



Bylaws

Article 1 – Name, Purpose, Location

Section 1 – The name of this organization shall be Greater Valdosta Home School Association Inc. (GVHSA).

Section 2 – The mission of GVHSA is to provide a Christ-centered homeschool cooperative. Our mission is to provide a consistent environment and like-minded comradery for committed homeschool educators and students. We offer our members the opportunity to participate in academic programs and social activities that strengthen and promote traditional family values.

Education is a God-given right and the responsibility of parents. A Christian perspective is always in mind in the determining of group activities and support of both the parents and children. Our member families will find educational opportunities to enhance their curriculum, information from state and national homeschool agencies, a high moral code of behavior, a well-defined governing body, and numerous opportunities to serve one another.

This organization supports and promotes homeschooling as a legitimate alternative to other types of education and is only limited to the gifts and talents of its active membership. This support broadens as leadership talent is developed, community resources are located, and membership needs are expressed. Psalm 111:10 states, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do his commandments: his praise endures forever." Therefore, we will strive to conduct our business "in the fear of the Lord" and in accordance with the basic tenants of Christian faith: doing all things in love, sharing all joy, speaking and acting in peace, always being honest, and being faithful to our members as unto the Lord.

Section 3 – The weekly recurring meeting location of GVHSA shall be Trinity Presbyterian Church, 3501 Bemiss Rd., Valdosta, GA. 31605. The organization may have any number of offices at such places as the Board may determine.

Article 2 – Membership

Section 1 – The organization will not have voting members. All decisions will be made by the Board of Directors.

Section 2 – The qualification for nonvoting membership, which defines those in participation-only status will be:

- A. Membership Requirements - Open to anyone who is actively engaged in home education with at least one school aged child before 1 October and agrees to acknowledge, respect, and conduct themselves as prescribed in the Statement of Faith, Bylaws, and Code of Conduct for GVHSA.
 - a. New memberships will be evaluated in the spring of each year. Families request membership online and must agree and sign our Statement of Faith, Code of Conduct, and Release of Liability forms.
- B. Active homeschool families must operate their homeschools in accordance with Georgia law.
- C. By joining GVHSA, members signify that they understand our purpose statement and agree to abide by our by-laws.
- D. There are two classes of membership: Full and Support Group.
- E. Full Membership allows access to all activities and services offered by GVHSA. Additional fees may be required for some activities, and classes will be announced as events are planned.
 - a. Activities are closed to non-members unless determined by the Board of Directors to be in the best interest of the membership or deemed to be an open activity.
 - b. Other homeschool organizations may be invited to participate in certain academic functions if they are approved by the Board of Directors, and they

agree to abide by GVHSA rules and by-laws while participating in the shared function.

F. Support Group Membership includes everything in the full membership except for co-op classes, which includes archery.

G. All memberships shall be reviewed at least annually by the Board of Directors and **may** be subject to revocation by the Board of Directors for conduct that is:

- a. Contrary to the stated purpose, Statement of Faith, Code of Conduct, and By-Laws of GVHSA, or
- b. In conflict with the homeschool laws of the state of Georgia.

H. Service Opportunities - Each member family must be willing to assist the local group with the following:

- a. Mandatory clean-up of each classroom in which GVHSA members occupy on co-op days or special events. This will be accomplished by each teacher and teacher assistant ensuring that their assigned class is cleaned prior to the beginning of the next class hour.
- b. Each family agrees to volunteer as a teacher or teacher's assistant. Teachers are required to volunteer at least one hour per week while teacher assistants are required to volunteer for a minimum of at least two hours each week unless approved beforehand by GVHSA's board members.
- c. Supervision Requirements. A parent or legal guardian is expected to remain on the premises for the full duration of their child's participation in cooperative classes or events. Members of the Board of Directors may serve as the supervising guardian for their own child and are exempt from this requirement. If a parent or legal guardian designates another adult to temporarily supervise their child, the Board of Directors must approve this designation prior to the child's attendance at any cooperative class or event. *This policy is intended to address short-term absences. For extended absences beyond two weeks, members are required to communicate with the Board for discussion and approval.

- d. Families that do not assist in the programs and activities of GVHSA may have their membership reviewed and may have their membership revoked.

I. Group Classes:

- a. Classes will be held once a week commencing in August, ending in April of the following year.
- b. Teacher application will be due in the spring of the following school year.
- c. Board members and teachers will receive first priority in class registration followed by teacher assistants. Members who do not carry out their commitments will be reviewed by board members the following year. Members who have not committed to a teacher/teacher's assistant position will not be able to register for classes.

