



H.E.A.R.T. HANDBOOK

2023-2024

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HEART BY-LAWS

ARTICLE I: STATEMENT OF ORGANIZATION

**Home Education and Responsible Teaching ("HEART") is a home educators' support group.

ARTICLE II: STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

We purpose to glorify God through supporting one another in our common conviction to "train up a child in the way he should go." (Proverbs 22:6)

ARTICLE III: GENERAL GOALS

- A. For families to support and encourage one another in the efforts of teaching at home.
- B. To offer educational field trips and social opportunities for our home-educated children to interact with others of like mind and training.
- C. To establish a link in a chain for information to be passed on to individual home school families from statewide, citywide and local organizations.
- D. To educate and encourage action, which would protect and further our legal rights to teach our own children.

E. To help one another develop in our children's right attitudes toward authority and Biblical truth. ARTICLE IV: DOCTRINAL STATEMENT

Though secular families and those of differing faiths are welcome to participate, this support group intends to be Christ-centered, doing all things in a manner which honors Biblical principles and brings glory to His name. We are adopting a limited doctrinal statement to these fundamental positions. All board members, coordinators, and activity organizers collectively and individually agree that they believe in each of the following and shall sign the HEART Leadership Statement agreeing with all HEART Bylaws. We believe:

- A. there is only one God, eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. (John 1:1, 14),
- B. in the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, that He was, is, and shall forever be the only Begotten Son of God. We believe in His virgin birth being conceived of the Holy Spirit, in His sinless life, in His miracles, in His victorious and atoning death through His shed blood. We believe in His bodily resurrection, in His ascension to the right hand of the Father, and in His personal return in power and glory. (John 3:16; Luke 1:30-31, 5:22-24, 23:46; Mark 16:19; Matthew 24:30-31)
- C. His life was perfectly sinless, and that His sacrifice on the cross is complete for the atonement of sin. (1 Peter 2:21-22, 24; John 19:30)
- D. the Bible to be the only inerrant, plenary, verbally inspired word of God, which is needed to direct lost souls to Jesus Christ.
- E. all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God and therefore must accept by faith the death of the Lord Jesus Christ as payment for the penalty of those sins. (Romans 3:23, 6:23; Acts 16:31; John 1:12; Ephesians 2:8-9)

F. We believe that God has blessed people with the institution of marriage for His glory and to reflect the union of Jesus and the church. We believe that the family is the basic governing, social, and spiritual unit created by God whereby the child learns self-discipline, social relationships, and develops a relationship to the Creator and Savior. In the eyes of God, a family is comprised of either a single parent or male and female parents who are scripturally married, not merely cohabitating or in a homosexual relationship. We believe all intimate sexual activity outside this biblically defined marriage relationship is not in accordance with God's plan and therefore sin. We believe that God created the human race male and female and that all conduct with the intent to adopt a gender other than one's biological gender is not in accordance with God's plan and therefore sin.

ARTICLE V: OFFICERS AND GOVERNMENT

The government of HEART shall be vested in a volunteer Board of Directors consisting of five members annually elected from the membership. The Board of Directors shall consist of at least the following members: President, Vice-President, Information and Technology Officer (ITO), Secretary and Treasurer. As appropriate, job responsibilities may vary from year to year.

- **President**

The President or a board member designated by the President shall preside at all meetings of the board and membership. The President, as servant leader, shall focus the majority of their attention on carrying out the General Goals of HEART, as detailed in Article III of these Bylaws, and will solicit leadership and other members to function likewise.

- **Secretary**

The Secretary, as servant leader, is the custodian of all official HEART records and is responsible for ensuring accurate documentation of all HEART meetings.

- **Treasurer**

The Treasurer, as servant leader, shall have charge and custody of, and be responsible for all funds and securities of HEART, giving an account of faithful performance of all duties through budget reports to the HEART board and general membership.

Further details of job roles can be found in the HEART Handbook. All candidates for the Board of Directors shall sign the HEART Statement of Faith agreeing with HEART Bylaws, Article IV: Doctrinal Statement. The HEART governing board will meet periodically, at its discretion, to discuss matters relevant to HEART. The Board of Directors shall have control and management of any property belonging to the HEART organization.

Handbook

HEART will maintain a Handbook that addresses member etiquette, board responsibilities and volunteer opportunities. This Handbook is available on the website to all members, as well as at all meetings.

Nominations and Elections

Nominations will be accepted for board positions until April 30. A special meeting will be held at the May General Meeting to elect new board members. Special Meeting requirements will be followed as detailed in Article IX: Meetings. Terms will run June 1 – May 31. Board members may serve 4 consecutive years. After a hiatus of at least one year, a member may run again to serve on the HEART board.

Vacancies

Any board member may resign at any time by giving written notice of resignation to any board member. Such resignation shall be reported to the membership by one of the remaining board members within 72 hours of receipt of the resignation. The resignation shall take effect at the time specified in the notice.

Any board member may be removed from the HEART board by a 2/3 majority vote of the Board of Directors whenever in its judgment the best interests of HEART would be served thereby, but such removal shall be without prejudice to the board member so removed. This removal shall be confirmed by a majority vote of the membership at the next General Meeting.

Any vacancy created in the Board of Directors shall be filled by appointment by the Board of Directors with a 2/3 majority vote. This appointment shall be confirmed by the membership at the next General Meeting.

