

How To Start a Homeschool Co-Op

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This document includes the following:

Bylaws, Member in Good Standing, Standards of Conduct, Parent Off-Site Agreement



Homeschool Co-Op Bylaws

ARTICLE I: NAME

The name of this organization shall be _____

ARTICLE II: MISSION AND VISION

Mission Statement

_____ is a commonwealth school formed to serve entire families for shared educational and social and faith-based experiences.

Vision

_____ is a commonwealth school formed to serve entire families. We offer one full day of mentored classes each week from September to April. Classes are proposed by families in the school and taught by parents, youth, and professionals based on free-market principles. The principle approach is encouraged to support classroom instruction with an emphasis on a classical liberal arts education. We focus on building a strong community in our efforts to raise up a generation of scholars committed to doing what is right and fulfilling their God-given missions.

ARTICLE III: COMMONWEALTH

Section 1: Definition

1. A “COMMONWEALTH” school creates an environment in which families of like culture can study the classics and become great citizens by gaining a greater vision of our country and ourselves. A commonwealth signifies “the common good or happiness; thus it is a form to secure the public good.” A commonwealth school consists of a community that self-governs, that exists beyond the creators whose children are now raised and gone and can stand the test of time.

2. This commonwealth provides class opportunities through a free-market system. Classes are provided by “Class Mentors”. These mentors can be moms, qualified students from the commonwealth, or can be approved individuals from outside the commonwealth community. These “Class Mentors” are considered independent and voluntary directors of their own curriculum or “class(es)”.

Section 2: Philosophy

1. _____ is an umbrella organization that facilitates and allows its members to choose among multiple Mentored Class offerings. It provides facilities, scheduling, assistance, support and coordination for the benefit of both Class Mentors and students.
2. The principle approach methodology, is encouraged to support classroom instruction.
3. We offer a full day of Mentored Classes, once a week, in a free-market environment. “Free-market” is understood to mean that classes are based on the economic ideal that allows supply and demand to regulate prices and class selection.
4. While _____ strives to provide quality educational opportunities, neither

_____ nor its mentors are to be held liable for any teachings that may not be in harmony with each individual and/or family's beliefs. Parents have the responsibility to monitor but do not have the privilege to dictate class content. Communication with each child's mentor is encouraged.

5. In order for the _____ Board to perform its fiduciary responsibility, the Board reserves the right to discontinue a Mentored Class at any time.

Section 3: Rights and Duties of Mentors

1. In order for a Mentored Class to be accepted and taught in the _____ community, it must adhere to the standards set by _____ and meet the needs of current students and members.

2. Prospective Class Mentors shall follow the current Policies and Procedures regarding mentor proposals.

3. A Class Mentor is required to be either a _____ Member in good standing or a non-_____ member approved by the Board.

4. A Class Mentor is encouraged to maintain communication with each student's parents and must allow an open door policy for parents wanting to evaluate the course's value for their child.

5. All decisions regarding class administrative matters, ie: class material, teaching methods, class size, rules, assignments, grading, fees, student eligibility, acceptance or expulsion or other approaches within the class are made by the Class Mentor but must adhere to _____ guidelines.

6. Class Mentors are not employed nor contracted by _____.

ARTICLE IV: MEMBERS

Section 1: Requirements

Membership in _____ is open to all individuals and families who:

1. Complete the _____ Membership Agreement Form which includes reading and digitally signing the "Building Stewardship Policy", the "Standards of Moral Conduct", the "Bylaws", and the "Parent Offsite Agreement".

2. Pay Non-Refundable Registration and Building Fees each semester.

3. Follow _____ Bylaws, Policies, and Procedures.

Section 2: Standing

Members will remain in good standing who fulfill the requirements in this Article.

Section 3: Limits on Membership

If the need arises, the Board shall create a policy for membership capacity.