J. Full and Support Group member families shall have on file with the Board of Directors a Medical & Liability Release form. This form must be updated yearly and is necessary for participation in GVHSA functions.

K. Finances - Minimum annual dues shall be set by the Board of Directors. The annual dues cover but are not limited to facility expenses, supply costs, website upkeep, incorporation fees, association insurance, and fees for special guests.

L. As a prerequisite to full membership, all actively participating parents or legal guardians must submit to and satisfactorily pass a background check, with no disqualifying legal issues identified.

Article 3 – Meetings

Section 1 – The date of the regular annual meeting shall be determined by the Board of Directors who will also set the time and place.

Section 2 – Regular meetings of the Board may be held at such place and time as shall be designated by the standing resolution of the Board.

Section 3 – Special meetings may be called by any acting Board member.

Section 4 – Notice of all meetings shall be provided to each voting member, by email, text message and or phone at least 24 hours prior to the meeting.

Section 5 – Members of the Board may participate in a meeting through use of conference telephone or similar communications equipment, so long as members participating in such meeting can hear one another. Members of the Board may vote by e-mail, text, or other electronic means.

Section 6 – Board members are requested to attend every board meeting. If board members cannot attend a meeting, they should contact the board president prior to the meeting, and the secretary for meeting minutes after the meeting. Board members become ineligible if they miss three consecutive board meetings without approval of the Board.

Article 4 – Board of Directors

Section 1 – The business of the organization shall be managed by a Board of Directors comprised of at least three Board members. The Board is responsible for maintaining the overall policy and direction of the organization. The Board shall delegate responsibility of day-to-day operations to the Executive Director or President and appropriate committees. Certain positions require a major commitment of time and service to the group as a whole and therefore receive free tuition; these positions include any person serving as a member of the Board of Directors and the Webmaster. The Board and all appointed leaders shall fully subscribe to the GVHSA Mission Statement.

Section 2 – The Board shall meet monthly. Additional meetings may be called at any time by the Board President or upon request by 50% of the board members.

Section 3 – All Board members can be eligible for re-election after a one-year absence.

Section 4 - The board shall have final authority over membership requirements, program content, services offered, adoption of operating rules, all administrative issues, fiscal responsibility, appointment of program coordinators, clubs, and committees.

Section 5 – Any Director may be removed from office if deemed unable to fulfill their duties or for his/her conduct, actions, or work which is not congruent with the Statement of Faith, or mission of the association, and voted off by a 2/3rd vote of the presiding Board Members.

Section 6 – Any Director may resign at any time by giving notice to the organization.

Section 7 – In the event of a vacancy on the Board (including situations where the number of Board members has been deemed necessary to increase), the Directors shall fill the vacancy.

Section 8 – The Board may not hold an official meeting or make decisions unless a quorum exists. A quorum shall consist of a simple majority of current Board Members.

Section 9 – The Board of Directors shall hire and fix the compensation of all employees which they in their discretion may determine to be necessary for the conduct of the business of the organization.

Section 10 – Nominations for Board Members can be made by the membership at large of GVHSA and submitted to the Board. A person may refer himself or herself to the Board. The Board will review the nominations and determine eligibility. The Board will vote and confirm the election of the Board Member.

Section 11 – Leadership Qualifications for Board Positions include: Has homeschooled at least one year; has been an active member of GVHSA at least two years; has signed and governed themselves according to GVHSA’s Statement of Faith and Code of Conduct; each leader must strive to maintain quality of leadership, the vision of the group, and harmony amongst the leaders.

Section 12 – If a married couple is elected, they may serve together as one board member with one vote.

Section 13_ - Board members shall keep, confidential, all discussions and materials presented during GVHSA Board meetings and shall not share such information unless authorized or required by law.

Exceptions

Confidential information may be shared only when required by law, approved by the Board or President, or necessary to carry out official GVHSA duties with individuals who have a legitimate need to know.

Inquiries

Questions or requests for information from members or non-members regarding GVHSA governance or operations shall be directed to the President. If the President is unavailable for more than forty-eight (48) hours, inquiries shall be directed to the Vice President.

Enforcement

A Board member who violates this policy may be subject to disciplinary action by the Board, including a warning, censure, suspension of duties, or removal, in accordance with these bylaws and applicable laws. The member shall be given notice and an opportunity to respond before discipline is imposed, unless immediate action is necessary to protect GVHSA.

