

ARCH CO-OP Family Handbook

As a community of families striving to build strong foundations of God's truth with our children, we gather to celebrate together, in the Catholic tradition, the presence of Jesus in the sacraments, appreciate and encourage the unfolding of unique God-given gifts in each child, and facilitate support for parents who are journeying in obedience on the home-school path toward eternity with God.

ARCH Co-op classes are primarily for children ages 5-18 and their preschool siblings. The co-op meets at St. Raymond-St. Elizabeth Church on Sappington Rd. in Crestwood, MO. Classes are held on Wednesdays during the months of September-November and January-April.

As a co-op community, all parents are expected to help with activities and supervision, even if they are not on duty. We rely on our parents to always be willing and able to provide assistance, wherever it is needed, whether it is helping a student find his way to class or cleaning up trash left behind on a table. Please think of the ARCH community as an extension of your home-school family.

We ask everyone to be respectful of the property of St. Raymond-St. Elizabeth's. Our goal is to always leave it looking better than when we arrived. If you have a question regarding St. Raymond-St. Elizabeth's parish or facilities, please come to a committee member, and we will communicate with the secretary.

MEMBERSHIP IN ARCH CO-OP

Membership is open to homeschooling families with school age students (K-12) and is subject to the approval of the director and the coordinating committee. An informal interview with a committee member and payment of the annual registration fee are the requirements. New families to ARCH will be considered for membership based on the number of returning families and our maximum number allowed.

Our coordinating committee is made up of Amy Simmons (Director), Rebecca Mohs, Nic & Erin Herdler, Jenny Vlahutin, Ann Clegg and Christine Hendricks. The role of the director and coordinating committee is to determine policies and procedures, and to administer and oversee the operation of the co-op. In addition, they will interview teachers who share in ARCH's mission and have the skills necessary for instructing a group of students.

REGISTRATION

Member registration in the ARCH co-op is required before families sign up for classes. Once a new family has met with a member of the coordinating committee and paid the annual co-op registration fee, they are welcome to sign up for classes during registration, which takes place in the spring. The co-op registration fee is used to pay rent, insurance, website fees, miscellaneous supplies and fees, provide a stipend to the priests who celebrate Mass and offer Confession, and subsidize the parties that we offer several times a year. This fee is subject to change from year to year in the event that co-op expenses change.

Each teacher sets his/her own tuition for each individual class offered. Any questions about class tuition should be directed to the teacher. The schedule for the co-op year is made available in the spring, followed by current family class registration. New families have the opportunity to register for classes a few days after that. Once a class reaches its maximum size, the class is closed. At that point, a waiting list is used for interested students, who will be added to the class if spots open up.

We encourage families to put serious thought into class choices before the registration period, so that once registration ends, there is no need for changes. **After the drop date, dropping a class is not permitted without a penalty -- 2 months tuition. This is to ensure a reasonable class size for the teacher who has committed to planning and teaching the class. Once classes begin, a student may drop a class, however payment for that month and the next is required.** We are blessed to

have a number of great teachers who provide wonderful classes for our children. They accept or decline the position based on the number of children that are enrolled when registration ends.

PAYMENT POLICY

Class fees are to be paid either for the year (full class fee) or the semester (½ class fee) or on a monthly basis. Families will be provided with a list of each teacher's accepted payment methods, including cash, check, PayPal or Venmo. Cash and checks can be deposited into the teacher's hanging file folder, located in a purple bin which is usually placed in the cafeteria. Payment in full is due the first week of co-op, payment by the semester is due the first week of the semester and payment monthly is due the first Wednesday of each month.

If you have questions about payment, contact Amy Simmons or Rebecca Mohs.

If student(s) have been signed up for classes, and payments have not been collected by the due date, those student/students will be removed from the class lists, allowing any students on the waiting list to take their spots. An automatic notification will be sent to parents that their student(s) have been removed.

SAFETY COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS

Since all parents volunteer to watch and supervise the children at the ARCH Co-op, it is necessary for the parent who primarily comes each week to comply with the safety compliance requirements required by St. Raymond-St. Elizabeth's. All teachers must meet these guidelines as well. These include: the Eparchy Safety Program (Protecting God's Children training class), Worker Registration Form, Code of Ethical Conduct Form, and registration on the Family Care Safety Registry website. These requirements are to be met by the date communicated by the coordinating committee.