ARTICLE VI: MEMBERSHIP

Any family currently home schooling children ages 3 -21 or have graduated a high school student through homeschooling while a member of HEART may become a member of HEART, upon completed application, the payment of annual dues, and agreement to abide by these by-laws.

HEART membership is for the school year beginning June 1st and ending May 31st. Members of HEART receive access to the website and may participate in HEART-sponsored field trips and activities. Members should regularly attend meetings and volunteer in HEART activities.

ARTICLE VII: FINANCES

In January, the Board shall determine, and membership will approve, the annual non-refundable dues for members for the following school year, to be payable to HEART upon joining. An annual budget for general operations will be presented to the membership for approval by vote prior to June 1st. The membership rate shall remain constant for each membership year regardless of the month a member joins and will only be adjusted in coordination with the annual budget review. The Treasurer will provide a periodic accounting to the officers and members of HEART. All expenditures outside of the approved yearly budget over \$300.00 must be approved by two-thirds of the active HEART members attending the monthly meeting where a motion for the expenditure is raised. An annual budget for general operations will be presented to the membership for approval by vote prior to June 1st.

Monies received will be accepted by leadership, reviewed and/or accounted for by the Treasurer and deposited into the HEART bank account. The Treasurer and Secretary will be co-signers on the account.

ARTICLE VIII: WEBSITE

HEART will maintain a website with current events, announcements, and forums, the purpose of which will be to provide ideas, information and event calendars that edify and benefit home schooling. All important communications will be sent by mass email to the entire HEART membership. Various other announcements will be posted on the front page of the website or in other areas of the website.

ARTICLE IX: MEETINGS

The President shall exercise parliamentary control according to *Robert's Rules of Order* for all meetings unless otherwise specified in these Bylaws. At least two weeks' notice of all meetings must be given to the membership.

General Meetings

HEART has General Meetings that are held regularly, and all members are encouraged to attend. All business matters will be decided by vote of a majority of the members present at the General Meeting where the matter is raised, unless otherwise provided for in these Bylaws. Every HEART family has one vote. An agenda will be posted on the website prior to the meeting.

Special Meetings

The President or a majority of the officers may call Special Meetings from time-to-time for various purposes. Notification of a Special Meeting will be posted on the website and sent to all members. A quorum (5% of members) must be established before the meeting can commence. All matters will be decided upon by a two-thirds majority vote, each family having one vote. Absentee votes will be accepted via submission to the HEART PO Box Attention: Secretary, or electronically submitted to both the Secretary and the President. All absentee votes must be received 72 hours prior to the special meeting.

ARTICLE X: FIELD TRIPS AND ACTIVITIES

HEART members will assist with planning or plan, in accordance with the HEART Leadership Statement, regular field trips and other extracurricular activities under the direction of coordinators. Information about activities will be provided on the website. Activities will be designed for home-educated students as enrichment to their studies. Participation in all HEART activities and field trips is limited to HEART family members only.

ARTICLE XI: GRADUATION

HEART offers Christ-centered graduation ceremonies to Kindergarten and High School Senior student members. Representative colors will be royal blue for Kindergarten and navy and silver for Seniors. Signups, requirements, deadlines and fees for both ceremonies will be posted to the website.

ARTICLE XII: AMENDMENTS

The HEART Bylaws may be altered, amended or repealed only by recommendations from a special member committee. Notification will be sent to membership for solicitation of candidates to serve on said committee. A board member must serve on the committee. Bylaws may be adopted by a Special Meeting called for such purposes. All Special Meeting requirements must be followed as detailed in these Bylaws in Article IX: Meetings.

Last updated 5/15/2017

HEART Activity Guidelines

1. **A leader in charge of any HEART activity must agree with and sign the HEART Leadership Statement agreeing with all of the HEART Bylaws, including Article IV: Doctrinal Statement, to fulfill the purpose and goals for this organization.**
2. **Please only sign up for an activity if you are committed to attending.** Arrangements are made according to sign ups. *Activity fees are due upon sign up on the HEART website, (usually paid through PayPal.)* All attendees should meet at the specified meeting site and time. If an emergency does arise, please notify the coordinator as soon as possible.
3. HEART activities are designed to enrich home education. **Therefore, these activities are primarily for the benefit of your home-schooled children.**
4. **As a parent, you must always know where your children are and what they are doing.** Your children need to be with you (or the person you have designated to monitor them) throughout the activity. Children are to be respectful, kind, and courteous to authority and each other.
5. **Please pick up after yourself.** Place all trash in a trash receptacle. Please leave the host facility in better condition than you found it.
6. In order to comply with the host and be a good witness, **please abide by any restrictions or requests made.** Those not abiding by these restrictions may be asked to leave, and may be prohibited from attending other activities. *Send thank you cards or emails to those hosting the activity.* **First impressions are the longest lasting. For some of our activities, we may represent the first exposure to the Lord and/or home schooling. It is very important to be on our best behavior, to set a good example, and do all things as unto the Lord.**
7. **All attire must be modest and in good taste for both PARENTS and STUDENTS.** The length of shorts, skirts, or dresses must be finger-tip length or longer. Spaghetti straps, leotards, halters, and undershirts as outer garments are not acceptable. All shirts must be worn so as not to expose bare chest/cleavage; the midriff must not be exposed during normal activities (i.e., bending, stretching, or reaching.) Sleepwear may not be worn. Excessively loose or tight garments are not acceptable; all clothing should be appropriately fitted. **STUDENTS MUST:** wear shoes appropriate to the activity; have neat, clean, well-groomed hair (including facial hair); not show jewelry in pierced areas of the body, except ears; cover any visible tattoos; not wear any clothing that attracts undue attention or disrespects the host restrictions or requests.
8. **There will be absolutely NO dating or public displays of affection allowed.** If parents allow their children to have boyfriend/girlfriend relationships, those relationships should be shared elsewhere. If students engage in inappropriate behavior, they will be asked to stop, or leave the activity if the behavior continues.
9. **Everyone is expected to act with integrity, honesty and respect.** Older students should embrace the privilege and responsibility of being role models to the younger students. **So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all to the glory of God.**
1 Corinthians 10:31

