

Bandera County Area Home Schoolers (BCAHS)

Policies and Procedures

Mission

At BCAHS, we seek to provide opportunities for homeschooling families to build positive, lasting friendships, and to foster a love of learning through educational enrichment opportunities. We serve families in the Bandera County, Texas area.

Description

BCAHS is an association of volunteers organized and operated by independent homeschoolers for the purpose of assisting and encouraging each other as they pursue the choice of home educating their children. BCAHS is not operated by a for-profit business, nor is it operated by or affiliated with a government agency or public or private school. It does not function as a substitute for the parent-teacher role or responsibility in any of the subject areas assigned by Texas law (reading, grammar, math, spelling, and a course in good citizenship).

I. Membership Requirements

- A. BCAHS is open to all area families who are actively engaged in the home education of at least one child in grades K-12. All families must agree to abide by BCAHS Policies and Procedures.
- B. Membership becomes active upon review of completed membership information. Signed waiver forms and payment of all fees will be collected at first attended event or class. If forms and fees are not submitted, membership will be cancelled.
- C. Interested families are encouraged to attend an event or class before applying. If not, we encourage interested families have a conversation with a Steering Team member before applying, so all questions are answered and expectations are clear.

II. Membership Rights and Privileges

- A. Members shall be entitled to involvement and participation in all BCAHS activities, including, but not limited to: members-only website, field trips (see Attachment D), parent support activities, family activities, teen activities, and Monday School (see Attachment E)
- B. All BCAHS members are entitled to invite guests to BCAHS activities. Members are fully responsible for the actions of their guests. As a courtesy, introduce any guests in attendance to the Activity Leader. All guests must have a signed Liability Waiver on file with BCAHS. (Forms can be found on website.)
- C. Membership may be renewed each year in accordance with the BCAHS Policies and Procedures.

III. Membership Duties and Responsibilities

- A. All members must abide by BCAHS Policies and Procedures and decisions as established by the Steering Team. These Policies and Procedures have been developed to provide direction, consistency and unity within the group.

- B. All members are encouraged to communicate openly with BCAHS leadership and other members regarding questions, concerns, ideas. Effective communication is necessary to help protect unity within our group, encourage positive relationships, provide for growth and share resources.
- C. Parents will be responsible for the supervision of their children. If a parent is unable to attend an activity with their child, prior arrangements must be made with the Activity Leader to ensure the child has adequate supervision.
- D. All members must pay all fees by the given deadlines. Failure to pay by the given deadlines may disrupt involvement in activities and cause late fees to be charged. Repeated occurrences could result in termination of membership.
- E. Official BCAHS communication will be through electronic means. To help ensure there is no lapse in communication, members must participate in the members-only website. Currently, the members-only website is for adults only. Families may choose to join the Facebook group, as well, also for adults only.

IV. Loss of Membership

BCAHS reserves the right to terminate membership of any member for failure to adhere to these Policies and Procedures as determined by the Steering Team.

V. Citizenship

Consistent with homeschool laws of Texas, individual homeschooling families will govern themselves with respect to curriculum, record keeping, school calendar, and education method. We believe parents to be the best judges when raising and educating their own children, and while BCAHS offers support and encouragement, it is up to individual families to decide what is best for their children. BCAHS is a supplement to the family homeschool and not a replacement for parent-led teaching of core subjects in the home.

VI. Wellness / Illness

If you or your children are experiencing symptoms of illness, we ask that you carefully consider whether the symptoms could be the result of a contagious illness. If in doubt, we ask that you please do not attend any BCAHS activities to prevent exposing the group to the illness. Use your best judgment. This is for the protection and comfort of you, your child and the other members of the group.

VII. Code of Conduct

In order to protect the unity of the group, all members are required to be familiar with and abide by the Code of Conduct. As a parent-led group, it is the parents' responsibility to inform and enforce all BCAHS Policies and Procedures with their children. Please be advised that there may be additional rules as required by facility or activity. See Attachment A for the detailed Code of Conduct.

