

H.E.A.R.T. Inc.

Policy and Procedure Guide

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I. MISSION STATEMENT

Our Mission within H.E.A.R.T., Inc. is to provide loving Christian Support to home schooling families in our community. We will provide an opportunity for a variety of Educational, Social, and Extra Curricular Activities.

II. STATEMENT OF FAITH

We believe:

1. The Scriptures, both Old and New Testaments, to be the only inspired Word of God, without error in the original writings, the complete revelation of His will for the salvation of men, and the Divine and final authority for all Christian faith and life.
2. In one God, Creator of all things, infinitely perfect and eternally existing in three persons, The Father, The Son, and The Holy Spirit.
3. Jesus Christ is true God and true Man, having been conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He died on the cross, a sacrifice for our sins, according to the Scriptures. Further, He arose bodily from the dead, ascended into Heaven, where at the right hand of God, The Father, He now is our High Priest and Advocate.
4. That the ministry of The Holy Spirit is to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ and to convict men, regenerate the believing sinner, indwell, guide, instruct, and empower the believer for Godly living and service.
5. Man was created in the image of God but fell into sin and is therefore lost and only through regeneration by The Holy Spirit can salvation and spiritual life be obtained.
6. The shed blood of Jesus Christ and His resurrection provide the only ground for justification and salvation for all who believe, and only such as receive Jesus Christ are born of the Holy Spirit, and thus become children of God.

III. PURPOSE FOR HOMESCHOOLING

1. SPIRITUAL: God has given us the responsibility to train our children. We have a responsibility to instill our faith and spiritual beliefs in our children.
2. ACADEMIC: We can assure every subject approached from a Christian standpoint. Better quality of education through: individual instruction and more concentrated learning due to lower pupil/teacher ratio.
3. CHARACTER: We have a better opportunity to instill God's Word and Christian values in the hearts of our children. We can build our children's self-esteem and help them gain emotional maturity. We desire to decrease peer pressure that often results in negative character traits and provide positive socialization by integrating learning with everyday experiences.
4. FAMILY: We strive to build a stronger family unit and to foster a strong family relationship to which our children can turn for love, support and encouragement.

IV. H.E.A.R.T, INC. GOALS

1. Mutual support, encouragement and fellowship for home schooling parent.
2. Positive fellowship for our home-schooled children.
3. Exchange of ideas, resources, and information important to home schooling.
4. Organized activities such as field trips, co-ops, and parties, etc.

V MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS

Membership is based on:

1. Agreement with the Statement of Faith
2. Agreement with our Purpose for Home schooling and Goals
3. Compliance with the Legal Status of Home schooling in Florida
4. Submission and approval of an application
5. Interview and reference verification

Applicants seeking new membership are required to sign the application and statement of faith and must be interviewed by a current Board member. Although church membership is not required, it is an indication of the applicant's relationship with the Lord and doctrine choice. Membership is not automatic or immediate. Applicants will be contacted by the Membership Liaison once approved for membership.

Returning members must complete an application and sign the statement of faith, but they are not required to go through the interview and reference process. Membership is granted to all returning members as long as they are members in good standing. However, H.E.A.R.T., Inc. reserves the right to deny membership to returning members in accordance with the bylaws.

Membership fees must be paid annually and are non-refundable. Members registration info must be reviewed annually and updated accordingly.

VI. PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS

For a child to participate in H.E.A.R.T., Inc.'s K5 – 12th grade activities, their family must be a member of H.E.A.R.T., Inc. in good standing and be home-schooled. They are home-schooled if they:

1. Register with the county or an umbrella school.*
2. Keep a portfolio.
3. Receive an annual evaluation.
4. Follow all home-school laws.

****Exception:** Families with the oldest child being a preschooler may join

H.E.A.R.T., Inc., however they will only be able to participate in Park Days, Preschool group activities, Mom's Night Out, and Large Group Meetings, or as otherwise approved by Activity Leader.

Florida Home School Laws

Compulsory Attendance Ages: "All children who have attained the age of 6 years or who will have attained the age of 6 years by February 1 of any school year or who are older than 6 years of age but who have not attained the age of 16 years...are required to attend school regularly during the entire school term." Florida Statutes Annotated § 1003.21(1).

Required Days of Instruction: 180 days for public and private schools. Florida Statutes Annotated § 1003.02(1)(g) 1. However, homeschoolers operating under option 1 below are specifically excluded from this requirement.

Required Subjects: None.

