# South Lake Home Educator's Handbook

We are delighted to welcome you to our community. By joining us, you become part of a truly unique and exceptional group. Our collaborative and cooperative approach, along with a large scope of families sets us apart. Whether you are new to homeschooling or an experienced veteran, we aim to support you by offering resources, activities, encouragement, and events to enrich your homeschooling journey.

# Mission Statement and Leadership

SLHE is a volunteer-led support group providing resources for educational activities, communication, encouragement, fellowship, and information to homeschool families and those interested in homeschooling. SLHE exists to encourage home-educating families in the task of teaching their children at home. The group is administered according to Biblical principles, by a volunteer Board of Directors for its various functions and activities. We hold all participants to a standard of behavior consistent with traditional, conservative family values.

The SLHE Co-op is an activity of the SLHE support group. We seek to provide a whole-group experience for students in a positive environment of respect, diligence, and high standards. We rely on each family to contribute to the success of the co-op on a weekly basis. We hold all participants to a standard of behavior consistent with traditional, conservative family values.

# Board of Directors

- President: Deirdre Harrington- **dee.harrington@me.com**
- Vice President: Rachel Little- **racheld05@gmail.com**
- Treasurer: Tiffany Santos- **tifersarie@aol.com**
- Secretary: Marisa Leslie- **marisa@lesliemania.com**
- Member at Large- Regina Webster- **r.webster74@yahoo.com**
- Member at Large- Hilarie Bessetti- **hilarieg8r@aol.com**
- Board Advisor- Sarah Cerilli- **Cerillifam@yahoo.com**

# Who We Are and What We Offer

The majority of our members register to homeschool with their individual counties. Some families are registered with the Step Up for Students organization for those who have the PEP and UA scholarships and some are enrolled in private schools primarily for home-educating families. We welcome any homeschooling family needing support, regardless of race, creed, or religion, though most of our members are Christians.

Our Board of Directors signs a statement of faith and makes all decisions for the group from a Biblical perspective. The Board publishes a handbook, and members sign a membership agreement stating they have read the statement of faith. We expect our members to comply with the homeschool laws of the state unless they have religious or constitutional objections.

SLHE offers numerous activities for home educated students outlined in the following pages. Attendance is not required, so families can participate as they choose. Our activities are organized on a volunteer basis by individual parents who are members of our support group. Each activity requires planning, coordination, and many helpers to ensure success. As a member, we ask that you please volunteer in a minimum of one area of interest to your family.

SLHE encourages participation and welcomes ideas and suggestions from its members for activities and events. These may include, but are not limited to: field trips, co-op classes, clubs, and guest speakers, along with other events that benefit the homeschool community and our support group. If there is an event you would like to see included on our calendar, please contact a member of the Board of Directors. All activities sponsored through SLHE must be approved by the Board of Directors. If the activity is on our calendar, it is considered an SLHE-sponsored event.

Parental involvement is a necessity to avoid lost opportunities for our children.

## What We Offer

SLHE offers numerous activities for students of compulsory attendance age, through 12th grade. All activities organized on a volunteer basis by parents who are members of our support group. Each family is encouraged to help with planning or coordinating at least one event per year. Our homeschool cooperative is run by volunteer families who, with the support of its members, strive to equip students with both academic preparedness and a lifelong love of learning.

## Events & Activities

- Promotion Night (Pre-K-11th graders promote to their next grade)
- Special Graduation Ceremony For Seniors
- SLHE Expo
- End of Year Testing
- Yearbook
- Family Events
- Community Service
- Field Trips
- Moms Night Out
- Clubs
- Enrichment Classes
- Teen Activities
- Dances (including a prom for high schoolers)
- Park Days

# Membership Requirements and Conduct Expectations

This support group is an official 501(c)3 Non-Profit organization. Its use and purposes are designated by the board members with feedback from the group, with the intent and purpose to allow it to remain in operation and thrive. Fees are assessed each year.

## Fees

SLHE Family Membership Fee: This membership fee covers a traditional academic year- August 1st through July 31st. All SLHE memberships expire on July 31st of each year and must be renewed to remain an active member of the group. Each family pays a nonrefundable fee to cover our combined overhead and organizational expenses including insurance which covers all SLHE events . Families choosing to participate will assume optional expenses (field trips, teachers fees, etc.). Membership fees should be paid in full by August 31st. Anyone not having paid by August 31st will be considered delinquent and lose access to the website. Please check the website for fee details.