INCLEMENT WEATHER/CO-OP CANCELLATION POLICY

There is always a possibility that classes will be cancelled due to unforeseen emergencies either with ARCH co-op, St. Raymond-St. Elizabeth's parish, or hazardous weather conditions. We ask for understanding from teachers and parents in this situation.

If a cancellation of classes is necessary, an email will be sent to all families by 7 am that morning. If the weather is poor, please check your email before coming to co-op. A make-up day will not be scheduled if there is only one cancellation for the year; however, if a second day of co-op is cancelled, a make-up day will be scheduled and will occur at the end of the semester, if possible, during the week after the last day of semester classes.

COMMUNICATION and CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Our co-op operates effectively on the principles of mutual respect and accountability. It is extremely important to the integrity and success of our community that if you have an issue with a child, parent or teacher that you first take the issue directly to the person involved and address it with them. If an issue is brought to the attention of a committee member, you will first be asked if you have had a conversation with the person in which you have a grievance.

"If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have won over your brother." Matthew 18:15

PROPER CONDUCT AND BUILDING USE

St. Raymond-St Elizabeth's is a parish, a place where people gather to worship and pray, as a community centered on faith. Please always remember that we are guests at St. Elizabeth's. All priests, parishioners and staff members need to be treated with respect and charity at all times. Kindness and proper demeanor are essential to the functioning of our co-op. Please keep in mind these common sense rules for our children:

- Children of all ages must be accompanied by an adult at all times - inside and outside
- Walk, don't run, in halls
- During class times, children must be either in a class, volunteering, or being supervised by an adult in the cafeteria or playground. Supervision must be by a parent or another adult appointed by the parent of that child
- Keep voices down, especially in the hallway outside the church
- Please keep food in cafeteria and always remember to clean up after ourselves, whether it be the classroom, playground or cafeteria
- Shoes must be worn at all times
- Speak respectfully to all adults
- Children are not allowed in the kitchen area

Our co-op is permitted to use the school area of the building. This includes the lower level of the building, and the part of the upper level that ends at the school doors. The parish space is for limited use when entering/exiting the co-op and visiting the church. Please be respectful of the lobby area and maintain reverence since the Blessed Sacrament is right inside the church. The school doors upstairs are closed between classroom and parish building, and the school space must be treated as separate from the parish space to respect parish business, personal prayer time of parishioners, and the safety of our children.

All ARCH classes and events should be conducted in the time allotted for the co-op on Wednesdays 8:30 a m – 4:30 pm Any time needed for ARCH classes or events, outside these parameters, will need special permission from the coordinating committee.

SUPERVISING PARENTS

Throughout the co-op day, children must be supervised at all times by their parents or authorized representative. This rule exists to keep our children safe and to minimize behavior problems. ARCH is not a drop-off co-op; however, the provisions that follow are for cases of sudden need or emergency and for our moms who are teaching classes. If your child/children are dropped off under the supervision of another parent, the parent supervising your children must be available throughout the day to administer to the needs of his/her own children as well as the additional children. If a parent is teaching classes at the co-op, all children they are supervising (their own and other parents' children, if applicable) must be watched by another mom while he/she is teaching.

*Please note: Although we are not a drop-off co-op, parents are welcome to leave their children at co-op to run errands or take care of other needs as long as another parent has agreed to be responsible for the supervision of their children. There is a sign-out notebook in the cafeteria for the designation of the responsible parent.

ARCH co-op facilitates a positive social environment where parents should feel confident that their child/children can interact with other children and adults in positive ways that promote appropriate social growth. For such an environment to exist at ARCH co-op for all families, behavior that could damage another child physically, emotionally, or spiritually will not be tolerated.

CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR AND ATTENDANCE

Students are expected to come to class every week with their work completed, if assigned. If they must miss class, there is no refund. If the teacher is unable to come, they may arrange for a substitute or issue a refund. Parents should let the teacher know when their child will not be in class. Teacher contact information can be found on the website listed with their offered classes.

