

**Reaching for Excellence Among
Christian Homeschoolers
(REACH)**

Parent Handbook

*This handbook is dedicated
to our Lord Jesus Christ
and the children with
whom He has blessed us.*

Revision Log

Revision	Changes	Date
Baseline	Updated, added and deleted sections. Reorganized sections and corrected formatting and typos	10/3/18
1	Added section on library, fees, social media and information gathering.	3/11/20
2	Removed outdated sections. Updated payment policies and fee due dates, added technology, special needs, health policy, and various other items.	3/1/25

Table of Contents

1. Abbreviations and Definitions	4
2. Mission Statement.....	4
3. History and Current Structure	4
4. Leadership	5
5. Roles & Responsibilities	6
a) The REACH Board of Directors:	6
b) The Treasurer:	6
c) The Head Coordinator:.....	6
d) The Assistant Head Coordinator:	7
e) The Admin Assistant:	7
f) The Department Coordinator:.....	7
g) The Encourager:	8
h) The Teacher:.....	8
6. Financial Policy	9
7. Encourager’s Room	10
8. Member Qualifications.....	10
9. Application Procedure.....	10
10. Educational Philosophy.....	11
a) Class Offerings.....	11
b) Special Accommodations	11
11. Commitment, Continuity and Quality	12
12. Communication	12
13. ID Badges.....	13
14. Showcase Programs and Graduation	13
15. Afternoon and Off-Campus Fellowship	13
16. Enrollment.....	13

17. Teaching Commitment.....	14
18. Spiritual Focus.....	14
19. Planning and Teaching Guidelines	15
20. Department Assistant (<i>On-Call</i>)	16
21. Biblical Peacemaking.....	16
a) Concerns regarding classroom content/issue	16
b) Personal Peacemaking	17
c) Assisted Peacemaking.....	17
22. Member Conduct.....	18
a) Behavior Guidelines: Respectful.....	18
b) Dress Code: Modest.....	19
c) Building Rules: Safe and Respectful	19
23. Discipline Procedure	20
a) For minor inappropriate behavior or attire:.....	20
b) For major inappropriate behavior or attire:	20
24. Health and Wellness.....	21
25. Safety – Child Protection Policy.....	21
26. Social Media Policy.....	22
27. Active Shooter Situation.....	22
28. Fire.....	23
29. Injuries.....	23
30. Severe Weather Policy	24
31. Exceptions to REACH Policy.....	25

1. Abbreviations and Definitions

Occasionally, we homeschoolers have our own lingo, which can be confusing if you are not familiar with it. The following are common abbreviations and terms you may hear:

REACH – Reaching for Excellence Among Christian Homeschoolers

UBC – University Baptist Church

HeadCo (HCO) – Head Coordinator

DeCo (DCO) – Department Coordinator

AA – Administrative Assistant

PRES – Preschool (Birth - PK)

EE – Early Elementary (K - 2nd grade)

UE – Upper Elementary (3rd – 5th grade)

INT – Intermediate (6th – 8th grade)

HS – High School (9th – 12th grade)

MAF – Medical Accommodations Form

Secondary – term used to combine both intermediate & high school departments

CCISD – Clear Creek Independent School District

HSLDA – Home School Legal Defense Association - a legal defense and information organization for home school issues across the nation.

THSC – Texas Home School Coalition – includes three branches: a legal defense organization for Texas members, a state-wide support network and a political action committee. Members receive the THSC Home Educator Quarterly magazine. THSC annually sponsors a THSC conference (Woodlands), Home School Leaders' Conference, Texas Home School Week, and bi-annual Capitol Days (Austin).

GCCHS - Gulf Coast Christian Home Scholars - a support group of Christian families sharing friendship, emotional support, prayer, home education resources, and group activities. We welcome all families who are seriously considering or who have chosen to home educate any or all of their children.

2. Mission Statement

REACH Co-op is a cooperative teaching ministry of Christian home school families who gather together to share our talents for the benefit of our children. Together we provide a Christian learning environment to supplement our own home schools from birth through 12th grade.

3. History and Current Structure

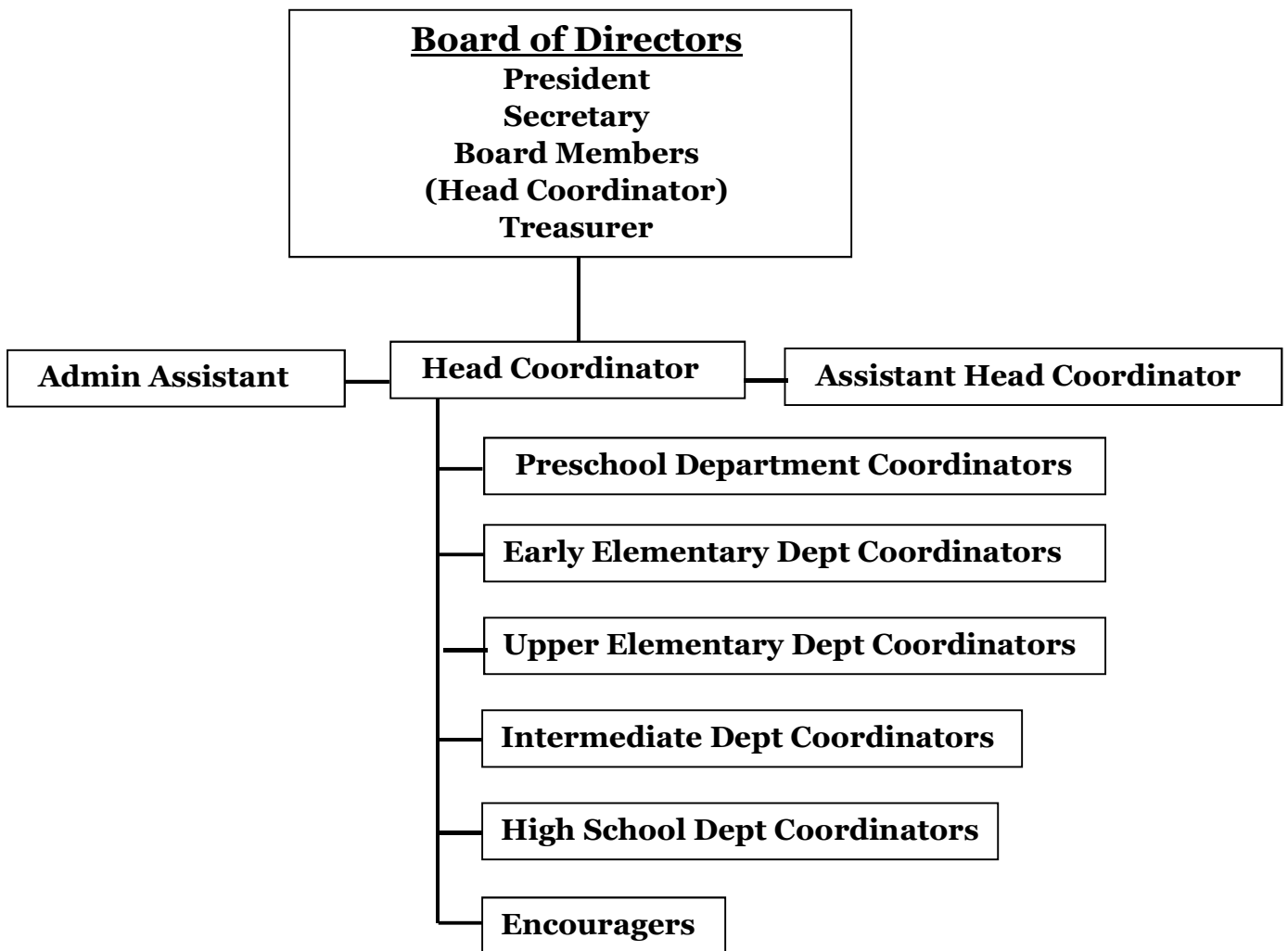
REACH Co-op began meeting at Bay Area Christian Church in the fall of 1996 and has changed locations twice due to steady growth throughout the years. We have been meeting at University Baptist Church (UBC) since the fall of 2002. Each year's program depends on building availability, student enrollment, and parental servanthood.

