



SARATOGA

LEAH

LOVING EDUCATION AT HOME

Co-op Handbook

Saratoga LEAH Co-op Handbook

General Information:

Vision Statement:

Saratoga LEAH Co-op is a ministry of Saratoga LEAH, to provide all interested Saratoga LEAH member families an opportunity to participate in enriching their children's education in a cooperative environment one day each week.

What is Co-op?

Co-op provides supplementary education for our children that we cannot easily provide ourselves, allows kids to learn accountability and study skills in a fun group environment, and opportunity to develop friendships. This environment is a mixture of more structured classes (e.g. -hard science classes – chemistry, biology), enrichment classes (e.g., sign language & basic microscopes) and fellowship for the children and parents. Co-op classes are organized by ability and age level. The Saratoga LEAH Co-op is not intended to be a structured replacement for public, private, or Christian schools.

We believe that being involved in the education of our children is a unique ministry, and as such, co-op teachers and steering committee members must not only sign the Saratoga LEAH Statement of Faith and Codes of Conduct but must pledge to not teach in such a way as is contrary to Biblical teachings.

The Saratoga LEAH Co-op exists as a ministry of and under the leadership of Saratoga LEAH, a local chapter of New York State LEAH, Inc. (Loving Education at Home, Inc.). As such, all participating members of the co-op must maintain memberships in good standing in both Saratoga LEAH and NYS LEAH. All members have reviewed and signed the Statement of Faith, and Codes of Conduct of Saratoga LEAH and the Saratoga LEAH Co-op. All of these statements, and all of the guidelines, are put into place to help to ensure that we are providing a safe, God honoring place for our children to learn.

When and Where is Co-op?

Co-op meets at Perry Road Baptist Church located at 150 Perry Road in Saratoga Springs, NY, on Wednesdays. The co-op runs from September through May. Several breaks are observed during the co-op year.

How Can My Family Participate in Co-op?

Families that wish to participate in the co-op must be members in good standing of both NYS LEAH and Saratoga LEAH and have at least one child of grade-school age (5 years old). Families will have the choice of what classes they participate in. Parents must remain to teach or co-teach at least **1** class and assist where needed for the duration of the co-op day. A nursery is provided for families with pre-school children. All that is required is that when your children participate in co-op you are available to help. In order for co-op to run smoothly, we need teachers, and classroom assistants. As a guideline, classes are organized and grouped by grades. If you feel that your child would enjoy and do well in a different group for a particular class, please contact the co-op director. If a teacher feels that a child is struggling, we will work together to find a good solution.

When is the Registration Period for Co-op?

Teachers have first opportunity to register their children. General registration opens on a communicated date, usually in June. Registration will be available via our website, www.homeschool-life.com/NY/SaratogaLEAH. Classes will be filled on a first come first served basis. Mid-year student admissions will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. S.L. leadership may admit or reject any application.

What Costs are Involved in Co-op?

There is a **non-refundable** registration fee of **\$50** per child (maximum of **\$200** per family) for the entire year of co-op. Individual classes may have additional fees for course materials and/or textbooks, but every effort is made to keep costs low. **Class fees are non-transferable and non-refundable.** Costs can increase for older grades, but please keep in mind that this may be curriculum that you would need to purchase anyway, at home, and you will save on not buying the teacher's edition. Fees are due at time of registration, and your child's spot will not be saved in classes until they are received. Fees that are late will have a \$5.00 charge added for every week overdue, up to two weeks. After that, admission to the co-op may be revoked. If fees present a financial difficulty to your family, families may petition the co-op steering committee for assistance.

How will I know if Co-op is closed due to inclement weather?

Unless marked otherwise, classes are slated to run for the duration of the co-op year (September – May).

To communicate a co-op session cancellation, members will be notified via email, SMS text message (if allowed), and on social media.

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Co-op Guidelines and Codes of Conduct:

In order to create and maintain an environment where learning can occur, students must show respect for authority, and be able to enjoy all of the benefits of this co-op, it is important to establish some basic guidelines.

