

HOMESCHOOLERS

BY THE SEA



ST. AUGUSTINE, FLORIDA

Homeschoolers by the Sea
St. Augustine, FL
www.homeschoolersbythesea.com

Welcome to Homeschoolers by the Sea!

We wish you the very best in your efforts to homeschool your children and thank you for choosing to participate with Homeschoolers by the Sea (hereafter referred to as HBTS).

HBTS exists solely because of the ideas, energy, and commitment of our membership. Generally, we do not ask much of first year homeschoolers, but after your first year, we hope you will be ready to assist in some of the exciting and rewarding programs available to our children.

We would like to encourage and support your homeschooling efforts. We offer parent meetings and parent workshops for your enrichment and encouragement. Although many of our members may be able to answer some of your questions, and even though we provide many educational, social, and developmental opportunities for your child(ren), educating yourself about the homeschooling movement and your family's curriculum will be your primary responsibility. HBTS members take the education of our children very seriously and spend a great amount of time in research and development of our individual homeschool programs.

We encourage you to read a few introduction to homeschooling books to help you establish your specific reasons for homeschooling, set your goals with those reasons, and establish strategies for meeting those goals. In our experience, first time homeschoolers are best served selecting a curriculum, which takes little preparation, but is of interest to their child(ren).

Finally, we encourage you to be realistic. Things will go wrong. You will not be the perfect teacher; you will not have the perfect homeschool; your child will not be the perfect learner. Be willing to limit what you do. This support group offers many options, so choose carefully. Avoid the temptation to do it all. Likewise, in your curriculum, aim to do a few things well! There will be plenty of time in the future to do more!

We have provided this handbook to familiarize you with HBTS. Please take the time to read it thoroughly.

May God bless your homeschooling efforts,

HBTS

The HBTS Board of Directors

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EST. 1994

ST. AUGUSTINE, FLORIDA

Membership Handbook

Mission Statement: The purpose of HBTS is to provide a Christian-based support group, open to all homeschoolers regardless of race, creed, religion, or national origin.

Revised 08/2014

The information printed herein is strictly confidential. No part of this handbook may be used or reprinted in any manner whatsoever without written consent of the Homeschoolers by the Sea Board of Directors. All members' names, phone numbers, addresses, and email addresses are strictly confidential. It is a violation of our members' right to privacy to disclose any member information contained herein.

Violators may be held liable and may be subject to prosecution.

Contact Information

Homeschoolers by the Sea
St. Augustine, FL 32086
904-794-9420

Web site: **www.homeschoolersbythesea.com**

Email for non-members: **info@homeschoolersbythesea.com**

Please refer all prospective homeschoolers to our email for non-members, or web site as listed above. Thank you!

Table of Contents

HBTS Handbook

Purpose and Goals	1
Conduct Policies	2
Board of Directors' Agreement.	3
Board Positions and Responsibilities.....	4
Membership Policies	5
Group Direction	9

Purpose and Goals

The HBTS Board of Directors' goal is to provide:

- Parent support meetings
- A forum for speakers and workshops at parent meetings
- TV, radio, and newspaper advertising of meetings and large events
- Information to meet the special needs of new homeschoolers
- Information regarding the laws of homeschooling
- A network regarding current homeschooling issues and information
- A supportive relationship with Home Education Foundation (HEF), Home Education Resources and Information (HERI), Home School Legal Defense Association (HSLDA) and Florida Parent Educators Association (FPEA)

The HBTS support and co-op group's goal is to provide educational, cooperative, and socialization opportunities for its membership, which may include, but is not limited to:

- Arts and crafts classes
- Physical education programs
- Workshops and field trips
- Language Labs
- Theater Works program
- Homeschool choir
- Book club
- St. Augustine Lighthouse Workshops
- Science Fair
- Social events
- Service projects
- Curriculum share
- Used curriculum sale/book fair
- Testing/portfolio services
- Recognition ceremony
- 4-H Club
- Spelling bee
- Public Speaking
- Show-n-tell/ Demonstrations
- Junior Rangers
- Poetry forum
- Florida History
- Creative Writing
- Foreign Language Lab
- Beach Day/Park Day
- Field Day