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Member Guidelines for Posting to the Forum:

Most HEART forums are moderated. The goal of moderating is to ensure respect among members and to limit the number of posts/emails so members can stay better informed of viable information that applies to the larger group.

Categories for the forum are as follows:

HEART Family	Non-HEART Sponsored Activities	Recipes-What's Cooking?
Little HEARTS	Academic Questions	Referrals-Where do you go for?
HEART Elementary	Dual Credit	Businesses
HEART Middle School	Sell-Buy-Donate	Political
HEART High School	Acts of Service	
HEART Middle/High School	Prayer Requests and Praises	

Please choose the category which best fits your need.

1. Posts which include information for an activity should include all pertinent information (who, what, when, where, time, etc....) as something which is vague will begin a flurry of questions posted to the forum. You'll want to be sure that your subject line clearly states what you are wanting or asking.
2. Posts regarding non-homeschool topics could be shared just as well by personal means. (If your post really does not apply to all of HEART's families, perhaps just email your friends.)
3. Most responses or questions to posts will require that you only click the 'reply' button and will put you in direct contact with the person who sent the post. (This will save our moderators time by not having to moderate more emails/posts; it will also keep member inboxes from being flooded with forum emails, and your response goes speedily and directly to the person who needs to see it.)
4. Please check the HEART calendar for conflicts before submitting information to the forum. You could even take it a step further, and contact the coordinator for the age group you are targeting to see if there are some dates that work better than others for your activity.
5. Use of H.E.A.R.T.'s name and or social media guidelines: No pictures of H.E.A.R.T. only events, member contact information or event locations should be posted on Facebook, only to the H.E.A.R.T. forum. ANY use of H.E.A.R.T.'s name and or logo online or for social media requires board approval.
6. Please follow HEART etiquette guidelines:
 - *Direct your responses to the appropriate audience.* Reply/repost to the thread only if it pertains to the whole group, otherwise make it a personal response by clicking the reply button.
 - *Make your subject line clear*, so as to reach your specified audience (ex. Museum field trip)
 - *No spam*
 - *No all caps* (yelling)
 - *Remember* that the HEART board, moderators, and activity coordinators are all volunteers

- *Let the Bible be your guide, “Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.” Ephesians 4:29*

HEART Calendar and Event Sign Ups

Any event added to the HEART calendar should be HEART specific, meaning that it is an event for only HEART members. (The forums can be used to inform members of HEART events which are located on the calendar, as well as events that are not HEART specific.)

Be sure to consult with the coordinator for advice or insight when planning an event, as she may be able to make suggestions for your event to progress smoothly.

When signing up for an event, please complete the following steps:

1. The first pop-up window is where you enter your (the parent's) information so that the coordinator knows which family (or family member) initiated the sign up for the event. Complete the requested information and click the 'Continue' button.
2. The second/next screen is where you will actually sign up your children by name. If you as the adult are not to be included in the sign up, you will delete your name from the number one position and fill in your child's name (adding the names of other children as needed) Click the 'Continue' button.
3. The third screen is where you will see all of your sign-up information: your information as the one who completed the sign up, and the name(s) of the child(ren) you signed up to attend the event. Click the 'Finish' button. If payment is required for the activity, a PayPal screen will pop-up in order for you to complete payment (please check the settings on your device). You will receive an automated email confirmation for your event sign up.
4. The PayPal screen is where you must submit payment through PayPal for events which have a fee or cost involved. ***Failure to complete payment upon sign up may lead to a rather dismal situation, as most often, the names of those who have not completed payment must be removed from the event sign up.*** The PayPal link should be on the right side of the screen after step three has been completed. (Please complete this step when payment is required – no one enjoys having to remove names from event sign ups.)