Homeschools have three options:

Option 1: Homeschools can operate under the home education law. Fla. Stat. Ann. § 1002.41.

1. The definition of a "home education program" is "sequentially progressive instruction of a student directed by his parent or guardian..." Fla. Stat. Ann. § 1002.01(1).
2. The parent must meet the following requirements:
 - a. notify the county superintendent in writing within 30 days of establishing the home education program (not required to be filed annually);
 - b. give the names, addresses, and birth dates of the homeschool students;and
 - c. maintain a portfolio of records and materials consisting of a log of educational activities made contemporaneously with the instruction and designating by title any reading materials used and samples of any writings, worksheets, workbooks, or creative materials used or developed by the student. The portfolio must be preserved for two years and made available for inspection by the superintendent upon 15 days' written notice, but the school district has no authority to enter the home. Nothing in this section shall require the superintendent to inspect the portfolio. (Note: The child abuse affidavit requirement was repealed in 1995 by Senate Bill 1536.)

Option 2: More than one homeschool can operate as a private school. A child who "attends" a private, parochial, religious, or denominational school is exempt from compulsory attendance. Fla. Stat. Ann. § 1002.01(2). Florida's intermediate appellate court ruled in *State v. Buckner*, 472 So. 2d 1228 (Fla. Dist. Ct. App. 1985) that one homeschool does not qualify as a private school by itself. However,

groups of homeschools can file as private schools under Fla. Stat. Ann. Ch. 623 (the Private School Corporation Law of 1959, Ch. 617 (the Nonprofit Corporation Law), or Ch. 607 (The Florida Business Corporation Act).

Ch. 623 schools must file a charter with their local circuit court and file an annual database form. In some localities, they may be required to obtain a business license. Although in practice these schools have operated for years, the Deputy General Counsel for the Board of Education has issued a non-binding memorandum dated November 2, 1988, stating that homeschools cannot satellite with Ch. 623 private schools because they must be in "attendance" at the school. Florida FL-2 The memorandum, however, did not deal with Ch. 607 and 617 schools, which must merely incorporate and file an annual database form. The memorandum also ignored the fact that children enrolled in Ch. 623 schools are actually "in attendance" at various classroom sites located in each home and that the Ch. 623, Ch. 607, and Ch. 617 schools meet all the statutory requirements for private schools. Thousands of homeschool students are legally enrolled in these schools throughout the state.

Option 3: Homeschools can operate under the private tutor law. Fla Stat. Ann. § 1002.43. A person may teach a child if the person meets the following requirements:

- a. Holds a valid Florida certificate to teach the subjects or grades in which instruction is given;
- b. Keeps all records and makes all reports required by the state and district school board; and
- c. Requires students to be in actual attendance for 180 days or the equivalent on an hourly basis.

Teacher Qualifications: None for parents.

Standardized Tests: Only required for parents homeschooling under the homeschool law in Option 1 above. The parent must file a copy of the evaluation with the local school superintendent annually. There is no specific statutory deadline. Fla. Stat. Ann. § 1002.41(1)(c). Each student must do one of the following each year:

- 1) Have educational progress evaluated by a teacher holding a valid regular Florida teaching certificate and selected by the parent. The evaluation must include review of a portfolio and discussion with the student;
 - 2) Take any nationally normed student achievement test administered by a certified teacher;
 - 3) Take "a state student assessment test used by the school district and administered by a certified teacher, at a location and under testing condition approved by the school district";
 - 4) Be evaluated by a Florida licensed psychologist or school psychologist; or
 - 5) Be "evaluated with any other valid measurement tool as mutually agreed upon."
- "The school superintendent shall review and accept the results of the annual evaluation.... If the pupil does not demonstrate educational progress at a level commensurate with his ability, the superintendent shall notify the parent in writing " The parent shall have one year to provide "remedial instruction" to the

pupil. At the end of the "one year probationary period" the student shall be reevaluated to determine if he has progressed "commensurate with his ability." Fla. Stat. Ann. § 1002.41(2).

Religious Freedom Act: Fla. Stat. § 761.01 et seq.