VIII. Conflict Resolution

The goal is for any situation that may arise to be worked out for the greater good. Please avoid gossip and non-productive discussion which may bring discord among our members.

In the event that a conflict does arise, we ask that the following steps be pursued:

1. Go directly to the individual with whom the conflict has arisen. If the individual is a child, go to the child's parent or responsible adult.
2. If the problem continues or you are unable to come to a mutually amenable resolution, we ask that you seek a member of the Steering Team who will go with you to speak with the other person.
3. If the members involved are still unable to come to a resolution, the members involved will sit with the Steering Team who will listen to all sides of the conflict for the purposes of mediating and arbitrating.

All members agree that they will walk away in unity.

IX. Consequences

To maintain the unity of the group, should any situation arise where the BCAHS Policies and Procedures are breached or discord is being sown among our group, the Steering Team will determine appropriate consequences. This may include anything from a warning to termination of membership.

X. Leadership Team

The Leadership Team consists of members who have agreed to take on a specific role within BCAHS. The Leadership Team is guided by the Steering Team. All leaders must be active BCAHS members, must have at least one child currently being homeschooled, and must strive to maintain the quality of leadership, the vision of the group and harmony among the leaders. See Attachment B for descriptions of the Leadership Team responsibilities and a listing of current Leadership Team Members.

XI. Registration Procedures

- A. Families meeting the membership requirements may register to become a member of BCAHS with the following steps:
 1. Attend a BCAHS activity or have a conversation with a Steering Team member.
 2. Review the BCAHS Policies and Procedures.
 3. Request membership on the members-only website.
 4. Submit completed and signed waiver forms
 5. Remit annual fees.
- B. If at any time you decide homeschooling is not going to be a part of your child's education, we expect you to notify the Steering Team and remove yourself from the group. There will be no refund of fees paid.

If at any time, while a member of BCAHS, you find you can no longer peacefully abide by the BCAHS Policies and Procedures, please discontinue your membership for the sake of unity in the group.

The Steering Team reserves the right to exercise judgment in enforcing or making exceptions to any established BCAHS Policies and Procedures.

Terms and Definitions

Member: All adults and children registered with BCAHS (including “other adults that will be participating with your child” as listed on the membership form) and who consistently follow the BCAHS Policies and Procedures.

Guest: Any person invited to and accompanied by a member to any BCAHS activity. It is the member's responsibility to ensure guests abide by BCAHS Policies and Procedures.

(BCAHS) Activity: This is a general term used when speaking of any coordinated activity, event, field trip, class, meeting, etc.

Student: Any member registered for a class in Monday School.

Activity Leader: The adult(s) in charge of the specific activity. The default Activity Leaders for all BCAHS activities are the Steering Team members.

Member Instructor: A member who teaches a Monday School class

Non-Member Instructor: A non-member who teaches a Monday School class

BCAHS: Bandera County Area Homeschoolers

Member-only website: www.bcahsgroup.com

Attachment A: Code of Conduct

Following are general guidelines of what is expected from each BCAHS member attending any BCAHS activity. Not every situation can be covered. Your Steering Team and/or Activity Leader will inform you of any needed revisions. These guidelines apply to students and parents.

- We expect all members to be encouraging and accepting of one another.
- We expect all to “do everything without complaining or arguing.”
- We expect all members to think of others and the impact your actions will have on others in the group. Always act in love toward each other. Remember the Golden Rule and do unto others as you would have them do to you.
- We expect all members to assist in cleaning up after activities.
- All members and their guests will refrain from:
 - gossip and conversations that are not edifying to the group
 - speaking ill of or putting down another member
 - putting down other educational systems. such as public schools
 - off-color jokes, coarse language or crude joking around
 - destruction of property
 - name calling
 - excessive teasing
 - rough and tumble horseplay, including hitting, kicking, slapping or pushing (even in jest)
- All members will be polite.
- All members will be ladies and gentlemen.
- All members will be kind.
- All members will be respectful of others, courteous and cheerful.