Whistleblower Protection

Nothing in this section prevents any individual from reporting concerns in good faith about illegal or improper conduct. Retaliation against anyone who makes such a report or participates in an investigation is prohibited and may result in disciplinary action.

Article 5 – Duties of the Board of Directors

1. Duties of the Board of Directors

A. The Board of Directors shall be responsible for the oversight of all programs of GVHSA and shall:

- a. Initiate new programs to promote homeschooling and to support the membership of GVHSA.
 - b. Evaluate current programs of GVHSA.
 - c. Eliminate any programs that do not meet the needs of the
- b. Members.
- a. Determine the eligibility of nominations for officers.
 - b. Oversee all elections, including clubs and committees.
 - c. Assist the other officers when needed to ensure that no single job interferes with the responsibilities of teaching their child(ren).
 - d. Publish the policies and procedures of the GVHSA, including grievance procedures and disciplinary procedures.
 - e. All committees should keep accurate membership records.

- f. Through committees, coordinate association events such as book fairs, picnics, field days, etc.
- g. Develop and maintain a website that promotes homeschooling and the values of GVHSA.

Article 6 - Officers

Section 1 – The officers of the organization shall be President, Vice President, Secretary, Class Coordinator, and Treasurer. The Board of Directors shall appoint each of these officers. The Board may also appoint other officers it deems necessary.

Section 2 – The Board of Directors shall appoint officers for a term established by the Board.

Section 3 – Officers of the Board will not be compensated via salary for their service as an officer of the Board.

Section 4 – Board President

The president shall attend all board meetings and (1) serve as the chairman of the board of directors and shall not cast a vote except to break a tie, (2) convene and preside over all meetings of the Association and keep a notebook of all information concerning the president's responsibilities, (3) act as official representative of the Association in all public relation endeavors and work with the board to establish any committees that shall become necessary, (5) plan and coordinate all Association parent meetings, (6) work with all directors on brochures press releases, website, membership, class coordination, or any communications representing the Association, (8) serve as an ex-officio member of all committees. The president shall continue to serve until the board determines that a change of command is beneficial, the board votes and the majority agree to remove the president, or through a resignation letter from the President.

Section 5 – Vice President

The Vice-President shall attend all board meetings and (1) secure locations for all Association parent meetings, (2) timely submit to the directors any announcements concerning the program for upcoming meetings, (3) preside at any meeting in the absence of the President, and (4) perform all duties of the President if the office of the President shall become vacant, until the Board of Directors appoints a replacement. The vice-president shall continue to serve until the board determines that a change of

command is beneficial, the board votes and the majority agree to remove the vice-president, or through a resignation letter from the Vice-President.

Section 6 – Secretary

The Secretary shall attend all board meetings and (1) serve as the Secretary of the Board of Directors, (2) accurately record all solutions and the transaction of all business of the Board of Directors, (3) keep the minutes of the board and parent meetings, (4) be prepared to give a reading of the previous meeting minutes in any Association meeting kept in a notebook, (5) timely submit minutes from all meetings to the director for publication, (6) distribute ballots, tally and record votes during elections and other issues requiring a vote. The secretary shall continue to serve until the board determines that a change of command is beneficial; the board votes and the majority agree to remove the secretary, or through a resignation letter from the Secretary.

Section 7 – Treasurer

The Treasurer shall attend all board meetings and (1) be responsible for filing all information returns, including those to governmental agencies, as required by law, (2) keep up-to-date membership dues records, (3) receive and disperse all funds for any expenses incurred by the Association, (4) be prepared to give a reading of the current financial records at any Association meeting or Board of Directors meeting, and (4) present the annual financial report at the last scheduled meeting. The treasurer shall continue to serve until the board determines that a change of command is beneficial; the board votes and the majority agree to remove the treasurer, or through a resignation letter from the Treasurer.

Section 8 - Class Coordinator

The Class Coordinator shall attend all board meetings, work closely with the class coordinator team leads, and (1) generate classes and schedule, (2) assign classrooms after classes have been solidified, (3) schedule a teacher/teacher assistant meeting before co-op classes begin, (4) arrange and place at least one teacher assistant in each class, (4) During classes the class coordinator will ensure teachers and assistants are present and troubleshoot any problems that may arise during co-op. The class coordinator shall continue to serve until the board determines that a change of command is beneficial, the board votes and the majority agree to remove the Class Coordinator, or through a resignation letter from the Class Coordinator. The Board may adopt policies to further clarify the duties of the Class Coordinator.

