

Helena Homeschool Enrichment Co-op inc.

HHEC



Handbook

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Vision statement

In short, we are Christian Families gathering to develop relationships, support home education, and provide fun educational opportunities. This means that our first priority is to build healthy relationships with other homeschoolers. We want to build those relationships among the children and the adults.

Our second priority is to support home education. We do this by building a diverse group of families that each of us can bounce ideas off of, or glean ideas from. The variety of educational philosophies enriches the experience rather than creating division. We want to encourage each other on this road we are all committed to.

Our third priority is to provide fun educational opportunities. This means that instead of focusing on the intense academics that the kids (and parents) get enough of at home. We want to focus on things that are fun, character building, and difficult to do with just your family: games with large groups, show and tell, listening to other teachers, working in groups on projects. These are good skills that are dramatically different outside the home. They can also be a great deal of fun for everyone.

As you teach we ask that you try not to make your class a burden for yourself or your students but think of ways that you can make learning a joy and encourage interaction between all participants.

Each family will be free to decide the level of execution, extra reading and projects outside the context of co-op time, but each family will agree to give its very best in terms of attendance, preparation and execution at the weekly meeting.

Our ultimate goal is to bring glory to God, to use our covenant relationship to honor the Lord Jesus Christ and to be sanctified, one to another, as we carry out a semester commitment.

Statement of Faith

While we may hold to denominational differences, we agree on a common statement of faith.

We are Christians who believe in the infallible Holy Trinity. We believe that Jesus Christ was born of the Virgin Mary, was crucified and died for the sins of mankind, rose body and soul in the resurrection, ascended into Heaven and will someday return in power and glory. We believe that we are created in the image and likeness of God, but through our fallible nature, we all sin and fall short of the glory of God. We believe in the power of Christ's forgiveness.

You do not have to believe everything in this statement to attend the co-op. However, if the mention of Jesus in everyday conversation makes your family uncomfortable, you may not be comfortable at our co-op. That said, there are some who have chosen to attend anyway and have had an enjoyable experience. Contact us if you want further clarification on what this part of attending co-op looks like.

When We Meet

We meet for twelve weeks in the fall starting Aug 31st-Sept 6th, always ending the Friday before Thanksgiving. In the Winter/Spring We meet for another 12 weeks starting the first Friday in February skipping Good Friday and ending the remaining weeks after. Regular co-op days start at 9:30 and end at 12:40 with occasional extension classes afterward.

On the last day of each semester, in addition to regular classes, we will have a Friends and Family night where children will perform and display what they learned in their classes for you and your friends and family.

We also try to meet every other week throughout the summer for fun or educational outings. These may include hiking, biking, field trips, planning meetings, or just about anything. These may be at varying times and locations, though will usually still be Fridays.

Where We Meet

For security reasons: we don't share this online. Please contact us for the location.

A Day in the Enrichment Co-op

This is a basic walkthrough of what you can expect co-op to look like.

9:15-9:30 - Your family arrives, comes downstairs.

You put your coats on the coat rack, lunches on the back counter in the kitchen and head into the gym to get your name tags. Your kids will play in the gym or on the playground while you chat

9:30-9:40 - We will gather everyone together, make announcements and say the Lord's Prayer and The Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

9:40 - The students go to their first period classes, Parents who have a break that period go to the breakroom for hot drinks, snacks and conversation.

10:20 - Administrators walk around giving each teacher a warning that there are 5 minutes until classes end .

10:25 - Children and parents spend 5 min cleaning their classroom, prepping for the next class and moving to the next class.

10:30 - 2nd period classes start.

11:10 - 5 minute warning until 2nd class period ends.

11:15 - Cleaning, prepping, moving to the next class.

11:20 - 3rd period classes begin.

12:00 - Last 5 minute warning

12:05 - Spend 5 minutes as a class cleaning your room or if in the gym helping set up tables and blankets for lunch.

12:10 - Everyone goes back to the Gym, retrieves their lunch from the kitchen and eats with their friends in the Gym. Children are free to play on the playground, in the gym or play games in the classrooms. They should not be playing in the halls. The teens and pre-teens may hang-out at the front of the building with their parents' permission. Clean-up starts.

12:50 Recess monitors are allowed to leave and remaining children are considered under their parents' supervision.