Boy/Girl Relationships:

- No holding of hands, other than that which is necessary for a planned activity.
- No lingering hugs.
- No kissing.

Participation:

- Members are required to actively participate in planned activities when attending a BCAHS activity, unless excused by the Activity Leader.
- Participation includes keeping your attention on the people around you and on the planned activities. Please refrain from using electronic devices unless it is a benefit to the group.

Teens Driving to BCAHS Activities:

Any teen who has permission to drive themselves to a BCAHS activity may do so under the following conditions:

- The parent must contact the Activity Leader and notify him/her of the on-site designated responsible adult.
- The teen will be required to arrive on-time and remain at the activity until the scheduled ending time.
- The teen will not be allowed to leave an activity early unless arrangements have been made between the parent and the Activity Leader.

Social Media:

All members, please be aware of how texts, emails and social media affect other members of BCAHS, and govern yourselves accordingly. Our goal is a group that uplifts and encourages friendly, supportive interaction for our families.

Supervision is Never 1-on-1:

All activities must be supervised by a minimum of one adult. Some activities will require additional supervision based on age and group size.

For the safety of all of our members, adults should never be in a one-to-one setting with a child. If possible, it is preferred to always have two adults present. At a minimum, an Activity Leader should always be with at least two children and never alone with a child that is not his/her own child. If an Activity Leader needs to speak with a child one-on-one, this conversation should be held in open view of others.

Attachment B: Leadership Team Responsibilities

A. Steering Team (minimum of 2 members)

- Determine BCAHS long-term operating goals
- Oversee the carrying out of the mission statement
- Manage and monitor BCAHS activities verifying the coherence with established goals
- Responsible for development and implementation of all BCAHS Policies and Procedures
- Make strategic decisions to optimize the functioning of the group
- Plan the calendar for the year
- Handle parent concerns
- Be open to member input
- Serve as liaison with the public
- Transact business and enter into agreements on behalf of BCAHS
- Maintain financial records necessary for good governance
- Oversee and plan parent meetings
- Record meeting notes and post on the members-only website
- Maintain contact information for all participating members
- Create “working groups” and choose experts, with whom BCAHS will work to realize the goals of the group
- Create Coordinator positions as deemed necessary
- Attend Steering Team meetings
- Approve membership
- When a Steering Team position becomes vacant, existing Steering Team members evaluate and appoint a volunteer to fill the position.

B. Field Trip Coordinator(s) – One per particular field trip. This person in this position changes with each field trip. You are the Activity Leader. You are in charge of the Field Trip

- Obtain relevant information and create event on members-only website calendar:
- Date, time and location for the field trip
- Is a tour guide, instructor, or class provided, or will the group be self-guided?
- What special highlights or other information will help families be better prepared for their visit?
- Is there a school or group rate? What is the price for preschoolers and parents (adult chaperones)?
- Is there a minimum and/or maximum group size limit?
- What ages are allowed to participate? Are strollers/nursing moms accommodated?
- Are there eating facilities on site or nearby? Are there bathroom facilities?
- When do they need a final count and payment? What type of payment is acceptable? What is the policy for refunds?
- What parking facilities are available? Is there a parking fee?
- Set deadlines for commitment by members.
- Set up the group reservation.
- Serve as main contact, and collect payment if required.
- Coordinate field trip day details, i.e. meeting point, lunch plans, transportation, etc.
- Disseminate pertinent information to participating members, including your phone number.
- Arrive early and check-in at field trip venue.
- Bring list of attendees.
- Post photos on members-only website after the activity.