HEART Financial Information

- An annual budget is presented that only reflects the forecasted income and budgeted expenses of HEART membership dues and funds.
- Payments for HEART planned and member coordinated sign up events are collected at the time of sign up. All payments must be completed via PayPal. The PayPal link is located on the right of the screen once the registration is complete. Checks and cash are not acceptable forms of payment and can only be considered under extreme circumstances with coordinator and treasurer approval. (To see how to sign up for an event please page #10 of the members handbook)
- If payment is not completed at the time of sign up, the member will be notified via email their current sign up is being removed from the calendar and the member will need to sign up again and complete the payment. Their sign up will not be “held” on the calendar and any unpaid spots will be made available.
- A member may cancel a sign up and be given a full refund up till the time the sign-ups are closed. It is the member’s responsibility to contact the treasurer to request a refund. Once signups are closed, the member will need to contact the coordinator of the event. Depending on the event and if payment has already been processed, it will be the responsibility of the member to try and seek repayment from another member who can attend in their spot if a refund from HEART cannot be processed.
- All non-membership fund expenditures are capped at their cash received amounts. If there is an overage of monies collected for a specific event, it will be retained by the HEART segment sponsoring the event (i.e., Little HEART, Heart elementary) until the end of the fiscal year. Overages may be used if needed for another event when approved by the coordinator. Overages will not carry over to the next fiscal year and will be added to the general fund.
- Proper documentation is needed, where applicable, for the release of money for a member coordinated event. If an invoice, contract or statement from a business needed for the trip is not available, the treasurer will rely on information from the calendar and PayPal to determine the amount of funds released via check. The check can only be made payable to a business unless payment is made in advance and a receipt is provided. In addition, if an invoice, contract or statement cannot be provided in advance, the member coordinating the event must obtain one or a receipt for payment and present it to the treasurer after the event.

H.E.A.R.T GRADUATION POLICY

H.E.A.R.T. does not validate your senior's diploma. This is the responsibility of the parent(s).

- Application & Fee
 - General sign-up will start at the H.E.A.R.T. Expo. In the event that there is not the H.E.A.R.T. Expo, general sign-up will be opened on August 4 on the website.
 - Parents must have homeschooled potential graduate during his/her junior year and current senior year.
 - Closing date will be October 28th at midnight. The website sign-up will be closed. First planning meeting will be the first week of November. Any sign-up requests made between October 29th and the first graduation meeting will be subject to HEART Board approval and a late fee.
 - The total fee for graduation will be due at the time of sign-up through Pay-pal. This fee will be determined and set by the chairpersons based on the previous budget and current prices.
 - "Fee covers the cost of the graduation ceremony venue, decorations, small reception, programs, thank you cards and offerings. "All other fees will be the responsibility of the senior and/or parent.
 - "The fees for a navy gown, cap with a navy and silver tassel, the charm for the current year, diploma, as well as all other fees will be the responsibility of the senior and/or parent. Specific details and instructions for ordering will be given at the graduation meeting.
 - Graduate signups close on October 28th. Participating graduate families may cancel their involvement in graduation up to 24 hours after the first graduation meeting in November and a full refund will be provided. After this 24-hour period no refunds will be given to families who later decide not to move forward with graduation
 - To ensure all committee work and volunteer commitments are met, an additional volunteer check in the amount determined by the chairpersons may be required per family. The volunteer check will be returned once a volunteer's commitment has been met, otherwise the check will be deposited.
 - Parents and students must agree and abide by the H.E.A.R.T Activity Guidelines to participate in this H.E.A.R.T event.
 - There will be no maximum number of graduates.
 - July 1st the H.E.A.R.T. board will take "submissions" for those who want to volunteer as the chairperson and co-chairperson. Two people, who have seniors graduating, should fill these positions.
 - Any disputes will be decided by the board members of H.E.A.R.T.

- Each family will be asked to sign-up for a committee. These committees are what make graduation personal and successful. Participation on these committees is not optional. Our fees are based on family participation. Committees may include but are not limited to:
 - Chairperson, Co-Chairperson
 - Treasurer
 - Secretary
 - Voiceover Recorder
 - Reception Refreshments
 - Reception Decor
 - Sanctuary Decor
 - Graduation Program Design
 - Program Proof-reader
 - Photography Coordinator
 - Technical and Media Manager
 - Thank You Cards
 - Public Relations
 - Wrangler Mom Coordinator
- Cap/Gown: navy/silver
 - Try on your cap and gown as soon as they arrive to be sure they fit properly. (The gown should be midway between your knees and ankles)
 - Prayerfully consider what you will wear under your gown.
 - Wear a lightweight fabric as the room does get warm.
 - Wear a casual dress shoe. You want to be comfortable and able to walk naturally in the shoes you choose.
 - Be sure to iron or steam the creases out of your gown before arriving at graduation.
 - The cap is to be worn level on the top of head—not tipped to the front, back, or to either side.
 - The tassel is initially worn on the right side of the cap and then moved to the left when instructed during the graduation ceremony.
 - No personalization or embellishments of cap and gown with exceptions of honor cords and collars.

- Venue
 - H.E.A.R.T will contribute \$850.00 for a single ceremony. In order to promote continuity and a repeating relationship with our local churches, it is suggested that the following churches be approached first. These churches have been gracious to us in the past. Past committees have used their equipment and video processing is easier when you do not have to learn the new equipment each time.
 - Securing the venue is critical. We have suggested the third week in May be our optimal date. Reasons being: college graduations are usually the week before along with Mother's Day. For those students taking dual credit at Lone Star, their classes are completed by this date. If it is moved to the end of the month, Memorial Day became a factor.
 - 1st suggested choice: 1st Assembly of God in Humble - if the church commits early enough.
 - 2nd suggested choice: a venue large enough to accommodate approximately 40 guests per graduate.
- Videos
 - Length of the video will be determined by the chairperson based on the number of seniors.
 - All lyrics to music will be approved by the chairperson and co-chairperson. Any disputes will be resolved by the H.E.A.R.T. board.
 - Pictures will be approved by the chairperson and co-chairperson. Any disputes will be resolved by the H.E.A.R.T. board.
 - All videos will have allowed voiceovers by seniors or parents. No live microphones.
- Parent Certification: H.E.A.R.T. does not validate any senior's diplomas. Currently in Texas, homeschooled students are legally considered private school students. There is no statutory definition of a "homeschool," or "home-schooled student." Establishing a legal definition for these programs opens the door to government regulation. Texas State Law Requirements Regarding Home Schooling:
 - The instruction must be bona fide (i.e., not a sham)
 - The curriculum must be a visual form (e.g., books, workbooks, video monitor.)
 - The curriculum must include the five basic subjects: reading, spelling, grammar, mathematics, and good citizenship.