Co-op fees are separate from the support group membership fee. Teacher's fees for the co-op are handled between individual teachers and co-op families. There are additional fees for individual field trips, events, clubs, etc. Florida Parent-Educators Association membership is offered at a discounted rate to our membership as a separate fee. A 3% convenience fee will be added by our online payment system to all transactions paid for on our website.

## Membership Requirements

Membership is open to anyone interested in home education who agrees to adhere to SLHE's Policies and Procedures, the Expected Conduct, Youth's Expected Conduct, and understands that the Board of Directors signs a statement of faith to ensure the Christian leadership of the group. The Board of Directors reserves the right to deny membership. Membership may also be terminated if a member no longer meets the qualifications set forth by the Board of Directors. Membership and participation in the SLHE support group and its co-op programs are granted on a year-to-year basis. The Board of Directors reserves the right to determine, at its discretion, whether a family will be invited to continue membership or participation in subsequent years.

- Each family is expected to read and agree to the mission and purpose of SLHE and read and agree to the membership agreement which includes the Policies, Procedures, Expected Conduct, and Youth's Expected Conduct agreements. Each family is expected to read and sign the membership agreements and release of liability for the current academic year. If your family has a child aged ten years or older, or who will turn ten during the current membership year, please have them read and agree to adhere to the Youths' Expected Conduct.
- Each member is required to serve as a volunteer in at least one of our activities that benefit SLHE as a whole. New members will benefit by serving alongside an experienced member. Our **Volunteer Roles** are described here.
- Each family agrees to adhere to a standard of behavior consistent with conservative family values at all SLHE events; extending to SLHE-sponsored/related online activities.
- Each family agrees to uphold and model a high standard of courtesy and dress appropriately for the occasion. SLHE provides a **Dress Code** to all members in its handbook.
- To ensure everyone enjoys our events, we ask that each family maintains a spirit of cooperation.
- Our volunteers set deadlines based on event preparation needs. Please be considerate and submit fees or forms on time - no special treatment for missed deadlines. Please be on time for events and inform the coordinator if you will be late or cannot attend.
- Parents must be present and responsible for their children at all SLHE functions. For drop-off events, you'll need to complete a liability waiver and your child must follow the Expected Conduct expectations.
- If any facilities are damaged, the family of the person involved will be responsible for repairs or compensation.
- SLHE follows Lake & Orange County school districts as well as the leased co-op facility for closures related to weather and pandemics. The Board of Directors makes the final decision on closures.
- Families must adhere to our **Illness Policy**- stay home if anyone is contagious.
- No unauthorized use of the SLHE name or logo on websites, products, etc.
- Members are required to volunteer in some capacity to support the group.
- All members and children will behave in a manner consistent with the Expected Conduct at all SLHE meetings and sponsored events. Failure to do so could result in the dismissal of membership with SLHE.

**We hope these guidelines help create a positive experience for everyone. If you're not comfortable with our policies, we encourage you to seek out other homeschool communities that may be a better fit.**

# Board of Directors Statement of Faith

South Lake Home Educators, Incorporated believes that parents have a God-given responsibility to teach their children (Deut 6:4-9). This Statement of Faith and Statement on Gender, Marriage, and Sexuality does not exhaust the extent of our beliefs. The Bible itself is the sole and final source of all that we believe. For purposes of South Lake Home Educators' practice, policy, and discipline, the Board reserves the right to make final decisions according to the statement of faith. The Board reserves the right to deny or revoke membership to any individual or family if it is determined by the Board that behaviors are deemed detrimental to the group or would violate the principles which are reflected in the Statement of Faith and in the Bible.

SLHE believes the Bible is the inspired and inerrant Word of God and it teaches the following:

### 1 God

SLHE believes the Bible is the inspired and inerrant Word of God and it teaches the following: There is one self-existent, sovereign God who is eternal, immutable, omnipresent, omniscient, omnipotent, existing in three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Knowing God is the foundation of all knowledge, wisdom, understanding, and truth.

### 2 Jesus Christ

Jesus Christ, born of a virgin, is the incarnation and supreme revelation of God. Jesus alone is the Promised Messiah, the Savior of mankind through His death on the cross, burial, resurrection from the dead, and ascension to God the Father. He will return again and reunite with those who believe in Him, to reign with Him in power and glory throughout all eternity.