Attachment B.1: Current Leadership Team
As of May 31, 2017

Steering Team:

Christina Stade – cinastade@yahoo.com – 210.867.9405 cell

Melissa Watson – mamaof2txbeauties@yahoo.com – 512.308.2975 cell

Field Trip Coordinator:

Varies per field trip.

See individual trip information on the members-only website.

Attachment C: BCAHS Field Trip Attendee Guidelines

1. Please note field trip information on members-only website or speak to the field trip coordinator BEFORE signing up. Many locations have age, group size, or other requirements that we must meet. Please do not sign your children up for a field trip that they are not eligible to attend, as this reflects poorly on our group and homeschoolers in general.
2. Please call the field trip coordinator if you are not able to attend. If prepayment has been made, a refund will be given if BCAHS can obtain a refund.
3. Please be at the location of the field trip on time. "On time" means 15 minutes early, so that you can go in as a group with your group leader.
4. Parents are responsible for the appropriate behavior of their children and their guests.
5. Please dress appropriately, neatly and modestly, according to weather conditions. Your clothing is a reflection upon the homeschool community.
6. Plan ahead of time if you need to pack a lunch.
7. Inform your children of any learning experiences that will take place on the field trip.
8. Be courteous and polite at all times.
9. Respect others who are on the trip with you.
10. Listen carefully to any instructors and instructions on the trip.
11. Be patient as you wait your turn.
12. Be cheerful without complaining.
13. Be thankful to those who helped on the field trip. Say "thank you" to the person who conducted the class or tour.

Attachment D: BCAHS Monday School

Description

- Monday School is designed to capitalize on the talents and gifts of our participating families by offering stimulating and enriching classes to our children. Participation in Monday School is open to any interested BCAHS member. We are not a business but a collaboration of effort between homeschooling families to enjoy a group experience rather than the product of one individual's industry.
- Monday School runs in multiple sessions, varying each session/year based on the calendar. Each session offers a variety of enrichment opportunities for the students.
- Classes are discussed and determined during a parent meeting, prior to the opening of a new session.
- Approximately two weeks prior to the first day of classes, offerings will be posted on our members-only website. All class registrations will occur online.
- Class sizes may be limited at the discretion of the teacher. If a class ends up being too big (as determined by Steering Team and Teacher), we will handle it at that time based upon registration numbers. We could potentially split the class into 2 groups and recruit an additional teacher, or we could recruit more assistants to add to the existing class.
- In the event that one of your children is not registered in a class, he/she may be in the designated common area when there is no class assigned to that space. Parents are responsible for supervision.
- If there are any fees due, you will need to pay them directly to the instructor and according to the time frame requested.
- Participation in Monday School is a right and a privilege of BCAHS members. The following is in addition to the BCAHS Policies and Procedures.

Participation

- Prior to participating for the first time, you must have a conversation with a steering team member and submit any required fees by given deadlines.
- Continued participation requires adherence to BCAHS Policies and Procedures.

Facilities

BCAHS Monday School currently uses the facilities of Church of Christ in Bandera, Texas. (See Attachment C for specifics on facility use.)

Volunteering

Monday School is an opportunity for all members to make their gifts and talents available to others. As an all-volunteer, parent-led group, each Monday School family must participate in some capacity throughout the day, whether in a teaching role or a supervisory role. A sign up sheet will be available prior to each session. Volunteering is a requisite of membership.

Attachment D .1: Monday School Instructor Expectations

Instructor Expectations:

- All BCAHS instructors must take their responsibility at BCAHS Monday School seriously and display the level of leadership that is necessary in assisting or leading a class.
- All instructors should recognize the value of being prepared for the class that they will be leading and to begin and end at the agreed upon time.
- It is the responsibility of the instructor to make arrangements for a substitute instructor if she/he is unable to begin promptly or needs to be absent.
- All instructors must act with moral integrity. Please honor copyright laws.

