



For Immediate Release

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**GUESS WHAT HOMESCHOOLING FAMILIES
DO DURING THE SUMMER MONTHS?**

(July 6, 2004) – July through September is a busy time for homeschoolers.

While many public school students are attending camp or vacationing, a number of homeschoolers continue their studies. Many other homeschooling families and those families considering a move to homeschooling aim during the summer to determine if homeschooling is right for them, to craft a home education program for the next year's instruction, and then to obtain course materials.

Calvert School, the nation's first formal homeschool curriculum provider, enrolls about half of its homeschool students between July and September, with the July 4th holiday usually marking the start of the busy season.

"Families are always thinking about whether homeschooling would help their child excel academically, and summer is when they really make their decision," says Jean C. Halle, president of Calvert Education Services, the curriculum provider arm of Calvert School. Calvert annually enrolls more than 20,000 homeschool students in its complete courses for Pre-Kindergarten through Grade 8.

"For those who are already homeschooling, these months offer them the chance to explore new programs and instructional materials in preparation for the coming homeschool year," Halle adds.

Each July, telephone, Internet and mail inquiries more than double at Calvert School, a Baltimore, Md.-based private school that started distance learning in the U.S. in 1906.

The Calvert School warehouse in Hunt Valley, Md., has days between July and September each year when it ships several hundred individual course boxes. These boxes, containing textbooks,

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workbooks, and all necessary supplies for that course, are sent to homes in all 50 states and in more than 90 countries.

The July-September period also is a time when many new families elect to join the growing ranks of homeschoolers in the U.S. and abroad. “Summer is a time to take stock of the child’s personal academic needs and the family’s situation in preparation for homeschooling the child in the next year,” Halle says.

Calvert School’s research estimates that at least 1.9 million school-age children are home educated in the United States. Growth of homeschooling is projected at up to 15 percent per year.

Reasons families choose to homeschool include: a desire for a better education; faith-based reasons; poor learning environment at schools; family reasons; to develop character/morality; objections to what schools teach; schools not challenging enough; other problems with available schools; student behavior problems at school; and dealing with special needs or a disability.

A U.S. Department of Education study, released in 2001, found that more than 61 percent of homeschooling families have three or more children, and that homeschooling families cut across all socioeconomic and education levels.

Calvert School offers families an integrated curriculum steeped in the basics (reading, writing and arithmetic) and enhanced with subjects like science, art, music, history and geography. In addition to the textbooks, workbooks, supplies, Calvert courses include detailed lesson manuals that help home teachers maximize their teaching time with their children. Families using Calvert School’s materials range from the family next door to families in the military, missionary work, the performing arts and the sailing community. To further help home teachers, Calvert also offers placement testing, academic support and its Education Counselors, each a professionally trained teacher who can assist families by phone or email with questions about daily work, instructional methods and learning styles. The academically challenging coursework, the complete lesson manuals that leave no gaps instruction, and academic success that results from the use of Calvert’s curriculum have made it the choice of more than 187,000 children in the last 20 years.

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NOTE: Halle and others from Calvert School are available for interviews about when it’s right to homeschool, how to get started, and the benefits of homeschooling. Calvert School also can assist with finding local families who homeschool as well as providing other information, including state regulations, for news reports and features on homeschooling. Contact Bob Graham at 410-796-6616 (pager) or at bgraham@calvertservices.org.