Anchor Christian Homeschoolers

HANDBOOK

Who We Are

Anchor Christian Homeschoolers (ACH) seeks to provide a place for relationship and fellowship with like-minded families as we endeavor to homeschool our children. To that end, we come together to offer group classes in order to supplement and enrich our children's education and provide the opportunity for parents to come together and share their talents and resources for the mutual benefit of all participants.

ACH meets in SW Springfield, MO, on Mondays from 9am to 1pm. The co-op follows a traditional school-year schedule, with several breaks observed throughout the year. Please refer to the calendar on our website for a complete schedule and detailed dates. For further information, please email us at: anchorchs@gmail.com. ACH is an HSLDA discount group. Members of ACH receive a $15 discount on HSLDA membership. Please see leadership to be added to HSLDA discount member's list or to receive our HSLDA discount code.

Mission Statement

The purpose of Anchor Christian Homeschoolers (ACH) is to encourage and engage with the local community of Christian homeschool families by providing educational and enrichment opportunities. ACH is designed to supplement, not replace, parental instruction at home. We are committed to cultivating a safe, respectful, and cooperative environment for all members. To support this goal, all participants are expected to follow our Code of Conduct, Bullying Policy, and Dress Code.

Statement of Purpose

- To serve God as we serve and encourage each other.
- To provide educational opportunities as a group.
- To provide social involvement through activities.
- To teach our children responsibility, respect, and cooperation.

Statement of Faith

Anchor Christian Homeschoolers is a community of home educators from diverse backgrounds united by a shared Christian faith. It is important for potential members to understand that our desire is to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ and we are committed to educating our children from a Biblical worldview. As such, Christian practices—such as devotions, prayer, and reading from the Bible—play an integral part in our weekly program. All classes provided through Anchor Christian Homeschoolers will be taught from a Biblical perspective. In order to maintain a spirit of unity and fellowship, each family seeking to join Anchor Christian Homeschoolers is asked to sign our Statement of Faith.

Organizational Roles

Leadership Team / Board

The purpose of the Leadership Team is to provide vision, guidance, and accountability in alignment with the mission and Biblical foundation of Anchor Christian Homeschoolers. This team is responsible for upholding the group's mission and Statement of Faith, developing and enforcing policies and procedures, overseeing finances and group structure, and guiding long-term planning. Additionally, the team mediates conflicts and supports families as needed. The Board is composed of at least three members who have participated in the co-op for a minimum of one year. The Leadership Team is entrusted with the overall operation of the group and serves as the final authority in decision-making matters.

Director / Program Coordinator

The Director, or Program Coordinator, is responsible for overseeing the daily operations of the co-op. This role involves coordinating schedules, class assignments, and calendars, maintaining communication with families, volunteers, and teachers, and ensuring that all activities align with a Biblical worldview. The Director manages membership applications, interviews prospective families, and guides new members through registration and onboarding. As the primary point of contact and leader on co-op days, the Director ensures smooth operations, presides over board meetings, and provides oversight for all serving positions.

Treasurer

The Treasurer is responsible for managing all financial aspects of the co-op. This includes collecting dues, class fees, and event payments, maintaining accurate financial records, and reporting to the Leadership Team. The Treasurer also creates the annual budget, assists with financial planning, oversees the co-op's bank account, handles invoicing and reimbursements, and tracks supply expenses. She or he reports directly to the Director and provides updates on unpaid balances for necessary follow-up.

Lead Teachers

Lead teachers are responsible for maintaining the consistency, quality, and Biblical alignment of all academic offerings. They are in charge of their own curriculum planning and are to review class content for alignment with the Statement of Faith. Teachers are responsible for developing lesson plans appropriate to the age group they teach, as well as prepare a backup plan for their Assistant Teacher in case of their absence. They determine necessary supplies, submit requests to the Treasurer, and are responsible for classroom setup. End-of-day duties include notifying the Director of any room damage and helping to reset the classroom to the church's needs.

Assistant

The assistant is responsible for fostering a Christ-honoring and respectful classroom environment while serving as the primary point of contact for student needs during class. Key duties include maintaining attentiveness, managing attendance records, and actively supporting classroom management, which encompasses enforcing discipline procedures and removing disruptive students when necessary. Assistants must also maintain open communication with parents regarding any student behavior issues.
In addition to instructional support, assistants must be prepared to substitute for the Lead Teacher during absences, assuming lead role. Operational duties are also critical; specifically, the third hour assistant is tasked with end-of-day cleaning protocols, including emptying trash, vacuuming floors, wiping tables, and securing the room and turning off lights.

Teachers and Assistants: We kindly ask that you avoid personal cell phone use during class to help maintain maximum focus on our students.

Substitutes

Substitutes assume the role of the Assistant when assigned to a classroom due to lead teacher/assistant absence.

We do value everyone's assistance in this area, but please note that Lead Teachers will be placed in as substitutes less frequently than those who are only assigned to assistant roles.