Supervision: Never 1-on-1

- All activities must be supervised by a minimum of one adult. Some activities will require additional supervision based on age and group size.
- For the safety of all of our members, adults should never be in a one-to-one setting with a child. If possible, it is preferred to always have two adults present. At a minimum, an Activity Leader should always be with at least two children and never alone with a child that is not his/her own child. If an Activity Leader needs to speak with a child one-on-one, this conversation should be held in open view of others.

Preparing and Proposing Classes:

- Please provide a description of the class, including full disclosure of any potentially controversial content being covered. The purpose is to fully inform parents before they sign their children up. Examples of controversial content could be a discussion of evolution vs. creation, political differences, religious differences, etc.
- Please provide any supply fees or materials that need to be purchased by the parent
- Honor copyright laws.
- Prepare a syllabus or lesson plans. This can be done on your own or with the assistance of a Steering Team member or other member. Curriculum is not provided. If the purchase of material is desired and you would like to be reimbursed, prior approval by the Steering Team is required.
- Instructors are encouraged to use their talents and creativity while planning age appropriate lessons.
- The class titles listed on the matrix are just a very basic idea. What the class specifically covers and how it is run is up to the person who takes on the task of teaching it. Time, space, resources and age of kids should be taken into consideration as you plan.
- We are more than happy to help with the planning at any point. If a parent is willing to teach, but would like some help in preparing lessons, just let any member of the Steering Team know and we will make sure that you get the help you need.

Non-Member Instructors:

- Non-member assistants/instructors are required to submit to a screening process which includes an interview, a background check and possibly reference checks.
- Upon approval by the Steering Team, non-member instructors must submit a commitment letter.
- Space availability and need for classes will affect whether a non-member assistant or instructor will be accepted to help for a session.

Attachment D.2: Monday School Member Participant Expectations

Parent Agreement

As a parent, I recognize the value of committing my time and talents to a dedicated community of homeschoolers for the purposes of providing an enriching environment. I understand that I am fully responsible for my child's education and that BCAHS Monday School is offered as an extra-curricular opportunity.

I acknowledge the following:

- Participating in any and all classes is completely voluntary.
- I recognize that some classes will involve the purchase of materials and/or supplies. If I choose to have my child participate in such classes, I agree to pay the required fees promptly.
- I agree to remain on the premises with my child during activities and participate to the best of my ability. If I must leave my child more than one time per session, I will request approval from the Steering Team. Should I need to leave, I will arrange for another adult to be responsible for my child.
- When we sign up for a class, we will make a concerted effort to honor our commitment, and demonstrate respect for the instructor's time by being punctual and attending class regularly.
- I understand that it is my responsibility to provide for the needs of my child, such as snack, lunch, beverage.
- I will ensure that my family adheres to the facility guidelines, BCAHS Policies and Procedures and will handle the re-directing and disciplining of my child as needed.

Student Agreement

As a student, I recognize the privilege of participating in and enjoying the activities of BCAHS Monday School.

I commit to the following:

- Appropriately participating in class.
- Respecting the instructors and all adults in words and actions.
- Working on class activities to the best of my abilities.
- Honoring my peers and other students in the program in words and deeds.
- Adhering to all facility guidelines and BCAHS Policies and Procedures.

Attachment E: Financial Policies and Procedures

I. General

- The Steering Team is responsible for authorizing all bank accounts and check signers.
- Financial institutions where accounts are maintained are notified of any changes in check signers following a change in Steering Team members.
- Financial records are available for review by any BCAHS member upon request.

II. Cash Receipts

- Members handling cash will have the necessary knowledge and skills to perform the job and will be carefully supervised.
- When events occur requiring cash receipts, two designated people will always count beginning and ending cash and will maintain control of the cash at all times.
- Incoming checks must be restrictively endorsed “for deposit only” with the organization’s account number, when received.
- All non-electronic receipts (cash and checks) must be recorded in a pre-numbered carbon receipt book with enough information to indicate the type of revenue source. If the individual is present, the original receipt should be given to the individual immediately.
- The receipt book along with copied checks should be used to record the revenue with as much information as possible for transparency purposes.
- Bank deposit receipts must be compared and attached to the original bank deposit slips.
- Adequate physical controls must be maintained over cash receipts from the time of receipt to deposit in the bank.