Conduct Policies

- I acknowledge that HBTS is a not-for-profit organization of volunteers. I release HBTS, its officers, members, and associates from all liability, and I assume full responsibility for my children and myself at all HBTS sponsored functions.
- If I commit to attend any event or activity of HBTS, I will abide by my commitment. If something arises and I am unable to keep my commitment, ***I will notify the coordinator of that event 24 hours before that event.*** I recognize my accountability to others in this group and my obligation to teach my children responsible behavior through my example.
- As a courtesy to all, I will try to make all HBTS phone calls after school hours (after 2:00 pm).
- As a courtesy to the people who have volunteered to coordinate events for HBTS, ***I will arrive 10-15 minutes before a scheduled event.*** This courtesy will ensure that all events can begin as scheduled.
- I recognize that the behavior of my children is my responsibility. If my child's behavior becomes distracting or offensive, I will remove my child as a consideration to those participating in the event. If I fail to discipline my child, the coordinator or teacher of the event will have the right to approach my child or me concerning the behavior.
- Because my conduct in this homeschool group and before my children is paramount to the reputation I seek to establish, my family and I will conduct ourselves in an upright, moral way at all HBTS functions, knowing that homeschoolers in general will be judged in part by the way my family presents itself.
- If I am dissatisfied with some element of a workshop, field trip, or any other HBTS sponsored activity, I will first express my disapproval to the HBTS event coordinator. I acknowledge that it is inappropriate to air grievances with personnel outside HBTS beforehand.
- If I find fault with another member of HBTS, the only appropriate response is to lovingly and expediently approach that individual about the fault and to reconcile any differences. It is inappropriate to bring such faults to the board or another individual first. If, however, no resolution can be reached between the two parties, then the matter may be taken to the board or a board member. If no satisfactory resolution can be reached, the parties have the option to present the situation to the group. Matthew 18:15-17, *"Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican."* KJV

Board of Directors' Agreement

The board of directors agrees to base its decisions and actions on the words and teachings of Jesus Christ in order to secure a firm foundation, to have a cornerstone from which to build, and to provide service as Christ commanded. Luke 6:47-48, *"Whosoever cometh to me, and heareth my sayings, and doeth them, I will shew you to whom he is like: He is like a man which built an house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock: and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it: for it was founded upon a rock."* KJV

The HBTS board of directors will strive to:

- † Keep the operation of our organization SIMPLE
- † Embody a spirit of TOLERANCE toward all people
- † Respond in a POSITIVE manner to adversity
- † Consider all ideas as VALUABLE

Qualifications for leadership include:

- † Support of the HBTS Mission statement
- † A commitment to establish Christ's teachings as our foundation
- † A willingness to set goals consistent with the needs of HBTS members
- † A willingness to oversee the availability of activities for HBTS members
- † The willingness to serve the best interests of the group
- † One year's experience homeschooling
- † Intention of serving on the board for at least one full year

Board Positions and Responsibilities

Coordinator's Roles

- To assess and serve the needs of the HBTS membership
- To coordinate HBTS board members
- To establish and maintain HBTS' calendar of events
- To assist each special event coordinator with her program(s)
- To establish and conduct parent meetings
- To draw up parent meeting agenda

Assistant Coordinator's Roles

- To assess and serve the needs of the HBTS membership
- To receive, verify and disseminate membership information to respective board members
- To establish and maintain an information table at all parent meetings
- To work as a liaison with the FPEA and other supportive networks
- To compile and distribute membership packets and cards

