



## **STATEMENT OF MISSION**

Our mission is to build a Christ-centered co-op community, with a grace-filled culture, that equips, supports, and encourages homeschooling families and proclaims Christ's leadership over all aspects of our lives. We desire to bring together homeschooling families who love God and want to share the knowledge of Jesus Christ with the next generation, by providing academic and enrichment classes, sports activities, and clubs from a Christian worldview, as well as opportunities for mentoring and friendships. Our teachers love God and communicate Biblical teaching and Christian values to our students.

## **STATEMENT OF FAITH**

We believe that the Bible is the inspired and infallible Word of God that speaks with final authority concerning truth, morality, and the proper conduct of mankind. For purposes of doctrine, practice, policy, and discipline, our governing board is Branches' final interpretive authority on the Bible's meaning and application.

We believe in one God, eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

We believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person to reflect His image as either male or female; but that each person is by nature a sinner, and alienated from God.

We believe that salvation and reconciliation come only from God, by grace; that God in love gave His only Son, Jesus, to die on the cross for our sin, thereby purchasing the redemption of those who believe in Him.

We believe that marriage is prescribed by God as a sacred, covenant relationship between one man and one woman, symbolizing the union of Christ and His church, and all forms of sexual activity outside of marriage is sin.

We believe that every Christian, through the power of Jesus Christ, is called to live a life set apart that will bear fruit to the glory of God, and sinful behavior, or even advocacy of sinful behavior, dishonors God and should not be encouraged.

We believe that God loves every person and therefore we need to treat others with the compassion, love, kindness, and dignity that He shows us.



## STATEMENT OF EDUCATION

We believe that it is the parents' role and responsibility to educate their children individually on topics of a sensitive nature, including:

- Political Views
- Doctrinal Views
- Sexuality Views
- Dietary Views

Out of respect for each family's decision on when and how to teach these matters to their children, all teachers, volunteers, parents, and students are discouraged from discussing these topics with other **children** at Branches unless in a clearly defined class.

## GUIDELINES & STANDARDS

- Branches is a cooperative program. All member families must do their part to help Branches succeed. Member families must sign up for the appropriate amount of job credits. All member families must have at least one on-campus job. A job that is off campus can be done for the maximum amount of 3 job credits toward parent job requirements.
- Branches is not a drop off program. A responsible adult must be present to care for your child(ren) at all times. In an emergency or unusual situation, like illness, you can have another parent care for your child. A Temporary Guardianship Form must be filled out and turned into the Snackbar before you leave campus. Otherwise, all parents are expected to stay on campus at all times.
- All member families must sign up for volunteer jobs to participate in Branches. Families who are on campus (whether enrolled in a class or not) for 3 or less class periods need to earn 6 parent credits. Families who are on campus (whether enrolled in a class or not) for 4 or more class periods need to earn 8 parent credits. All volunteering adults must have successfully completed a background check through the company recommended by Branches; have read and agreed to abide by the Statements of Mission, Faith, and Education, the Guidelines and Standards, and the Code of Culture; and be approved to work at Branches.
- Parent jobs must be covered at all times. If a floater is needed to cover a parent job, then you must contact the floater coordinator on your campus.
- A floater can be used up to *four* times a semester. If a parent is missing more than *four* times a semester, they must find their own replacement with friend or family member that have successfully completed a Branches background check; have read and agreed to abide by the Statements of Mission, Faith, and Education, the Guidelines and Standards, and the Code of Culture; and be approved to work at Branches. As a cooperative it is imperative to fulfill your parent job requirements.



- All floaters are needed each week. They are required to check in and respond to the floater coordinator via text or in person for each hour they are signed up to work. If a floater is missing more than *four* times a semester, they will also need to find their own replacement, with friend or family member that have successfully completed a Branches background check; have read and agreed to abide by the Statements of Mission, Faith, and Education, the Guidelines and Standards, and the Code of Culture; and be approved to work at Branches.
- Class fees must be paid by the due date. Failure to pay, or make special payment arrangements, by due date will result in membership suspension. Member families with a remaining balance will not be allowed to register for the next semester's classes. Special payment arrangements cannot be made to extend payment past mid-semester.
- Parent teachers, assistants, and floaters must show up, be on time, and remain in the classroom for the entire class period.
- Students must show up on time and remain in class for the entire class period. If a student needs to leave, they are required to get permission from the teacher before they do so.
- Parents need to monitor their children when not in class.
- Volunteering member teachers must fill out the teacher application form in order to teach a class at Branches. To maintain the integrity of our mission and Christian identity, all teachers must affirm in writing that they desire to further the mission of Branches, their personal beliefs are consistent with the Statement of Faith, and they will act consistently with the standards set forth in the Guidelines and Standards and Code of Culture.
- Children are encouraged to wear the Branches t-shirts.
- Branches is a nut-free campus.
- Branches does not have a formal dress code, however all private areas must be covered.
- Biting or aggressive behavior in class will not be tolerated. If you have a child that has issues with biting or aggression, that child will need to have a one on one aide to help them. The parent will be responsible for finding the aide.
- Cheating, stealing, bullying, drug use, profanity, obscenity, sexual immorality, personal appearance or conduct contrary to one's biological sex, dishonor to the Word of God, disrespect to the leadership of the group, or continued disobedience to the established standards of this group will not be tolerated.