1:00-1:30 Locked up. Please plan to leave the building by 1pm unless you are attending an extension class or performing duties.

Friends and Family Night

When and Where- Each semester, family night will be the evening of our last day of classes, at 6:30pm, unless we specify otherwise. This is a required event. Please don't miss it. All the kids will have performances and displays to show to their friends and families. We will have the displays set up downstairs in their main classrooms. We will have the performances upstairs in the auditorium.

Performance Morning- The morning of Family Night we will have regular classes as usual. During your class, you will have an assigned time to take the kids upstairs to familiarize them with the stage. Let us know if you will want mics, music, displays or anything else on the stage so we can make sure to test it before performance time.

Setting up- Immediately after classes on Friday, teachers are welcome to start setting up their displays or performance materials for the evening. Talk to co-op admins for details or supplies you need. We are here to help. Please refrain from taping anything to the painted murals in the building, or from pushing anything up against them that might chip them. If you need to be in the building at a specific time to complete your set up, talk to the admins to find out who can unlock it for you.

The Evening- We will open the building at 5:30 to start getting the stage ready for performance. Please have yourself and your kids there by 6:15. Ask them to stay upstairs, so that the displays don't get disturbed. We will have the performances start at 6:30 and when they are finished we will all go downstairs to view the displays.

Take it all home- When you are ready to leave Family Night, don't forget to take all your kids' art and projects. Also check the Lost and Found one more time. We will have to throw out any art left behind, and the church often donates unclaimed lost and found items.

Summer Activities

For anyone who is available, we like to have activities planned every other week throughout the summer. These may include hiking, biking or swimming. They might be meeting at a park, there might be a field trip to a ranch or train depot. It is up to you.

We will have a sign-up sheet for the summer dates. We ask that each parent consider adopting a day to plan the activity. It doesn't have to be anything special. Our kids just love to see each other throughout the summer.

Please be thinking about activities you might like to invite the co-op to participate in with your family.

Enrollment Process

Application- Each family needs to fill out a one time application. This can be found online, in the back of this handbook, at co-op or can be mailed upon request. This does not have to be done again, unless your information changes.

Volunteer Slots- Upon acceptance, you will need to select the two classes that you would like to volunteer in weekly and what support role you will help with. Volunteering is mandatory. If you cannot meet our volunteering requirements, talk to Admin to request special accommodations.

Semester Agreement- Every semester you will fill one of these out for your family. This expresses your commitment to fulfill all duties assigned for this semester.

Teen Semester Agreement- Every semester you and your students, 12 years old and older, will sign a semester agreement going over expectations of the student.

Payment- Payment of \$5 per student for each semester is required. Please pay by Cash or check only. Checks can be made to "HHEC". Regardless of sign-up date, payment is not prorated.

Student Placement- Students are usually divided into classes based on their age as of Sept. 1st. However, when maximum class sizes require it, the age cutoff will be moved to spread the students as evenly as possible. Please understand this is to keep classroom numbers manageable. Students can't be moved into an older class, regardless of academic ability or maturity. However, if you feel your child might benefit by being moved down a class, please talk to us.

Teen Selections- Students 12 years old and older before September 1 will be placed in the Teen classes. Students in the teen class will be given 3 choices of different classes for every period to enroll in. Let us know what classes each of your teens would like to be in by using the Teen Google form sent in an email to you or contact in writing using the co-op email.

Extension Classes- We will occasionally offer classes taught by other organizations after regular co-op is finished for the day. These usually are geared toward older kids, but we will always let you know the age range for each class. We also will try to find childcare options if any adults want to stay for the classes. These classes will usually have drop off options. Some examples include Finance, Truth Project, Driver's Ed, Bible Study Fellowship. Some will be one day seminars and some will be multi-class series.

Communication- The main form of communication is **email**. It is your responsibility to stay informed. Check your email regularly. Our email is: enrichment.coop@gmail.com. Be sure to check your email on Thursday nights prior to class day for any last minute announcements. If you don't have email let Admin know that you should receive major news by mail or phone.

