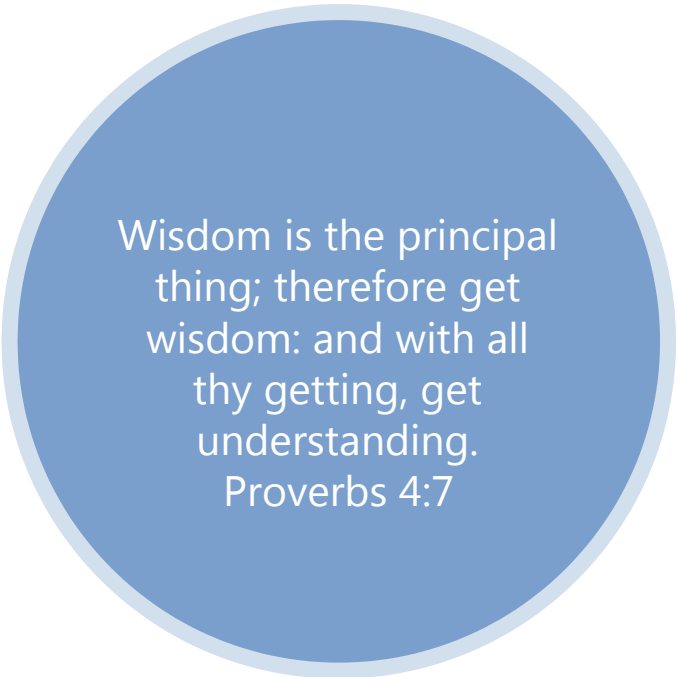


# CHSEL

Christian Homeschool Enrichment Labs

Handbook for Parents, Students, Administration

2024-2025



Wisdom is the principal  
thing; therefore get  
wisdom: and with all  
thy getting, get  
understanding.  
Proverbs 4:7

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**CHSEL** (Christian Home School Enrichment Labs) is just what its name implies: a group of Christian, Bible-believing families who homeschool coming together to enrich their learning at home with labs in various subjects.

**Our mission** is to encourage one another in our walks with Christ through glorifying Him in every subject we teach. CHSEL is Christian organization led by parents. CHSEL exists as a ministry to home school families. It is our desire to meet the need for students to have fellowship, accountability and fun while providing a common goal for parents to help our children learn. We believe that knowledge should be built upon the foundation of wisdom that comes through a relationship with Jesus Christ. Because glorifying God is our motivation, we will make every effort to contribute to the spiritual growth of both students and parents while respecting denominational differences. We highly regard the choice each family has made to train their children in the Truth and hope to contribute to that through the curriculum.

Note: At CHSEL, we believe that the best place to learn is at home! Our labs are not intended to provide a complete credit for any course but are designed to enhance the studies of those subjects with deliberate retention-building activities while encouraging students to think critically, develop interests and, most importantly, see how all learning can be motivated through a love of the Lord and His creation as we commit our thoughts and hearts to Him!

## Statement of Faith

We strive to use the Bible for the direction in each topic. We emphasize that Christ is the Son of God, the creator of all, and that He came in the flesh to redeem mankind from the corruption of sin that all are in because of Adam's sin, and that through His blood we can be reconciled with the Father, who is one with Christ and His Holy Spirit. There is God, who exists in three persons: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

There is only one way for mankind to be reconciled with God and that is through choosing to place one's faith in the death, burial and resurrection of Christ for salvation, which is a gift given freely to all who believe. These precepts will be unapologetically included in all subjects because we believe that teaching for the sake of knowledge alone can be harmful because without the foundations of the Wisdom which comes through knowing Christ, true understanding cannot be attained. Further information concerning organizational faith-based positions is included on the Lighthouse member website.

## Leadership

Executive Director - Veronica Pedraza

Registrars – Veronica Pedraza, Stacy Richard

Financial Director - Stacy Richard

Facility Director – Chloe Golmon

Service Duty Director - Stacy Richard

Website Management – Veronica Pedraza

Social/Communications/Events- Carissa Parr

Student Council/Devotions/Volunteers – Laci Gossett

CHSEL can only function fully through volunteer help and family participation. Please contact a coordinator or director to find where you may serve to help our organization thrive and provide a great and memorable experience for all involved.