III. Cash Disbursements

- All Steering Team Members must approve payments unless listed in Attachment F.1
- Steering Team members are authorized to make payments without a second signature (other than self reimbursements) via written check, charge card or online payment.
- Supporting documentation must accompany checks when presented for signature.
- Signing of blank checks is strictly prohibited. Checks must be made payable to specific payees based upon appropriate documentation, and never to “cash” or “bearer”.
- Access to blank checks must be limited to persons authorized to prepare checks.
- Blank check stock must be locked in a secure place when not in use.
- Any voided/spoiled checks must be marked “Void” with the signature portion removed and retained in a secure place.
- All IRS record keeping requirements must be adhered to.

IV. Bank Reconciliation

- Bank accounts must be reconciled on a monthly basis and reviewed by the Steering Team.
- All check numbers must be accounted for.
- Checks outstanding over 90 days must be periodically investigated, with payment stopped and an entry made restoring such items to cash if appropriate.

V. Disbandment

- Upon the disbandment of BCAHS, all assets will be donated to another non-profit organization.

Attachment E.1: List of Authorized Routine Monthly Payments

In accordance with the BCAHS financial policies and procedures, the Steering Team authorizes the following routine expenditures for payment.

1. Monday School Session facility use donations to Church of Christ per agreement.
2. General Liability and Accident Medical insurance premiums.

Attachment F: Church of Christ in Bandera, Facility Guidelines

- A. In order to be at the facilities during regular Monday School Hours, students must be registered in a class or in the presence of their parent.
- B. Upon Arrival:
- Check at the porch/house for announcements.
 - Verify your location(s) for the day, for both classes and volunteer positions.
- C. During BCAHS Activities:
- An adult must be present and monitoring children at all times in any area.
 - Dress respectfully
 - No tobacco (including e-cigs), alcohol or drugs.
 - No foul/offensive language or gestures.
 - Be respectful of personal space. No wrestling or rough physical contact.
 - Use indoor voices during class times and when indoors
 - Use of electronics is fine during free time. Keep a G rating for all media. Minimize volume.
 - Keep the bathrooms clean. Especially the bathrooms in the sanctuary.
 - If you take it out, put it up. Clean up after yourself.
 - On muddy days, take off your shoes. Keep the floors clean.
 - Do not play or eat in the sanctuary.
 - Be respectful of the private residence and office on site.
 - Common sense and safety should prevail.
 - No climbing on objects not designed for climbing.
 - Picking up rocks is okay. Throwing rocks is not okay.
 - Use caution near and in parking lots and roads.
 - Students are to remain on the grounds unless accompanied by a parent.
- E. Upon Departure:
- Check at porch/house for closing announcements and presentations.
 - Assist with site clean-up.
 - Please ensure you take all personal belongings home with you.
 - We are guests and we want to make sure we leave the facilities better than we found them.

Attachment G: Fees

There are yearly fees involved with participating in BCAHS. BCAHS is a non-profit entity and no profit goes back to any member. All fees are given directly to where they are needed. With that in mind, the fees are based off of the number of registered families each year.

\$45 per family annually

This fee will offset any insurance premiums, banking fees, and website fees incurred by the group.

Accident Medical and General Liability Insurance:

For the safety and security of our families and our host facility, BCAHS has contracted for our own insurance. The insurance premium is paid yearly and our insurance coverage is good for one full year.

Monday School Participants Only:

Fees are due concurrent with registering your child(ren) for classes.

The following are per session and will be used to cover our costs at Church of Christ in Bandera.

\$20 for one-child family

\$30 for 2+ children family

Note: Infants are included in the child count.