We meet on Friday mornings from 8:30 am to 12:30 pm, for 29 weeks, from August through April. The fall semester for 3rd through 12th graders is 15 weeks, including the first Friday that is a “Kick-Off”, and the spring semester is 14 weeks. For Preschool and Early Elementary, the year is divided into four seven-week quarters. We do not meet on major national or Christian holidays and we take an extended Christmas break.

4. Leadership

REACH is led by a Head Coordinator and Assistant Head Coordinator and governed by a Board of Directors, all of whom are, or have been, co-op parents who are committed to prayer and to the Lord’s leading for the co-op. In addition, one or two Department Coordinators serve and prayerfully lead each grade-level department. See organization chart below in Figure 1. See the REACH website for contact information for all leadership positions (after you sign into your account click on the Leadership Contacts link on the left menu). Website link: https://www.homeschool-life.com/375/index_public. This handbook is also available on the REACH website after you log in to your account by clicking on the REACH Handbook link on the left menu.

Figure 1 – REACH Co-op Organizational Chart



5. Roles & Responsibilities

a) The REACH Board of Directors:

The board consists of three to five members. The Head Coordinator is also a board member. Board positions include President, Secretary, Treasurer and member. The board is responsible for setting the strategic goals of the co-op, resolving any issues that affect the co-op, reviewing background check reports, interviewing, and deciding on individuals for leadership positions, and deciding on any exceptions to policy. Refer to REACH Co-op Bylaws for specifics on Board positions and operations. The Bylaws are available on the REACH website after you login to your account and click on the REACH Board Info link on the left menu.

b) The Treasurer:

The Treasurer is responsible for overseeing the organization's financial health and ensuring transparency in financial reporting.

- Maintains website invoicing (fees) and transfers information to Quickbooks for REACH Co-op, which houses the master records for fees, reimbursements and overhead costs.
- Creates the REACH fee bill statements for each family each semester.
- Maintains accurate and up-to-date financial records.
- Monitors cash flow, expenses, and revenue to ensure financial stability.
- Ensures the organization adheres to financial policies and best practices.
- Works with the board and executive leadership to develop and manage the annual budget.
- Provides financial insights to guide strategic planning and decision-making.
- Prepares and presents regular financial reports to the board of directors.
- Ensures financial transparency by providing reports on income, expenses, and overall financial health.
- Ensures compliance with federal, state, and local financial regulations.
- Ensures adherence to internal financial policies and bylaws.
- Manages bank accounts and financial transactions.
- Establishes and enforces financial policies to prevent fraud and mismanagement.

c) The Head Coordinator:

- Responsible for the day to day operations of the co-op each Friday.
- Responsible for the safety of the co-op students during class time.
- Negotiates the building use agreement with the organization supplying the building, currently UBC.
- Addresses any questions or concerns with the facility as the main REACH point of contact, currently for UBC.
- Responsible for ensuring each department has organized and planned an appropriate number of classes balancing the needs and wants of the majority of the co-op with academic and enrichment options.
- Resolves any issue at the department level, but must get the Board of Directors resolution via a majority vote for any issues affecting the entire co-op.
- Interviews individuals for department coordinator positions and makes a recommendation to the Board. Provides orientation opportunity for new department coordinator by partnering with a current coordinator.

- Monitors REACH email account and addresses any questions or actions, or can delegate to administrative assistant.
- Responsible for maintaining the REACH website or can delegate to the administrative assistant.
- Communicates with assistant head coordinator regularly to address co-op needs, planning, and a good working knowledge of co-op to operate.
- Plans mandatory meeting, new member orientation training, and lead open house in spring.
- Plans meetings with department coordinators two times per semester.

d) The Assistant Head Coordinator:

- Assists the head coordinator with addressing any issues with the co-op operations each Friday.
- Maintains the status of background checks for each member and ensures any new or expired background checks get updated each school year.
- Plans any department coordinator or leadership retreats.
- Acts as the Graduation Coordinator.
- Responsible for the Encourager Room schedule and point of contact for any issues.

e) The Admin Assistant:

- Assists the head coordinator with addressing any administrative issues with the co-op operations each Friday.
- Be available to act as a point of contact or liaison between members and the head coordinator or assistant head coordinator each Friday.
- Performs duties and tasks as assigned by either the head coordinator or assistant head coordinator.
- Assist with document creation including signup sheets and announcements.
- Assist Treasurer as needed with reconciliation and invoicing.

f) The Department Coordinator:

- Prays, encourages, and leads their department by organizing all the classes each school year for their department ensuring they are providing the wants and needs of the members in their department and the co-op by providing the right number of classes and mix of academic and enrichment options.
- Interviews potential teachers to learn their skills sets and then works with parents to find a good fit for teaching, balancing requirements for classes with the skill sets of the parent.
- Collaborates with teachers to create classes for department, providing a balance of academic and enrichment classes.
- Collects class descriptions and creates a schedule for the entire year (intermediate and high school coordinate classes and schedules)
- Places students into classes for their department and then compiles each student's final schedule and communicates that to students and parents.
- Resolves any issues within their department, but must go to the head coordinator for resolution of issues between departments.
- Sets up class registration on the website and communicates registration details to parents. Then facilitates signups for classes (early elementary facilitates 4 signups a year versus the 2 semester signups for the rest of the co-op departments).