## General Policies

### Application

All families are required to apply for membership with Lighthouse Home School Support to attend CHSEL. As Lighthouse members, families will enjoy many benefits of the organization, including access to register for CHSEL labs on the private CHSEL website, which will require signature of parents acknowledging the Mission, Statement of Faith and General Policies pertaining to CHSEL, including permission to conduct a background screening for all adult members. The annual membership fee of \$40 to join Lighthouse is non-refundable. Upon completion of family login information in the CHSEL program, families may then register their students and must agree to participate in volunteer/service duty positions as specified.

### Registration

Registration for labs must be completed online through the scheduled lab matrix of [www.chsel.org](http://www.chsel.org) registration pages. All family registrations are for a full semester and require a semester registration fee of \$30 along with first month's payment. A second registration fee of \$30 is payable in December for all families participating in second semester labs. Upon registration, participants are agreeing to the terms set forth in this handbook and through the registration process.

### Orientation

A mandatory, all member online student orientation will be main August each year. Students and parents must attend or view online orientation, finalize student registrations, sign all necessary documents, including waivers and agreements in order to stay registered in labs. Information will be given each year with orientation dates and deadlines. Please stay informed through our website and email communications.

### Service Duty Requirement

All families must agree to participate in serving to help CHSEL operate smoothly and to protect our children and members. Each family must serve 2 times a year, depending on how many families are registered. A sign-up schedule will be made available online prior to and during orientation for various duties. A family can choose to opt-out of service duty and by doing so, will incur a \$50 charge for the year, which is due at orientation. This fee is then passed on to any family who chooses to do more service duties than required. If a family misses a service duty date without finding a substitute, a \$25 charge per service duty will be charged to that family account. CHSEL teachers/assistants are exempt from service duty requirements.

## Drop Offs and Devotion/Prayer Time

CHSEL is intentionally designed to accommodate parents who find it more practical to drop off their children than to stay and teach throughout the entire day. While drop-offs are allowed, it is highly encouraged for parents to ensure their child gets to his/her first lab or our devotion/prayer time held in the commons area. Parents need to be sure their students get to devotion time or to their first lab in a timely manner so that teachers can get started on time. It is our recommendation that all students 6<sup>th</sup> grade and under be brought to their lab or the commons area instead of dropped off in the foyer. There may be times that we require parents to sign in their students in the foyer. Only registered students are allowed on campus during CHSEL lab hours.

## Open House

At the end of the co-op year, CHSEL holds an open house for all labs. This is a time for parents to visit their students' labs and for the teacher to share what the students have learned over the semester. Some labs will have special presentations for all families. Simple refreshments are served at this event. All co-op families are invited to share in this special event and teachers must agree to participate as part of the fulfillment of their contract. This is a scheduled co-op event.

## Dress Code

At CHSEL, we choose not to enforce what we can or cannot wear; however, we ask that you dress with respect for others. We ask that students, parents and teachers please dress modestly, which means that our intention is to edify and esteem others, not ourselves. We ask that mothers and fathers be the overseers of their children's clothing, discerning whether wisdom and discretion have been considered. Those who arrive in clothing that is revealing, provocative or otherwise considered inappropriate, will be gently admonished and asked to change or wear a provided garment over their clothing when available.

## Illness/Significant Allergies

To avoid a possible contagious infection spreading throughout our co-op members, please do not bring children who have had **a fever or any contagious condition** within the last 24 hours. If your children have any significant allergies, please inform their teachers. Please keep all nut-containing products in your personal possession, considering the possibility of severe allergies of others.

- Children or adults who are sick or who may be a source of infection should not attend program events.
- Parents are advised that a child who has been sick during the night should not attend any program event the next day.

- A child with a communicable illness should not attend any program event Illness Policy for Adults
- Adults with a communicable illness should not attend any program event.
- Arrangements are in place to provide relief cover while adults in service are on sick Leave.

Parents have the right to choose to Immunize their child or not. Not all children attending STEP programs may be immunized. In the event of an outbreak of any infectious disease, all parents will be verbally informed. A dated notice informing all parents of any infectious disease outbreak will be emailed.