H.E.A.R.T. DOES NOT VALIDATE DIPLOMAS OR ACCREDIT ANY HOME-SCHOOL OR PRIVATE SCHOOL FAMILIES.

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Board Roles Descriptions

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President:

The president or a board member designated by the president shall preside at all meetings of the board and membership. The president shall exercise parliamentary control in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order. The president, as a servant leader, shall focus the majority of their attention on carrying out the By-Laws of HEART and solicit leadership and other members to function likewise. The president shall approve or sign on behalf of HEART, upon approval from the membership, any facility forms or contracts. (Example: meeting facilities)

The president's involvement may include but is not limited to the following activities:

- work with churches to request rooms for meetings/events
- work with the other board members to decide topics/speakers for meetings
- oversee calendar as HEART specific events are added to ensure compliance with HEART goals
- Help activity coordinators enlist coordinators for regularly scheduled events and activities i.e., Thanksgiving lunch, Valentine's party, science fair, spelling bee, etc.
- Arrange for set up/take down for meetings and events as well as lock up facilities (CHATA could be utilized to help with this and other board members whose children are participating in a given event might take the responsibility of locking up)
- Oversee expenditures in conjunction with the Treasurer to ensure that the financial policies within the bylaws are being followed (rent, copies, postage, web site).
- MC the kindergarten graduation
- share info about homeschooling with new and existing homeschoolers

Vice President:

The vice president as a servant leader shall be the membership liaison and oversee special committees when they are formed from time to time. The vice president is responsible for membership and approving all new members. Upon the death, absence, removal or resignation of the President, or in the event of his/her inability to act, the Vice President shall assume the duties of the President, and when so acting, shall have all the powers of and be subject to all the restrictions on the President until a new president shall have been duly elected.

Membership Duties

- Check HEART email daily (memberships, requests for information)
- Respond to information requests as needed (email or phone calls)
- Approve and process member renewals
- Liaise with Treasurer periodically regarding dues and payments
- Take care of other tasks that may arise from time to time

Special Committee Duties

- Be a member of short-term committees as they are needed
- Liaise with Board members as issues arise
- Keep Board and membership informed of progress
- Carry out specific tasks related to work of committee
- Other duties may arise from time to time

Treasurer:

The Treasurer shall have charge and custody of and be responsible for all funds and securities of HEART. Responsibilities are listed but are not limited to:

- Be knowledgeable of HEART bylaws and Activity guidelines.
- Reconcile bank statements within 1 week of receipt.
- Maintain and transfer funds in PayPal account as needed. This is including a monthly reconciliation of the PayPal account.
- Have knowledge of and use accounting software for record keeping and reporting.
- Deposit checks within one week of receipt of the item.
- Keep records of all deposits.
- Keep records of all disbursements and have appropriate documentation for such transaction. (i.e., receipt, contract, email)
- Mark members paid for calendar events in a timely manner. Follow up with those who have not paid for events at the time of sign up (per HEART guidelines).
- Complete payments for field trips or events where money is collected via HEART account and maintain receipts for those items.
- Prepare and distribute timely and reliable financial information to be published on the website and present at HEART meetings.
- Determine HEART annual dues for next fiscal year in January of current year.
- Prepare a budget by April 1st for the preceding fiscal year. The budget is to be presented to the board at the April Board meeting and the presented to the members at the May HEART meeting for approval.
- Submit records to either a Certified Public Accountant or audit committee at the end of the fiscal year for review. All records should be turned over no later than 2 months of the end of the fiscal year.
- Prepare and file any and all necessary tax documents.

Secretary:

The Secretary as a servant leader is responsible for ensuring that accurate minutes of all meetings are taken, approved, and distributed in a timely manner. She is responsible for maintaining all permanent records and reports of the organization, and for working with the ITO to communicate appropriately all meetings of the board, members, and special meetings.

In accordance with HEART bylaws and the Handbook, the responsibilities of the Secretary include but are not limited to:

- Ensuring accurate minutes of meetings are taken, approved, and distributed in a timely manner
- Maintaining, updating, and making available HEART's organizational and permanent records including the HEART handbook
- Distributing ballots, tallying and recording votes including proxy votes given to any board member or general member
- Creating a proxy form which can be printed and given to any member/board member for elections and other issues
- Coordinating with the HEART President to prepare meeting agendas
- Functioning as a second signer for checks
- The Secretary is responsible for reviewing and updating documents as necessary and ensuring all documents are safely stored electronically and/or in permanent binders and readily accessible
- Printing current membership rosters for each member meeting for use as sign in sheets
- Submitting meeting minutes to the ITO for posting on the HEART web site within one week of the meeting

Information Technology Officer:

- **Information and Technology Officer (ITO)**

The Information and Technology Officer (ITO), as servant leader, has the responsibility of the maintenance of the HEART website. The ITO will provide support and assistance to members, and will update the website as needed (at least quarterly).