### 3 Man and Salvation

Man was created by God in the image of God, but fell into sin and therefore is lost, and can only be saved by faith in Jesus Christ alone (John 14:16, Acts 4:12). God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ (Acts 3:19-21; Rom 10:9-10; 1 Cor 6:9-11)

### 4 The Holy Spirit

Every believer of Jesus Christ has been given the gift of the Holy Spirit. God's Holy Spirit, "...lives with you and will be in you...." (John 14:17). The Holy Spirit is the inspiration behind the writings of scripture, administrator of the church, the believer's counselor, the source of a believer's spiritual and physical strength, the believer's teacher, and the believer's confirmer of salvation.

### 5 Community of Believers

There exists a community of believers who, through faith in Jesus Christ, and by the power of the Holy Spirit, covenants with God and with other believers to live out faithfully the beliefs, practices, and mission of the church. As a community of believers, we are to carry out the work of Christ in the world and to love one another. Every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity (Mark 12:28-31; Luke 6:31).

### 6 The Bible

The Bible is the inspired and infallible Word of God, the final authority of faith, truth, morality, conduct, and life, without error in its original writing both in doctrine and historical details. All true knowledge is consistent with its revelation.

## Statement on Gender, Marriage, and Sexuality

To preserve the function and integrity of South Lake Home Educators, Incorporated and to provide a Biblical role model to its members and the community, it is imperative that all board members agree to and abides by the following Statement on Gender, Marriage, and Sexuality (Matt 5:16; Phil 2:14-16; 1 Thess 5:22).

1. God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God (Gen 1:26-27). Rejection of one's biological sex is a rejection of the image of God within that person.
2. The term "marriage" has only one meaning: the uniting of one biological man and one biological woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture (Gen 2:18-25).
3. God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a biological man and a biological woman who are married to each other (1 Cor 6:18; 7:2-5; Heb 13:4).

# Expected Family Conduct

The behavior and conduct of our children are how society will judge homeschoolers and SLHE in general. Please join us to build a good reputation for homeschoolers as well-behaved, interesting, and responsible, young people.

1. I have read and agree with the SLHE Mission Statement with a Purpose.

2. Be respectful and courteous at all times. No profanity. No drugs. No alcohol at any SLHE Family- oriented events.

3. To ensure a safe, respectful, and positive environment for all children participating in our homeschool activities, parents and guardians must exercise good judgment and exemplary conduct at all times.

4. Each family agrees that they will not promote any political or social agendas at SLHE-hosted or sponsored events; extending to SLHE-sponsored/related online activities.

5. Each family agrees to adhere to a standard of behavior consistent with traditional conservative family values at all SLHE-hosted or sponsored events; extending to SLHE-sponsored/related online activities.

6. Absolutely no physical altercations are acceptable. Depending upon the severity, a member can be terminated immediately at the discretion of the Board.

7. Parents are expected to be in control of children and their behaviors at all times and are liable for any damage or personal injury incurred during any field trip or event scheduled by SLHE volunteers.

8. If someone else's child should break the rules ask him/her to check with his/her parents right away or inform the parent or event coordinator of the situation immediately.

9. In accordance with the Matthew 18 principle, if you have a conflict or issue with a member of SLHE, please try to resolve that issue or conflict with the person directly. If unable to resolve, please bring the issue to the event coordinator if applicable. If the issue is still not resolved, please bring the issue in written form to the Board President or Secretary. The issue will be addressed at the next board meeting, and if needed, a special meeting of the board will be called. All board decisions will be final.

10. All members (parents & children) are expected to respect the use of any facility used by SLHE. Running in buildings, carving on or defacing property, throwing things, littering, and willful damage to, or destruction of property, will not be tolerated. All members and children must respect the rules and materials in the facilities and not touch materials or equipment not needed for the function. Please pick up after yourself and your children and encourage your children to clean up all play areas before leaving. We should always advise our children that many of these facilities, whether used for meetings or visited for field trips may be someone's workplace. The level of noise must be kept to a minimum. Members must respect all parameters and restrictions set by any facility used by SLHE.

11. Students must be supervised at all times and are not permitted to roam freely without adult supervision at any SLHE event.

12. Students cannot leave an event without knowledge or permission from the host/hostess/ coordinator.

13. At any SLHE meeting, special event, or activity, the Board of Directors and/or Coordinator has the right to approve and choose the music listened to. Music must be honoring to family values and the SLHE purpose.

14. Parents need to honor the parameters established by coordinators of field trips such as signup/ cancelation procedures, meeting payment deadlines, and participation guidelines.