## **Medicines**

CHSEL teachers may not assume the responsibility of dispensing medicines to any CHSEL student for any reason other than emergency when parental consent has been given. For any children who may need emergency Epi-Pen injections, it is the parent's responsibility to make arrangements for who is permitted to administer it in an emergency.

## **Visitors**

No unregistered students or adults may attend or visit labs during regular co-op days. There will be scheduled visitor days for the purpose of allowing potential participants to find out more about CHSEL. These visitors will be required to complete a sign up/registration for the day.

## **Textbook Editions**

Always check with teachers before purchasing textbooks or any lab materials to be sure you are purchasing the correct items.

## **Background Check**

All persons 18 years and older participating in CHSEL must submit to a background check disclosure and agreement. Background checks must be submitted at least 2 weeks in advance before working with children. The fee for a background check is included in registration fees.

## **Notice of Intent to School District and Documentation**

Please consult Home School Legal Defense Association, HSLDA, ([hsllda.org](http://hsllda.org)), and Texas Home School Coalition (THSC) for the most current guidelines. CHSEL does not keep records from year to year.

## Personal Item Management/Lost and Found

All items brought to CHSEL are the responsibility of each member. CHSEL takes no responsibility for lost/misplaced items. Lockers are available for students who are attending the full day. Please check the lost and found box in the CHSEL common room for lost items or email the Facility Director for information. Please do not call the church. All items found will be placed in the box during clean up.

## Holidays

While each of us have and carry out our own traditions and festivities for various holidays, it is the policy of CHSEL to avoid the use of cultural symbols such as trees, Santa Claus, rabbits, eggs, etc. associated with holidays **within the curriculum**. Because CHSEL is intentionally and overtly Christian in mission and statement, we will use the Biblical and/or Christian symbols associated with any Christian holiday. **Halloween and Valentine's Day will not be considered Christian holidays and will have no significance on lab days.**

## Lab Tuition/Fee Policy

CHSEL has a Fall and Spring Registration Fee (\$30 each). The fall registration fee secures your registration for the fall semester, as does the spring registration fee for the spring semester. Each lab your student is registered in will have supply fees that are due upon registration. Each lab has teacher fees (hereafter referred to as tuition.) Families may pay tuition yearly or monthly. Monthly tuition installments are due by the fourth Friday of each month. The fall semester is paid in full once the November installment is paid and the spring semester is paid in full once the April installment is paid. Any exceptions to this policy must be addressed by the teacher and the CHSEL administration team. There are no refunds for lab tuition after August 31, of each CHSEL year, except at the sole discretion of the teacher(s) of the lab(s) involved. **While tuition payments are set up monthly, each registrant is making an agreement for a full semester.** In the event of inclement weather or facility issues causing more missed labs than the number of makeup days in the semester, tuition for those labs will not be refund, however make-up days may be incorporated into the schedule.

## Collection of Tuition and Fees

CHSEL is a clearing house which sets up a venue for parents to exchange services. The parents teaching are independent self-contractors whose fees are in exchange for your student's participation. Teachers have chosen as a group to allow each exchanging parent to pay on a monthly basis to prevent financial hardship in participating; however, when you register, you are agreeing to participate and pay the exchange for an entire semester or year. In allowing parents to pay monthly, CHSEL receives the funds and distributes them back to the teachers less a percentage for operating costs, insurance, etc. Please note the following courteous fees



procedures:

1. All CHSEL fees are non-refundable unless agreement has been made with a teacher to refund your semester fees based upon the cessation of a lab prior to completion.
2. Semester Supply Fees (SSF) – These fees provide the Teacher with the means to make copies and purchase supplies as needed for labs. These fees are due upon registration. Lab supply fees are non-refundable after Sept. 1.
3. Fee/Tuition Collection – Fees/Tuition must be paid electronically through the CHSEL website, and accounting is managed by our Financial Director. All electronic payments include a convenience fee in the fee/tuition accounting.
4. Financial Hardships - Families with financial hardships MUST contact the Financial Director to make payment arrangements BEFORE payments are due. A written agreement from the teacher for each circumstance will be required. A payment plan can be set up which will allow the family to avoid the consequences of late payments. A limited assistance fund exists and may be used with approval by the administration team for families with special circumstances. (Contact administrators for a financial assistance application if you would like to apply for assistance.)
5. Late Fees Without Payment Arrangements – Any member whose payment is more than one month past due and who has not made previous arrangements with the financial director will be placed on probationary status:
  - The students of said member will not be allowed to attend labs until tuition is paid.
  - There will be a \$10 late fee assessed.