The ITO's responsibilities include but are not limited to web site oversight and updates, membership-wide emails; posting and circulating HEART-wide communications, supporting and assisting members in proper web site etiquette. The ITO will also be responsible for the following:

- Regular review (at least quarterly) of, and update of web site layout
- Supply member updates via email
- Informing the Board of any membership issues or internal needs/issues
- Online voting (sending, receiving, confirming, and reporting of all membership voting if applicable)
- Setting up auto confirmation to all incoming emails
- Forwarding member emails to appropriate coordinator or board member for response.
- Special communications for meetings and notifications through collaboration with Secretary

Little HEARTs Coordinator:

The Little HEARTs coordinator (or coordinators) shall organize and oversee activities for students who are Little HEARTs members. This includes but is not limited to helping event coordinators in maintaining and/or amending the website pertaining to kindergarten or younger functions or events, assisting the coordinator of individual events in attaining buildings for activities, updating members on upcoming events, and ensuring HEART activity guidelines are followed at events.

- Organizing and overseeing activities for Little HEARTs students
- Plans with parents and coordinate fieldtrips for children kindergarten or younger.
- Maintain (and/or assist members) in adding or amending Little HEARTs functions on the web site, adding activities on the calendar, and overseeing sign ups through regular contact with the activity coordinator
- Update members when a new activity is posted for Little HEARTs.
- Correspond with members and field questions
- Attain facilities for activities
- Ensure HEART Activity Guidelines are followed at events
- Organize and coordinate special events
- Attend monthly HEART membership meetings
- Attend periodic HEART board meetings
- Make sure that payments are received prior to the event, and that the necessary check is written for an event, if applicable. Coordinate all payments with treasurer

While it is not necessary to attend every scheduled event, it is the responsibility of the activity coordinator to contact the event coordinator to make sure all necessary preparations are completed.

Elementary Coordinator:

The Elementary Activity Coordinator (or co-coordinators) shall organize and oversee activities for students who are elementary HEART members. This includes but is not limited to helping event coordinators in maintaining and/or amending the website pertaining to elementary functions or events, assisting the coordinator of individual events in attaining buildings for activities, updating members on upcoming events, and ensuring HEART activity guidelines are followed at events

- Organizing and overseeing activities for Elementary HEART students
- Plans with parents and coordinate fieldtrips for children in grades 1 through 5
- Maintain (and/or assist members) in adding or amending Elementary HEART functions on the web site, adding activities on the calendar, and overseeing sign ups through regular contact with the activity coordinator
- Update members when a new activity is posted for Elementary students.
- Correspond with members and field questions
- Attain facilities for activities
- Ensure HEART Activity Guidelines are followed at events
- Organize and coordinate special events including, but not limited to Field Day, Christmas caroling, Thanksgiving dinner, Valentine celebration
- Attend monthly HEART membership meetings
- Attend periodic HEART board meetings
- Make sure that payments are received prior to the event, and that the necessary check is written for an event, if applicable. Coordinate all payments with treasurer

While it is not necessary to attend every scheduled event, it is the responsibility of the activity coordinator to contact the event coordinator to make sure all necessary preparations are completed.

HEART Middle School Coordinator:

The HEART Middle School Activity Coordinator (or co-coordinators) shall organize and oversee activities for students who are middle school HEART members. This includes but is not limited to helping event coordinators in maintaining and/or amending the website pertaining to HEART Middle School functions or events, assisting the coordinator of individual events in attaining buildings for activities, updating members on upcoming events, and ensuring HEART activity guidelines are followed at events

- Organizing and overseeing activities for HEART Middle School students
- Plans with parents and coordinate fieldtrips for students in middle school
- Maintain (and/or assist members) in adding or amending HEART Middle School functions on the web site, adding activities on the calendar, and overseeing sign ups through regular contact with the activity coordinator
- Update members when a new activity is posted for HEART Middle School.
- Correspond with members and field questions
- Attain facilities for activities
- Ensure HEART Activity Guidelines are followed at events
- Organize and coordinate special events
- Attend monthly HEART membership meetings
- Attend periodic HEART board meetings
- Make sure that payments are received prior to the event, and that the necessary check is written for an event, if applicable. Coordinate all payments with treasurer

While it is not necessary to attend every scheduled event, it is the responsibility of the activity coordinator to contact the event coordinator to make sure all necessary preparations are completed.

HEART High School Coordinator:

The HEART High School Activity Coordinator (or co-coordinators) shall organize and oversee activities for students who are high school HEART members. This includes but is not limited to helping event coordinators in maintaining and/or amending the website pertaining to HEART High School functions or events, assisting the coordinator of individual events in attaining build-ings for activities, updating members on upcoming events, and ensuring HEART activity guide-lines are followed at events

- Organizing and overseeing activities for HEART High School students
- Plans with parents and coordinate fieldtrips for students in high school
- Maintain (and/or assist members) in adding or amending HEART High School functions on the web site, adding activities on the calendar, and overseeing sign ups through regu-lar contact with the activity coordinator
- Update members when a new activity is posted for HEART High School.
- Correspond with members and field questions
- Attain facilities for activities
- Ensure HEART Activity Guidelines are followed at events
- Organize and coordinate special events
- Attend monthly HEART membership meetings
- Attend periodic HEART board meetings
- Make sure that payments are received prior to the event, and that the necessary check is written for an event, if applicable. Coordinate all payments with treasurer

While it is not necessary to attend every scheduled event, it is the responsibility of the activity coordinator to contact the event coordinator to make sure all necessary preparations are com-pleted.