Children should not be wandering around between classes. Once a period has begun, the children should stay in that room. Students in the building who are enrolled in a class may not skip their class except in the event of sickness or another emergency. Children who are not enrolled in a class during a particular hour should be filling a volunteer role or supervised by an adult (in the cafeteria or on the playground).

Bathroom breaks should be done between classes only. Exceptions should be emergencies. Teachers/parents, try to remind students to use restroom BEFORE class. Students will be dismissed after 55 minutes of class, so that there is a five-minute passing period between classes when students may use the restroom.

The only place where running is allowed is in the gym or outside.

If there are behavior issues in a classroom, the teacher needs to be in contact with the parents about the presence of the inappropriate behavior and possible solutions to correct the behavior. If the teacher and parents are having difficulties in finding a workable solution, a committee member can be brought into the conversation. It is most productive if the teacher can record specific behaviors and bring them to the attention of the parents before they escalate to an unmanageable point. Parents appreciate knowing about any negative behaviors in the classroom. If the behavior is not corrected after solutions are implemented, the student will no longer be able to attend the class. The classes are designed for cooperative students who are willing to learn. It is not fair to all cooperative students who are ready to learn to have the class disrupted by a student who chooses inappropriate behavior.

Discipline issues: First and second offense merit a warning and contacting a parent; at the third offense, the child will be asked not to return to the class for the remainder of the semester.

ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY ON BULLYING

Our co-op has a zero-tolerance policy on bullying. Physical threats and/or verbal abuse will not be tolerated. Please bring bullying concerns to a committee member. All concerns presented will be taken very seriously and could result in a one-semester immediate suspension or expulsion.

RECESS POLICY

Parents, or other caregivers appointed by a parent, are the primary adults responsible for the children at recess time. Recess monitors will be utilized to help ensure the proper conduct and safety of our children; however, these adults do not replace the parents, as they cannot possibly ensure the safety of all the children present. Their primary role is to ensure that recess rules are being followed. If a rule is being broken, the recess monitor will conduct the child to their parent or caregiver and help resolve the issue. Children ages 6 and under need to be supervised by their parent during recess.

Please note that there is no tree climbing or fence climbing allowed. Also, no wheels are allowed on the parking lot, including bikes, scooters, or skateboards. The fields that we are allowed to use on campus are a valuable asset to Mary Queen of Peace, and they must be treated with the utmost care.

If there are behavior issues at recess, which do not end after the recess monitor asks the child to stop, the recess monitor should have the child go immediately to their parent for supervision. A parent and committee member should be made aware of the behavior. If the inappropriate behavior continues at a later time, the child will not be able to participate in recess and will need to be supervised by a parent or other adult at that time. The duty of the recess monitors is to provide overall supervision of the children. Their attention cannot be focused on one child who chooses inappropriate behavior.

VOLUNTEER POLICY

Every family is asked to help with cleanup or recess supervision. This is vital to the success of our co-op and the safety of our children. Sign-up for recess duty or cleanup time slots will be held in late August. Families are asked to sign up for 2 clean-up slots or 4 recess slots each semester, depending on the number of families enrolled.

In case of absence on assignment day, please try to secure a replacement or swap shifts. Recess changes should be communicated to Jenny Vlahutin and cleanup to Ann Clegg.

If a family knows they will not be able to fulfill their volunteer duty, please coordinate with Ann Clegg to discuss options. It may be acceptable to write a check to ARCH for \$25 (for each required shift) to pay to have a substitute cover their shift (s).

There are many other volunteer opportunities available that all ARCH Co-op to operate well. Please consider the volunteer opportunities at the parent meeting. If you have any suggestions, please contact a member of the Coordinating Committee.

DRESS CODE

All students should be dressed appropriately for classes. Shoes should be worn at all time. Tops should cover backs, shoulders, mid-section, and not be low cut. Shorts and skirt length should be modest in length (a good guideline is to the tips of fingers when arms are at your side). Young men should be neat and clean in appearance.

For P.E. classes, students can wear t-shirts and shorts weather permitting. Shirts with inappropriate messages or advertising will not be allowed. Tennis shoes and socks must be worn for this class. Please do not wear flip-flops or sandals.