## Dropping a Lab

If you need to drop a lab after the semester begins, please notify the CHSEL Financial Director ([setxstep@gmail.com](mailto:setxstep@gmail.com)) and each teacher via email at least one week in advance. If you need the teacher's email, please go to the directory on the CHSEL website. Registration, supply fees and tuition per semester are non-refundable and agreements are for a full semester, requiring payment to be completed even if a student drops the lab unless teacher agrees to waive the tuition for the remainder of a semester. This agreement between teacher and parent must **be communicated to the Financial Director in writing.**

## Lunch Policies

Lunch policies are as follows:

1. Lunch period is not a CHSEL organized activity. If students choose to stay during lunch hour, a parent or guardian must be there to monitor their student in the lunch area during the lunch hour. If staying for lunch, families will need to stay in the gym. Parents may also sign their child/children up to be supervised by a lunch monitor for a set fee each month, which schedule is on the CHSEL matrix. All participants, regardless of age, must be under the supervision of an adult (family or CHSEL member 21 or older) during lunch.
2. Lunch period guidelines and time periods are modified according to level of participation each year. Please check the scheduled labs and lunch period on the CHSEL website.
3. All families (including all students) **are required** to throw away trash and help clean before leaving the gym for afternoon labs.
4. A signal will be given to indicate when to begin cleaning up and for dismissal.

## Special Needs Policy

At CHSEL, we welcome children who may require special learning accommodations. If you have a child with special needs, in order to register that child for the co-op, the student must meet the following criteria:

1. The child must be toilet trained. 2. The child must not cause excessive physical or vocal disruptions during lab. 3. The child must have the capacity to participate in lab activities with minimal assistance, including staying seated as necessary for the lab period. 4. If assistance is required, a parent must provide the assistance or make arrangements with the teacher and assistant of the lab. If there is no assistant in the lab, the parent must be available to assist the child. Enrolled siblings are not allowed to be the child's assistant. If the child meets the above criteria, then a meeting will be scheduled with our administration team and the teacher to discuss the child's unique needs. If both feel these needs can be met at the co-op, registration will be permitted. Please understand that the teachers will be given the final decision as to whether or not they would feel comfortable having the student in their labs. If the teacher(s) feel comfortable, then the student will be permitted to register for the approved labs.

## Juvenile Protection Policies

LHSA/CHSEL/STEP has no tolerance for violence, threats, or intimidation. Any violence or threats of violence toward another member, student, coach, parent, administrator shall be addressed without delay by administrators. Disciplinary action will include but not be limited to admonition for reconciliation and restoration of relationship and will result in required parental involvement on site. Any infraction of the Code of Conduct will require reproof, admonition, and may lead to membership withdrawal should the behavior remain uncorrected.

LHSA/STEP is committed to providing a safe sports and academic environment. This policy applies to all employees as well as to all directors, officers, volunteers, coaches, independent contractors, athletes, managers, officials and members of STEP/LHSA. It applies to abuse which may occur during the course of all STEP/LHSA/CHSEL business, activities and events. No employee, independent contractor, coach, volunteer or worker, may

- Go anywhere alone with a child
- Use corporal punishment against any child or adult
- Engage in hazing or demeaning conduct against any child and/or adult

When any employee, independent contractor, director, officer, volunteer, coach, athlete, manager, official or member has a reasonable belief that a minor is being abused, molested or neglected, he/she shall report this belief to administration. The suspected allegation will be brought to authorities after an immediate emergency LHSA/STEP admin and/or board meeting is called and held to examine the reasonable belief. All such allegations will be turned over to the authorities for investigation. STEP/LHSA shall immediately relieve the suspected abuser from his or her duties pending investigation by child protection authorities and/or police.

**CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES** It is the policy of our service to ensure that children are protected and kept safe from harm while they are with staff and volunteers in our service. We do this by

- Ensuring that our administrative and coaching contractors avail of training on Child Protection through online protection training provided by Alison.com
- By conducting a valid and secure background check for all of our contractors, staff, coaches, volunteers and all parents or any adults that may have prolonged contact with any children in our programs.
- Letting parents know how to voice their concerns or complain if there is anything they are not happy about.
- Having reporting procedures and a named designated person in place to deal with Child Protection Concerns Ensuring that all coaches, contractors, staff, and volunteers are informed of the Reporting Procedures
- Having procedures on actions to take if an allegation is made against a member, teacher, coach, staff, contractor or volunteer.

## CHILD PROTECTION REPORTING PROCEDURE

- The Designated Person to deal with Child Protection concerns with any STEP program is Veronica Pedraza.
- Should this person be absent, for whatever reason, the deputy Designated Person is Stacy Richard.
- Should a child make a disclosure to a staff member or volunteer we have clear guidelines as to how that staff member or volunteer would respond.
- Any member of staff or volunteer who has a Child Protection concern will discuss their concerns with the Designated Person
- The Designated Person is responsible for the recording of any such Concerns
- It is our policy to inform parents/carers about any Child Protection concerns, unless doing so would put the child at further risk.
- The appropriate verbal/written communication regarding Child Protection concerns will be made to the authorities without delay.

## DEALING WITH A DISCLOSURE

Should a child disclose to a staff member/volunteer that abuse may be happening in their life, the role of the staff member/volunteer is primarily to listen, asking only open ended questions e.g. is there anything else you want to say? The staff member/volunteer must share this information with their designated person. They must never promise a child that they could keep such information to themselves, even if a child requested it. It is never the role of the staff member/volunteer to investigate or to make an assessment of the risk of abuse to a child. The DFPS carry out such investigations.

[https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Child\\_Protection/Child\\_Safety/report\\_abuse.asp](https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Child_Protection/Child_Safety/report_abuse.asp) At the appropriate time, the staff member/volunteer will record the disclosure as it happened, quoting the words of the child. The designated person will implement our Child Protection Reporting Procedure.

## Electronic Interface Conduct and Offense Policy

We have chosen not to make a list of do's and don'ts and instead ask each participant to regard the Scripture as we conduct ourselves according to Christian values. The code of conduct is not comprehensive, but reminds us that when we are choosing how to treat others, the Scripture should be our guide.

We do ask that when offenses occur, which they probably will in a large group such as this, that we adhere to the instructions given us in Matthew 18 v. 14-20 as much as is possible. We desire to live peaceably with all men if possible as much as lies in us (Rom. 12:18) and seek the Lord for guidance when we are unsure what to do.

## Communications

The following are various means of communication that the administration team uses to communicate with members and that all members should be familiar with:

1. The primary means of getting information to students and parents will be through the forums and dashboard on [www.chsel.org](http://www.chsel.org), the website calendar and [www.facebook.com/groups/chsel](https://www.facebook.com/groups/chsel). Reminders will be sent through the REMIND APP. Please be sure that you have downloaded and have use and notifications for REMIND.
2. We may also text or email when a message needs to get to you quickly.
3. Please make every effort to check the website, files and publications, along with Facebook pages regularly preceding labs each week.

## Emergency Procedures

### *Inclement Weather*

The administration team will decide regarding labs in the event of inclement weather, and members will be notified via CHSEL Facebook group and forums no later than 7:30 am the morning of co-op. If snow/sleet starts while CHSEL is in session, please realize we may dismiss labs early for everyone's safety. Decisions regarding lab cancellation will be based upon the surrounding school districts closing and at the discretion of the administration team of CHSEL. If your school district has closed, CHSEL may not be closed, but please make your decision to attend based upon your personal driving situations.

### *Fire/Tornado/Severe Storms/Emergency Lockdown Procedures*

The CHSEL teachers and admin have and will follow all measures to ensure every child is accounted for and safe in the event any emergency arises. Different emergencies require different measures. Please know that EVERY child's safety is our top priority. Communications with parents during such events will be made only after all student's are safe.