I believe that God views parental rights to be fundamental because they are so important to society that they deserve the highest level of protection.
  - b. **The Church.** God has given rights and duties within the various ministries which HE ascribed to the church. These rights are also fundamental to society and deserve the highest level of protection.
  - c. **The Government:** God has also given duties to the government as summarized in Romans 13:1-7, i.e., to reward good and punish evil (as defined by God). These duties do not include childrearing or education.

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<sup>1</sup> David Lostroh has testified on behalf of Nebraska home education starting in early 1982, i.e., for over 40 years. He has been involved in Nebraska homeschool freedom ever since. Working with our members, God has granted great success to our NCHEA efforts.

<sup>2</sup> See *Vouchers - Shekels with Shackles*, Christian Education Initiative, Frontline Ministries, Inc, Sept 12, 2022, at <https://nchea.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Vouchers-Shekels-With-Shackles-CEI.pdf>. See also the Christian Education Initiative website at <https://ChristEdu.Org/>.

<sup>3</sup> "O Timothy! Guard what was committed to your trust, avoiding the profane and idle babblings and contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge." 1 Timothy 6:20 NKJV

**PROBLEMS ARISE WHENEVER ONE OF THE ABOVE INSTITUTIONS ATTEMPTS TO INTERFERE OR USURP THE RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF ONE OF THE OTHER TWO INSTITUTIONS.**

**Simply put, God never gave the responsibility for the education of children to government. Nor does the government own the children.** Ultimately, they belong to God and He has clearly given the responsibility for childrearing to the parents, NOT the state.

At least in Nebraska, it was the recognition of this God-given responsibility to bring up their children "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" that caused many Nebraska Christian parents to homeschool even when it was not recognized by the state as legal. The intense battle for homeschool freedom involved many homeschoolers who were prosecuted, jailed, and/or even had their children taken away from them.

**IT WAS CHRISTIANS WHOM GOD USED TO WIN HOMESCHOOL FREEDOM IN NEBRASKA!** Please see [Victory in Jesus: The Battle for Christian Educational Freedom in Nebraska 1977-1984](#).<sup>4</sup>

**2. SOME OTHER INSTITUTIONAL FORCES:**

- d. Religious and philosophical institutions who directly or indirectly oppose God.
- e. Non-Christian universities/colleges and schools. These are actually a subset of d. above.
- f. Teachers Colleges that often believe their graduates are better teachers than parents and should be granted authority over parents. Of course, there have been many, many studies that continue to prove this belief untrue.
- g. Teachers Unions
- h. The Major Media
- i. Friendly organizations, legislators, and others who sometimes misunderstand the nature of the issues, opponents, and battle.

**There are many friendly forces that want to help get children out of the public schools (which is an honorable goal), but their efforts have the potential for sacrificing homeschool freedom for money.**

The term "School Choice" has become popular in the media, and it sounds good. But, since Nebraska has had school choice since 1984, i.e., public, parochial, denominational, private, and exempt (both religious and non-religious) schools, then what is now meant by the term "School Choice?" To many, School Choice means the parents choose the school they desire and then desire that someone else pay for part or all of it (using government or private funds). The most dangerous is using government funds, but even private funds may have strings attached.

Please see "[A Historical Perspective on Home Education and A Historical Perspective on Home Education and Parental Rights in Nebraska](#)"<sup>5</sup>

**3. FINANCIAL FORCES/PRESSURES:** There can be significant financial costs to homeschooling, including the loss of a second income if one of the parents leaves their current employment to homeschool.

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<sup>4</sup> *Victory in Jesus: The Battle for Christian Educational Freedom in Nebraska 1977-1984*, Lorraine Lostroh at <https://nchea.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Victory-In-Jesus-2002.pdf>.

<sup>5</sup> *A Historical Perspective on Home Education and A Historical Perspective on Home Education and Parental Rights in Nebraska*, Nick Lenzen, NCHCA President, at <https://nchea.org/join-nchea/nebraska-history/>.

## EDUCATIONAL SAVINGS ACCOUNTS (ESA): GOVERNMENT MONEY - A MAJOR RISK TO HOME EDUCATION

Please see HSLDA President Jim Mason's article on ESAs, [\*The Civic Virtue of Private Home Education or How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Oppose So-called Educational Savings Accounts for Homeschoolers\*](#)<sup>6</sup>.

Please see [\*Government Subsidies Would Destroy Homeschooling, Not Help Families\*](#).<sup>7</sup>

### Get Now, Lose Big Later

Genesis 25:29-34<sup>29</sup> Now Jacob cooked a stew; and Esau came in from the field, and he was weary.<sup>30</sup> And Esau said to Jacob, "Please feed me with that same red stew, for I am weary." Therefore his name was called Edom.