ARTICLE V: BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Section 1: Purpose

_____ shall be managed by a working Board of Directors with Board Members and duties as specified below. The Board of Directors has the authority to conduct all proper business of _____.

Section 2: Members of the Board of Directors

1. President

2. Vice President
3. Youth Relations Director
4. Education Director
5. Communications Director
6. Secretary
7. Treasurer

Section 3: Presiding Officer

The President is normally the Presiding Officer. In situations where the President cannot be present or otherwise fulfill this responsibility, the Presiding Officer will either be designated by the President beforehand, or the Presiding Officer will fall to the Board Member in the order listed above.

Section 4: Duties of Board Members

General Duties of the Board:

1. Be Members in good standing.
2. Promote the Vision and Mission of _____.
3. Create and manage policies and procedures as needed.
4. Make monetary decisions (e.g. spending, building fee, and membership fees).
5. Approve new members.
6. Review and approve Class Proposals and curriculum.
7. Produce annual Mentor Training, as needed.
8. Create a calendar of regular Member Meetings at the beginning of each school year.
9. Create and manage committees as needed.
10. Supervise the Student Council, when active.

President (or Presiding Officer)

1. Acts as the Standard Bearer of the Vision and Mission of _____
2. Acts as Chairman of the Board. Creates an agenda and conducts Board Meetings.
3. Facilitates and chairs general meetings and activities.
4. Oversees all aspects of the operation of the organization.
5. Consults with Board Members, Class Mentors and Members as needed.
6. Ensures adherence to Bylaws and Policies & Procedures.
7. Monitors and participates in committees as appropriate.
8. Acts for _____ in exceptional circumstances (e.g. safety and dangerous situations) requiring timeliness in the absence of other Board Members.
9. Informs the Board of actions taken.
10. Personally interviews and recommends new potential families being considered to join _____.
11. Reports on the state of the organization at Member Meetings.
12. Presents a report at the Annual Members Meeting.

Vice President (Chief Operations Officer)

1. Serves as the President's assistant and counselor in all things related to _____ operations.
2. Oversees activities such as field trips and Mama's Nights - any activity not youth-specific.
3. If the President cannot fill his or her term, the VP acts in the capacity of President until a new President can be elected.

4. Arranges for and oversees facilities and maintenance (cleaning schedule).
5. Works with the Education Director to schedule the time and location of classes.
6. Creates a logistical schedule of who opens and closes the building.
7. Presents a report at the Annual Members Meeting.

Youth Relations Director

1. Oversees all youth activities.
2. Creates and coordinates the annual Youth Retreat.
3. Oversees Student Council, this includes attending the youth Student Government Class.
4. Works with the student council to create appropriate enriching activities for our youth.
5. Acts as a bridge of communication between the Student Council and the Board.
6. Works with the Board to create a clear vision of the Scholar Program.
7. Presents a report at the Annual Members Meeting.

Education Director

1. Takes the lead in ensuring that the class offerings at _____ are balanced according to the current needs of the group.
2. Oversees management of and communication with Class Mentors.
3. Makes recommendations to the Board for classes, mentors, and educational quality.
4. Conducts Mentor Training, as needed.
5. Creates a schedule and room assignments for each semester to be approved by the board.
6. Presents a report at the Annual Members Meeting.

Communications Director

1. Sends weekly emails with updates and information, acts as “the voice” of the group.
2. Keeps members up to date with information via Facebook and social networking.
3. Notifies members about meetings, classes, schedule changes, and any other important information using a method agreeable to the Board.
4. Uses mass texting to remind members of activities.
5. Maintains yearly calendar.
6. Maintains all aspects of the website.
7. Presents a report at the Annual Members Meeting.

Secretary

1. Take minutes and maintain records of all board meetings and general member meetings.
2. Maintain a current database of members, membership directory, current facebook group, email lists and organizes all google drive files.
3. Maintain a file of all completed paperwork (i.e. Membership Agreements, Class Proposals, and Standards of Moral Conducts, etc.)
4. Responds and manages the waiting list, and follows up with prospective members to answer any questions.
5. Provides training to new members by sending a welcome email and new member documents.
6. Creates demographics of families.
7. Presents a report at the Annual Members Meeting.