- Determines room assignments. Creates: rosters and attendance sheets for each class, Department contact sheet, room signs, Department Assist Schedule, and Teacher information folders.
- Organizes 'dept-assist' volunteers to back up and assist where needed in their department.
- Sends out emails to parents as needed in their department.
- Facilitates their department meeting as part of the REACH Fall Mandatory meeting.
- Runs meeting on Kick Off Day for department students and parents.
- Assess teach performance through periodic classroom visits and student evaluations.
- Helps teachers work with children who need support.
- Informs teachers of student allergies in their department.
- Regularly communicates with each other in each department so everyone has a working knowledge and ability to run the department. Communicates with the Head Coordinator and Assistant Head Coordinator the status of the department and any updates on issues, needs, and concerns for students and teachers.
- Must be present each week 8:20-12:45 and meet the needs of students and teachers as necessary (discipline, substitutes, dress code)
- Updates and maintains all documents as students request class changes and as new students join co-op.
- Recommends coordinator replacements to head coordinator who will interview individuals and make a recommendation to the Board for approval.
- Attends the mandatory meeting, the fall and spring showcase, any open houses, and assists with new member interviews.
- Assists with appropriate activities for unexpected Friday morning teacher absences.

g) The Encourager:

- Coordinates with the Assistant Head Coordinator for scheduling assignments.
- Responsible for organizing the encourager's room each week during the school year and also during the mandatory meeting, kickoff meeting, fall and winter showcases, and graduation.
- Creates a sign-up sheet for each member to sign up for one week each semester to bring a snack during the kickoff meeting and then each week at the encourager's table.
- Sends out a weekly reminder to those parents who signed up to bring a snack on Wednesday or Thursday.
- Setups the snack table and puts out all the snack food dropped off by members each morning.
- Makes coffee, tea, and hot water as well as provide paper products and maintain that inventory.
- Gathers prayer requests and maintains a prayer list of needs.
- Arranges for a substitute if unable to attend and communicate with Assistant Head Coordinator ahead of time.
- Breaks down the encouragers' area and clean up each week.

h) The Teacher:

- Coordinates with their Department Coordinator on a class to teach.
- Prepares for their class by writing a class description and outline.

- Teaches their class or classes, serves their department assists as required, and brings snacks once each semester for the encourager's room.
- Must take roll at the start of each class and is responsible for all students during their class time.
- Must stay with their students during an emergency, such as a fire alarm, and must take roll again in the classroom after an emergency.
- Resolve issues in their classrooms, but should go to their department coordinators for issues outside their classroom.
- Responsible for finding substitutes and providing the materials for the class ahead of time if possible. Communicate any absences with department coordinator.
- Communicates with parents about class homework and any participation concerns as needed according to department policy.
- Communicates any needs, issues, or concerns with their department coordinator.

6. Financial Policy

REACH Co-op is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and we make every effort to be good stewards of co-op funds. Detailed financial information and yearly budgets are available on the REACH website, under the REACH Board page.

Membership fees consist of a **registration/admin fee**, a **building use fee**, a **department fee(s)**, and **class fee(s)**. **Registration/admin fees** go into the general fund to cover administrative and overhead costs inherent in the day-to-day operations of the co-op. This includes medical and liability insurance coverage, child protection training and background check software and expenses, website hosting and school photos/nametags, along with various other items. The **building use fee** covers facility rental for each Friday and the evening meetings/events we hold each year. **Department and class fees** cover class supplies and costs incurred by the respective departments and/or teachers. We work diligently to provide a quality program at a low cost, which is made possible through the service of each family. However, if outside costs increase unexpectedly, admin fees may increase. In order to ensure REACH can operate efficiently and economically, due dates for all deposits and fees will be consistent for all members, unless alternate payment arrangement is made with the Treasurer (see * below).

Upon membership renewal, a **financial deposit is due by May 1st** for the upcoming school year to reserve your space. This deposit will go toward the family registration, admin and building use fees, and will be non-refundable after May 1st. If a renewing member has not put down their deposit by May 1st, their account will be parked and eventually removed from REACH by June 1st.

All remaining registration, admin, department and fall class fees are due by August 1st or students will be bumped from fall classes that have fees to classes that do not have fees. If no fees are paid by the end of the fall semester, you may not be welcomed back to participate in REACH Coop. Spring class fees are due by Jan 1st.

* If a financial hardship exists, the member **MUST** make alternate arrangements with the REACH Treasurer that are reasonable and responsible. The member is responsible for initiating communication with the Treasurer in advance of all due dates. In the case of extreme hardship, it must be brought before the Board for evaluation and decision. This will be considered on a case by case basis

Reimbursement of costs is offered for consumable class supplies or items which REACH will own going forward. When seeking reimbursement for appropriate expenses, fill out a reimbursement form (found on the REACH website) and attach receipts. Your Department Coordinator will sign the form to approve the expenses and then deliver it to the Treasurer. If expenses exceed \$100, the form must be signed by the department coordinator and the Head Coordinator. Remember to use the REACH tax exempt form whenever possible when making purchases, as REACH does not reimburse taxes.

7. Encourager's Room

Our primary ministry focus is teaching the children. However, as a secondary ministry, we provide an area of the Fellowship Hall for adult members to relax, break bread while encouraging each other in their home schooling endeavors when they are not teaching. The Encourager's Room relies on contributions from our families. Each family is asked to bring something edible to share once each semester (fall and spring). Items needed each week include breakfast casseroles, fruit, nuts, chocolate, and bread items (muffins, breads, and kolaches). The signup sheet will be at the mandatory meeting, kickoff meeting, and at the Encourager's table each week. The encouragers will send out a friendly reminder text message (or email as a backup) the week you have signed up to bring a snack. Families may 'opt-out' with a fee each semester, to go towards blessing and encouraging fellow members.

As this room is set aside for adults, children are not allowed to sit in this area of the Fellowship Hall from 9am to 12pm and are never allowed in the kitchen area.

8. Member Qualifications

REACH accepts all families who home school at least one "school-age" child (K – 12), agree with our Statement of Faith (which is available on the REACH website by clicking on the Statement of Faith link on the left menu after you log in to your account), our teaching commitment, our policies, and provided that we have space available in the co-op. In order to ensure we have enough teachers, families with preschool children may be offered membership in times of need, but priority will be given to families with school-age children.

9. Application Procedure

Each family applies each year. Included in our online application are basic family and student information, student behavior agreement, and legal participation agreements. In addition, all new applicants and former members, out for one year or more, must attend an introductory meeting to complete their application and must show a current government issued photo identification. Applications will be reviewed for acceptance into co-op. A registration fee is due with your application. Should you change your mind about joining coop, the fee is nonrefundable after May 1.

Joining the co-op is acknowledging a willingness to follow the co-op's policies. You will be required to consent of your awareness of our policies and your agreement to follow and enforce them. If you are not in agreement with the co-op's policies, we will be happy to refer you to another co-op or support group that may better meet your needs.

You must review and agree with the REACH Co-op Statement of Faith. You must acknowledge your agreement by checking a box on your application each year.

You must complete a background check form and the results will be reviewed by the REACH Board for any issues and the Board will determine membership approval if any exemptions are required. The criminal background checks shall be rerun every three years (or rerun if a member has been out of REACH for a year or more). You must also complete online child protective training before you will be allowed to teach. Finally, you must review the Child Protection Policy (Section 24 of this Handbook). Completion of these requirements are maintained via an online application.

