

Real Hope Community Church (RHCC)

Academic Co-op Parent and Student Handbook

Statement of Purpose

RHCC Academic Co-op is a Christian Co-op run as a ministry of Real Hope Community Church (RHCC). Those of us serving in this ministry believe that God has called us to homeschool our children, and to provide a place for supplemental educational opportunities and group activities for children. Our goal is to help complement a family's homeschool curriculum with elective classes, help enhance an area of study, provide a warm and welcoming Christian environment for fellowship, and to create friendships in the homeschool community. RHCC Academic Co-op is not meant to be the sole source for educating a homeschooled child, but rather be a support for Christian homeschooling families in areas that may be difficult for primary educators to complete at home.

Mission and Belief Statements

We are a faith-based cooperative, operating under the umbrella of Real Hope Community Church. Our church's mission and vision is to be a church that brings Real Hope to our community.

- **We Believe** In one, sovereign, unchangeable God, eternally existent in three persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. (Isaiah 45:22, Malachi 3:6, John 1:1-5, Genesis 1:1-27)
- **We Believe** In the deity and humanity of our Lord Jesus Christ; that He was fully God and fully man. (John 1:1-5)
- **We Believe** In His virgin birth, sinless life, miracles, teaching, atoning death, bodily resurrection, ascension to the right hand of the Father, His perpetual intercession for Christian believers and His personal and visible return. (Luke 1:26-56 & Luke 2:1-17, Hebrews 4:15, Mark 6:1-3, Ephesians 1:7, Luke 24:42, 39, John 20:25-27, Luke 24:38-39, Hebrews 4:14, Mt. 24:37, 39, 42, 44)
- **We Believe** The Bible is the fully inspired Word of God, and that it is our only reliable guide for faith and conduct. (2 Timothy 3:16, Hebrews 1:1)
- **We Believe** That the convicting, regenerating, sanctifying, and empowering work of the Holy Spirit is necessary to accomplish salvation, and that this salvation has been freely offered to every person who repents their sins and accepts the atoning death of Jesus Christ on the cross. (John 16:8, 15:26-27, Acts 2:38 & 4:12, John 3:16)
- **We Believe** That people are sinners by nature and choice and therefore condemned until they are prompted by the Holy Spirit to repent their sins and trust Christ as their Savior and Lord. (Psalm 51:5, Roman 3:23, Jeremiah 17:9, Romans 6:23)

- **We Believe** In the universal Church, a world-wide living spiritual body of which Christ is the head and those who have been redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ are members. (Ephesians 1:18-23, Ephesians 5:2, 23-27)
- **We Believe** That Christ has commissioned every member of His church to the task of making disciples to the full development and exercise of their gifts. (Matthew 28:18-20, Acts 1:8)
- **We Believe** In the personal, visible return of the Lord Jesus Christ to earth to establish His kingdom. (2 Peter 3:13, 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18, Revelation 21:2, 3; 2:3-5)
- **We Believe** in the resurrection of all people: believers to that eternal state known as heaven, but those who have continued to refuse Christ's grace to endless separation from God. (Revelation 20:7-21:8)

Administrative Staff Members

- Rebekah Ford (Administrator/Principal)
- Amanda Savin (Administrator/Principal)
- Michelle Van Winkle (Administrative Assistant/Volunteer Coordinator)

The Administrator/Principals are responsible for Co-op oversight, vision, management, scheduling, accounting, church reporting, and handling any conflicts or disciplinarian action.

The Administrative Assistant/Volunteer Coordinator acts as Co-op receptionist during class times, is responsible for coordinating volunteer activities, and manages logistical activities to keep things running smoothly each week.

Schedule Information

Classes will be held on Mondays from 1:00-6:00 PM at Real Hope Community Church. This is to accommodate as many of our families as possible. Classes for the fall semester begin on September 11th, 2023.

At the end of each semester, there will be a party held for the kids. For the 2023 Calendar year the parties will be held on December 4th and May 20th. We end our semesters slightly early to allow families time to focus on finals and end of year testing. There will also be two field trips spread throughout the semester. Look to the Facebook page and Homeschool Life for updates.