Treasurer

1. Handles receipts and disbursement of funds, including approved reimbursements of expenses incurred by members.
2. Maintains accurate records of all financial transactions.
3. Reconciles monthly bank statements.
4. Creates and maintains budgets as directed by the Board.
5. Follows up with members to make sure membership fees and building fees are paid.
6. Prepares and presents a year-end financial statement at the Annual Members Meeting.

Section 5: Election of the Board of Directors

To be qualified to serve as a member of the Board of Directors, one must commit to fulfill the duties of the board position and be a member in good standing with Family Leadership Academy.

1. The terms of office shall be one year.
2. Elections shall be held at the Annual General Membership Meeting in the spring of each school year.
3. Board members shall begin their term at the close of the voting portion of the meeting in which they are elected.
4. Elections shall be conducted by one Board Member, first by nomination, then by secret ballot.
5. Ballots shall be tallied by two members in attendance at the election meeting. These two shall be selected by the President or Presiding Officer. The vote counters should not be candidates on the ballot currently being decided. They will count the votes and report the results to the President or Presiding Officer.
6. The position will be filled by the nominee who receives the majority vote. Results will then be announced to the Members.
7. The privilege of voting is given only to those members who attend the Annual Meeting and are paid in full with dues.
8. All board positions are voted on by general membership.

Section 6: Board Member Vacancy

1. Any Board Member may be removed from office by a vote of 2/3 of the General Membership who shall attend a regular or special meeting in which such a vote may occur.
2. Any Board Member may resign by giving written notice to the Board.
3. If a vacancy occurs on the Board, the Board appoints a Member in good standing to fill that position until a new Board Member can be elected. Elections to fill such vacancies shall occur at the next Annual Meeting.

Section 7: Meetings of the Board of Directors

1. The Board of Directors will meet weekly at a time selected by the President and approved by the Board during class periods.
2. The Board of Directors will hold additional strategic planning meetings as needed.
3. The Board of Directors will hold and attend the Member Meetings.

Section 8: Quorum of the Board of Directors

1. A quorum of the Board of Directors will consist of three (3) Board Members.
2. Board decisions and actions are formalized by majority vote as long as at least a

quorum is present.

ARTICLE VI: MEMBER MEETINGS

Section 1: Member Meetings

Regular Member meetings shall take place biannually at the discretion of the board.

Section 2: Annual Meeting

The Regular Member meeting during the spring semester shall be known as the Annual Meeting.

Section 3: Special Meetings

A special meeting may be called by the President or a minimum of three Members who provide notice to the president. The President will notify all Members at least three (3) days prior to such meetings.

Section 4: Quorum of the general membership shall be seven (7) Members.

Section 5: Voting

As long as at least a quorum is present, all votes of the general membership will be decided by majority vote unless they involve amending the bylaws or taking away privileges of Members in which case, a two-thirds (2/3) vote is required.

ARTICLE VII: COMMITTEES

Section 1: Creating Committees

1. Committees may be established as needed to carry out business. (e.g. A Board Member might create a committee to help them with their assigned duties.)
2. Any Member may propose the creation of a committee. The creation and dissolution of committees shall be approved by the Board.
3. Committees may be continuous (standing committees) or temporary (e.g. for a specific purpose or event) as required.
4. Standing committees should have and follow written objectives, duties, guidelines and procedures.

ARTICLE VIII: PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

The rules contained in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised shall govern the society in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these bylaws and any special rules of order the organization may adopt.