10. Educational Philosophy

Home schools are private schools in Texas. We believe God has given parents the responsibility of raising their children and their children's education. At REACH we offer assistance, and in some classes accountability, but all educational responsibility belongs to the parent including any grading or transcripts.

a) Class Offerings

We offer both elective enrichment and academic assistance.

Birth-5th grade classes are enriching unit studies that complement many curriculums.

6th-12th grade classes are either elective or academic and department coordinators are responsible for balancing the two as the needs and wants of the co-op dictate. Students may take all elective classes, all academic courses, or a combination.

b) Special Accommodations

REACH recognizes that students may need special academic, behavioral or medical accommodations from time to time to be successful in co-op. Each student is a unique child of God, with various strengths and weaknesses. REACH allows for 2 types of accommodation request – Academic/Behavioral and Medical.

Academic and Behavioral Accommodations (Non-Medical):

For non-medical special accommodations requests, the parent must complete a Parent Questionnaire for Special Accommodations. This request may include *modifications* to classroom content – same material taught in a different way (i.e. audio reading assignments for dyslexia, more time to complete assignments, etc.) and/or accommodations (i.e. no reading assignments, help with transitions, stress toy, etc.). This questionnaire forms the foundation for successful classroom interactions and will be shared with the child's department coordinators and teachers as needed. Together, the parent and teachers will develop a plan for the student's behavior choices which may include rewards and/or consequences.

Medical Accommodations:

If a temporary or permanent medical accommodation is needed, the parent must complete a Medical Accommodations Form (MAF). This form will specify how to keep the student safe and healthy in the classroom, what symptoms to look for, when to notify the parent, etc. and will be shared with the department coordinator and student's teachers.

Teachers are not allowed to administer medication (topical or ingested). Children that have been prescribed Epi-pens need to have a MAF on file.

Students must be fully toilet trained in order to advance to Kindergarten. No accommodations regarding toilet training will be allowed in K-12.

IMPORTANT NOTES:

REACH may not be able to accommodate every need. We are a body of volunteer teachers, committed to delivering quality content in a classroom setting, but do not have special education training. If the student's unique needs are greater than our resources, REACH may not be the best fit.

Regardless of special accommodations, all students will be held to the guidelines laid out in this handbook regarding member conduct and discipline procedures. Filling out the special accommodations request does not mean that inappropriate behaviors will be allowed.

In the event a student is pulled out of class because of a behavior or medical need, the student is not allowed to stay in the encourager's area, or the parent's classroom (if the parent is actively teaching).

11. Commitment, Continuity and Quality

By joining REACH Co-op, you are making a commitment to the other families to teach for the year. We plan with each family in mind, including teaching positions and class offerings. Secondary class sign-ups take place in early July. Planning a quality program takes time, and replacement teachers are not easily found. Any family who chooses to drop out of co-op after May 1st is breaking their commitment with other families, because classes are being set and signups are held soon after. Therefore, we do not refund any membership fees after that date.

We have **one mandatory meeting** for parents to attend in the fall. This meeting will provide important information for you as both a parent and a teacher. Department breakouts are incorporated into this time. In the spring, your department may or may not have a second mandatory meeting. Your department coordinators will provide you with that information. As this information is important and part of your commitment, if you are unable to attend (with good reason) communicate that with your department coordinator so you can attend a Makeup Mandatory Meeting. Please mark your calendars early and make every effort to attend.

12. Communication

- a) Website: www.homeschool-life.com/tx/reachcoop. This is our primary means of communication; as such, it is imperative that you **keep your member profile up-to-date**. Please update your email regularly. The directory is checked yearly.
- b) Weekly Email Update: You need to request our weekly email updates on your profile page. Click on the Edit My Profile link in the left-hand column on the website to change this, if you haven't already checked that box.
- c) Events and Sign-Ups: You will find the calendar, directory, community forum and much more on the website. Don't miss out! Log on regularly.
- d) Suggestions and Comments: We want to hear from you! The best way to communicate with us is by e-mailing us at reach.coop.houston@gmail.com
- e) Other news: If you have a prayer request or know of any information or announcement that would be of interest to the majority of our families, please post it to the website forum.
- f) In Case of Emergency, REACH may utilize communication apps (GroupMe, What'sApp, etc.) as determined by the admin staff.

13. ID Badges

Each member of REACH will be issued an ID badge. All members will be expected to wear it in a visible location near the neckline for security reasons. There is a \$1.00 replacement fee for lost badges.

14. Showcase Programs and Graduation

We have a spring showcase each year. This is an opportunity for classes to perform for fellow students, parents and grandparents! Prayerfully consider what your class can display or perform for the enjoyment of all. This is a good opportunity to invite family and friends who may be interested in learning more about REACH.

REACH offers a Graduation Ceremony each year, including pictures, depending on the number of graduates. More information on program and pricing can be received from the Asst Head Coordinator.

15. Afternoon and Off-Campus Fellowship

a) Afternoon Fellowship

- After Co-op classes end, the church facilities are available for our use until 1:30pm, and you may use the encourager's room, pavilion area and playground to fellowship with other families. Each guest is responsible for their own clean-up, and children must be supervised by their parents at all times. Remember that you are an ambassador of REACH while on church property, and that children should behave with decorum while in the church building. See section 24 c for more information on building rules.
- We often have extra-curricular options during this time, such as fencing or toastmasters. These options are separate from regular REACH Co-op classes, and may require additional participation fees. Only active members at REACH may participate in these programs.

b) Off-Campus Activities

- REACH often hosts off-campus gatherings, such as park days, field trips, and volunteer opportunities. These off-campus activities are voluntary, and not covered by co-op insurance. Each family is responsible for their own safety and behavior.
- In rare cases, a teacher may host a 'field trip' off-campus during class time. DeCo's must be involved in the planning, and parental consent must be received, in writing, for each student prior to the trip. Transportation, destination and activity details must be included in the parental consent request. Co-op insurance coverage will NOT apply when the group is off campus.

16. Enrollment

Only children in your family (whether they are natural, adopted, or foster) will be enrolled at REACH, unless an exception is made by the Board of Directors by a majority vote of approval. This includes the addition of a members' grandchild.

Placement of students will be based on their age as of September 1st. If you have a placement situation that needs special attention, please contact a Head Coordinator for resolution. Your request will be handled on a case-by-case basis as space allows. The maximum age for student enrollment is 18 before September 1st of that school year, unless special permission has been

received by the Board of Directors via a majority vote of approval. Students 18 and older prior to the start of the school year will be asked to complete child safety training to ensure all adults comply with insurance requirements. A student who has graduated high school will not be allowed to attend classes.

Sometimes a student may need to change a class and this is possible with a valid reason. If the change is approved and made before the second week of classes, there will not be a \$5 fee assessed. There would be no fee if the change was made by REACH. A \$5 fee would only be assessed for switching a student's class after the second week of classes.