Class Structure

Lead Teachers and Assistants- In general, the lead teacher of each class is the person who will choose the subject matter and the curriculum. They will direct the class and prepare the lessons. They will teach most of the lessons. The Assistants in the class should be paying close attention to the material. If the lead teacher must be gone, the first assistant will be asked to teach in their stead. The assistant is also responsible for running to the supply room for supplies, taking kids to the bathroom, and reminding children to listen. Be an all around support to the lead teacher.

Subject Selection- At the co-op we like to give the families an opportunity to try a large variety of subjects. Rather than assigning subjects for each class, the Admin team will give a subject category to each class. Littles through Preteens will have 3 class periods. One of those classes will be a Performance based class like Music, Drama or Speech. The Performance class will have a maximum of 15 min. on stage for the whole class during Performance night. One will be a Display based class like Art, Science, or Literature. The Display class will have a display in their classroom on Performance night. The other class will be a PE based class. When you sign up to teach a class, you may decide what specific topic within that category you would like to teach, and let us know.

Curriculum Choice- Since teachers will pick the subject, it is also up to them to decide what curriculum to use, if any. The Co-op has purchased some books that you can glean ideas from or use for your whole class. We may be willing to buy a different book if you think that it will be good for the co-op long term. We do accept donations. You are also free to just make your lessons up as you go. We trust and believe in you.

Supplies- The co-op dues that everyone pays go exclusively toward the running of the co-op. This includes supplies for classes. We have a supply room loaded with purchased and donated supplies. Please ask an Admin or Board member to show you where it is. If you need a specific item that we don't have you may buy it and submit a receipt for reimbursement. Please keep in mind that we work on a very low budget, so choose the least expensive item that will work. Each class is limited to \$25 per semester. If you need more than that, talk to Admin for approval before making the purchase. You may also let us know of supplies you will be needing and we can order them online for you. You may also submit requests for supplies to be donated by other organizations such as Walmart or Target. As a non-profit we do qualify to receive grants and donations. Ask Admin for more information on this. If the co-op pays for supplies, please leave the leftovers in the supply room.

Homework- It is extremely discouraging that anyone younger than the teens have any homework or home assignments. We all have enough work to do at home, right?

Accountability- All rooms we use have windows in them, we also staff every room with two or three adults. This is for everyone's safety. If you have questions or concerns, talk to Chris or Admin.

What to Bring

Families are responsible for feeding themselves. Due to allergy concerns, we will eat as a group at lunch time. Please bring a NUT- FREE sack lunch for your family.

Kids may have water with them at all times, but other items should be put aside until Lunch time. Please no dark colored or sticky beverages on the carpet.

Please wear shoes the kids can run and play in for P.E.

Weather appropriate clothes are needed as often children do go outside for PE and Recess.

Favorite Board Games- We will allow time and space for kids to play games if they don't want to play on the playground.

Lunches and Food

The Co-op and our host building are intended to be NUT-FREE facilities. Please do not bring any peanut or tree nut products to co-op, even in your own food. Some children will have a severe reaction from even being next to a peanut butter sandwich.

Please do not bring dark/sticky beverages. Water only during classes. Please eat your lunches only in the Kitchen, Gym, or outside. Do not take any part of your lunch in the classrooms.

We have a strict rule against feeding anyone's children at co-op. If you want to do a project involving food or to offer snacks to your class, you need written permission for the specific food from every parent in your class. Admin will have a form for you to fill out and have every student's parent sign.

Please do not send birthday or holiday treats with your child to the co-op. We will not allow them to be given to their classmates.

The snacks in the breakroom are for the co-op adults only. If there are some left over at the end of the day, a parent may offer them to their own children only. If a child is in need of food, because they missed breakfast or such, they need to get their parent to give them food preferably from their own lunch(es).

Absences / Sickness

Because we are 100% volunteer run, each family is important. We need everyone to make every effort to be there every week.

Please have no more than 2 planned absences per semester.

If you must be gone, please **contact your co-teachers and head admin**. Please have a detailed lesson plan for the classes you lead teach so no one is left under the stress of coming up with something to do. It's not fair for anyone to be put in that position.

If any child or parent has a fever (100.1 or higher), or vomiting, within the last 24 hours, please do not bring him/her to the co-op. If you have any reason to believe your family has a contagious illness, please keep the whole family home, i.e. two members are sick with the same thing. We are all grateful to keep healthy.

If a parent must be gone for some reason, students may still attend co-op with another adult who stays on campus, up to 2 days max per semester.