Secretary's Roles

- To record minutes of parent meetings and board meetings To draft all correspondence on behalf of HBTS (donation requests, recognition certificates, thank-you notes, etc.)
- Compile, maintain, and distribute membership information

Treasurer's Role

- To establish HBTS budget for the upcoming year
- To receive, record, deposit, and handle all finances for HBTS including, but not limited to, membership dues, FPEA dues, HEF contributions, program and service fees, and fund raising efforts
- To keep the members informed of HBTS' financial status on a monthly basis
- To initiate end of year audit by another board member and two other HBTS members

Outreach Coordinator's Roles

- To administer the publicity for HBTS
- To communicate with prospective homeschoolers
- To maintain an informational relationship with the public libraries
- To be a point of contact with the local school board through correspondence or phone call on an annual basis and maintain that relationship

Membership Policies

Board of Directors

Governing Body: Homeschoolers by the Sea (hereafter referred to as HBTS) is governed by an elected Board of Directors. The HBTS Board of Directors (hereafter referred to as the Board) agrees with and supports the purpose, goals, and activities of HBTS. The Board shall be made up of the Coordinator, the Assistant Coordinator, the Secretary, the Treasurer, and the Outreach Coordinator.

Nominations: Nominations for vacant board positions may be taken from HBTS members at large. Nominees for said positions may present their personal plans for this group during the organizational meeting to be voted upon by the members present. Board members will make themselves available to their successors to offer counsel for a minimum period of three months.

Fiscal year: The fiscal year for HBTS shall be July 1 to June 31.

Transfer of Materials: From the May meeting until June 1 will be a period of transition. Both exiting board members and newly elected board members will have at least one meeting for the transfer of all materials including, but not limited to, all items on each board members' respective Transfer of Board Responsibility Checklist. The Checklist will contain a list of items used during the year by each board member and such items are the property of HBTS. This will ensure a complete and smooth transfer for the upcoming board. The exiting board members will be held accountable for the transference of these items in proper condition in a responsible manner within the time limits stated above.

Disbandment: HBTS may be disbanded with a two-thirds vote of membership present at an advertised meeting.

Impeachment: Any or all of the board members may be impeached by a majority vote of members present at an announced meeting. The grounds of not fulfilling their duties as prescribed in this handbook and/or any significantly objectionable actions that pertain to HBTS may constitute reasons for impeachment. In the event of impeachment, the responsibilities of that position will be divided among the remaining board members until the position is filled. Impeachment may only be an option provided that the following procedures have been fulfilled in the following order, as described on page two:

1. Lovingly and expediently approach that individual and reconcile any differences.
2. If no resolution can be reached between the two parties, then the matter may be taken to the board.
3. If no satisfactory resolution can be reached, the parties have the option to present the situation to the membership body.

Amendments: Only at membership parents' meetings will a suggestion to amend or add to the policies be made to the floor. Said changes will be tabled to provide notification, through electronic or US mail, to the entire membership explaining the proposed changes and notification of the opportunity to discuss and/or vote on the proposed changes. Discussion will take place at the following membership parents' meeting. After discussion, a motion should be made to make said changes and seconded. At which time, the coordinator either will call for a vote or may make a motion that the issue be tabled for even further discussion. A majority vote of membership present is needed to pass an amendment.

Treasury: The Board agrees to close out each year's budget with no less than \$100 remaining in the HBTS checking account, which is to be used in the next successive school year. Only if HBTS is dissolved, will the account be depleted.

Finances

Membership Dues: Membership dues are set at \$25 per family, per year. Co-operative dues are set at \$10 per family per semester. Income generated through HBTS membership dues first will be allocated to pay HBTS's administrative costs. The HBTS Board of Directors must approve a yearly budget submitted by the treasurer. After monies have been budgeted toward the aforementioned items, funds will be allotted as follows: if funds are available, they will first be distributed to all events that benefit the group as a whole (i.e. Recognition Night) and then if additional monies are available, they will be evenly distributed among the specific events (i.e. Youth Workshops, Special Children's Programs, etc.) to help absorb some of the cost to the parent members.

