

# South Lake Home Educators 2023-2024 Handbook



**SLHE.ORG**

**This handbook is your permanent copy of the information about the South Lake Home Educators (“SLHE”) support group. Please keep a copy for reference to the opportunities and responsibilities of membership.**

**A copy of this handbook will be available on the website.**

## **South Lake Home Educators 2023-2024 Handbook**

### ***Welcome to South Lake Home Educators!***

We are so glad that you are joining us! You are a part of something unique and one of a kind. This group, with its collaborative, cooperative style, and large scope of families, is expressly unique. Whether you are new to homeschooling or a seasoned veteran, our desire is to serve you by providing resources, activities, encouragement, and events to enhance your homeschooling experience.

### **Mission Statement with a Purpose**

SLHE is a volunteer-led support group providing resources for educational activities, communication, encouragement, fellowship, and information to homeschool families and to 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 conservative family values.

### **Co-Op Mission Statement with a Purpose**

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 conservative family values.

### **2023-2024 Board of Directors**

**President:** Deirdre Harrington- [dee.harrington@me.com](mailto:dee.harrington@me.com)

**Vice President:** Rachel Little- [racheld05@gmail.com](mailto:racheld05@gmail.com)

**Treasurer:** Sarah Cerilli- [cerillifam@yahoo.com](mailto:cerillifam@yahoo.com)

**Secretary:** Marisa Leslie- [marisa@lesliemania.com](mailto:marisa@lesliemania.com)

**Member at Large-** Regina Webster- [r.webster74@yahoo.com](mailto:r.webster74@yahoo.com)

**Member in Training-** Lynden Jones- [lindennjones@yahoo.com](mailto:lindennjones@yahoo.com)

**Member in Training-** Tiffany Santos- [tifersarie@aol.com](mailto:tifersarie@aol.com)

## Who We Are:

- The majority of our members register to homeschool with their individual counties. A number of families are enrolled in private schools existing primarily for home-educating families. We are open to any homeschooling family needing support, despite race, creed, or religion, though most of our members are Christians. Our board of directors sign a statement of faith and make all decisions for the group from a Biblical perspective. The board of directors publishes a handbook and members sign a membership agreement stating that they have read the statement of faith. We expect our members to be in compliance with the homeschool laws of the state unless they have religious or constitutional objections.
- SLHE offers numerous activities outlined in the following pages for grades K-12. 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 and coordinating, as well as many helpers to see it through successfully. Please volunteer in an area of interest to your family.
- SLHE encourages participation and welcomes ideas and suggestions from its members for activities and events. These include field trips, co-ops, guest speakers, and any other events that would be beneficial to the homeschool community and our support group. If there is an event that you would like to see included on our calendar, please contact a member of the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors must approve all activities sponsored through SLHE. If the activity is on our calendar, it is deemed an SLHE-sponsored event.
- Parental involvement is a necessity to avoid lost opportunities for our children.

## South Lake Home Educators Policies and Procedures

- The Board of Directors may revise Policies & Procedures and the Expected Family & Youth Conduct at any time. As revisions are made, members will be given notification of any changes. Expect changes as SLHE grows in membership and maturity.
- The SLHE Board of Directors serves to provide direction, information, and organization to the group. It is responsible for maintaining the overall policy and direction of the organization.
- The Board of Directors shall consist of 4 officers: President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer which comprise the Executive Committee. One or more members at large shall be appointed to the Board by the Board as the Executive Committee deems necessary.
- The Board of Directors shall be required to sign a Statement of Faith to ensure the Christian leadership of SLHE.
- The Board of Directors shall be a self-perpetuating entity. Current Board members will choose members to train to follow them in their offices.
- Members are eligible for consideration as board members when they have been active members of SLHE for no less than two years and have been a coordinator, or co-op teacher in good standing, for no less than one year. In addition to eligibility, prospective board members must complete an interview with current members of the Board of Directors.

## Membership Benefits

Members will have the following provided as part of their membership dues:

- Membership to SLHE with all rights as members including support, encouragement, and fellowship of other homeschooling families.
- FPEA (Florida Parent Educator's Association) discount code for membership purchase.
- SLHE offers an online calendar during the school year to inform parents of upcoming events, any field trips, and other educational opportunities along with a member's only website which will provide information and communication with other SLHE members.
- SLHE provides a directory for communicating with other South Lake Home Educator families. This is not to be used for the solicitation of business.
- SLHE will provide an online handbook describing existing opportunities, Policies & Procedures, the Expected Family & Youth Conduct rules, information about Florida's homeschooling laws, and other helpful information.