If you would like more information about the classes, please reach out to the Administrative Staff at rhcc.academiccoop@gmail.com. You may also reach out to the Administrative Staff through the RHCC Academic Co-op's Facebook page and through Homeschool Life.

Fees

Fees will be used for our new registration system, to purchase supplies and equipment for the RHCC Academic Co-op.

The registration fee and background check cover 12 months from the time you pay them. If you have a background check that is less than 12 months old, you do not need to file again until it

expires. The fees for classes are per quarter session. If your child has a full schedule, there is a discount per class.

- \$15 per class per child (study hall, clubs, and nursery excluded. This fee is for the entire quarter, not per week. This comes out to approximately \$3 per class day)
- \$20 annual registration fee per family (Non-refundable. This fee covers admin supplies and use of the online registration system.)
- \$20 one-time background check fee for each parent serving at the Co-op (waived if you have a background check on file with RHCC. Please let us know if you already have one.)

No individual associated with RHCC Academic Co-op will profit financially.

Participation

It is required that all adults (ages 18 and older) in the building have a national background check on file with the church; this is for the safety of all the children involved. Once registration is complete, we will provide a link to the national background check through the church for you to complete.

For guest speakers and one-time attendees/visitors, it is required that the Administrative Staff be notified of the date and time a one-time attendee/visitor will be coming to the Co-op, the purpose for their visit, and their full name and phone number. Someone who has passed a background check will be assigned as a chaperone to the visitor. The chaperone will follow the visitor everywhere the visitor will go while in the building and at no point will the visitor be allowed to be alone with any child(ren) at the Co-op.

It is required that each adult must commit to volunteer in the Co-op. This can be done by volunteering to teach a class, assist in a class, helping with set-up, or clean-up and/or other duties as determined are needed to keep the Co-op running. All parents should expect to have a task during each hour. Volunteer requirements are outlined in the **Volunteer Requirements** document.

It is required that a parent or guardian be present **IN THE BUILDING** at all times while your children are in class. If you happen to have an unassigned hour, or your assigned task has been completed early, you **MUST** remain at Co-op either in the lobby, or you may sit in on a class, study hall, or nursery. You may be asked by the Administrative Assistant to take up an extra task or help fill a need if one arises.

If you need to leave to run an errand, another adult must be left in charge of your child(ren). You must fill out a Parental/Guardian Absent form and it must be approved and signed by a member of the Administrative Staff.

Another Parent or Guardian can only take on one family's additional children at a time and must sign the form agreeing to the responsibility. This is so that, in case of emergency in the parent's absence, the acting parents can fulfill their responsibilities well.

If you cannot attend Co-op with your child(ren) for any reason, you must have prior permission from the Administrators for your child(ren) to attend with an adult who will be responsible for

them while they are at Co-op. This can be a grandparent, or other guardian, or another Co-op parent. You must fill out the Parental/Guardian Absent form and it must be approved and signed by a member of the Administrative Staff.

There may be times when a homeschooling family may want their child(ren) to participate in Co-op, but the parent(s) or guardian(s) may be unable to attend each week due to an emergency or an unexpected change in their situation. Should something like this happen, the family may petition the Administrative Staff for permission for their child(ren) to attend with another responsible party. This stand-in party will still be required to pass a background check and complete the volunteer requirements, unless the stand-in party is already a member completing their own requirements. This process, if approved by the Administrative Staff, will need to be renewed for each quarter.

Each family will be required to fill out a photo release and opt in or out of permissions for photos and videos to be utilized by Real Hope Community Church.

Real Hope Community Church may, from time to time, document the activities of the ministries of this church with photos and/or video. These are used to both remember the event and help promote future events through Real Hope Community Church. By agreeing, you allow us to include your child in these photos/videos. If you do not agree, your child will not be included or will be obscured in these photos/videos.

Volunteer Requirements and Point System

Because we are a volunteer run Co-op and in order to keep our Co-op performing well, we all must work together.

We have implemented a point system to encourage all members to actively participate. This spreads out the necessary duties evenly to all members, instead of the bulk of it falling onto the shoulders of the Administrative Staff members. Additionally, to help keep costs low, we need to make sure that we are utilizing the building in a respectful manner, by cleaning up and resetting the church after we are done.

We require each family to participate and to earn a certain number of points each week. A student that is at least 16 years of age may work and volunteer towards their families' points. The minimum number of points required each week per family is **4 points**.