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VII. LEADERSHIP REQUIREMENTS

Any potential leader who is not a H.E.A.R.T. Inc. member must be approved by the H.E.A.R.T. board and must meet the following requirements: agree and sign the Statement of Faith; favorable interview with 3 board members consisting of activities coordinator and 2 other board members; completion of all activity forms; be willing to perform all of the responsibilities associated with the leadership position including fulfilling the term associated with each position. They will have no voting privileges. Returning members must have been with H.E.A.R.T. Inc. for at least one year and be a member in good standing. If members have accepted leadership positions in prior years and have not fulfilled their responsibilities, including completion of the activity term, they may have limitations imposed on future leadership opportunities. Opportunities for leadership include serving as an Activity or Club Leader, Co-op Teacher, and Coach for athletics. Only Members in good standing are qualified to run for a Board position.

1. BOARD MEMBERS - Board members are elected annually and serve one year terms. Officers can serve a maximum three consecutive years, regardless of position held, and may be considered for re-election following at least one year off the board. The Board positions and responsibilities are as follows:

A. Chairman:

Organize agenda for all board meetings, large group meetings and election of officers.

Preside over board meetings, large group meetings and election of officers.

Serve and maintain open communication with all members.

Delegate the duties for officers and leaders.

Send formal letter to any family denied membership.

Speak at Large Group Meetings.

People skills!

B. Vice-Chairman:

Address all emails being sent from a member to the membership.

Email legal alerts.

Help organize large group meetings (door prizes, guest speakers, vendors and goodie bags).

Assist Chairman in all aspects.

Hold Chairman accountable.

In the event the Chairman is unable to attend or perform his/her duties, the Vice Chairman would preside over all meetings.

Be prepared to speak in front of the membership.

Attend board meetings and other meetings.

People skills!

C. Secretary:

Basic secretarial skills, which includes, taking minutes at board meetings and large group meetings.

Computer skills.

Email copies of minutes to all board members in a timely manner.

Prepare name tags for leadership, annually.

Responsible for updating the By Laws, Policy & Procedure Guide, Membership Application and related docs in pdf on flash drive.

Printing 2 copies of the H.E.A.R.T. Directory for each of the 2 Large Group Meetings.

Attend board meetings and other meetings.

Assist with large group meeting details.

Be prepared to speak in front of the membership.

Assist as called upon.

People skills!!

D. Membership Liaison:

First contact for new members.

Computer skills helpful.

Interview skills.

Interview and process new members through close of enrollment.

Check for application for membership online daily and contact applicants with an appointment time for interview in a timely manner.

Call to notify all applicants of their acceptance with help from fellow board members.

Maintain payment plan and scholarship paperwork.

Attend board meetings and other meetings.

Assist with large group meeting details.

Be prepared to speak in front of the membership.

Assist as called upon.

People skills!

E. Activities Director:

Organize all H.E.A.R.T activities by keeping a master calendar of all events scheduled (making sure dates are not double booked with H.E.A.R.T. activities).
Keep inventory of HEART storage unit and record when something is signed out and returned.

Organize leaders meeting, prepare leaders paperwork, & collect completed leader applications.

Coach and train members on being an activity leader.

Supervise all H.E.A.R.T. activities or designate someone else in your place to attend.

Order ribbons and certificates for H.E.A.R.T. events.

Attend board meetings and other meetings.

Assist with large group meeting details.

Be prepared to speak in front of the membership.

Assist as called upon.

People skills!

2. Treasurer:

Keep detailed records and receipts of all income and expenses incurred in H.E.A.R.T., annually.

Prepare an annual tax return for H.E.A.R.T.

Be prepared to do any filings to the State or IRS by all due dates.

Maintain checking account including timely deposits and paying of H.E.A.R.T.'s expenses.

Reconcile bank account monthly and email a copy to each board member.

Must be able to use QuickBooks.

Be accountable for all funds.

Prepare and present treasurer report at large group meetings.

Make all board member reservations for FPEA Convention.

Set up payment plans, send invoices, and contact members who fall behind in payment.

Keep track of all Scholarships.

Have projected budget done by Aug. LGM.

Make sure H.E.A.R.T. Inc. stays in compliance of 501 (c)(3) laws.

Attend board meetings and other meetings when necessary.

Be prepared to speak in front of the membership.

Assist as called upon.

People skills!