The guidelines and codes of conduct are as follows:

Parent Expectations/Code of Conduct:

1. I understand that my child's education and discipline is my responsibility, and that the Saratoga LEAH Co-op program merely helps me in that endeavor.
2. I understand that this is a cooperative education project and that every family unit must have at least one parent (or other designated adult) available during the entire co-op time who is willing and able to teach/co-teach/assist. This means that errands, appointments, etc., should be scheduled outside of co-op time, and no one should be leaving early nor coming late, as this undermines the functioning of Co-op and shortchanges the other participants. Extenuating circumstances will be considered, but joining Co-op requires a level of commitment that means you do not schedule other appointments or activities for Wednesdays during co-op.
3. I understand that I will be required to teach or co-teach at least 1 class (after the 1st year), assist in a class when needed, and serve in other capacities as needed. Children will not be registered for co-op until their parents have made a commitment to help.
4. I understand that my child(ren) will be held to the Saratoga LEAH Co-op Student Code of Conduct. If an issue arises the teacher will speak to the parent. If the issue continues the teacher will bring the matter before the co-op Steering Committee.
5. If I have a difficulty with a class or teacher, I will communicate it, respectfully to the teacher first, in private. Issues shall not be aired with others. If the issue is not resolved, the teacher and parents are to discuss the situation with the Co-op Steering Committee.
6. When I enroll my child in a class that requires "outside work" I will supervise that work at home. My child(ren) will come to co-op prepared to learn and participate.
7. I will be vigilant about keeping sick germs at home! If your child has had a fever over 100.5 degrees, vomiting, diarrhea, or other contagious illness within the 24 hours up to and including co-op, please do not bring them to co-op. If they become sick with any of the same during co-op, please take them home. Be sure to notify the co-op director, so that your classroom responsibilities can be covered.
8. **I understand that promptness and attendance is required for the smooth running of the co-op.** However, if I am unable to attend, I will first notify my assistant(s) and then the co-op director as soon as possible.
9. Since co-op is a cooperative effort and each person's contribution is critical to the success of the whole program, **I understand that if I have more than 4 absences for the year, my family may be asked to leave co-op, and readmission for the following year may be denied. Extenuating circumstances will be considered on a case-by-case basis.**
10. I agree that my children will bring no electronic devices (cell phones, I Pods, MP3 players, hand-held games, etc.), unless needed for classes.
11. If my child has a learning disability or special need, I will discuss this with each of his/her teachers before co-op begins.
12. I will do my best to make sure that we go home with all of our book bags, lunch boxes, etc.
13. Parents will refrain from unnecessary use of electronic devices (ex. I-Pods, cell phones) during instructional time.

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14. Parents will check their emails for general co-op updates, and for emails from teachers, understanding that most communication will occur via email.
15. One of the “co-operation jobs” for parents is clean-up at the close of co-op. We need to leave the church better than we found it.
16. I will notify teachers and the co-op director about any medical conditions, allergies, etc. for each of my children.
17. I will provide emergency medical information and a release form giving permission for medical professionals to treat my children. This information will be maintained by the co-op director.

Teacher/Assistant Expectations/Code of Conduct:

1. **Be on time and be prepared!**
2. Teachers deserve respect and they must model this respect in the way they treat their students.
3. Have a few back up plans in place in case you are unable to attend and communicate these plans to your assistant and the co-op director. If you know you will be absent, talk to assistant(s) and decide on a plan. Then call the co-op director ASAP.
4. As the teacher or assistant, you are required to enforce the co-op student code of conduct. We will not allow the behavior of any student to sour the educational opportunities of the others in the class. Be reminded that there is to be no physical discipline of any kind.
5. You will contact the parents ASAP about any student problems or concerns.
6. You will bring any unresolved parent/teacher issues to the attention of the co-op director.
7. Let your students know on the first day of class what things you expect from them, determine how you will grade or evaluate the course, what penalties there are for not doing the assignments, etc.
8. You will keep good records and return papers and assignments in a timely fashion if students are expected to complete assignments outside of class.
9. Teachers will provide a syllabus or course description before or at the start the co-op year. Expectations will be made clear to parents and students up front as much as is possible. When appropriate (all school age classes) teachers will communicate weekly assignments to parents via email.
10. Even though we all agree to a basic statement of faith, there will be many different theological viewpoints represented at co-op. It is important to respect those differences and to defer questions about those differences to the home. Stick to the basics.
11. A copier will be available for use during the co-op day. Please keep copies of pictures to a minimum to save on ink.
12. If an accident or injury occurs in class, please communicate this to the co-op director, who will notify the parent, either immediately or before the end of co-op. An incident report may be required.
13. Every effort will be made to have two adults in each classroom at all times. Similarly, one adult should never be alone with one child who is not their own child. When a child is taken to the restroom, the adult is to wait outside of the restroom for the child and return him/her to their class.