Points will be assigned after registration on a first come, first served basis until the needs of the Co-op are met. While we do our best to accommodate your requests, all parents (and students 16 years or older who wish to participate) must work as assigned, unless there are physical limitations that prevent you from performing your duties.

It is possible that some parents may be assigned more duties that exceed their 4 points. If this occurs, any extra jobs that need to be filled will be dispersed as equally as possible until the needs of the Co-op are met.

Volunteer activities are coordinated by the Administrative Assistant.

Points for each activity will be awarded as follows:

- 4 Points - Serve on the Co-op Administrative Staff

- 2 Points - Teaching One Quarter Class
- 2 Points - Being Lead for One Quarter in Study Hall
- 2 Points - Being Lead for One Quarter in the Nursery
- 1 Point - Co-teach One Quarter Class
- 1 Point - Assist in one hour block of Nursery for a Quarter
- 1 Point - Assist in one hour block of Study Hall for a Quarter
- 1 Point - Assist in One Quarter Class
- 1 Point - Serve on Set-up Crew for a Quarter
- 1 Point - Serve on Clean-up Crew for a Quarter
- 1 Point - Teach a one-time class during the flex hour (example: kitchen hour)
- 1 Point - Serve as Hall Monitor for a Quarter
- 1 Point - Serve as Chaperone for a Quarter
- 1 Point - Serve as Coffee Manager for a Quarter

Teacher Requirements

We would not be where we are without our wonderful teachers! So, thank you to each and every teacher who gives their time and their talents to bless other families and children! Classes are formed by parents or other adults volunteering their time to teach a specific topic or class.

As a teacher, we need you to be committed to the entire length of the class. If you are teaching a quarter, or a semester you must be able to commit to the entire length of the class as it is scheduled. Please be prepared and arrive early enough to set up and start your class on time.

Each teacher will be assigned a helper, and it is the teacher's responsibility to let their helper know what is fully expected of them and what their level of involvement needs to be. Examples can include helping students stay on task, helping them with assignments during class, passing out materials and supplies, helping younger children glue or cut, help with certain tasks some children might not be capable of doing on their own yet, offering feedback and helpful ideas, and so on. Please be clear with your helper in the beginning so they know what will be expected of them.

If you are ever interested in teaching a class or have any ideas for classes that you would like to see be taught, please submit your ideas through Homeschool Life. Make sure to include in the description if you would be interested in teaching the class, or if another teacher would need to be found. Not all classes submitted as ideas will always be able to be implemented. Classes formed each semester are set by availability of a teacher who has stepped forward, and classroom space availability.

Visitors

Guests, family members, and children are welcome to visit RHCC Academic Co-op. Please notify a member of the Administrative Staff of any planned visitors/guests.

All Visitors must sign in at the sign in table with the Administrative Assistant and get a name tag. Please have them return the visitors name tag when they leave for the day.

Siblings of registered children who are visitors to the Co-op are welcome to visit, but must remain with their parent/guardian, or go into an age-appropriate area like study hall or nursery.

Absence Procedures and Sick Policy

Please take any illness seriously. Even if it is just a simple cold to you, and you do not personally feel like your cold will harm anyone, be mindful that some individuals are immune compromised and a simple illness for you can cause a very serious health issue for someone else, resulting in them not being able to attend.

If you or your child(ren) or anyone else residing in your household have been sick (fever, diarrhea, wet cough, thick mucus flow, vomiting, flu or Covid symptoms etc.) within the 24-hour period prior to Co-op you please remain at home for the sake of others around you. If possible, we will try to find a way for your child to receive the information he/she missed that week.

If you are assigned in a position to assist a teacher, or as a co-teacher you might be required in the rare event a teacher falls ill or has a scheduled leave of absence to substitute for that class. We ask that each teacher have substitute materials available.

Teachers, if you are unable to teach your scheduled class, please notify the Administrators as soon as possible. You must also notify your helper of the need to substitute your class. If your helper is not available, please reach out for another approved replacement. If you are unable to find a replacement on your own, let the Administrative Assistant know. Once a substitute has been found, you are responsible for arranging any transferring of materials and needed supplies to your substitute.