Fundraisers: To reduce the cost of HBTS programs and services, HBTS' goal is to support an annual fundraiser. Any fundraiser voted on and accepted by HBTS members will require participation by all active members. Alternate participation will be a financial donation of \$20. Failure to meet either obligation will be considered a non-fulfilled service; please refer to page seven about non-fulfilled service.

Fees: Should HBTS not sponsor a fundraiser, the cost for all the year's activities will be passed on through each event, and all HBTS activities will be pay as you go.

Prepayment: Unless otherwise specified, HBTS events and activities must be prepaid. In most cases, a due date will be posted. Due dates will be strictly enforced. When cash is exchanged, a receipt may be requested.

Debts: Members are responsible for any bank charges HBTS sustains as a result of a member's check drawn against their account with insufficient funds. Existing HBTS debts must be paid before any new commitments may be made or will be honored.

No Refunds: Unless otherwise specified, HBTS will not issue refunds for membership dues, missed field trips or classes or other financial transactions unless HBTS is at fault. If an event is cancelled and HBTS receives a refund, HBTS will issue reimbursement to paid participants.

Membership – General

Privacy: Information about any HBTS member is strictly confidential. Furthermore, no HBTS publication may be reprinted without written consent of the Board.

Membership: Membership will constitute of the payment of membership dues of \$25 per family per year and a service commitment for HBTS. Membership benefits include participation in field trips, service projects, fund-raisers, participation at parent planning meetings, adult educational sessions, Internet networking, Recognition Ceremony and other adult programs as well as receipt of the HBTS' Handbook. HBTS limits its membership to no more than 45 families.

Cooperative Classes:

Co-op classes will be offered to HBTS members on a first come, first served basis, with a cap of 40 families. Co-operative classes' dues are set at \$10 per family per semester. Please note that this is a weekly commitment and regular attendance is expected. If a family who is registered for co-op feels they can no longer participate, that family is encouraged to resign from co-op classes to allow other members an opportunity to participate. If a family who is registered for co-op does not participate in co-op classes for 30 days, they will be contacted by the Board through US Mail or electronic mail to confirm their intentions. If there is no response after 10 calendar days, the family will no longer be registered to participate in co-op classes.

Service Commitment: A service commitment shall be defined as coordination of a class or an event, service in an administrative capacity as a board member or committee member, or anything pre-approved by the Board.

External Correspondence: All correspondence representing HBTS that is written to individuals not affiliated with HBTS must be submitted to a Board member and approved. Any professional or financial correspondence must be on HBTS letterhead and signed by the HBTS Board of Directors.

Internal Correspondence: Internal correspondence from the Board to the Membership body will be approved by all HBTS Board members and signed by the HBTS Board of Directors.

Not For Profit: HBTS is a not for profit organization. Therefore, profits from services or programs offered from individuals through HBTS must meet with Board approval, and must be advertised as such.

Non-fulfilled Service: Members who fail to fulfill their HBTS service commitment will first be contacted by a Board member. If other service arrangements cannot be made and the service obligation remains incomplete, such members will be denied an active membership during the successive school year. Families seeking active memberships may offer a defense of their non-fulfilled service commitment to the Board.

Event Coordinator Responsibilities

Replacements: Individual event coordinators who leave their service position midyear (whether they cease to homeschool or other unforeseen events) are expected to find and train their replacement. If an event coordinator chooses not to reassume their former position, it would be a courtesy to make themselves available to offer counsel to her successor.

Longevity: Members who have formerly served HBTS in a specific area, activity or event will be offered first priority to continue as that event's sponsor as long as they desire that position and have Board approval.