Bringing extra children as guests (not children of a member family) to REACH will be determined on a case-by-case basis by the Head Coordinator. The Head Coordinator will check with the affected department coordinators to see if the extra children can be accommodated. The visiting extra children will sign in at the appropriate department coordinator desk, get a badge to wear for the day, and get on the appropriate class rosters. There may also be an extra time commitment required by the sponsoring family as needed and determined by the Head Coordinator.

17. Teaching Commitment

Each family serves:

- a) 54 minimum total hours present at REACH -
 - This consists of 42 actual teaching hours and 12 Dept Assist hours
 - Dept Assist requires you to check in with your Department Coordinator on your scheduled day and be prepared to stay and serve.
- b) Planning time for your classes in addition to your 54 service hours –
 - Every department and every class will require an appropriate amount of planning time depending on:
 - the age of your students
 - the nature of your class
 - the length of time you will be with the students

Our primary ministry focus is to provide classes for our children. All classes are parent-taught. We do our best to offer a well-rounded selection of classes that meet the largest percentage of the students' needs. Please Let us know what talents or areas of expertise you can share. There are five different grade/age level departments in which you may teach. Each department has slightly different schedule commitments. Check with Department Coordinators for details.

18. Spiritual Focus

As a fellowship of believers, we encourage you to grow continually in the Lord through Bible study, prayer, and accountability to a body of believers outside of REACH. Regular church participation is highly encouraged to help your family grow and serve the Body of Christ.

In the classroom, we believe that the best way to start the day is with prayer. Please be sure to lead your students in prayer at the beginning of your 1st period class. Pray for the kids and offer for students to lead the prayer. Prayer needs can be shared via the Encourager's room.

19. Planning and Teaching Guidelines

Please remember our primary ministry focus is the students. Your Department Coordinators will work with you to plan interesting and age-appropriate classes for your students.

Early preparation is essential for a quality program. You will need to give your Department Coordinator a class description and brief lesson plan for the class at least five weeks in advance via an email. The lesson plans need enough detail for a substitute to be able to teach, if needed.

- a) Come prepared. Some supplies are available for co-op use, check with your Department Coordinator ahead of time. Utilize the technology available to you on the REACH website's Classroom Dashboard.
- b) You must bring your own copies, if needed. No copier is available to use on site. You can submit the cost of copying for reimbursement through your Department Coordinator with a receipt (do not use the UPS Store - their costs are too high) or copies made at home. Contact your department coordinator for the current copy reimbursement rate and list of vendors that allow discounted rates for our co-op. See Treasury section for information on reimbursement of class fees.
- c) Pray for, encourage, and praise your students. When you see good behavior, say something!
- d) You are responsible for the students in your class for the hour. ~~Please~~ Take attendance and keep it with your class in case of emergency.
- e) Follow the Discipline Procedure. Deal with problems early. Communicate concerns to parents and the department coordinator as many problems can be addressed with good communication.
- f) If an illness or emergency prevents you from teaching, you must find a substitute and notify your Department Coordinator.
- g) Attendance - take roll and keep it with your class at all times ~~is essential~~ to provide for the security of our students. It is the documentation of each student's current location. In event of a fire drill/alarm, please take the roll with you to the designated area outside and take roll to account for all your students. Upon return to the classroom after an emergency complete roll again for accountability of all your students.
- h) Parental Availability - In the event of injury or behavior issues, we require that you, or another appropriate person, are available and accessible to be responsible for your children. If you must leave the building or event where your children are in attendance, we ask that you leave a phone number and have a plan for immediate return if necessary.
- i) Other Emergencies - Some events may necessitate teachers to contain their students in the classroom until released by a Department Coordinator. If this should occur, keep the students calm with story time, prayer time, or other calming diversions.

We strongly believe in a positive teaching environment. Positive classrooms are enjoyable and have fewer discipline problems. Please consider these suggestions in your plans:

- Pray for your students.
- Arrive a few minutes early to allow time to set up before your class begins.
- Smile!
- Begin your class by greeting each of your students by name.
- 1st hour classes should start the day with prayer.

- 1st hour classes should recite the pledge of allegiance. We also ask you to lead the students in the Pledge of Allegiance to our country's flag, as Christians living in one nation under God.
- Explain your positive behavior expectations and the consequences for not following them. **Be consistent.**
- Your enthusiasm for your subject is contagious! Spread it around!
- Listening carefully to your students lets them know they are valued.
- Provide a variety of different activities for your students. Students have different needs. Stimulate visual, audio, and kinesthetic interests.
- Encourage group problem solving skills creatively through hands-on activities.
- Include all your students in cleaning up the classroom. The room is shared by all and can be cleaned by all.
- Bring good books to share as time allows. Read aloud to the class.

***Pleasant words are a honeycomb, sweet to the soul and healing to the bones.
Proverbs 16:24***

20. Department Assistant (On-Call)

Department Assistant, formerly known as “On-call”, is an important role that makes each Friday run smoothly. The Department Assistant is designed to cover holes caused by unexpected illnesses and emergencies. They also assist Department Coordinators as needed. They may be floated to other departments as needed.

21. Biblical Peacemaking

In any group there are bound to be conflicts from time to time. It is our desire to commit to building a “culture of peace” that reflects God’s peace and the power of the gospel of Christ in our lives. As we stand in the light of the Cross, we realize that bitterness, unforgiveness, and broken relationships are not appropriate for the people whom God has reconciled to Himself through the sacrifice of His only Son (John 13:34-35; Eph. 4:29-32; Col. 3:12-14).

Therefore, we look to the Scriptures and the Holy Spirit for guidance on how we can respond to conflict in a way that will honor God, promote justice, reconcile relationships, and preserve our witness for Christ. As God gives us His wisdom and grace, we are committed to actively teaching and encouraging one another to live out the following principles of peacemaking and reconciliation.

a) Concerns regarding classroom content/issue

- In the event you, as a parent, have a concern regarding classroom related issues or behavior, contact the teacher and/or department coordinator. The teacher and department coordinators will make every effort to address the concern.
- If the concern is *about* the teacher or classroom content, contact the department coordinator directly.
- In the event that a concern is not resolvable at the department level, the department coordinator will contact the head coordinator to seek a resolution, which then may be brought to the board if necessary (see major inappropriate behavior or attire section above).

b) Personal Peacemaking

Whenever we are faced with conflict, our primary goal will be to glorify God with our thoughts, words, and actions. (1 Cor. 10:31)

We will work to get the logs out of our own eyes before focusing on what others may have done wrong. (Matt. 7:3-5)

We will seek to overlook minor offenses. (Prov. 19:11)

We will refrain from all gossip, back-biting, and slander. (Eph. 4:29) If we have a problem with others, we will talk **to** them, not **about** them.