Visitor Policies

If a family is interested in the co-op, they are welcome to come and try it for up to two times a semester without filling out an application or paying. We allow visitors at any time during the semester, except the last week of classes. We require at least 2 days notice by phone or email for a visit so that teachers can plan for the extra students.

To visit, please let me know each child's month and year of birth (for class placement) and fill out a visitor liability statement.

During your visit, the parent will be permitted to watch or sit in on classes or visit with adults on break as they please, rather than filling volunteer spots.

You may bring additional family members to the co-op. Children you are babysitting or public schooled children who have the day off are welcome at co-op up to two times per semester without registering them.

Grandparents, and other family members are welcome at the co-op. Please let an Admin know they are here and have them wear a name tag.

Guest teachers may be invited to class with permission from the admin team.

Adults without family at co-op or a class to teach need to talk to Chris first before visiting.

Name Tags

There are boxes with folders in the main meeting area. You should find your name tags for your whole family in that box. Student name tags will indicate the student's class, name and parent. Please make sure to put them back in your folder at the end of the day. If you need a new name tag or have a visitor, please let the Admin team know. They will take care of it.

Lost and Found / Giveaways

On the front kitchen counter, members may place items to give away. Please take any of your remaining items with you at the end of the day. These may include books, clothes, or toys. Next to the name tags, we have lost and found items. The church has a separate lost and found upstairs under the coat rack. Please check these periodically to see if you might have lost something and not realized it.

Holidays

The co-op as an entity does not formally celebrate any holidays. That is not to say that we are anti-holiday. We do not bring candy or dress up at co-op for Halloween and we do not set aside an exchange time for Valentines Day. However, some teachers may choose to have some of their projects or classes acknowledge a holiday, such as making a Christmas ornament in class and that is fine. If your child wants to bring gifts for their friends they must be Nut Free and be handed out after regular classes are over.

Student Behavioral Guidelines

- Please don't touch anyone without permission. Good or bad, this rule still applies. For example, we ask the children not to hug someone without their permission.
- Please do not gossip about each other.
- Please say only kind words to each other
- Please dress modestly out of consideration for all others in the Co-op.
- Refrain from threatening anyone with a would be weapon, even in jest. (We will not reprimand imaginary play, but request the kids don't imagine hurting each other. An imaginary bad guy would be fine.)
- Refrain from rough play (i.e. wrestling) and running in the facility (except when given permission).

Discipline

It is our desire to keep things simple and friendly at the co-op.

Misbehavior by students may be handled in three ways:

- 1) Allow the student to sit in the class without participating.
- 2) Send them to sit with an Admin until they are ready to participate again.
- 3) Have the admin team retrieve the parent from class.

Please choose whichever you feel most appropriate.

If there is any repeat behavior that you would characterize as bullying, please make Admin aware immediately.

Conflict Management

It is our desire that all members live at peace with each other as much as it depends on them. This means if there is a conflict between members, we ask you first to speak to each other. If resolution can't be reached, then please ask Admin or a board member to mediate. Please do not gang up on each other, and please do not gossip about each other. This will create the best environment for each other and the best example for our children.

Technology

The co-op is intended to be a place to build relationships for the whole family. With that in mind we require all participants to not use technology between 9:30 and 12:40, except when being used for co-op purposes, or emergencies.

Students should not use technology for personal use at all during co-op hours. If you cannot trust your child to follow this rule, please have them leave their tech in the car, lunch box, or at home.

Usage examples: It is fine to have a video lesson, or have kids playing a virtual piano in music class.

It is not fine to spend your break period in a corner on your phone or computer.

It is fine to answer calls or make calls and respond to important messages, but please don't let that consume the time you could spend among friends.

Building Care

The host building allows us to use this building for free. This is a huge gift that keeps co-op affordable. Please do everything you can to show care and respect for this building that belongs to the church and to God.

Many of the rooms contain hand painted murals. Please do not stick any tape to them and please do not put furniture where it might rub or scrape the murals.

Please keep younger students downstairs to not disturb the Pastoral staff. Teen classes being held upstairs need to be considerate of the other people working in the offices and keep volume at a reasonable level.

