

STUDENT & PARENT HANDBOOK

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE:

SHINE Christian Homeschool Co-op is organized to provide supplemental educational opportunities and group activities for children. It is intended to complement the home educator's curriculum with elective classes as well as core classes to enhance our children's studies in a Christian environment. SHINE Christian Homeschool Co-op is not meant to be the sole source of your child's education.

PARTICIPATION:

- Membership is open to all local home educators who are in agreement with, and have signed, the co-op handbook and guidelines as well as the attendance policy.
- Membership is reserved for active homeschooling families only.
- Each family's oldest child must be old enough to be enrolled in the three-year-old class or above by each semester.
- Every adult (age 18 and over) attending co-op must pass a background check. Additional checks may be necessary if the member has not attended in four or more semesters or if safety concerns arise. This decision will be made at the discretion of the board.
- One parent from each family must commit to teaching a class, assisting in a class, and/or helping with setup or clean-up and/or other duties as determined to serve the co-op. All parents should expect to work all four periods.
- A parent must be present at all times during co-op. In the event that you should appear to have an unassigned hour, you **MUST** remain at co-op in the designated parent break area with expectations of being used to fill in where needed when requested by the Director(s). If you leave to run an errand or get food, another adult must be left in charge of your children and the Director(s) must be notified.
- If you absolutely cannot attend co-op one week, you must have prior permission from the Director(s) for your children to attend with an adult who will be responsible for them while they are at co-op. This can be a grandparent or another co-op parent.
- In rare instances, a homeschooling family may desire to participate in co-op, but the parent(s) may be unable to attend co-op each week because of an emergency or an unexpected change in their situation. Should that occur, the family may petition the Board for permission for their children to attend with another responsible party. The attending party will still be responsible for fulfilling the point requirements unless the attending party is already a member earning their own points. In most cases, the family will still need to pay their own registration fee. If the petition is accepted by the board, it will be effective for one semester only.
- In rare cases, a member may have other adults and/or children that are not their own attending co-op with them. In these cases, the member will need to petition the co-op for permission to bring along other children that are not their own. If an additional adult is attending each week, they will need to have a background check run and the co-member policy will apply. The board will take each individual case into consideration. Factors the board will consider include, but not limited to, the age of the child(ren), how many children will be attending, the primary care giver for the child(ren), and if they are currently living in the same household. These decisions will be made at the discretion of the board. The board holds the right to reassess and possibly terminate this arrangement at any time.
- While it is not required to be a Christian to attend, by attending you acknowledge that Christian beliefs and values will be taught and upheld at SHINE. Teaching against Christian beliefs and doctrines is not permitted.

- Any photographic or video material taken during co-op events or activities by teachers or board members will be strictly for use in co-op publications, print or advertising material, social media, or websites. A photo release is included on the handbook signature page if you would like to opt out of shot images.

POINT SYSTEM:

- Since our co-op is a volunteer organization, it will only perform well when we all work together.
- Our point system is to encourage all members of co-op to actively participate. This keeps our costs and liability low. We require each family to earn at least four points each semester.
- Points will be assigned on a first come, first serve basis until the needs of the co-op are met. While we do our best to accommodate your requests, all parents must work as assigned, unless there is a physical problem that prevents you from performing your duties.
- Some parents may be assigned more duties that exceed their four points. Any extra jobs that need to be filled will be dispersed as equally as possible until the needs of co-op are met.
- Parents with babies UNDER 12 months of age at the start of the semester can be considered “nursery” and are not required to earn four points. If the mother would like to teach a class or help in a class with their baby that’s under 12 months, they may keep their child with them if they are not disruptive to the class.
- Parents with babies between the ages of 12-18 months at the start of the semester will still be considered on “nursery” duty, but also required to earn 2 points that semester.
- It is the goal of co-op for children to start attending classes by 18 months old which is when parents become responsible for earning their four points. However, we understand that some children may not be ready for class yet at that age. If this is the case for a family, they can speak with the Board/primary coordinator for ideas to help their child acclimate to class. Children between 18 months and 3 years old are allowed to stay with their parent while they earn their four points, if the child is not disruptive to the class. If the child is disruptive, then an alternative plan will need to be discussed with the board. The board will work with families to earn their four points.