For Mass, let us all remember that we are in the presence of the Living God. Our co-op is representing the home-schooling community, and we want to be dressed neatly and in a respectable manner for Mass. Please take some time to think and pray about this. Am I giving honor and glory to God dressed to meet Him like I am going to a picnic or sporting event? This is even more important if you are participating in the role of a gift bearer, reader or server. (Even if you are a server, your robe does not cover your tennis shoes or sandals.)

HEALTH AND SAFETY PROCEDURES

In case of illness, please use the following guidelines to determine whether the child or entire family should stay home. Keep in mind that we are a large number of people in a relatively small space, and it is easy for germs to travel. We need to wait out incubation periods to protect our families, most especially the youngest members. **If you do decide to keep a child at home, please notify any teachers affected.

Colds: A child with a minor cough or cold (clear runny nose) may attend co-op. If the cold is accompanied by excessive coughing, temperature, or fatigue, please allow your child to remain at home.

Flu: If a family has been exposed to the flu (including a member of the family having it) all members of the family should stay home until the household has been well for 48 hours or has been free from exposure for 48 hours. This includes families that have been vaccinated against the flu this year.

Covid: Please follow current CDC guidelines.

Diarrhea/Vomiting: A child with diarrhea and/or vomiting should stay at home until symptom-free for 24 hours.

Fever: A child should remain at home with a fever greater than 100 degrees. The child can return to co-op after being fever-free for 24 hours (without fever-reducing medicine such as Acetaminophen or Ibuprofen).

Chicken Pox: If any member of a family has the chicken pox (or has been exposed), the entire family will need to stay home for the incubation period (16 days) until all lesions have crusted (scabbed). Please note that according to the CDC, vaccinated people who get chickenpox may develop lesions that do *not* crust, so they are considered contagious until no new lesions have appeared for 24 hours.

Croup: The incubation period for croup is 2-6 days and the child will remain contagious for a minimum of 4 days after. (Please wait until the child is no longer coughing, sneezing, or otherwise appearing contagious).

Lice: If a student has nits or head lice please notify a Coordinating Committee member, especially if you think your child had them while at co-op. The entire family should stay home from co-op and be treated. Families can return to co-op when they are nit free. This is not a 'dirty' problem or a reason to feel ashamed – for children or parents. It is a common issue among toddler and elementary school age children that can be remedied through natural methods, consideration, and communication.

Safety: For fire evacuation, reference the building fire code procedures which are posted on the classroom doors. All teachers, parents and students should make themselves familiar with the exit route for the classrooms they are using. In the case of an evacuation, teachers should have their attendance sheet and a supervising mother should have the sign-in/sign-out sheet. Our meeting spot for everyone is on the back fields. Once there, teachers and supervising mothers should take attendance and account for all the children for whom they are responsible.

ALLERGY POLICY

Please understand that we have no control over what food is used or brought into the building, especially by other groups. Even when only ARCH is present, the cafeteria is not guaranteed to be peanut-free. However, we ask parents to consider not bringing any foods containing peanuts to co-op to help ensure the safety of our allergic children.

Teachers are encouraged not to pass out snacks or candy to students during their classes, as many families have issues with food ingredients. To ensure the safety of your child, it is the parent's responsibility to email all teachers so that they are made aware of your child's allergies.

USE OF ARCH NAME

The ARCH name may not be used to participate in any competition or event, whether academic or otherwise, without the advance written permission and consent of the Coordinating Committee.

No one may procure funds using the ARCH name as a means of obtaining such funds from any sponsored group without the advance written permission and consent of the Coordinating Committee.

RESOURCE LIBRARY

The resource library is located in Room 5 on the upper level. Parents may check out and borrow resources for use in their schooling at home. Julia Blaxton has cataloged all the books for easy access in the app LibraryThings and it can be accessed here: <https://www.librarycat.org/lib/ArchCoop> (<https://www.librarycat.org/lib/ArchCoop>).

VISITORS

Only parents (or their representative) and siblings of children enrolled in classes should be on the premises during co-op. Friends of enrolled children will not be allowed to attend our co-op because of liability issues for our group and for the church where we are meeting. People interested in joining the co-op should contact a committee member to visit.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Activities that focus on our Catholic faith are organized and celebrated throughout the year on co-op days and other days. Please contact Christine Hendricks if you would like to volunteer in offering a special ARCH event.