Items in the Building

Most of the items throughout the facility we use belong to the host building. Please use the utmost care and respect when handling all items. If something is damaged in any way before or during co-op, please let the Admin team know. We will take care of it. Please do not use supplies you find in any classrooms or supply rooms that are not specifically designated as co-op's. If you need to use something belonging to the church, please talk to Admin first to see if the co-op can buy the needed supply or log it so the co-op can reimburse the church for its use.

We are permitted to use the church's copy machine. It is up the stairs and to the right. The co-op passcode is posted in the copy room or ask Admin. Keep careful track of your copies and write down how many you made including what kind on our copy tracking sheet on the administration counter in the kitchen. Please be quiet and respectful while in the copy room. If you need help with the copier see an Admin.

Not For Profit Status

The Helena Homeschool Enrichment Co-op is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. Tax deductible gifts may be made to it. This also means that the co-op may receive donations and grants from other organizations. If you would like to apply for a grant on behalf of the co-op for your class, you may ask Admin for the tax ID and/or letterhead.

Also, should the Co-op ever dissolve, all assets must be given to other 501(c)3 organizations.

Being a non-profit, the co-op finances are not private. If you ever have questions or concerns about how the co-op gets and spends its money, just ask and we will show you.

Board Members

The co-op is directed by a board of 5 to 10 members. These board members vote on the major policy decisions of the co-op. Our Co-op is still growing and changing. There is plenty of room for improvement. It is very important that any concerns, issues, or ideas be brought to the board. You may discuss ideas with any board member and they can bring your idea to our next board meeting.

Chris Hauer is the President of the board. She makes most day to day decisions, while bringing any potentially controversial decisions to the board. Please bring any problems or concerns to her or Admin right away. She will handle issues confidentially, and will be careful not to make any rash decisions. We cannot make good decisions about issues unless we know about them. Chris or Admin will always be available to hear your concerns.

The other board members are listed on the front page of this book. These members were selected based on a combination of qualities. These include consecutive semesters attending co-op, attendance records, volunteering record, and a proven passion for the direction and well-being of the co-op as a whole. Also, board members have been selected to ensure good representation of all student age groups in the co-op.

Board members vote on major decisions to help maintain the vision and direction of the co-op. They represent the interests of all co-op families and age groups. They greet families, answer questions, and help provide cohesion to the co-op.

If you are interested in being a board member someday, the best thing you can do is be consistent in your attendance and show that you are willing to serve the co-op's best interest as a whole, not just in the ways it serves your individual family.

Support Roles Outlined

Set-up

Arrive by 9am

Turn on Lights

Stack the chairs in the big room and take down tables

Help set up the classrooms with tables and chairs.

Recess Monitors :)

9:20-9:40: Make sure kids stay in the Big Room and play safely until co-op starts.

They may not be in the classrooms before co-op as teachers are setting up for class.

11:55-12:40: We need at least 1 Recess monitor on the playground, 1 walking the halls, and 1 out the main entrance with the teens.

Eat Your own lunch first.

Monitor the kids in their permitted recess areas.

Usual recess areas include Gym, Playground and nursery.

Per your approval children may play board games in a classroom.

Stay there until 12:40 and send kids to their parents.

Tidy up and lock up the playground.

The Hosts :)

Please sign up for the Hostess and Kitchen tasks in the kitchen by the coffee pot.

Tasks include: Set-up, bringing a sweet treat or a healthy treat for 12, gym water station, dishes, sweeping kitchen, kitchen counters, and Hostess clean up.

The Cleaning Crew :)

There is a new sign-up sheet every week in the Kitchen on the Admin counter. Please sign up for as many jobs as you are able. We aim to leave the church better than we found it.

The Administration Team

Greet New and Visiting Families

Go through Admin papers to check for information needing addressed or given out.

Mark attendance of families.

Note all information and issues.

Drive timely switching of activities.

Oversee all support roles are being done adequately.

Field questions and comments.

Organize volunteers.

Lead Administrator- Chris H. -

Rearrange schedule as needed for absences

Maintain Finances.

Maintain Documents.

Maintain the co-op Website.

Make Announcements.

Lead in Prayer and Pledge

Support Admin-

Orchestrate Co-op Setup and Teardown

Oversee the Hostess and Morning recess monitor

Maintain Name Tags

Maintain First Aid Supplies

Fill in as needed