

## **Virtual Schools Make their Debut in Washington.**

Recently some of you may have received information in the mail, the newspaper or a homeschool conference about on-line programs offered by the public schools.

Some of these programs advertise as “homeschooling” programs but they are in fact public school-at-home-programs and do not fall under the home-based instruction law RCW 28A.200.

There are currently 38 school districts offering “virtual school” programs some of these programs are being administered by for-profit corporations such as K12, Insight, or Digital Learning Commons. There are approximately 68 state-wide informational meetings being held or already held to promote these programs. Homeschooling families appear to be their target market. This may be because homeschooling families have experienced much success in teaching at home and we also represent new money to the school district.

These programs fall under the authority of the public school system and are funded under state rules for alternative learning programs WAC 392-121-182. Homeschoolers who join the program relinquish their homeschool rights under the home-based instruction law and must adhere to state standards, goals, teaching methods, regulations, district graduation requirements like pass the WASL and state/district approved curriculum.

In 2005, CHN worked hard to require by law that “virtual schools” provide a written full disclosure form to parents informing them of the difference between these programs and home-based instruction. This form is known as the [Statement of Understanding Form](#). At this point in our preliminary research, many of the sites do not appear to be including this form in the enrollment process.

To read more about these programs click here <http://www.chnow.org/id17.html>

Some homeschoolers have asked us where did they get my contact information? Last year we did some research on this and discovered that a large direct marketing company had compiled a list of homeschoolers in our state. They received contact information from vendors who sell their lists, or from harvesting state support group web sites.

***Preserving homeschool freedoms for today and tomorrow!***

**Christian Homeschool Network**

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This information is not intended to be and does not constitute the giving of legal advice. Before making any decisions that could affect the legal status of your homeschool program contact Home School Legal Defense Association [www.HSLDA.org](http://www.HSLDA.org) for advice.