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14. When guest speakers are planned for a class, the teacher is expected to clear the speaker ahead of time with the co-op director. The teacher is then expected to notify parents via email of the upcoming guest speaker.

Student Expectations/Code of Conduct:

1. **Classroom Conduct:** I pledge to work, study, complete assignments, participate in class, and be courteous and respectful at all times. I will listen to my instructor, obey the class rules, and conduct myself in a manner that would be pleasing to Christ.
2. Because “electronic” devices (cell phones, iPods, MP3 players, hand-held games, etc.) might be a distraction during co-op, I will leave those items at home or in the car, unless needed for class. If a device is found on the premises, the device will be taken away and given to the parent for safe keeping.
3. **Physical Contact with Others:** I will keep my body to myself. Conducting myself in a Christ like manner means I will love my neighbor as myself -- no pulling hair, kicking, hitting or wrestling allowed (even in play).
4. **Proper Demeanor** - My body belongs to God. Therefore, I will not use inappropriate hand gestures or engage in physical displays of affection. I will also dress in a manner that is respectful to my brothers and sisters in Christ. Modesty in dress is required, as well as appropriate language/imagery of articles of clothing.
5. **Proper Language** - I will speak in a way that honors our Lord. I will speak in a way that honors and respects others. This means I will not swear or use offensive language. My tongue will be used to encourage others and not tear them down.
6. **Respect the Property of others** - If something belongs to someone else, I will not use it or take it without permission. I will also respect the property and grounds of the building where co-op is held. That means I obey the property rules and agree to clean up when I am done.
7. **Health & Safety** - I will not come to co-op sick, nor will I use tobacco products, alcoholic beverages, or illegal drugs. I agree not to have possession of, or use any fireworks, firearms, knives and/or weapons of any kind while at co-op.
8. Students will not be disruptive in the classroom, and will understand that teachers do have a three step process in place to deal with behavioral problems.

Classroom Behavior Expectations/Code of Conduct/Discipline:

Teachers will be expected to set specific classroom rules and expectations that are clearly communicated to the students and made available for the parents as well. If a teacher feels that a student’s behavior is inappropriate, there is a three-step process to be followed:

1. The teacher will address the student discretely about the problem. At the teacher’s discretion a conversation may be held with the parent.
2. If the problem continues, the student will be asked to leave the class for the day and be taken to their parent/responsible adult.
3. If the problem occurs again, the teacher will request a meeting with the child’s parent and a member of the co-op Steering Committee. All efforts will be made to resolve the problem in a mutually satisfying way. If, however, it cannot be, the child may be asked to permanently leave the class.

If problems occur consistently across various classes, the co-op director and one member of the steering committee will meet with the child and his or her parent to attempt to resolve the issue. If a mutually satisfying solution cannot be reached, for the safety and benefit of all of the children in co-op, the steering committee reserves the right to remove this child from co-op.

It is our hope that co-op would provide a positive and productive learning environment for our students. Please pray for the teachers and students. It is our hope that we can work together and exhibit Godly love as a community of believers.

Co-op Positions and Job Descriptions:

Administrative:

- **Steering Committee:**
 - Determine the classes to be offered for the co-op year.
 - Determine the class schedule.
 - Determine room assignments
 - Canvas the Chapter membership for individuals to fill the co-op Instructional positions.
 - Handle any disciplinary matters (in accordance with the disciplinary procedures).
 - Advise the Chapter Leadership on the following:
 - Annual Budget for the co-op
 - Registration fees, class costs, and fee structure.
 - Modifications to co-op policies and any relevant forms.
 - Modifications to the registration form and process for co-op.
 - Communications to the chapter of matters related to co-op.
 - Set up time for Fire Drills (twice a year)
 - Develop Phone Tree
- **Co-op Director**
 - Registration Coordinator
 - Substitute Instructional Coordinator
 - Orientation Coordinator
 - Handles co-op communications
 - Over sees opening and closing activities
 - Responsible for the Phone Tree
- **Facility Monitor:**
 - Greet visitors
 - Sign in / Sign out?
 - Supplies Coordinator
 - Notifies Church if supplies are low
 - Inspect rooms after co-op
 - Communicate with teachers/co-op director if rooms not cleaned
 - Notify church of any damage to the rooms or furniture.