3. ACTIVITY/CLUB LEADER:

- Be a member of H.E.A.R.T. for at least 1 year and be a member in good standing.
- Fill Out "HEART Activity Leadership Application" (required)
- Complete Leader Orientation
- Submit to background checks
- Attend annual H.E.A.R.T. meetings
- Adhere to 2 deep leadership principles
- Plan your activity/event
 - *Secure a location for your activity
 - *Plan the day and time for your activity
 - * Send activity information to H.E.A.R.T. Activities Coordinator
- Collect any fees required for your activity. NO activity fees will run through H.E.A.R.T. Inc.
- Maintain attendance records
 - *Send list of members/attendees to Activities Coordinator
 - *If applicable, you will hand out ribbons to your members- ribbons need to be ordered ahead of time through your Activities Coordinator
 - *Any attendee NOT a member of H.E.A.R.T. must fill out a "Waiver of Liability and Hold Harmless Agreement"
- Take photos or appoint a helper to take photos and submit them to the yearbook website in a timely manner
- Enforce Discipline Policy
 - *See the "Code of Conduct" (all members of H.E.A.R.T. have signed this)
 - *Report any discipline problems immediately to the H.E.A.R.T. Board using a "H.E.A.R.T. Disciplinary Form" (copies go as follows: white-board, yellow-leader, pink-parent)
- Responsible to set up a sign-up table at Large Group Meeting have sign-up sheets and all applicable paperwork to promote your activity/event.
- Keep members up-to-date as the year progresses.

4. CO-OP TEACHER:

As a Co-Op Teacher, you are responsible for all aspects of the course you choose including but not limited to curriculum, lesson plans, maintaining attendance records, submitting photos for yearbook, enforcing discipline policy. Joyful Hearts Co-op requires additional membership and approval through the co-op board.

5.FUNDRAISING COORDINATOR:

Current fundraising opportunities include: Box Tops for Education, Campbell Soup Labels, and GoodSearch. Responsibilities include collecting and redeeming the needed labels/receipts and keeping records including funds awarded.

6.COACH:

Responsibilities include all aspects of organizing the program including but not limited to practices, games/competitions, uniforms, fundraising, collecting and accounting for all fees, maintaining attendance records, submitting photos for yearbook, presenting ribbons/awards, preparing certificates for end of year awards ceremony, enforcing discipline policy.

VIII. CODE OF CONDUCT

Christian conduct is expected of students at all times. As we commit ourselves to a code of conduct that glorifies the Lord no matter where we are, it will benefit others as well as ourselves.

The following code of conduct has been established so that members can interact with one another without distraction or discomfort.

ALL members (parents and students) are expected to:

- Assume responsibility for their behavior and act respectfully.
- Respect and not break, damage or deface personal property, building, grounds, materials or furnishings at event locations.
- Respect the personal property and school materials of others. 4. Respect the rights of fellow members without teasing, name calling, or violence.
- Use language that is free from vulgarity, disrespect and profanity.
- Be honest in their words and deeds.
- Act in a manner that does not disrupt others.
- Members, children and adults will come to activities dressed in modest, clean, neat, and respectful attire. No clothing or accessories with inappropriate graphics, slogans, or logos. Clothing must be properly sized, not too tight, revealing, or baggy. For girls, all skirts and shorts must be at least finger-tip length. No visible undergarments or cleavage. Bathing suits must be one piece or a tankini. If too much skin is showing, you will be asked to cover up. For boys, pants must be worn at waist. No visible undergarments.

Failure to comply with the dress code will result in the following consequences:

1. First offense - You will be asked to change.
2. Second offense - You will be sent home.
3. Third offense - You will be sent home & be scheduled a meeting with the Board.

The following guidelines have been established with respect to activities to foster a safe and positive environment for all members:

1. Children must be accompanied by a parent or responsible adult at all functions, unless express permission is given by the Activity Leader. If another parent is to be acting as the responsible guardian of a student, a note signed by both parent and guardian should be given to the Activity Leader.
2. Parents are expected to monitor their children at all times. If the parent is in charge of an event, and unable to keep a close watch, another parent should be given responsibility for and authority over those students, however that authority does not allow for physical discipline.
3. Children are to stay with parents unless given permission by the Activity Leader to do otherwise.
4. No running, shouting or horseplay is allowed unless at an appropriate location.
5. Children and parents should give full attention to the adult in charge, or any person speaking to the group. While most matters of discipline are the responsibility of parents alone, participation in group activities requires adherence to group standards. Parents should understand that by participating in H.E.A.R.T., Inc. functions, they are putting their children under the authority of other parents and designated adults, such as tour guides, security guards and facility coordinators.
6. Children are to treat one another kindly and should respect all adults.
7. Children have the right and obligation to inform any adult member when another child's behavior does not follow the above guidelines.