Family Coordinator:

The Family Activity Coordinator (or co-coordinators) shall organize and oversee activities for students who are any age HEART members. This includes but is not limited to helping event coordinators in maintaining and/or amending the website pertaining to HEART functions or events, assisting the coordinator of individual events in attaining buildings for activities, updating members on upcoming events, and ensuring HEART activity guidelines are followed at events

- Organizing and overseeing activities for any age HEART students
- Plans with parents and coordinate fieldtrips for families of all ages
- Maintain (and/or assist members) in adding or amending family HEART functions on the web site, adding activities on the calendar, and overseeing sign ups through regular contact with the activity coordinator
- Update members when a new activity is posted for families.
- Correspond with members and field questions
- Attain facilities for activities
- Ensure HEART Activity Guidelines are followed at events
- Organize and coordinate special events including, but not limited to Renaissance Festival, Thanksgiving dinner, Christmas caroling, Valentine celebration, Houston Livestock Show & Rodeo, Field Day
- Attend monthly HEART membership meetings
- Attend periodic HEART board meetings
- Make sure that payments are received prior to the event, and that the necessary check is written for an event, if applicable. Coordinate all payments with treasurer

While it is not necessary to attend every scheduled event, it is the responsibility of the activity coordinator to contact the event coordinator to make sure all necessary preparations are completed.

HEART Leadership Statement

With my signature below, I acknowledge that I have read and I agree with the Bylaws Articles I-XII in their entirety.

ARTICLE I: STATEMENT OF ORGANIZATION

**Home Education and Responsible Teaching ("HEART") is a home educators' support group.

ARTICLE II: STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

We purpose to glorify God through supporting one another in our common conviction to "train up a child in the way he should go." (Proverbs 22:6)

ARTICLE III: GENERAL GOALS

- A. For families to support and encourage one another in the efforts of teaching at home.
- B. To offer educational field trips and social opportunities for our home-educated children to interact with others of like mind and training.
- C. To establish a link in a chain for information to be passed on to individual home school families from statewide, citywide and local organizations.
- D. To educate and encourage action, which would protect and further our legal rights to teach our own children.
- E. To help one another develop in our children's right attitudes toward authority and Biblical truth.

ARTICLE IV: DOCTRINAL STATEMENT

Though secular families and those of differing faiths are welcome to participate, this support group intends to be Christ-centered, doing all things in a manner which honors Biblical principles and brings glory to His name. We are adopting a limited doctrinal statement to these fundamental positions. All board members, coordinators, and activity organizers collectively and individually agree that they believe in each of the following and shall sign the HEART Leadership Statement agreeing with all HEART Bylaws. We believe:

- A. there is only one God, eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. (John 1:1, 14),
- B. in the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, that He was, is, and shall forever be the only Begotten Son of God. We believe in His virgin birth being conceived of the Holy Spirit, in His sinless life, in His miracles, in His victorious and atoning death through His shed blood. We believe in His bodily resurrection, in His ascension to the right hand of the Father, and in His personal return in power and glory. (John 3:16; Luke 1:30-31, 5:22-24, 23:46; Mark 16:19; Matthew 24:30-31)
- C. His life was perfectly sinless, and that His sacrifice on the cross is complete for the atonement of sin. (I Peter 2:21-22, 24; John 19:30)
- D. the Bible to be the only inerrant, plenary, verbally inspired word of God, which is needed to direct lost souls to Jesus Christ.
- E. all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God and therefore must accept by faith the death of the Lord Jesus Christ as payment for the penalty of those sins. (Romans 3:23, 6:23; Acts 16:31; John 1:12; Ephesians 2:8-9)
- F. We believe that God has blessed people with the institution of marriage for His glory and to reflect the union of Jesus and the church. We believe that the family is the basic governing, social, and spiritual unit created by God whereby the child learns self-discipline, social relationships, and develops a relationship to the Creator and Savior. In the eyes of God, a family is comprised of either a single parent or male and female parents who are scripturally married, not merely cohabitating or in a homosexual relationship. We believe all intimate sexual activity outside this biblically defined marriage relationship is not in accordance with God's plan and therefore sin. We believe that God created the human race male and female and that all conduct with the intent to adopt a gender other than one's biological gender is not in accordance with God's plan and therefore sin.

ARTICLE V: OFFICERS AND GOVERNMENT

The government of HEART shall be vested in a volunteer Board of Directors consisting of five members annually elected from the membership. The Board of Directors shall consist of at least the following members: President, Vice-President, Information and Technology Officer (ITO), Secretary and Treasurer. As appropriate, job responsibilities may vary from year to year.

President - The President or a board member designated by the President shall preside at all meetings of the board and membership. The President, as servant leader, shall focus the majority of their attention on carrying out the General Goals of HEART, as detailed in Article III of these Bylaws, and will solicit leadership and other members to function likewise.

Secretary -The Secretary, as servant leader, is the custodian of all official HEART records and is responsible for ensuring accurate documentation of all HEART meetings.