Instructional:

- **Teacher:**
 - Determine the curriculum used for their class.
 - Determine the supplies/equipment needed for their class.
 - Present brief outline of the course to the Steering Committee.
 - Present budget for the class to the Steering Committee.
 - Responsible for cleaning up their own rooms.
 - Notify the Facility Monitor of any damage to the rooms or furniture.
 - Snacks as required (for Pre-K and Kindergarten teachers only)
 - Guest Instructional Programs
 - Grading / Providing Progress Reports for Parents
 - Develop a backup plan for the Assistant and co-op director in the case of the teacher's absence.
 - Advises co-op Steering Committee of class length (1 hour, 1 ½ hour, or 2 hour).

- **Teacher Assistant:**
 - Responsible for assisting with the cleaning up their own rooms.
 - Be able to back up the teacher.
 - Be familiar with the class materials
 - Assist with maintaining class order.

- **Nursery Teacher:**
 - Determine the supplies/equipment needed for their class.
 - Supervise the Nursery Coordinator Assistant and Nursery Helpers.
 - Clean and Sanitize toys, and equipment used.
 - Prepare snacks.
 - Supervise Nursery Helpers

- **Nursery Teacher Assistant:**
 - Determine the supplies/equipment needed for their class.
 - Supervise the Nursery Coordinator Assistant and Nursery Helpers.
 - Clean and Sanitize toys, and equipment used.
 - Prepare snacks.
 - Supervise Nursery Helpers

- **Nursery Helper (ages 12 and up):**
 - Assist Nursery Teacher and/or Nursery Teacher Assistant.

- **Student Helpers (ages 14 and up):**
 - Teachers have the option to utilize students to assist them during their class(es).

- **Physical Activity Teacher:**
 - Coordinate and Plan Games and Activities

- **Physical Activity Assistant:**
 - Assist Physical Activity Teacher

Saratoga LEAH Co-op Membership Registration Form

(This sheet needs to be completed and returned, one per family.)

Statement of Purpose

Saratoga LEAH is a Christian organization. Its members are like-minded families dedicated to observing the Biblical commands of Deuteronomy 6:6-8, Proverbs 22:6, Luke 2:52, and Ephesians 6:4. Saratoga LEAH Co-op promotes home education as the scriptural design for education and views institutional education as an alternative to the home.

Statement of Faith

1. We believe the Bible to be the infallible Word of God, the supreme and final authority for all faith and life.
2. We believe that there is one God, eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
3. We believe in the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, His virgin birth, His sinless life, His miracles, His vicarious and atoning death through His shed blood on the cross, His bodily resurrection, His ascension, and His imminent bodily return in power and glory.
4. We believe that man was created in the image of God, but fell into sin and is therefore lost. Only those who put their faith in Jesus Christ alone, not trusting in any personal works, can be eternally saved from just payment for their sin and guaranteed eternal life.
5. We believe that salvation is the free gift of God brought to the sinner by grace and received by personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ alone, Whose substitutionary death on the cross paid the penalty for man's sin.
6. We believe that the ministry of the Holy Spirit is to convict men of sin, indwell, guide, instruct, and empower the believer for godly living and service.
7. We believe in the spiritual unity of believers through our common faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and that individual doctrinal differences which may exist, outside of the aforementioned (1-6), should not hinder the unity of Christian home educators.

Statement of Dress and Conduct:

For the purpose of bringing glory to God and to avoid causing an offense to others, we ask our members to please ensure that all dress at Saratoga LEAH is modest. In addition, we ask that all language and activity be in accord with biblical principles of speech and behavior.

Co-op Membership Criteria:

1. All participants must be members in good standing with the Saratoga LEAH Chapter. Dual memberships are welcome.
2. All members must be in agreement with the statement of purpose.
3. All members must be in agreement with the statement of faith.
4. All members must agree to abide by the statement of dress and conduct.
5. All members must agree to abide by the guidelines and codes of conduct.
6. All members must understand that Saratoga LEAH is not a local church. Saratoga LEAH encourages all of its members to be active members of a local church.
7. All members agree to pay the yearly LEAH dues.
8. All members must pay the \$50.00 per child (max \$200 per family) non-refundable co-op registration fee.