IX. DISCIPLINARY POLICY

1. In the event that a student does damage to property, the family is responsible for repair or replacement value. If physical injury occurs as the result of deliberate aggression, the offending child's parents are responsible for medical bills incurred.
2. In the event that a child has a) shown a deliberate act of defiance to authority, or b) shown excessive inappropriate behavior, the following action will be taken:
 - A. Those witnessing the behavior should notify the Activity Leader or the parent, who should in turn correct the child. In the event that the behavior could result in injury or damage to property, the witnessing member should intervene immediately. The activity leader should ask if the child has previously received a disciplinary warning. (If so, the activity leader will follow guidelines as outlined in below)
 - B. If the Activity Leader deems the incident as a significant violation of the conduct guidelines, he or she will verbally report it to a Board member. This serves as a disciplinary warning. If problem behavior continues after a warning

has been given, the Activity Leader or Board member will request that the child be kept directly with the parent (within reach) for the remainder of the event, or at the next function. The Activity Leader is responsible for reporting the incident to the Board, who will keep record of the date, problem, witnesses, and disciplinary action taken.

Statements from those involved and witnesses should be included in the report. This is considered the first strike on the record.

C. If the pattern of behavior continues, or the parent fails to keep the child under direct control, and another incident occurs, the child may be asked to leave the function. A report is made by the activity leader. The family must come before the Board. (Parents may decide if the child is to attend) The child will receive a second strike. Considering the circumstances in each case, the Board will suspend the child from H.E.A.R.T., Inc. functions for a term of one to three months.

D. If behavioral problems persist, and the child receives three strikes, the family will come before the Board once again. The child will not be allowed to participate in group functions for the remainder of the academic year.

E. Upon returning to the group, the child will be on disciplinary probation. If problems recur the Board may withdraw the family membership, as evidenced that the parenting standards do not align with the Biblical guidelines represented in the bylaws and statement of faith.

Note: This is a policy intended for consistent misbehavior or disobedience, not normal childish irresponsibility. The Board of H.E.A.R.T., Inc. realizes that this is a strict policy. While the Board seeks to extend grace and mercy, it is also responsible to preserve the safety of all children. Activity Leaders and Board members are expected to use common sense and judgment in considering each case on its individual circumstances. We encourage all parents to remind children of appropriate behavior before each function. We must strive to be a positive influence on the community as representatives of home schooling.

X. CONFLICT BETWEEN MEMBERS

When problems arise between members, biblical principles for resolving differences should be used prior to contacting the Board.

Steps for handling differences:

1. Approach the person with whom you have a problem and explain your position and seek peace.
2. If the person is unwilling to meet with you or if you don't feel that your position was understood, take another member (witness) with you and try to reach out to them again.

3. If the problem is still unresolved, the Board should be approached and both parties will come before the Board to express their point of view and seek a peaceful resolution.
4. If the problem is still unresolved or continues to occur, and or the actions of either party is not in accordance with biblical principles, and or either party is not abiding by the Florida statutes for home schooling in any way, then the member(s) will be taken before the entire membership for the purpose of voting to revoke their membership in HEART, Inc.

XI. CHECK WRITING POLICY

We understand that unforeseen circumstances sometimes occur, but after the third returned check, you will be placed on a "cash only" basis regarding any financial transactions with H.E.A.R.T., Inc. You will be responsible for any bank fees incurred by our organization with regard to returned checks. Any payments made by check that are not honored by the bank must be paid in full within 30 days plus any service fees incurred by our organization. A letter will be mailed to you informing you of the total amount due. This must be paid in cash or money order. All debts must be resolved prior to the new membership year in order to be eligible for membership.

XII. GUEST ATTENDANCE

H.E.A.R.T., Inc. membership applies to the immediate family members of the household listed on the application. Some H.E.A.R.T., Inc. events are open to guests (graduation, awards ceremony, sporting events, etc.), however there are many other events where guests could be problematic. Therefore, all guests must be approved with the Activity Leader prior to the activity. The intent is not to restrict access or discriminate in any way, but to ensure a safe environment for everyone and control insurance liability exposure. All guests must sign an indemnification agreement prior to the event as they are not covered by H.E.A.R.T., Inc.'s insurance. Attendance at H.E.A.R.T., Inc. functions as a guest on a regular basis will require the approval of the Board. H.E.A.R.T., Inc. members are responsible for the conduct and actions of their guests at all times.

XIII. MISCELLANEOUS

Bylaws are furnished to the members upon request. Members proposing changes to the Bylaws shall forward their proposal to the Chairman in writing. The Chairman will then make sure the proper procedure is followed to handle the request.