

# Opinion: How many new homeschoolers will we have this year?

Over the past two decades, the number of homeschoolers in Mississippi – and in America – has more than doubled as this education choice has moved from the fringes of society to a practice that is legal in every state.

But even with that growth, according to the National Center for Education Statistics, homeschoolers represent just three percent of the student population. However, that was before the coronavirus pandemic shut down more than 100,000 schools for over 55 million children last spring.

Even if it was government led with government curriculum, every family in Mississippi had a taste of homeschooling. Some sarcastically quipped that would end homeschooling. But then polling started to tell us otherwise. Almost overnight, homeschooling favorability rose. Twenty, thirty, even forty percent said they wouldn't be sending their kids back to school in the fall.

While the strongest advocates of homeschooling know that we probably won't see numbers like that,

we are all expecting a large departure from both public schools, and potentially from private schools as well. Why? There's an interesting mix of parents who feel that sending their children into a large school setting isn't safe, while another large group doesn't like the restrictions that will be coming, limiting interaction with friends, while requiring face masks in many (or perhaps all) school settings.

Fortunately, it is easy to get started homeschooling in Mississippi. For a state that has generally shown little interest in education freedom, the freedom to homeschool is broadly supported and protected by law. The one thing a parent must do is file an annual certificate of enrollment with your local school district's school attendance officer. All you need on the form is your child's name, address, phone number, and a simple description of the program such as, "age appropriate curriculum."

When you do that, your child and you are now exempt from the state's punitive compulsory education laws. There are no requirements on curriculum or

testing or who can teach. Parents, instead, have the freedom to choose the educational system, style, and setting that works best for them and their children.

The Department of Education "recommends" parents review state curriculum guidelines and maintain a portfolio of their child's work, thought that is not required. As opposed to following a government curriculum that tells your child what he or she must learn at what age, homeschooling allows you to let your child learn at their own pace.

That means a child who is excelling can move forward at a quicker pace, cover additional topics, or take in material at a deeper level. If a child is struggling, you can slow down, switch your teaching style, or bring in new materials. If your child has a unique interest, the world is literally at their fingertips with scores of free, online training materials. Yes, YouTube is filled with funny cat videos. But it also provides a library of instruction on virtually any topic you can think of.

Thanks to today's technology, a quick Google search can help you get more comfortable with homeschooling. There is an abundance of homeschool Facebook groups with veterans who are willing to share their ideas

## \*U.S. Postal Service

(Continued from page 1.)

of \$0.40  
 • 20 lbs., zones 8/9 – the increase will be \$0.06 instead of \$0.40

• Oversized – the increase will be zero instead of \$0.40

A full list of commercial pricing can be found on the Postal Service's Postal Explorer website <https://www.usps.com/business/prices.htm>.

The Postal Service has some of the lowest mail postage rates in the industrialized world and also continues to offer a great value in shipping.

The PRC will review the prices before they are scheduled to take effect on Oct. 18, 2020. The complete Postal Service price filings with prices for all products can be found on the PRC website under the Daily Listings section at [prc.gov/dockets/daily](http://prc.gov/dockets/daily). The price change tables are also available on the Postal Service's Postal Explorer website at [pe.usps.com/PriceChange/Index](http://pe.usps.com/PriceChange/Index).

The Postal Service receives no tax dollars for operating expenses and relies on the sale of postage, products and services to fund its operations.

on getting started, curriculum, extracurricular activities, maintaining your sanity, and much more. Connection to these groups is also a venue to plan an endless variety of outings and field trips. It won't take long to realize your child will receive as much "socialization" as you would like.

There are also options such as co-ops, where families gather together and share teaching responsibilities among parents. Similarly, we have seen the emergence of microschools this year in which a small group of parents pool their resources together to hire a teacher.

If you're on the fence about homeschooling, worried about what homeschool might look like in your family, or just not sure you can do it, at least take a closer look. Fill out the necessary forms, do your research, and talk with other homeschool families.

You might find what many homeschool families did long ago: Giving children time and freedom to pursue their individual interests while utilizing a curriculum consistent with the values of your family, rather than following forced government mandates created by faceless bureaucrats, tends to produce very positive results.

*Brett Kittredge is the Director of Marketing & Communications of the Mississippi Center for Public Policy, the state's non-partisan, free-market think tank.*

# New lieutenant colonel appointed as deputy director of Mississippi Highway Patrol

Press Release

Mississippi Highway Patrol Director Colonel Randy Ginn announced on August 3, that Major Malachi Sanders has been appointed to serve as Lieutenant Colonel of the Mississippi Highway Patrol.



LT. COLONEL MALACHI SANDERS

Major Sanders has been the Director of MHP's Special Operations Division since July 2016 and is a graduate of MHP Cadet Class 48. He started his 25-year law enforcement career in Clarke County working extensively in the patrol division earning several commendations in enforcement.

Throughout his years of service, his duty assignments include Public Affairs Officer, Assistant Troop Commander, Troop Executive Officer, Troop Commander, and Special Operations Major.

"Lieutenant Colonel Sanders' experience at all supervisory levels of the Mississippi Highway Patrol has prepared him for this position," said Colonel Randy Ginn. "I am confident that he will serve the

agency and the men and women of the Uniform Division well."

"After interviewing each qualified applicant for the Lieutenant Colonel position, it was clear that Major Malachi Sanders would be an excellent choice as the next chief of the uniformed division of the Mississippi Highway Patrol," said Mississippi Department of Public Safety Commissioner Sean Tindell. "Lieutenant Colonel Sanders' leadership and experience will be greatly relied upon as we strive for excellence throughout the Mississippi Department of Public Safety."

## MHP implements Operation S.T.O.P. Campaign to promote school bus safety across state

Press Release

The Mississippi Highway Patrol, in conjunction with the Mississippi Department of Education (MDE) is implementing the Operation S.T.O.P. (Safe Transport Of Passengers) traffic safety initiative.

Each day, thousands of students across Mississippi board school buses with the intentions of arriving to school and returning home in a safe manner.

The objective of Operation S.T.O.P. is to educate motorists regarding the dangers students face and to create a safer environment for school buses while traveling on our roadways. Throughout the upcoming school year, MHP will place emphasis on school bus loading zones and conduct saturation patrols in school zones in order to combat speeding and distracted driving issues.

"I encourage motorists to slow down and to watch for children at bus stops. We all want to ensure children arrive to school and return home safely, and we can help achieve that by paying attention to our surroundings and by not passing a school bus stopped for pick up and drop off," said Dr. Carey Wright, state superintendent of education.

"Our future literally boards a school bus every day and the priority for our Troopers will be to ensure the Safe Transport of Passengers to their destination," said Colonel Randy Ginn, Director of MHP. "We urge you to join us as we invest in the future of our state."

MHP will conduct enforcement activities regarding the Operation S.T.O.P. campaign throughout the 2020 – 2021 school year.



# Stay connected to your community by subscribing to the

Serving Holmes County Since 1959

# HERALD

## Sign-up Online Anytime • 24/7

[www.holmescountyherald.com](http://www.holmescountyherald.com)

# PayPal is Available!