We will make “charitable judgments” toward one another by believing the best about each other until we have facts that prove otherwise. (1 Cor. 13:7)

If an offense is too serious to overlook, or if we think someone may have something against us, we will go promptly to seek reconciliation. (Matt. 5:23-24; 18:15)

When we offer a work of correction to others, we will do so graciously and gently, with the goal of serving and restoring them, rather than beating them down. (Prov. 12:18; Eph. 4:29; Gal. 6:1)

When someone tries to correct us, we will ask God to help us resist prideful defensiveness and to welcome correction with humility. (Ps. 141:5; Prov. 15:32)

When others repent, we will ask God to give us the grace to forgive them, as He has forgiven us. (Eph. 4:32)

When we discuss or negotiate substantive issues, we will look out for others’ interests as well as our own. (Phil. 2:3-4)

c) Assisted Peacemaking

When two of us cannot resolve a conflict privately, we will seek the mediation of wise people in our co-op and listen humbly to their counsel. (Matt. 18:16; Phil. 4:2-3) If our dispute is with a co-op leader, we will look to other leaders for assistance.

When informal mediation does not resolve a dispute, we will seek formal assistance from our co-op leaders or people they appoint, and we will submit to their counsel and correction. (Matt. 18:17-20)

When we have a business or legal dispute with another Christian in the group, we will make every reasonable effort to resolve the conflict within the body of Christ through biblical mediation or arbitration, rather than going to civil court. (1 Cor. 6:1-8) If the other party attends another church, our leaders will offer to cooperate with the leaders of that church to resolve the matter.

If a person coming to our co-op has an unresolved conflict with someone in their former co-op, we will require and assist them to make every reasonable effort to be reconciled to the other person before joining our co-op. (Matt. 5:23-24; Rom. 12:18)

When a conflict involves matter of policy or co-op discipline, we will submit to the Discipline Procedures outlined in this document and the direction of the Board of Directors for any issues not specifically listed.

If we have a legal dispute within our co-op and cannot resolve it internally through the steps given above, we will obey God’s command not to go into the civil court. (1

Cor. 6:1-8) Instead, we will submit the matter to mediation and, if necessary, legally binding arbitration, in accordance with the *Rules of Procedure for Christian Conciliation* of the Institute for Christian Conciliation, a division of Peacemaker Ministries (www.peacemaker.net).

Above all, we pray that the ministry of peacemaking will bring praise to our Lord Jesus Christ and lead others to know His infinite love and peace.

As you read these Relational Commitments, we encourage you to study the Bible passages that are cited next to particular provisions. We want you to be confident that these Commitments are based solidly on the Word of God. If your study does not answer all of your questions and concerns, please do not hesitate to approach our leaders, who will be happy to talk with you about these principles.

We encourage you to expressly embrace these Commitments with us as we strive to honor Christ in co-op.

22. Member Conduct

Behavior and attire at co-op functions should represent our Lord, Jesus Christ. These guidelines apply to students, teachers, and parents.

a) Behavior Guidelines: Respectful

- Show respect for and obey **all adults**. (Hebrews 13:17)
- Respect **one another**. Keep hands and feet to yourself. (Matt. 7:12)
- **No** teasing, bullying, name-calling, or putting others down. (Prov. 15:2)
- Show respect for the **property** of the place being visited. (Luke 16:2)
- **No** Romantic Displays of Affection (RDA). Only exception is spouses.
- **No phone calls, texting, headphones, or electronic games**, etc., during classes for both teachers and students.
- Classes may require **online learning**, digital communication, classroom dashboard, etc. for assignments, as stated in the class description and/or syllabus. Students will be held to high standards while using these formats **respectfully** and **responsibly**.
- Participate in group discussions in an **orderly** manner. Wait to be recognized before speaking. (1 Cor. 14:40)
- Students will come **prepared** to class. Bring appropriate supplies required for each class, including assignments.
- Teachers or assistants cannot be on their cell phones during class time.
- Wear your **ID badge** near the neckline in a visible location at all times.

b) Dress Code: Modest

Romans 14:13b “...not to put any obstacle or stumbling block in your brother’s way.”

All REACH students (PK – 12th) and members are asked to comply with the following dress code guidelines when on campus. This applies to parents even when they are not teaching.

- Clothing should be appropriate to be seen by all ages, from preschool to elderly (i.e. conservative, modest, and conducive to good health, comfort, and safety).
- No form-fitting clothing is permitted. If it fits like a second skin, it is not modest.
- **Exodus 28:42** ... Shorts and skirts are permitted, and they should extend to mid-thigh.
- Pants are to be modestly loose, but not extra baggy. Leggings, tights, and yoga pants must be worn with a longer top or skirt that extends to mid-thigh, same as shorts/skirts.
- Shirts/tops should be of modest length cover the full torso. No midriffs, immodest slits, deep openings or cleavage should be showing. Sleeveless tops are permitted as long as underarm openings and necklines are appropriately fitted, and the sleeve extends to the shoulder line (no tank tops).
- Visible tattoos or body piercing are permitted, as long as they are not inappropriate.
- No inappropriate pictures, brand names or logos that would misrepresent Christ on any clothing, backpacks, or accessories. Misrepresenting Christ includes, but is not limited to, alcoholic beverages, lingerie, names associated with impure or immodest advertising, frightening images, etc.
- Shoes must be worn at all times.
- PE students must wear appropriate athletic or tennis shoes in PE class.
- Science lab students must wear closed-toe, foot-covering shoes in lab class.
- Students who disregard these guidelines can expect to be loaned a large t-shirt or long shorts for the day, or be sent home to change. Repeat violations will be addressed by the Head Coordinator as needed.

Remember that we are guests at University Baptist Church, as well as any other locations we may attend. We are representing our Lord Jesus Christ, REACH Co-op, and homeschoolers in general. Please respect the property of all locations and rules they set.

c) Building Rules: Safe and Respectful

- Enter through the Chapel or main entrance.
- Remain in areas designated for REACH Co-op. No kids are allowed in the kitchen area.
- No running inside.
- No gum.
- Use only co-op materials. Do not use church supplies. Ask if you are not sure.
- All visitors must check in at the Head Coordinator desk and wear nametags.
- The Preschool Department has limited access and will be open only to a parent or older sibling **with a security tag** to drop off or pick up children.
- All primary students must be picked up by 12:15 at the latest. We must close classrooms at 12:30 pm. You may continue to use the first-floor main area until 1:30pm.
- We cannot be responsible for lost items.

- No guns (even toy, especially water), knives, or laser pointers. This includes anything that can be used as a weapon.
- Teachers, if a pointer or knife or any sharp tool is needed for a class, make a special request to the Head Coordinator.
- There will be **serious** consequences for bringing any weapon to co-op or its sponsored activities.
- No skateboards or skates of any kind, including retractable skate shoes.
- Do not use the church's phones.
- All facility questions, concerns, or reservations should be requested to the Head Coordinator **only** who will then coordinate with the appropriate facility points of contacts. We want to avoid the facility having to deal with a variety of different people.
- Promptly leave the building no later than 1:30 so that we can honor our contract with the facility.