POINTS/ACTIVITY:

- 4 Serve on the co-op board
- 2 Teach one co-op class
- 1 Co-teach one class
- 1 Assist in the nursery, pre-k, or kindergarten class for one period
- 1 Assist in a 1-12th grade class for one class period
- 1 Serve on the set-up crew
- 1 Serve on the clean-up crew
- 1 Serve during lunch/recess time

ABSENCE PROCEDURES:

- Planned absences- No more than two planned absences for a maximum of two class days per semester are allowed. It’s okay to travel, but if you plan to be out more than two class days per semester, this is not the semester to participate in co-op. Teachers may have no more than one planned absence per semester.
- Unplanned absences (sickness/family emergency)- If you or your child have been sick (fever, diarrhea, vomiting, flu or Covid symptoms, etc.) within the 24-hour period prior to co-op, please do NOT attend co-op that week.

Teachers: If you are unable to teach in your scheduled class:

- Notify your assistant (or if your assistant is not available, another replacement) to ensure that they will be able to teach the class and arrange for the transfer of any needed materials.
- Have a lesson prepared in advance that may be presented by the assistant.
- Notify the Director(s) that you will not be in attendance that day and that your helper is ready to teach.

Helpers: If you are unable to help in your scheduled class:

- Notify the teachers in your class of your absence. Ask if they want you to find a replacement. If so, go to the next available person on the duty sheet and ask them to cover for you.
- Contact the Director(s) BEFORE co-op and let her know you won't be there. Call or text especially if you don't know of your absence before Thursday morning.

CONDUCT:

All students are expected to be cooperative in class by listening to their teachers, having a good attitude and being kind to other students. When a student is struggling with inappropriate behavior the parent will need to be an active part in teaching their child or children skills for using better behavior while at co-op. If there are any damages to co-op or property caused by a child, the parents are financially responsible for replacing items. Below are some examples of behaviors that will need to be addressed and while they are the more common behaviors, others may need to be addressed even if not specifically listed below.

Younger Students

These are students in the "Kinder class" or younger. Young students are just learning about classroom etiquette and primary grade teachers are prepared for this. These are specific behaviors that sometimes arise and need to be addressed. They are very distracting to other students, place a burden on the teachers and can also cause accidents:

- Running away from class or from teachers. Using the "class rope" to and from class is necessary for all primary grade students.
- Excessive disruptive behavior such as screaming, throwing things and running in class
- Name calling, using mean words, cursing, teasing or yelling at others
- Behavior that causes pain or injury to others is the most concerning for young students. Biting, pushing, hitting and shoving are taken seriously especially outside of isolated, one-time occurrences. This includes reckless behavior to a student's own self.

Early Elementary Age

These are students in 1st – 3rd grade and while they're expected to be more familiar with appropriate behavior there may be some instances where learning is still happening. All of the behaviors listed above apply to Early Elementary students except the expectations are a little higher. Additional behaviors include:

- Ignoring another student's "No" when playing together. If a classmate says, "stop" or "don't", that needs to be respected.
- Talking out of turn excessively during class
- Leaving class without permission
- Bringing outside items to class repeatedly

Older Students

These are students in 4th grade and above and by this age-appropriate behavior is the expectation. In addition to all the above-mentioned behaviors, these are behaviors that would need to be addressed:

- Inappropriate touching or conversation between students to include public displays of affection
- Sharing content from phones or other electronic devices or using phones during co-op. The exception is when it is needed for work or other urgent matters, and it should never be used in a social way

The following steps will be taken in dealing with a **behavior issue** that is disruptive but not a safety issue:

- 1st time per semester - The student will be spoken to by the teacher in an attempt to redirect them
- 2nd time per semester – The teacher will again redirect, and the parent needs to be notified of the concern.
- If behavior continues excessively, a board member needs to be notified and a parent may be asked to join the teacher in class to assist with the challenging behavior.

The following steps will be taken in dealing with a behavior issue where **safety is a concern**:

- 1st time per semester - The student will be spoken to by the teacher in an attempt to redirect them and notify a board member by the end of the class period. A parent will also need to be notified.
- 2nd time per semester – The teacher will again redirect as needed and notify a board member by the end of the class period. A parent will also need to be notified. The parent may be asked to join the teacher in class to assist with the challenging behavior.