## What We Offer

SLHE offers numerous activities for grades Pre-K-12. Our activities are organized on a volunteer basis by individual parents who are members of our support group. Each family is asked to participate by helping with planning or coordinating at least one event per year. Our homeschool cooperative is run by volunteer families who, with the help of its members, strive to equip students with not only academic preparedness but a lifelong love of learning.

## Events & Activities

Co-op	Promotion Night
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)	Park Days

## **Fees 2023-24**

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.

- 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 in order to remain an active member of the group. Please check website for fee details.
- Co-op fees are separate from the support group membership fee. 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 and who agrees to abide by SLHE's Policies and Procedures. The Board of Directors reserves the right to deny membership. Membership may also be terminated if a member no longer meets the qualifications. The qualifications for membership are as follows:

- 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 agreement.
- 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 abide by Youths' Expected Conduct.
- Each family pays a nonrefundable fee to cover our combined expenses such as building rental fees, insurance, paper products, bank fees, postage, printing, and supplies. Membership in SLHE also entitles families to a discounted Florida Parent-Educators Association membership. Families choosing to participate will assume optional expenses (field trips, etc.). Membership fees should be received by August 31st. Anyone not having paid by August 31st will be considered delinquent and lose access to the website.
- 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 be asked to serve alongside an experienced member.
- 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 to the occasion. SLHE provides a dress code to all members in its handbook.
- Each family agrees to maintain an attitude of cooperation so that everyone can enjoy events.
- Each family agrees to respect the schedules of volunteers who establish deadlines in order to offer activities. Deadlines are set according to the preparations required for the activity and are announced with adequate time for response. Please be considerate; don't ask for special treatment because you missed a deadline. This includes prompt payment of fees. For example, field trip fees or testing fees, etc.
- Parents must be present and responsible whenever their children are attending or participating in a function.
- In the case of a student drop-off event, the parent must complete a Release of Liability/Assumption of Risk form and be available via phone. The student is under the authority of the adults in charge and should abide by the Expected Conduct. Adults present are expected to supervise.
- In the event of any facility damage, the family of the person involved is responsible for repair or reparation.
- SLHE follows local school districts (Lake and Orange Counties) & WOCC for weather closures.
- SLHE follows local, state, and federal guidelines, as well as WOCC for closures relating to pandemics.
- My family agrees to adhere to the SLHE Illness Policy: "I understand and agree that if an immediate family member has a contagious illness, our family will refrain from attending co-op or SLHE related activities until the contagion has been cleared by a physician or until the person has been fever free or free of symptoms of illness for a minimum of twenty-four hours."
- The South Lake Home Educators' name is incorporated. As such, no member shall start a webpage, social networking site, or photo-sharing site in the name of SLHE or South Lake Home Educators without Board approval. Any such site or page established without Board approval is in violation of law and members that created them will be asked to remove them.
- Keep in mind that the quality of your SLHE experience is directly related to your involvement in the group. Members are required to participate in some service to the group. There are many opportunities available throughout the year. Please look over the Service Opportunities/Job Descriptions section of the handbook. Please let the Board of Directors know in what area you can serve.
- We encourage people who are not comfortable with our guidelines to seek like-minded homeschooling families in other support groups.
- A copy of Policies & Procedures and Expected Conduct will be available on the website.
- 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.

## ***Board of Director's 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: 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.

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.

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).

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.

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).

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 abide 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. Be respectful and courteous at all times.. No profanity. No drugs. No alcohol at any SLHE Family-oriented events.
2. 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.
3. Each family agrees to adhere to a standard of behavior consistent with conservative family values at all SLHE hosted or sponsored events; extending to SLHE sponsored/related online activities.
4. Absolutely no physical altercations are acceptable. Depending upon the severity, a member can be terminated immediately at the discretion of the Board.
5. 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.
6. 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.
7. 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, If needed, a special meeting of the board will be called. All board decisions will be final.
8. 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, 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 maybe someone's work place. The level of noise must be kept to a minimum. Members must respect all parameters and restrictions set by any facility used by SLHE.