23. Discipline Procedure

REACH Co-op desires to maintain an environment conducive to the purposes of the group and we know that you desire to meet the disciplinary needs of your children. Expect to receive notice if your child forgets your good teaching. We know that you as parents will want to know if problems occur so that you may use this knowledge as an opportunity for correction and teaching.

a) For **minor** inappropriate behavior or attire:

- 1st infraction – student will be given a verbal reminder by the teacher.
- 2nd infraction – student will be given a verbal reminder by the Department Coordinator. Parents will be notified by the Department Coordinator by the end of the day.

b) For **major** inappropriate behavior or attire:

- Student will be referred as soon as possible to a Coordinator and/or member of the Board of Directors. Student and parent will be required to attend a conference with two members of the Board of Directors.
- Depending on the offence and age of the student, the student and parent may be required to sign a document (at the very least a verbal acknowledge is required) to show their understanding of why their behavior was inappropriate and to show a recommitment to following the rules.
- Under extreme circumstances or a habitual negative pattern of behavior, the student may be expelled from REACH. This decision will be decided by a majority vote of the Board of Directors.

We realize that young children will need to be reminded often of the rules, but by Upper Elementary (grade 3) we expect the students to follow the rules carefully. The older the student, the higher our expectations are of their behavior.

We expect to see:

- an **attitude** of respect to all others
- an **attitude** of cooperation
- **consistent prompt attendance**, (students who are more than 10 minutes late to class may be excluded from that hour's class)
- class participation

- completion of class assignments

Appropriate behavior is expected at all co-op functions. It is the parent's responsibility to correct their child's behavior at co-op events. However, if this is not done, or the parent is not immediately available, the person(s) in authority will have the freedom to speak with your child.

If your child does not choose to be a cooperating part of REACH Co-op, then we ask that they no longer attend. To keep classes running smoothly and make sure that the majority of students are benefited, we ask students who do not follow our rules to attend classes elsewhere.

24. Health and Wellness

We are a 'well' co-op. We desire that our students, families and teachers stay healthy and well so that we can continue moving forward in our academic goals for the year. Simply put, if you or your student has a fever or other signs of contagious illness, please stay home.

25. Safety – Child Protection Policy

The members of REACH Co-op realize that there may be times when we need to have a plan for the safety of our children to protect from the possibility of abuse and to protect members from the possibility of false accusations. We will adhere to the following procedures without exception. Questions regarding policy interpretations shall be addressed by the Board.

Application Process and Criminal Background Check Requirements

All REACH members will complete the Application Procedure in Section 15 of this Handbook. This includes completion of an initial interview process, showing of a current government issued photo identification, and an application for membership each year. The application process includes student behavior agreement, legal participation agreement, statement of faith agreement, online child protective training, review the Child Protection Policy, and a criminal background check.

Two Person Rule

At no time during REACH Co-op or associated activities shall one co-op student be left alone with one adult. We implement a two-person rule so that two adults are required to be with one student, if such a situation arises. For example, if a student is pulled out of class for a discipline issue then two adults will be present to discuss the issue with the student. Also, all rooms used by members and students together must remain accessible (no locked doors). Department coordinators will make rounds and survey the classrooms to ensure this policy is being executed properly.

Reporting Suspicious Behavior

All suspicious or inappropriate behavior must be reported to REACH leadership including Department Coordinators, Head Coordinator, and Board members and must be investigated immediately. All reports must be reported to the Head Coordinator immediately who will notify the Board members. Policy interpretations shall be the responsibility of the Board.

Information Gathering

The Head Coordinator will be responsible for initiating an immediate information gathering activity involving appropriate individuals (i.e. the appropriate Dept. Coordinators, the accused REACH member, any witnesses, the student's parents, and another Board member). The Head Coordinator shall document all interviews, phone calls, and written correspondence related to the information gathering. All reasonable attempts shall be made to maintain confidentiality

of the situation in order to protect the accused prior to and during the investigation. Any REACH member suspected of violating the Child Protection Policy will, upon request, voluntarily relinquish or be removed from duties which involve direct contact with students until the matter is completely resolved. The REACH Board shall review all the information from the information gathering and decide if the Child Protection Policy has been violated. Any confirmed violations shall be grounds for immediate dismissal from REACH. Any REACH member who witnesses an incident and determines further action is warranted will report it to the Head Coordinator. It is the responsibility of the REACH member to call CPS if they determine that level of response is required to resolve the situation and then they must let the Head Coordinator know if CPS was contacted.

26. Social Media Policy

The members of REACH Co-op have access to a website (<https://www.homeschool-life.com>) for looking up calendar events, member emails, leadership contacts, Board minutes, and the Handbook to list a few examples and Co-op leadership positions will store important documents for archival purposes. These documents and information are for active members only.

REACH Co-op has a closed Facebook group page for sharing activities that is for active members only. The page is moderated by leadership appointed by the Head Coordinator. Any social media issues will be brought to the Head Coordinator.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/37375611099>.

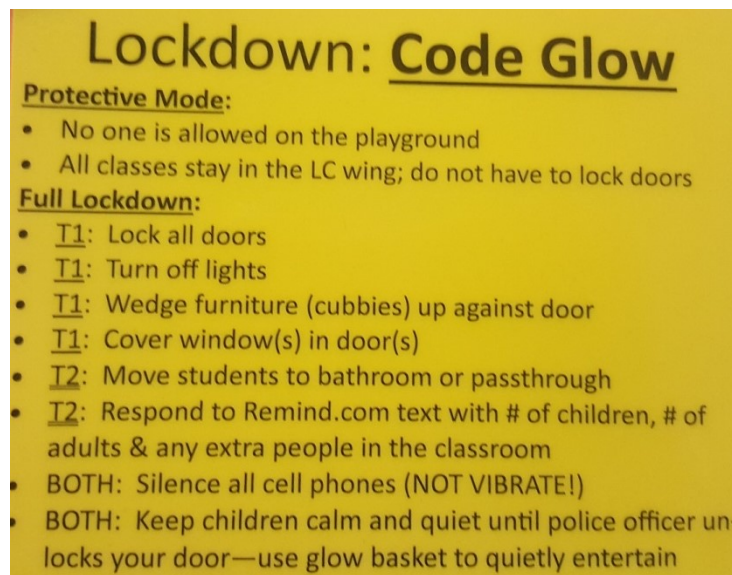
All pictures taken at REACH or REACH events can be used for REACH purposes including social media posts to the closed Facebook group, the REACH yearbook, and for advertising campaigns.

Any new REACH social media accounts or applications require Board approval.

27. Active Shooter Situation

The members of REACH Co-op will follow the general guidelines required by University Baptist Church for an active shooter situation. They are shown in the figure below:

Figure 2 – Lockdown



28. Fire

UBC has a formal procedure we are required to follow. There may be a fire drill on any given Friday and each drill is treated as an actual fire. The co-op will evacuate the building in an orderly manner with each room following their evacuation procedure.