Expenditures: If you are requesting monies for your service commitment from the HBTS budget, submit your request to the Treasurer by the September parent meeting or before. Each event coordinator must submit, in writing, an outline of how all monies from the HBTS budget will be spent. Reimbursements will be made to individual event coordinators upon submission of a receipt and only up to the amount allocated, to be submitted within the fiscal year. If additional monies are required, and before being spent, they must be submitted to and approved by the Board.

Caps: Event coordinators reserve the right to limit the number of participants attending HBTS functions. Sign up will be on a first come, first served basis.

Community Donations: All event coordinators seeking community donations must have such requests pre-approved by the Board. Please submit a rough draft proposal, including the business's name and address to the Board. Upon approval, the Board will draft the final copy of the request on HBTS letterhead and supply the postage. Most solicitations need to be made at least four months in advance.

Reservations: Event coordinators are responsible, in advance, for contacting the organization HBTS will be attending. Any advance paperwork or payment required by the organization will be submitted by the due date. Confirmation letters, on HBTS letterhead, need to be requested from the Board.

Priority: HBTS maintains that during our activities and outings, when space or seating is limited, first priority is given to our children. When space is limited, the event coordinator will impose a lottery to select a limited number of parents to act as chaperones. If the activity includes a free admission, the recipient will be the event coordinator and their family.

Accountability: Event coordinators will maintain a list of all individuals signed up for and actually participating in their event. The event coordinator may contact any member who does not attend and fails to contact the event coordinator at least 24 hours in advance. If this occurs twice, the coordinator may recommend to the Board that the family be excluded from similar events for the remaining school year.

Discipline: Each parent is responsible for the behavior of their child(ren). If a child's behavior becomes distracting or offensive, the parent will remove their child as a consideration to those participating in the event. If the parent fails to discipline the child, the event coordinator or the group's instructor, who is responsible for group management, has the right and the obligation to speak to or correct an unruly child concerning the misbehavior. Repeated misbehavior will be referred to the parent and the board should be apprised. If the behavior is not corrected, the child will be prohibited from participating in similar activities for a period to be determined by the event coordinator and the parent; the Board should be apprised.

Group Direction

HBTS begins planning for the upcoming school year well before it starts. It is the Board's goal to have HBTS's programs and services assigned by May and organized during the summer. This ensures that when the school year begins, families can focus on schooling and allow the support group to support! A great deal of organization and preparation go into establishing and maintaining HBTS's support and co-op group. Our membership's cooperation in the preplanning process is critical.

July is the beginning of the HBTS fiscal year and hence the month during which the Board of Directors will plan for the rest of the year.

August is our back-to-School Kick-off. This is a casual time to get to know each other and welcome new families.

September parent meetings should focus on the needs of new homeschooling families.

Parent meetings will be offered from August until May.

April is the month when we nominate members for Board positions for the following year.

May is the month for voting on Board positions, signing up for the following year, and stating one's service commitment. To clearly identify what can and will be offered and for how many, the Board needs a clear commitment of the members who desire to renew their affiliation with HBTS. An equally important part of our membership drive involves the membership dues we collect, which largely determine what events and services HBTS can afford to offer. May is also the month to confirm your service commitment. Therefore, current and potential members must turn in:

1. Service commitment form
2. Dues of \$25.00 per family, and \$10 co-op fee per semester if participating
3. A completed application form

For the Board of Directors to adequately plan and coordinate all services HBTS can offer, it is necessary that each member state their service commitment by the May meeting. Furthermore, HBTS general memberships are limited to 45 families, taken on a first-come, first-served basis with current members given priority.

Fundraising may be necessary to provide programs, services, and opportunities to HBTS members. Provided a Fundraising Coordinator is forthcoming, all members are required to participate; see page six. The monies raised will be allocated as determined by HBTS' budget and the Board. Some fundraising ideas may include candy bar sales, Current stationery sales, a drawing, entertainment booths at local events, holiday bake sales, Christmas card sales, used curriculum sale, yard sales, auctions, CD game sales, or phone book recycling.