<sup>31</sup> But Jacob said, "Sell me your birthright as of this day."

<sup>32</sup> And Esau said, "Look, I am about to die; so what is this birthright to me?"

<sup>33</sup> Then Jacob said, "Swear to me as of this day."

So he swore to him, and sold his birthright to Jacob.<sup>34</sup> And Jacob gave Esau bread and stew of lentils; then he ate and drank, arose, and went his way. Thus Esau despised his birthright.

In the above passage, Esau sold his birthright to Jacob because he had a pressing, immediate need — he was very, very hungry. He lived to regret this decision years later. He lost out big!

### Take Government Money for Your Homeschool Now, Lose Home School Freedom Later

During the battle for Homeschool Freedom, 1977 – 1984, Nebraska was the worst state in the U.S. in which to homeschool for reasons mentioned above and detailed in footnotes 4 and 5. At that time, proponents of homeschooling stated that they were not interested in government control. **They also stated that they did not want government money to support their homeschools. This added convincing proof of their desire to be unregulated by the state.** I know this because I was there as a participant in the discussions.

A piper may like to play certain tunes because he likes them and thinks they are better than other tunes. But, if he needs money, we know that:

**"HE WHO PAYS THE PIPER CALLS THE TUNE."**

This is essentially universally true with government payments for the activity of others. When the government pays for something, it implies that they are responsible for the activity and have a need to oversee how the money is used. **There is a tacit implication of giving up your God-given authority over your homeschool to the state when you take state money.** The control may not come immediately, but it will come sooner or later.

Newcomers to home education may struggle to believe this is true. But, believe me, I know that it was a factor during the battle for Christian homeschool freedom in 1977-1984. Non-religious homeschool freedom came later in 1999 after Christian Home Education proved that homeschooling works.

I recently attended the 2022 Alliance of Christian Home Education Leadership Conference (state homeschool leaders across the U.S. and Canada) where ESAs were one of the topics of extended discussion by state homeschool organization leaders. I stated during the discussion that not taking government money was definitely a significant part of the debate in the Nebraska capitol during the battle for homeschool freedom. Families wanted total freedom to homeschool as they determined best for their family, with no government funding due to the related involvement, interference, and regulation that accompanies government funding.

My concern with homeschool ESAs is the distinct potential that the homeschooling freedom of parents who have decided they will not take government money will be eliminated by those that choose to take government money.

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<sup>6</sup> *The Civic Virtue of Private Home Education or How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Oppose So-called Educational Savings Accounts for Homeschoolers*, Jim Mason, President-HSLDA, at

<https://nchea.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/HSLDA-Jim-Mason-on-ESAs-2020.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> *Government Subsidies Would Destroy Homeschooling, Not Help Families*, Maggie McKneely, HSLDA Federal Relations Liaison, <https://thefederalist.com/2022/06/10/government-subsidies-would-destroy-homeschooling-not-help-families/?fbclid=IwAR3R2XyaP-U4QfgPOfoZPeKILdtBYwy6bWAZG5orslevzwiiErzSFKIbjrg>.

**When that happens, there will be no homeschool freedom for all homeschoolers whether or not government money is accepted.**

There is a great need to ensure that the freedom of parents who have not and will not take government money is not swept away with those who take government funding. After all, it was the religious families who did not want government money that, through God's grace, won homeschool freedom in the first place.

Many years ago, the Alberta government implemented legislation that provided government funding for homeschool resources to individual homeschooling families. Along with the funding came certain requirements. Parents who wanted to homeschool had no legislative option but to accept these conditions or they would be considered truant. Alberta home educators continued to fight for their rights. A few years ago the Alberta legislature passed changes to the Education Act that allowed for an additional option for home educators -- that of 'notification-only'! So, while many Alberta home educators still accept government money and the strings that are attached to it, others now have chosen the option of freedom to educate without government oversight. The point here is that many Canadian homeschoolers, once used to getting government money, have chosen money over choosing homeschool freedom. It is better to avoid the temptation of money as soon as it appears!

According to an article in the previously footnoted *Vouchers – Shekels With Shackles*, the United Nations “education” agency (UNESCO) commissioned a report advocating that “Governments should use tax subsidies for private schools to bring them under government control and impose regulations mandating ‘equity’ and other goals..”<sup>8</sup>

**Private Money Educational Savings Accounts:**

Do not expect to be given money without strings attached even when the money comes from private donations. While private money doesn't come with the potential of the force of state control, it still can become a serious temptation to use the money if strings are attached. Again, donors often have restrictions on how their money should be spent and their restrictions may cut seriously into your homeschool freedom.

**Let's keep home education free in Nebraska!**

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid, [Vouchers - Shekels with Shackles](#), p. 14