15. Be prompt. If you are unable to be prompt for a scheduled event, the group will not be able to wait for you and will proceed without you. If you are unable to attend a field trip/event, let the coordinator know in advance. Failure to do so could result in forfeiture of any monies paid.

16. Fulfill your commitments. If you find you cannot attend an event after signing up, call to cancel so someone else can take your place. If you find you are having trouble fulfilling your volunteer position, do all you can to help the coordinator find someone to take your place.

17. I will not knowingly attend any SLHE event if I or a member of my immediate family has a contagious illness. I will follow the **SLHE Illness Policy**

18. Our activities are designed to be learning experiences for school-age children and members should do all they can to make them as profitable as possible. Preschoolers and babies are more than welcome to attend the activities if they are not noisy or distracting. PLEASE remove disruptive preschoolers or babies (i.e., babbling, crying, talking, etc.) from any assembly in consideration of others. Your cooperation in this sensitive area is greatly appreciated.

19. Our rules extend to online activity. Members are prohibited from flaming or harassing others online. Do not forward SLHE messages to other groups, except for advertisements or public statements. Under no circumstances should personal SLHE messages or member contact information be shared with individuals or groups outside of SLHE.

20. Do not create pages, sites, or other internet-related content using the SLHE name without Board approval. Any such content established without Board approval is in violation of the law. Members who create such content will be asked to remove it and will be subject to disciplinary action as deemed appropriate by the Board.

21. No member family, club, or co-op class shall create, sell, or distribute items that bear the South Lake Home Educator's name and/or logo without explicit written permission from the SLHE Board of Directors.

22. Youth and parent(s) are required to abide by and sign the Youths' Expected Conduct form. A youth is defined as any minor age 10 and older.

23. The Board of Directors has the discretion to determine guidelines for all of the above. By agreeing to these policies, you acknowledge that you have read and will adhere to SLHE conduct guidelines.

# Youth's Expected Conduct

All participating youth and their parent(s) or guardian(s) must read and agree to the following: *(Please review these conduct expectations with your children)

## Conduct Expectations

1. I have read and agree with the SLHE Policies, Procedures, & Expected Conduct.
2. My behavior will be honoring to conservative, traditional family values, the homeschool community, and SLHE at all SLHE meetings, field trips, special events, and activities; extending to SLHE-sponsored/related online activities. (which will hereto forward be referred to as SLHE Functions).
3. I will not bring weapons or any item that could be considered a weapon to any SLHE Function.
4. I will treat fellow members with respect. Behavior consistent with harassment or bullying (physical, verbal, non-verbal, extending to SLHE-sponsored/related online activities) is not tolerated and could result in disciplinary action and/or my family's removal from the group.
5. I will behave respectfully and appropriately with other members regardless of their gender at all SLHE functions.

## Dress Code

Following the **SLHE Dress Code** helps keep everyone comfortable and respectful in our homeschool group. It ensures a positive atmosphere where we can focus on learning and enjoying our time together. Please read through and agree to:

- I will dress modestly at all SLHE Functions
- No spaghetti straps
- No bare midriffs
- No undergarments visible
- Tank top shirts must have straps that are 2 finger widths wide
- Shorts, skirts, and dresses must come to at least your fingertips when your hands are relaxed at your side
- Holes in clothing must be at least below your fingertips when hands are relaxed at your side
- All pants must cover underwear

If there are any questions as to whether or not a clothing item is appropriate, please seek out a board member's approval.

I understand that the SLHE Board of Directors has the authority to establish and interpret the guidelines for all of the above.

## Acknowledgment of Policy and Procedures and Expected Conduct

I have read and understand the group's Mission Statement with a Purpose, the Board's Statement of Faith, SLHE Policies and Procedures, and the Expected Conduct for both adults and youth. I agree to observe, abide by, and honor the stated standards of behavior at all SLHE meetings, field trips, co- ops, special events, and activities. I understand that failure by myself, my family members, or guests to adhere to these standards could result in disciplinary action or termination of membership. As the parent or legal guardian of the child(ren) listed on the SLHE Membership Profile, I consent to and agree that they may participate in group activities and events. I hereby assume all risks associated with my child(ren)'s participation in these events and activities. I also hold harmless and indemnify South Lake Home Educators, its leadership, and any volunteers from any accidents, injuries, illnesses, or any other conditions that may jeopardize the health or safety of my child(ren) involved therein. I have read and agree to uphold the organization's Policies, Procedures, and Expected Conduct while participating in group activities.