To become a member of the Saratoga LEAH Co-op, please indicate with your signature that you have read this document and are in agreement with the membership criteria.

Signature_____Date_____

Signature_____Date_____

Please make checks payable to "Saratoga LEAH"

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Handbook Agreement

(This sheet needs to be completed and returned, one per family.)

Child's Name:

Child's Age:

Child's Birthday:

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Handbook Agreement

(This sheet needs to be completed and returned, one per family.)

I have read the Saratoga LEAH Co-op Handbook, agree to follow the listed guidelines, and agree to be responsible for my child doing so.

Parent Signature / Printed Name

Date

Children's Signatures:

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MEDICAL RELEASE

(Please complete one release per child)

Although it is our mandatory policy that parents remain on site with their children during co-op, it is sometimes possible for children to attend under the supervision of a "substitute" family representative. In order to prepare for emergency situations only, Saratoga LEAH Co-op opts to keep this medical information/release on file. This info is not shared with anyone outside the emergency need-to-know and is kept in the strictest confidence. As parent/guardian of _____ I authorize the treatment by a qualified and licensed medical practitioner for the following minor in the event of a medical emergency which, in the opinion of the first responders and / or attending physician, may endanger his/her life, cause disfigurement, physical impairment, or undue discomfort if delayed. This authority is granted, and we will make a reasonable effort to reach you as soon as possible.

Is this child currently on ANY medication such as Aspirin, Tylenol, Antibiotics, etc.?

Yes _____ No _____ If yes, please list: _____

It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to notify us of any changes to the list of medications.

Does this child have allergies?

Yes _____ No _____

If yes, please list all allergies and treatment. This includes **medication** and **food**.

Insurance Information:

Authority to Sign

I represent and warrant that I am a parent or legal guardian of the child named above and have the full power and authority to enter into this Medical Release on behalf of my child. By signing below, I acknowledge that I have read and understand this document, and represent that all information provided is accurate.

Parent or Guardian Signature

Date Signed

Printed Name and Phone Number

Emergency Contact: Name and Phone Number

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Saratoga LEAH Media Release Form

(This sheet needs to be completed and returned, one per family.)

Names of Participants:

RELEASE OF LIABILITY

Prior to my child's involvement in the event activities, I acknowledge that involvement of my child with Saratoga LEAH (S.L.) may involve risk of property damage and of personal injury, illness or even death, including but not limited to the risks arising from transportation– related activities, recreational activities, accidents in and around facilities, adverse weather conditions, and injuries and illness as a result of food-borne illnesses and allergic reactions.

By signing this Parental Consent and Release of Liability, I state that my child is fully capable of safely participating in all S.L. Co-op activities, and I expressly assume all risks of my child's involvement, whether such risks are known or unknown to me at this time. I further generally release Perry Road Baptist Church (PRBC) and Saratoga LEAH, its directors, officers, employees, volunteers, and agents, and other participants at the co-op, from any and all claims that I or my child may have against any of them, whether on or off PRBC grounds. This Release of Liability is given on behalf of myself, my child, and any heirs, family, estate, administrators, and personal representatives of me and my child.

MEDIA RELEASE

I understand that at S.L. Co-op or related activities, my child or I may be photographed, filmed, or taped. I agree to allow my and my child's photo, video or film likeness to be used for Saratoga LEAH for any legitimate purpose by Saratoga LEAH. We will not make any claim for invasion of privacy or any other legal right in connection with such uses by Saratoga LEAH. When an identification of a child is made, only the first name of the adult or child will be used and may include with the name of the church, Saratoga LEAH, and or NYS LEAH.

Please check the box and initial if your family wishes to opt-out of the Media Release. Initial: _____

Authority to Sign

I represent and warrant that I am a parent or legal guardian of the child named above and have the full power and authority to enter into this Release of Liability and Media Release on behalf of my child. By signing below, I acknowledge that I have read and understand this document and also represent that all information provided is accurate.

Parent or Guardian Signature

Date Signed

Printed Name and Phone Number

Emergency Contact: Name and Phone Number