Teachers, please have a lesson planned in advance that can be used in case of an emergency or last-minute absence.

Helpers, If you are unable to participate and help in your assigned class, notify the teacher in your class as soon as possible. And then let the Administrative Assistant know. The Administrative Assistant will find a replacement for you.

Allergies

At RHCC Academic Co-op we take allergy needs and medical needs very seriously. During registration please be sure to list all your allergies for anyone in your family who will be attending, including any animal allergies.

We are a NUT FREE facility. There is a strict NO NUT policy in place. Please refrain from eating Peanut Butter or any other nuts before coming to Co-op. We want to make sure that the Co-op is a safe place for everyone.

Code of Conduct

Student Code of Conduct

While attending RHCC Academic Co-op or during Co-op sponsored activities, students are expected to follow these basic rules, procedures, and expectations:

- Your priority at Co-op is to learn. Avoid distractions that interfere with that mission.
- Be in the assigned place with appropriate materials, ready to work at the designated time that class begins.
- Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself and never intentionally harm another student.
- Always use kind and Christ-like appropriate language while maintaining friendly and courteous behavior.
- Be polite and respectful to everyone, including other students, teachers, administrators, support staff, and visitors.
- Follow individual teacher instructions, class rules, and expectations always.
- Do not be a bully. If you see someone being bullied, intervene by telling them to stop or immediately report it to a Co-op teacher.
- Do not become a distraction for others. Give every other student the opportunity to maximize their potential. Encourage your fellow students. Never tear them down.
- Represent yourself in a manner that you will be proud of in 10 years. Take advantage of the opportunities you have at Co-op. They will help you be successful throughout your life.
- No running inside the classrooms or hallways, unless a teacher is asking you to.
- Do not bring unrelated items or toys into class with you that may cause a distraction to yourself or other students.
- Please wear appropriate clothing for the class activity you have signed up for.

Parents/Guardians/Visitors/Guests Code of Conduct

- Parents are responsible for their child(ren)'s behavior. If there is any damage to Co-op or church property caused by a child, the parents could be financially responsible for replacing items.
- Co-op is a place for learning and developing Godly relationships. Encourage your children to treat others kindly and respectfully.
- No inappropriate touching or conversation will be permitted between students, including public displays of romantic affection.
- Adults are not allowed to be anywhere in the building, or on the property alone with a child unless they are the parent or guardian of that child.

- Cell phones are not to be used by students during Co-op hours or by adults during class time if the adult is helping in the classroom in any capacity. The exception to this is if an adult works an on-call job or there is a family emergency.
- Coffee and tea will be made available to adults and teachers only. Do not let your child(ren) utilize the coffee bar in any way. Any coffee or tea needs to be always kept in a secure cup with a lid. If you utilize a borrowed cup from the Co-op you need to wash it and put it away when you are done.

Name Tags

Every member, child, and visitor that attends the Co-op is required to wear a Co-op issued lanyard name tag.

Name tags are required to be turned in before you leave the Co-op each week. If you take your name tag home and it becomes lost, you may be charged a fee for replacement.

Nursery children can wear a nametag sticker on the back of their shirt.

Each parent's name tag will have their child(ren) listed under their name. In case of an emergency, this is a simple way to help make sure everyone is accounted for.

Name tag lanyards are color coded as follows:

- Sparkly Lanyard: Administrative Staff
- Black Lanyard: Teacher
- Blue Lanyard: Parent/Guardian
- Yellow Lanyard: Child
- Pink Lanyard: Visitor

Handling Conflicts and Concerns

Matthew 18:15

"If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother."

While we all hope and pray for no conflicts to ever arise, sometimes they happen. So here are some guidelines for how to deal with conflicts amongst each other at Co-op.

Conflicts regarding other children:

If anyone has a concern about the behavior of any child at Co-op or a child is observed not following the code of conduct at Co-op, you should first approach the parent or guardian of that child privately, in a Christ-like manner.

If you cannot resolve the matter privately, you will need to bring this concern/issue to the attention of an Administrative Staff member. An Administrative Staff member will approach the child's parent/guardian privately or together with the person who voiced the original concern.

Conflicts regarding other members:

If anyone has a concern about the behavior of any member at Co-op or a member is observed not following the code of conduct at Co-op, you should first approach the member privately, in a Christ-like manner.