- Discrimination or harassment on the basis of race (including hairstyle/texture), color, sex, age, disability, marital status, citizenship, national origin, genetic information, or any other characteristic protected by law, is prohibited and will not be tolerated at Branches.
- Threats or statements of violence against anyone for any reason at Branches, Branches events, or on group chats (official or unofficial) involving Branches members or students will not be tolerated.
- Sexual harassment constitutes discrimination and is illegal under federal, state and local laws. For the purposes of this policy, “sexual harassment” is defined, as in the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Guidelines, as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when, for example: a) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual’s employment, submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual, or c) such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual’s performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment. All sexual harassment of any kind is prohibited.



## **SICKNESS POLICY**

It is the personal responsibility of each member to be aware of those sick around them and to abide by the Branches' sick policy for class days, special events, field trips, etc.

If any member of your family has these symptoms, please have that member stay home:

- Fever of 100 degrees or higher within the last 24 hours
- Signs of possible severe illness such as uncontrolled coughing, difficulty breathing, wheezing, persistent crying, lethargy, or severe sore throat.
- Vomiting or diarrhea within the last 24 hours.
- Rash that has been accompanied by fever or behavior change.

Any student attending class day with the above symptoms will be brought to the check-in table, where parents will be contacted for pick-up.

## CODE OF CULTURE

The purpose of the Branches Code of Culture is to promote a thriving environment where families feel safe and happy, and are empowered in their homeschooling journey. All parents and children are encouraged to:

### B – Blessing

- Be a blessing by having a grace-filled attitude.
- Be a blessing by treating others with kindness, compassion, dignity, and respect.

### R – Responsible

- Be responsible by working hard in volunteer jobs and classes.
- Be responsible by keeping the campus and outdoor areas clean.

### A – Adaptable

- Be adaptable by having a positive attitude no matter the situation.
- Be adaptable by jumping in to help where needed.

### N – Noble

- Be noble by introducing yourself to someone and making a new friend.
- Be noble by having a servant's heart.

### C – Considerate

- Be considerate by actively listening to your teachers and parent helpers.
- Be considerate by showing up to your jobs and classes on time.

### H – Helpful

- Be helpful by remembering your items when you leave.
- Be helpful by looking for ways to solve problems.

### E – Encouraging

- Be encouraging by vocalizing the good in those around you.
- Be encouraging by lifting up each other in times of need.

### S – Safe

- Be safe by thinking before you act.
- Be safe by being aware of your surroundings

## CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Conflict is a normal part of any healthy community. Learning to work through issues between each other will make our community stronger.

Branches uses the Matthew 18 Biblical model for conflict resolution. A Christian who has a conflict with another Christian is called to address the matter with the other person personally. When matters are handled privately, misunderstanding can be addressed, and there is great potential for the other person to respond positively. In addition, a private meeting helps to avoid the problem of gossip that can occur when a matter is taken to others instead of the person involved.

- **Student to Student Conflicts** - Go directly to the person you are upset with and share your problem or concern with grace and love. Both parties should have an open dialogue and be willing to hear each other out. If needed, parents should help the students work through their issue.
- **Parent to Student Conflicts** - Parents should go directly to the parent of the student they are having a conflict with and share the problem or concern with grace and love. Parent of student should be open and willing to hear other parent out and have an open dialogue to work through issues. The parent of the student can then allow the other parent to talk directly to the student if they feel comfortable. If not, the parent of the student can explain the problem or concern to their child. Student should be willing to have an open dialogue to work through issues.  
NOTE - This is not related to parent teachers guiding students in classes with normal classroom rules and discipline.
- **Student to Parent Conflicts** - If a student feels comfortable, they can go directly to the parent and share their problem or concern with grace and love. Parent should be willing to hear the student out and have open dialogue to work through issues. Student's parent should get involved if either party feels like it is necessary.
- **Parent to Parent Conflicts** - Go directly to the person you are upset with and share your problem or concern with grace and love. Both parties should have an open dialogue and be willing to hear each other out and work through issues.

If the conflict at this point is still unresolved, the parents should go to the Campus Director, who will help mediate the conflict.



## **AFFIRMATION AGREEMENT**

I hereby affirm that I have read the Branches Statements of Mission, Faith, and Education, the Guidelines and Standards, and the Code of Culture and have discussed these items with my children.