If continued disruptions or behavior concerns are reoccurring, the parent will need to meet with a board member to discuss strategies and a plan to prevent future occurrences. This step can vary greatly depending on the misbehavior and age of the student.

Any major incidents will be addressed immediately by the board. Safety concerns of students are taken very seriously and intentional injuries to others are grounds for dismissal from co-op.

*Absolutely no physical or corporal punishment will be used by any adult at co-op that is not the child's parent or the approved responsible party. Any adult found practicing physical discipline to a child not their own in any way will be immediately and permanently dismissed from Co-op.

Transitional Semester

For more complicated student behaviors or for repeat occurrences, special permission can be granted to the parent to forgo the point system responsibilities for ONE semester. This may be by the request of the parent with board approval or at the insistence of the board. This allows you, the parent, to be consistently present during and in between classes with your child in an attempt to correct them in the moment of misbehavior. This removes some of the burden from the teacher so they may continue to teach each week. It provides more safety and respect to fellow classmates and provides consistent and immediate correction to your child as they're struggling with unwanted behavior. The board will work with the family during the semester to transition the parent out of the classroom and ensure that the child's behavior is acceptable. Any repetitive unwanted behavior resulting in safety concerns for your child or other students is taken seriously and while dismissal from co-op is never a step that is easy to discuss, it must be considered and talked about openly when safety is concerned.

NAME TAGS:

Every adult and child that attends co-op must wear a co-op issued name tag on their front shirt collar/pocket or around their neck on a lanyard at all times. If a name tag is lost, the family could be charged a replacement fee. Nursery children may wear their name tag on their back shirt collar or diaper bag/backpack.

COMMUNICATION POLICY:

Our main method of communication is email. Please check your email regularly to stay informed as you will be responsible for the information given. We also use Remind via text or our private Facebook group. These are supplemental communication forms and will not be the main way to receive information. If your email address or phone number changes, please inform the Director(s) as soon as possible.

VISITORS:

- Guests, family members, and children are welcome to visit co-op. Please request permission for guests that are not family members and guests that will be visiting more than two times a semester.
- Have your visitors sign in at the sign-in table and get a name tag. Please have them return the visitor's name tag when they leave for the day.
- Visitors joining only for lunch do not need to sign in and will not be counted as a visit.
- Inform your guests that there may not be supplies for them in certain classes.
- Siblings of co-op students are welcome to visit during public school holidays, but they must remain with a parent or join an age-appropriate class.

CO-MEMBER POLICY:

If the visitor would like to attend the co-op more than two times per semester, the board will need to approve, and the adult will become a co-member. There will be a background check for the co-member and a one-time fee will be charged. This decision for a visitor to become a co-member will be made at the discretion of the board.

HANDLING CONCERNS:**Regarding other members/children:**

- If anyone has a concern about the behavior of any adult and/or child at co-op or a co-op member is observed continually breaking the guidelines or by-laws at co-op, he or she should first approach that adult or parent (if a child) privately, in a Christ-like manner.
- If the matter cannot be resolved privately, this concern can be brought to the attention of a board member. The board member will notify the Director(s) of the issue, then the board member will approach the person privately or together with the person who voiced the original concern. However, the Board will not step in unless the situation has been attempted to be resolved privately between the two parties first.
- If the matter still cannot be resolved to the Board's satisfaction, the Director(s), and any designated board member, with the prior approval by majority vote of the Board, may ask the adult and/or child not to return to the program that semester, or if the behavior is severe, permanently.

- The Board's decision may be reviewed at any time by the Board at a called meeting of the Board upon the request of: o a. any Board member, o b. the original complainant, or o c. the removed person.
- This meeting shall be private, involving only the Board, the removed person, and the complainant or complainants involved in the original situation.

Regarding co-op business:

- We are happy to accept feedback, questions, and concerns regarding co-op business. The following are the official steps to submitting a concern or suggestion.
- Submissions must be emailed to the director(s) and must come from the original party that has the concern or suggestion. No concerns made through a third party will be addressed.
- The Director(s) will review concerns and questions and address them judiciously in a reasonable manner. If the situation warrants, the Director(s) may consult with other Board members.