Treasurer -The Treasurer, as servant leader, shall have charge and custody of, and be responsible for all funds and securities of HEART, giving an account of faithful performance of all duties through budget reports to the HEART board and general membership.

Further details of job roles can be found in the HEART Handbook. All candidates for the Board of Directors shall sign the HEART Statement of Faith agreeing with HEART Bylaws, Article IV: Doctrinal Statement. The HEART governing board will meet periodically, at its discretion, to discuss matters relevant to HEART. The Board of Directors shall have control and management of any property belonging to the HEART organization.

Handbook -HEART will maintain a Handbook that addresses member etiquette, board responsibilities and volunteer opportunities. This Handbook is available on the website to all members, as well as at all meetings.

Nominations and Elections -Nominations will be accepted for board positions until April 30. A special meeting will be held at the May General Meeting to elect new board members. Special Meeting requirements will be followed as detailed in Article IX: Meetings. Terms will run June 1 – May 31. Board members may serve 4 consecutive years. After a hiatus of at least one year, a member may run again to serve on the HEART board.

Vacancies -Any board member may resign at any time by giving written notice of resignation to any board member.

Such resignation shall be reported to the membership by one of the remaining board members within 72 hours of receipt of the resignation. The resignation shall take effect at the time specified in the notice.

Any board member may be removed from the HEART board by a 2/3 majority vote of the Board of Directors whenever in its judgment the best interests of HEART would be served thereby, but such removal shall be without prejudice to the board member so removed. This removal shall be confirmed by a majority vote of the membership at the next General Meeting.

Any vacancy created in the Board of Directors shall be filled by appointment by the Board of Directors with a 2/3 majority vote. This appointment shall be confirmed by the membership at the next General Meeting.

ARTICLE VI: MEMBERSHIP

Any family currently home schooling children ages 3 -21 or have graduated a high school student through home-schooling while a member of HEART may become a member of HEART, upon completed application, the payment of annual dues, and agreement to abide by these bylaws.

HEART membership is for the school year beginning June 1st and ending May 31st. Members of HEART receive access to the website and may participate in HEART-sponsored field trips and activities. Members should regularly attend meetings and volunteer in HEART activities.

ARTICLE VII: FINANCES

In January, the Board shall determine, and membership will approve, the annual non-refundable dues for members for the following school year, to be payable to HEART upon joining. An annual budget for general operations will be presented to the membership for approval by vote prior to June 1st. The membership rate shall remain constant for each membership year regardless of the month a member joins and will only be adjusted in coordination with the annual budget review. The Treasurer will provide a periodic accounting to the officers and members of HEART. All expenditures outside of the approved yearly budget over \$300.00 must be approved by two-thirds of the active HEART members attending the monthly meeting where a motion for the expenditure is raised. An annual budget for general operations will be presented to the membership for approval by vote prior to June 1st.

Monies received will be accepted by leadership, reviewed and/or accounted for by the Treasurer and deposited into the HEART bank account. The Treasurer and Secretary will be co-signers on the account.

ARTICLE VIII: WEBSITE

HEART will maintain a website with current events, announcements, and forums, the purpose of which will be to provide ideas, information and event calendars that edify and benefit home schooling. All important communications will be sent by mass email to the entire HEART membership. Various other announcements will be posted on the front page of the website or in other areas of the website.

ARTICLE IX: MEETINGS

The President shall exercise parliamentary control according to *Robert's Rules of Order* for all meetings unless otherwise specified in these Bylaws. At least two weeks' notice of all meetings must be given to the membership.

General Meetings -HEART has General Meetings that are held regularly, and all members are encouraged to attend. All business matters will be decided by vote of a majority of the members present at the General Meeting where the matter is raised, unless otherwise provided for in these Bylaws. Every HEART family has one vote. An agenda will be posted on the website prior to the meeting.

Special Meetings -The President or a majority of the officers may call Special Meetings from time-to-time for various purposes. Notification of a Special Meeting will be posted on the website and sent to all members. A quorum (5% of members) must be established before the meeting can commence. All matters will be decided upon by a two-thirds majority vote, each family having one vote. Absentee votes will be accepted via submission to the HEART PO Box Attention: Secretary, or electronically submitted to both the Secretary and the President. All absentee votes must be received 72 hours prior to the special meeting.

ARTICLE X: FIELD TRIPS AND ACTIVITIES

HEART members will assist with planning or plan, in accordance with the HEART Leadership Statement, regular field trips and other extracurricular activities under the direction of coordinators. Information about activities will be provided on the website. Activities will be designed for home-educated students as enrichment to their studies. Participation in all HEART activities and field trips is limited to HEART family members only.

ARTICLE XI: GRADUATION

HEART offers Christ-centered graduation ceremonies to Kindergarten and High School Senior student members. Representative colors will be royal blue for kindergarten and navy and silver for Seniors. Signups, requirements, deadlines and fees for both ceremonies will be posted to the website.

ARTICLE XII: AMENDMENTS

The HEART Bylaws may be altered, amended or repealed only by recommendations from a special member committee. Notification will be sent to membership for solicitation of candidates to serve on said committee. A board member must serve on the committee. Bylaws may be adopted by a Special Meeting called for such purposes. All Special Meeting requirements must be followed as detailed in these Bylaws in Article IX: Meetings.

Print Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

(Either electronic or handwritten is acceptable.)

Updated 5/15/2017