ARTICLE IX: AMENDMENT

Section 1: Amendment Process

1. Any Member has the right to propose an amendment with written notice to the President thirty (30) days before the next regular meeting.
2. Members shall be notified of the proposed amendment ten (10) days before the next regular Member meeting.
3. An amendment will be adopted with a two-thirds (2/3) vote of Members in

attendance at the meeting.

Member in Good Standing Qualifications

_____ can only run successfully when members are following the outlined policies and procedures. When one or more members are not fulfilling their membership agreement, it causes extra work and stress for other members, including the board. The following document is meant to address these situations should the need arise.

In order to be considered a “member in good standing,” a member of _____ must meet the following qualifications:

1. All membership fees are paid.
2. All mentor class fees are paid.
3. All building fees are paid on-time.
4. Member is currently teaching one class or has made other arrangements with the board.
5. Member is currently the official assistant in two classes or has made other arrangements with the board.
6. Member always has supplied a suitable substitute for any class they are not able to teach.
7. Member has a cleaning assignment they faithfully fulfill every week we have classes.
8. In the spirit of building community, the member is always on-site during classes, or if there are special circumstances, they have worked out a Board-Approved Solution.

If it is found that any member is not compliant with any of the above, they will receive either a verbal or written warning from a member of the board. After two infractions, the member may lose the opportunity to participate in events, including classes, field trips, running for a board position, voting, etc. until the matter is resolved. The board will review each situation on a case by case basis and work with the member to try and resolve the issue. If the matter continues unresolved, the member will lose their ability to continue at _____.

Standards of Moral Conduct

All _____ members age eight and above must read (or be read to), understand, and agree to abide by these standards. After you have discussed these thoroughly as a family, you may enter digital signatures on the Membership Agreement form.

Behavior: I agree to act like a gentleman or lady and treat others with respect, kindness, and encouragement in speech and action as I demonstrate integrity and Christian values. I will refrain from any expression, gossip or physical contact that may harm or make another feel uncomfortable. I will not bring anything to class that is considered a weapon or could bring insult or injury to another member. In addition, pairing off with the opposite sex, hand-holding, kissing, or other affectionate gestures that sometimes accompany those who “pair off” are not allowed in this setting.

Dress and Appearance: Dress should be modest in appearance. All children 3+ dress in solid-colored polo shirts for class days OR an _____ issued T-shirt. Shorts, skirts, and dresses should be at least knee-length. Clothing should not be tight, revealing, or low-cut in the front or back and it should cover the stomach and shoulders. All members should avoid extremes in clothing, appearance, and hairstyle, be neat and clean, and avoid being sloppy in dress, grooming, and manners.

Language: Language used at _____ should be clean and intelligent – that which uplifts, encourages, and compliments others. The names of God and Jesus Christ should be used only in reverence. Profane, vulgar, or crude language or gestures, as well as jokes about immoral actions, are not allowed at _____

Media: Offensive material such as movies, music, videos/DVDs, books, magazines, pictures, and other media are not allowed at _____. This includes anything vulgar, immoral, violent, or pornographic.

Service to Our Organization: As members of _____, we commit to serve our organization by participating in cleaning of the building, keeping our environment clean and orderly, keeping track of our own possessions, and being attentive to our family’s needs.

Parent Off-Site Agreement

_____ is designed to bring families together for shared leadership educational experiences. _____ is not a daycare or school and is not a drop-off situation. _____ is a family learning environment where we are building community and relationships, and we expect all hands to be on deck. We expect a parent for each family to be on-site at ALL TIMES. This is not just so there is a point-person available to care for your children, but this is a critical part of our vision of building our community. If a parent is not able to physically be in the building when their child(ren) are attending classes, then _____ may not be a good fit for your family.

We understand that sometimes there is a need for an exception to be made. In the event that you need to be gone for a brief period of time (for example, to run to the store), please ensure that you have a designated adult to care for your child(ren) in your brief absence. Also, inform your child who you have appointed. If you have extenuating circumstances (such as recently having a baby), please contact your board to assess how the situation can best be handled.