FEES:

- There will be a nonrefundable family registration fee due online at the time of registration each semester. This fee covers one adult per family attending the co-op. If another family member or guest plans to attend more than twice a semester with your family, the comember policy and additional fee will be applied. The family registration fee will be used to pay for rental and facilities fees for the use of the building, supplies and equipment for co-op, board-approved co-op celebrations, parties, or activities, the co-op's website, background checks, and anything else the board deems necessary or beneficial to co-op.
- Some classes may have fees. Those will be paid directly to the teacher at our in-person orientation via check or cash a week before co-op begins. It is important that you pay the teachers for all your children's classes at orientation so that the teacher can ensure your child has the needed supplies and materials needed for their class. In the event this does not happen the next steps are up to the board's discretion.
- If your child drops or transfers from a class after you have paid the teacher for the semester, you will not be eligible for a refund. If your child is dropped from a class for failure to pay the class fee in full you will not be eligible for a refund of any monies paid for that class.
- Co-op parents are prohibited from profiting financially from any class they teach. All fees that are set for each class shall only be used for supplies. If money is left over at the end of the semester the funds may be used to purchase food/materials for a class party.
- Community teachers are permitted to set a reasonable class fee to cover their time and expertise not to exceed \$50 profit per class, per student, per semester. If supplies are needed community teachers may add a supply fee of up to \$10 to their \$50 compensation; however, the total for the class may not exceed \$60.

TEACHER REQUIREMENTS:

- Classes are formed by parents or other adults volunteering to teach a specific topic.
- Teachers must be prepared, punctual, and faithful to all classes that they commit to teach.
- If you are teaching a class, it is your responsibility to let your helper know what tasks and what involvement is expected of them. Some teachers appreciate perspective from helpers during lessons, others prefer help with student assignments and others may have different expectations. Please be clear with your helper in this area.
- All class fees are subject to approval by the Board. Because we are a co-op, no co-op member may profit from the class fees and/or co-op related fees (testing, certifications, extra-curricular

activities, or functions). All non-consumable items purchased with class fees become the property of the co-op for future use.

- Sometimes the co-op does not need all the classes submitted, and we may determine that we will only use the classes needed for that semester. We also may combine classes or ask a teacher to teach a class during two periods depending on the needs that semester. Turning in two class forms doesn't automatically mean a parent will earn all their points that way. We still have to ensure all the needs of the co-op are met.
- Any class funds left over at the end of each semester may be used on an end-of-semester class party or refreshments.
- Teachers may have no more than one planned absence per semester. Failure to repeatedly show up on time and prepared to teach may result in teaching privileges and/or co-op membership being revoked.
- Please see the section under conduct for dealing with behavior issues in the classroom.

SCHOLARSHIPS:

- As available, and when financially needed, members may petition for a scholarship, to be approved by the co-op board. Scholarships will be accessible to current members first and then returning members if still available.
- The Director(s) will announce before registration opens each semester when members may submit a request for a scholarship.
- Your oldest child must be at least 5-years-old by the start of co-op to qualify for a scholarship.
- These will be given on a first come, first served basis with the Board's discretion and will only be applicable for the family registration fee.
- All class fees must be paid.
- Members are only eligible for one scholarship per year (once every two semesters).

CHANGE OF VENUE:

In deciding where co-op shall be held, the Board shall consider the needs and best interests of the co-op. A majority vote by Board members is required to pass a change in venue. The Director(s) will publicly announce any change of venue after any such decision has been made.

DENIAL/TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP:

We expect everyone — adults and children alike— to behave in ways that endeavor to enhance our children's studies in a Christian environment and to promote general Christian fellowship, benevolence, and camaraderie while at co-op. We expect the adults to be the examples in this area, treating students and other adults with respect, courtesy, and kindness, according to Biblical principles. Non-biblical actions of members at co-op or non-compliance with the by-laws or guidelines can be grounds for termination of membership by a majority vote of the Board, effective immediately after the vote is made. If a member's membership is terminated, the co-op member will be notified by the Director(s) or another designated board member.

Revised: 7.29.2024