I certify that I consent to and will submit to all policies and standards of this group, and I acknowledge that violation of these terms will carry consequences that could include dismissal from Branches.

I understand that admission to Branches is a privilege, not a right, and admission for one year does not guarantee automatic admission for future years.

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Print Name

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Signature

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Date





Supporting Families • Creating Friendships • Learning Together

*Jesus said, "I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit." - John 15:5*

## **Assumption of the Risk and Waiver of Liability Relating to COVID-19 and Participation in Branches Homeschool Community**

In consideration of being allowed to participate in any way in **Branches Homeschool Community** related events and activities, the undersigned:

1. Agree that the parent(s) and/or legal guardian(s) of the participant should inspect the facilities and equipment to be used, and if the parent or guardian believes anything is unsafe, he or she should immediately advise leader of such condition(s) and refuse to participate. This is including but not limited to any special events or classes taking place on a church campus, in homes, various event facilities; group classes including, but not limited to: woodworking, science labs, sports and fitness type classes, cooking, drivers education, and so forth.

2. Acknowledge the contagious nature of COVID-19. Acknowledge there is a risk that, by participating in Branches Homeschool Community classes, events, and programming I and/or my children could contract the COVID-19 virus or other illnesses/viruses, and I accept this risk and nonetheless voluntarily choose to allow my family to participate.

Branches Homeschool Community has put in place some preventative measures to reduce the spread of COVID-19; however, Branches Homeschool Community, cannot guarantee that you or your family will not become infected with COVID-19. Further, attending any events with members of Branches Homeschool Community could increase your risk and your child(s)'s risk of contracting COVID-19. We are putting into place certain protocols we hope will minimize the potential to contract and/or spread COVID-19. These are merely precautions, not solutions or guarantees against spreading or contracting this virus. We must also make note that we cannot guarantee social distancing in most situations.

I further acknowledge that I must comply with all procedures that are put in place by Branches Homeschool Community to reduce the spread of illness including but not limited to COVID-19. I attest that myself or any member of my family will not attend any event, class, or meeting if they/we have any of the following symptoms: fever of 100 degrees or higher, cough or shortness of breath, chills or repeated shaking with chills, body aches/fatigue, sore throat, new loss of smell or taste.

By signing this agreement, I acknowledge the contagious nature of COVID-19 and assume the risk that my child(s) and I may be exposed to or infected by COVID-19 by attending any programming, classes, or events with Branches Homeschool Community, and that such exposure or infection may result in personal injury, illness, permanent disability, and/or death.

3. Acknowledge and fully understand that each member/participant may be engaging in activities that involve risk of serious injury, including permanent disability and death, and severe social and economic losses which might result not only from their own actions, inactions, or negligence but the action, inaction, and negligence of others, or the condition of the premises or of any equipment used. Further, that there may be other risks not known to us or not reasonably foreseeable at this time.



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4. I agree to assume all of the foregoing risks and accept sole responsibility (including financial responsibility) for any injury to my child(s) or myself (including, but not limited to, personal injury, disability, and/or death), illness, damage, loss, claim, liability, or expense, of any kind, that I or my child(s) may experience or incur in connection with my child(s)'s attendance or participation in any Branches Homeschool Community programming.

5. Release, waive, discharge, and covenant not to sue Branches Homeschool Community its affiliated clubs, their respective administrators, directors, agents, and other members of the organization, other participants, sponsoring agencies, sponsors, advertisers, and if applicable, owners and lessors or premises used to conduct the event, all of which are hereinafter referred to as "releases," from any and all liability to each of the undersigned, his or her heirs and next of kin for any and all claims, demands, losses or damages on account of injury, including death and damage to property, caused or alleged to be caused in whole or in part by the negligence of the releases or otherwise.

6. I understand and agree that this release includes any claims based on the actions, omissions, or negligence of Branches Homeschool Community, its leadership team, agents, and members, whether a COVID-19 infection occurs before, during, or after participation in any Branches Homeschool Community programming.

7. If a dispute over this agreement or any claim for damages arises, parent(s) and/or legal guardian(s) of the participant agrees to resolve the matter through a mutually acceptable alternative dispute resolution process. If the parent(s) and/or legal guardian(s) of the participant and Branches Homeschool Community cannot agree upon such a process, the dispute will be submitted to a three member arbitration panel for resolution pursuant to the rules of the American Arbitration Association.

I HAVE READ THE ABOVE WAIVER AND RELEASE, UNDERSTAND IT, AND SIGN IT VOLUNTARILY. I understand and agree that my signature below represents a signature on behalf of myself and each of my children.

Signature of parent or guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of each child:

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|-------|-------|
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |

Date of Signature \_\_\_\_\_