9. Students must be supervised at all times and are not permitted to roam freely without adult supervision at any SLHE event.
10. Students cannot leave an event without knowledge or permission from the host/hostess/ coordinator.
11. 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.
12. Parents need to honor the parameters established by coordinators of field trips such as signup/ cancelation procedures, meeting payment deadlines, and participation guidelines.
13. 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 would result in forfeiture of any monies paid.
14. 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.
15. Please do not bring your child to a field trip or event if he/she is not feeling well, has been running a fever, or is contagious. If your child has been exposed to a contagious illness, such as chickenpox, please inform the group members ASAP so we may take precautions. As it pertains to communicable illnesses, please do not bring potentially exposed but not yet sick children to events. Please also be mindful if your child or other family member has lice or has recently been treated for such.
16. I will not knowingly attend any SLHE event if I or a member of my immediate family has a contagious illness.
17. 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.
18. Our rules extend to online activity. Do not flame other members online. Do not forward messages from SLHE to other groups, except sale ads/public statements and the like. DO NOT forward or share personal SLHE messages and/or member contact information to other persons or other groups.
19. Do not create pages, sites, or any other internet-related vehicle in the SLHE name without Board approval. Any such site or page established without Board approval is in violation of law and

member/members that created them will be asked to remove them and will be subject to disciplinary action as deemed appropriate by the Board.

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

21. 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:

1. I have read and agree with the SLHE Mission Statement with a Purpose.
2. I have read and agree with the SLHE Policies, Procedures, & Expected Conduct.
3. My behavior will be honoring to conservative 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).
4. I will not bring weapons or any item that could be considered a weapon to any SLHE Function.
5. 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.
6. I will dress modestly at all SLHE Functions. This includes:
  - No spaghetti straps
  - No bare midriffs
  - No undergarments visible
  - Tank top shirts must have straps that are 2 finger widths wide
  - Shorts must come to at least your fingertips when your hands are relaxed at your side
  - All pants must cover underwear
7. I will behave respectfully and appropriately with other members regardless of their gender at all SLHE functions.
8. I understand that the SLHE Board of Directors has the discretion to determine the guidelines of all of the above.

## **Acknowledgment of Policy and Procedures and Expected Conduct**

I have read and understand the Mission Statement with a Purpose, SLHE Policies, Procedures, & Expected Conduct. I agree to observe, abide by and honor the stated standard of behavior at any and all SLHE meetings, field trips, co-ops and special events and activities. I understand that my failure or that of my family's participating members to abide by these standards set will result in the following action:

1st Offense: Warning- Documented

2nd Offense: Restriction from field trips and all other activities for remainder of membership year.

3rd Offense: We regretfully have no recourse but to ask you to seek another support group.

As the parent or legal guardian of the child(ren) listed on the Membership Profile, I consent and agree that said child(ren) may participate in group activities and events. I hereby assume all risk as a result of my child(ren)'s participation in the events and activities. I also hold harmless and indemnify South Lake Home Educators, its leadership, and any volunteers for accidents, injury, illness, or any other condition which may jeopardize the health/safety of my child(ren) involved therein. I have read and agree to uphold the organization, Policies and Procedures and Expected Conduct while participating in group activities.



## **South Lake Home Educators Illness Policy**

In consideration of all South Lake Home Educators (SLHE) members, during times of illness, we ask that you refrain from attending SLHE-sponsored activities if you or someone in your immediate family are experiencing any of the following symptoms, unrelated to any ongoing physical issues or allergies, within the last 24 hours:

- o Fever (Participant must be fever free for 24 hours without the help of medication)
- o Cough (non-allergy related)
- o Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- o Nausea/Vomiting
- o Diarrhea
- o Runny nose (with colored mucus)
- o Contagious illnesses such as but are not limited to: pink eye, chicken pox, measles, mumps, rubella, influenza, the common cold, and strep throat.

If anyone in your household has tested positive for COVID-19, please follow the current CDC guidelines by refraining from attending SLHE activities for 5 days from the date symptoms began.

Thank you for your patience as we navigate unfamiliar territory to the best of our ability, with guidance from health professionals, lawmakers, governmental guidance, and God leading and guiding our decisions and actions.

### **Statement of Waiver of Liability and Assumption of Risk Related to Coronavirus/COVID-19 for SLHE Co-op**

By attending South Lake Home Educators activities, you acknowledge the contagious nature of COVID-19 and voluntarily assume the risk that you and your family may be exposed to or infected by COVID-19. You also acknowledge that the risk of becoming exposed to or infected by COVID-19 may result from the actions, omissions, or negligence of yourself and/or others, including, but not limited to, SLHE volunteers, members, and participants. You agree to assume all the foregoing risks, waive liability against South Lake Home Educators and any other listed parties or venues, and accept sole responsibility for any illness, injury, disability, or death to you or your family, including all claims that may arise resulting from any of these. By agreeing below, I acknowledge that I have read and understand the South Lake Home Educators illness policy.