The **order of events** is as follows:

- One Department Coordinator in each department rechecks each of their classrooms and the appropriate bathroom before leaving the building.
- The other Department Coordinator gathers their department outdoors and verifies all classes are present. Teachers will provide roll sheet verification.
- The 'indoor recheck' Department Coordinator will join their outdoor Department Coordinator for the "All clear."
- The 'indoor recheck' Head Coordinator does a final walk through, including the elevator, before joining the outdoor Assistant Head Coordinator to verify all members and students are accounted for, outside the building.
- The Head Coordinator will give the signal to reenter the building **after clearance has been given by the church staff.**

Teachers:

- Follow your classroom fire exit plan.
- Take your **roll sheet** with you for everyone's security.
- Be ready to verify that you can account for all students to your Department Coordinator.
- Only a Department Coordinator can release a student to a parent.
- Stay with your students for supervision.

Students:

- Stay with your teacher.
- Leave the building with that teacher in a quiet, safe, and orderly manner.

Members on campus, not actively serving:

- Do NOT attempt to pick up your children during an evacuation unless it is an emergency, and only with Department Coordinator approval. Children should remain with their class until all children are back in classrooms.
- If safely possible, help evacuate younger children (especially preschool) and remain with them until all children are back in classrooms and roll is verified.

29. Injuries

All injuries must be referred to a Department Coordinator or Head Coordinator immediately.

The following steps will be taken:

- The situation will be evaluated.
- The student will be attended to.
- The parent will be notified as soon as is appropriate.
- An Accident Report will be filled out if the injury is serious or in any way involves the head.

A first-aid kit is located at the front co-op table. Be sure to check the back of the **student's ID badge** to check for possible allergies or other important medical information before applying first aid. We prefer that oral medication be **given by parents or appropriate guardians only**. Parents should add any allergies or medical issues on the back of their child's ID.

Medical Emergencies

In the event of a medical emergency, it is critical to **keep the hallways clear**. Only Department Coordinators and the Head Coordinator should be in the hallways.

The following steps will be taken:

- Notify the closest Department Coordinator or Head Coordinator.
- The situation will be evaluated as either a 911 level emergency or not.
- A Head Coordinator will notify the parent as soon as possible.
- The teacher will remain with the class and the medical emergency will be managed by the head coordinator or department coordinator.

30. Severe Weather Policy

REACH Co-op and UBC follow CCISD on closures and early releases. If you wake up on a Friday morning and CCISD has cancelled classes for the day, REACH will not hold classes either. It is rare to have a cancellation day, as they only happen under the most extreme circumstances. REACH closure notifications will be sent out by group e-mail and posted on the member home page of our website.

If you live in a different school district or you feel uncomfortable about attending on a severe weather day, we will understand. In that case, please notify your Department Coordinator as soon as possible so we can make alternate plans for your class.

If severe weather occurs during Co-op, then we will follow the general guidelines required by University Baptist Church for severe weather situations. They are shown in the figures below:

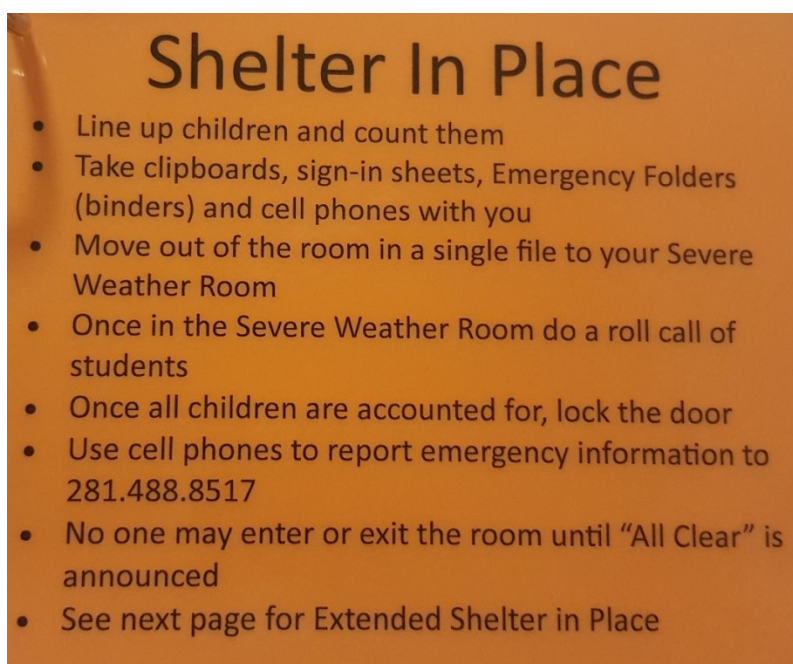


Figure 3 – Shelter In Place

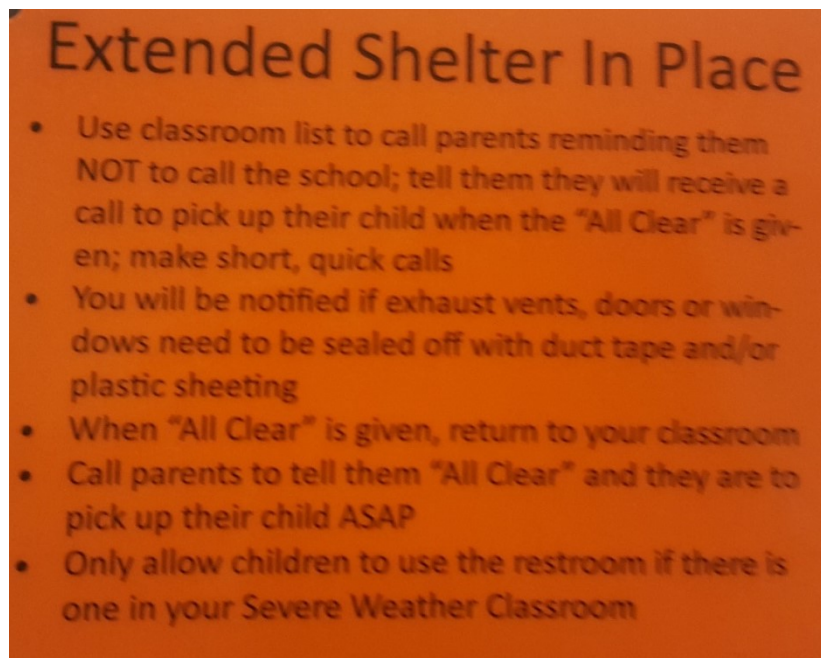


Figure 4 – Extended Shelter In Place

31. Exceptions to REACH Policy

REACH Co-op policy will be reviewed from time to time as needed.

Any requests for an exception to REACH Policy must be brought to the Board of Directors for consideration. Coordinators do not have the authority to grant exceptions to REACH policy for their departments. The exception request must receive a majority vote of approval from the board for the exception to take effect. The approved exception does not create new REACH Policy and only applies to this particular exception request.