If you cannot resolve the matter privately, you will need to bring this concern/issue to the attention of an Administrative Staff member. An Administrative Staff member will approach the member privately or together with the person who voiced the original concern.

Conflicts regarding visitors or guests:

If anyone has a concern about the behavior of any visitor or guest at Co-op you should approach an Administrative Staff member immediately. An Administrative Staff member will investigate and handle the matter in a Christ-like manner privately, and if needed only involve the family who was involved in the matter of concern.

Administrative Staff Members' involvement

If after Administrative Staff involvement, the issue cannot be resolved, the Administrative Staff will have the authority to decide on how to move forward with the issue. It is always our goal that every family and child will always be and feel welcome at RHCC Academic Co-op and we never want to turn any children or families away.

Any permanent decisions will be handled privately and in a Christ-like manner and will not be discussed with parties not part of the original situation. Gossip will not be tolerated. At any time, any party directly involved may request a private meeting to review the Administrative Staff's decision on a matter.

The overall goal is to maintain a safe and positive Christian environment for homeschooling families.

Discipline within Co-op Hours

As indicated above, Matthew 18 states that we are to go to our brothers and sisters in Christ if there is an issue and try to resolve it between them. If there is an issue during classes between students or between a teacher and a student, the teacher may pull the student aside in a gentle manner and discuss behavior and ask for changes to improve the class hour.

If the teacher's efforts are unsuccessful, he or she will get one of the Administrators involved. If the Administrator is unsuccessful in communicating with the student(s), the parents will be reached. Our goal is instruction and misbehavior requires another kind of instruction. ***At no point will any teacher or member of staff administer discipline, corporal or otherwise.*** This is not our place nor our responsibility. If a student is not listening or is misbehaving, they will be asked to sit out of an activity or leave class to be with their parent; this is the extent of the discipline we will administer.

We will frequently reiterate to the children the 3 R's:

Respect Authority – This means respect God first, parents second, and other authority figures in your lives.

Respect Others – This means everyone around you, including friends, acquaintances, and strangers. We are all children of God, and we all are brothers and sisters to each other. We must treat each other as we want to be treated, always remembering that we will give an account one day for our actions and words.

Respect our Environment – We are blessed to have use of the space we are in, space that costs the church time, materials, and manpower to maintain. We must always leave our environment (no matter where it is) as good or better than we found it. This is an extension of respecting people we don't even see.

Even though we know the right ways to handle things, sometimes emotions run high. People say or do things they should not do. We, as a church and a Co-op, take accusations and threats seriously. **Physical altercations or verbal threats and abuse will not be tolerated**, and for the safety of everyone involved, this will be addressed immediately. In these cases, teachers are to get the Administrators involved promptly. If the Administrators are teaching and need to leave their class to handle an issue, the helpers will take over the classes temporarily so the Administrators can deal with the situation. Once the Administrators understand the situation, they will involve the parents. It is at the Administrators' discretion whether or not the parties at fault may continue to participate in the Co-op.

Denial/Termination of Membership

The rules under the Code of Conduct are expected to be followed by everyone: children, parents/guardians, guests and visitors. It is required that everyone behave in ways that will support our children's studies in a Christian environment and to promote general Christian fellowship with each other while at Co-op.

Adults are called to be examples for children attending RHCC Academic Co-op and are expected to treat children and other adults with respect, courtesy, and kindness, according to Biblical principles.

Inappropriate actions of members at Co-op, non-compliance with Code of Conduct, or unwillingness to participate in volunteer activities can be grounds for termination of membership at the discretion of the Administrators. If a member's membership is terminated, the Co-op member will be notified by an Administrator.

Regarding Co-op Business

We always welcome any feedback, concerns or comments, or ideas regarding Co-op and your experiences here at RHCC Academic Co-op.

To leave any sort of feedback, you may speak to the Administrative Assistant in person, leave the front desk a note, or email leadership at rhcc.academiccoop@gmail.com. You may also reach out to the Administrative Staff through the RHCC Academic Co-op's Facebook page and through Homeschool Life.

Any concerns and questions will be reviewed by the Administrative Staff members and will be addressed in an appropriate and timely manner.