Section 9 – At-Large Member

The At-Large Member shall attend all board meetings and agree to serve alongside GVHSA board members to perform duties detailed under the tasks section below. The At-Large member shall continue to serve until the board determines that a change of command is beneficial; the board votes and the majority agree to remove the At-Large Member, or through a resignation letter from the At-Large Member.

TASKS *(please note that this list is not exhaustive. Tasks could change as needed but agreed upon between the class coordinator and at-large member):*

- Generating classes & schedule (matrix)
- TA signups/ensuring every class has a TA
- During co-op hours, assist in troubleshooting any issues/problems that may arise
- Help with all meetings pertaining to classes/teachers etc....
- Check in on teachers during co-op hours to ensure they have all they need
- Help input information into the system/computer
- Creating documents as needed
- Help in reminding members of the correct procedure when it comes to absences

Article 7 – Committees

Section 1 – The Board may create committees as needed, including but not limited to fund raising, public relations, and program committees. The Board shall appoint all committee chairs.

Section 2 – No committee shall have any power to: fill vacancies on the Board, adopt, amend or repeal the by-laws; amend or repeal any resolution of the Board, or act on matters committed by the by-laws or resolution of the Board to another committee of the Board.

Article 8 - Indemnification

Section 1 – The organization shall indemnify any Board Members who are a party or are threatened to be made a party to any proceeding, administrative or investigative, as such a person was or is an authorized representative of the organization. This indemnification against expenses, judgments, fines, and amount paid in settlements actually or reasonably incurred by such a representative of the organization is contingent upon the determination that such person acted in good faith and in a manner he/she believed to be in, or not opposed to, the best interests of the organization. With respect to any criminal proceeding, indemnified persons shall have had no cause to believe that their conduct was unlawful.

Section 2 – To satisfy indemnification obligations the organization may maintain insurance, obtain a letter of credit, act as a self-insurer, create a reserve trust, cash collateral, enter into indemnification agreements, or use any other arrangement whatsoever in such amounts, at such costs, and upon other terms and conditions that the Board shall deem appropriate.

Section 3 – This indemnification shall be made only if the organization shall be advised by its Board of Directors acting (1) by a quorum consisting of directors who are not parties to such action or proceeding upon a finding, or (2) if a quorum is not obtainable with due diligence, upon the opinion in writing of legal counsel that, the director or officer has met the foregoing applicable standard of conduct. If the foregoing determination is to be made by the Board of Directors, it may rely on all questions of law, on the advice of independent legal counsel.

Article 9 – Amendments

Section 1 – These By-laws may be amended when deemed necessary by a 2/3 majority vote of the Board of Directors. Proposed amendments must be submitted to the Secretary and Board President and sent along with regular board meeting notices.

Article 10 - Conflict of Interest

Section 1 – Whenever a director or officer has a financial or personal interest in any matter coming before the board of directors, the affected person shall a) fully disclose the nature of the interest and b) withdraw from discussion, lobbying, and voting on the matter. Any transaction or vote involving a potential conflict of interest shall be approved only when a majority of disinterested directors determine that it is in the best interest of the corporation to do so. The minutes of meetings at which such votes are taken shall record such disclosure, abstention and rationale for approval.

Article 11 – Conflict Resolution Policy

Unfortunately, personality conflicts and misunderstandings will sometimes happen. Should these events arise, it is important that we agree and have a biblical view on how to effectively resolve the grievances, which the Lord has outlined for us in His Holy Word.

Based on the Matthew 18:15-17 approach, if a conflict arises between two or more adult members, the first step in handling the conflict will take place privately between the involved individuals only. If resolution is unsuccessful, everyone must notify the President of GVHSA of the matter for mediation.

Should a conflict arise with a teacher and student, the teacher will first address it with the student and the parent, if needed. If either party is unsatisfied or resolution* cannot be met, the parties then need to seek the assistance of their Class Group Team Leader. In the case resolution is still unsuccessful, the team leader will inform the Class Coordinator for mediation. As a last resort, the conflict will be taken to the President of GVHSA as an attempt to make a last attempt at reconciliation.

We desire as much as in our power to have a clear conscience before God and our fellow cooperative family and will, therefore, hold each other accountable in adhering to this critical policy.

*resolve/resolution—achieved when all parties reach mutual agreement or understanding