Set-Up and Clean-Up Responsibilities

As a cooperative, the smooth operation of our daily sessions relies on shared effort from all families, making participation in facility maintenance a core requirement of membership. During the morning set-up, which begins at 8:45, lead teachers and their assigned assistants are responsible for preparing the learning environment before students arrive by arranging furniture and ensuring all materials are ready.

At the end of the day, third-hour teachers and assistants take charge of restoring the class at the close of class. Their primary duty is to reorganize furniture to match the church's standard layout and ensure common areas are tidy. Additionally, all third-hour assistants share the ongoing duty of maintaining classroom cleanliness throughout the session, which includes performing spot vacuuming as needed and ensuring the classroom is swept and free of debris before departure. Be sure to shut off lights once the class is reset.
Please remember that parents are responsible for cleaning up their children's areas after lunch. To support you in this effort, cleaning supplies are provided and easily accessible near the dining space.

Building Use Rules

As guests of the church, we must treat their facilities and equipment with respect. While accidents are understood, parents may be held financially responsible for any damage caused intentionally or due to a failure to follow the rules outlined in this handbook.

Food and drinks are not allowed in classrooms, with the exception of water. Children must not open outside doors for others. Only adults are allowed in the supply room and the church kitchen. The co-op is not responsible for any personal belongings left behind, so members should check all their areas before leaving.

Communication

Email will serve as the main form of communication, and members are responsible for checking it regularly to stay informed about important co-op updates. Key information will also be shared in our private Facebook group, which is accessible only to ACH members.

Social Media: Please refrain from posting photos of children on public social media platforms without permission from their parents. We use a private Facebook group for sharing photos, informal communication, and fostering community connections.

Conflict Resolution

Members are encouraged to use Matthew 18 as a guide on how they should be handled in the. event of any conflicts or misunderstandings. Parents and teachers are first encouraged to try to resolve issues directly. If unresolved, they should seek help from Leadership. As a last step, the Leadership Team will make a final, prayerful decision.

Membership is a privilege that can be revoked for misconduct at the Board's discretion. Members are expected to uphold the Code of Conduct at all group activities, both on and off-site, as their behavior reflects on Anchor Christian Homeschoolers. The Board maintains the right to dismiss members or change policies as needed. Refusal to abide by the Board's decision or these guidelines, may result in dismissal from the group.

Weather-Related Cancellation

Cancellations will be communicated by 7:00 a.m. through email and/or text. In the event of bad weather, please check your email and text before leaving for co-op to confirm whether classes are canceled. We recognize that weather conditions can differ by area. If we decide that roads are safe for co-op but your local roads are hazardous, please text or email Leadership at anchorchs@gmail.com by 6:45 a.m. so they can assess the situation.

Illness

For the health and safety of everyone, please keep anyone in your immediate household home if they are experiencing any of the following symptoms:

- Fever within the past 24 hours
- Excessive mucus
- Diarrhea, vomiting, or nausea within the past 48 hours
- Anything known to be contagious (virus, infection, rashes, ringworm, head lice, colored or copious mucus, etc.)

The Leadership Team reserves the right to send home any family whose student shows these symptoms on Monday morning.

Allergies & Special Needs

Allergies

Please make Leadership and your child's teacher aware if your child has allergies. ACH makes reasonable efforts to minimize allergen exposure, however, parents are ultimately responsible for ensuring the well-being of their child. We do not operate in a facility that is nut-free.

Special Needs

ACH is not specifically equipped or staffed to provide specialized education services. Families with children requiring additional support must inform the Leadership Team before the semester begins. While ACH will make reasonable efforts to accommodate special needs, parents are ultimately responsible for ensuring their child has the necessary adaptations and support to participate effectively.

Absences

To ensure this, we have an absence policy limiting members to no more than two absences per semester, with exceptions made for extenuating circumstances on a case-by-case basis. If you must be absent or late, please support the smooth running of the co-op by informing Leadership, Sub Coordinator and the Teacher/Assistant.

Planned Absences

If you know in advance that you will be missing co-op, please notify leadership and:

- Teachers: Communicate with your assistants and provide them with the materials needed to lead in your absence. Please inform the Sub Coordinator/Leadership of your absence.
- Assistants: Notify your lead teacher and inform Sub Coordinator/Leadership that they will need a substitute for you during your absence

Unplanned Absences

If you are unable to attend on the morning of co-op, please notify leadership immediately so they can inform the necessary individuals.

Refund and Reimbursement Policy

1. Membership Dues

Annual membership dues ($25 for returning families; $40 for new families) are strictly non-refundable. By submitting payment, members acknowledge that these funds are immediately allocated to administrative costs, insurance, and operational reserves for the full academic year. No exceptions are made for membership dues.

2. Semester Fees

Semester fees (including class registration, supply fees, and administrative costs) are subject to the following refund schedule:

Prior to Deadline: Written requests received before August 1 (Fall semester) or December 1 (Spring semester) may be eligible for a full refund, less a $25 administrative processing fee.

After Deadline: No refunds or credits will be issued for semester fees once the applicable deadline has passed, regardless of attendance or usage of services.

3. Family Emergency Clause

Anchor Christian Homeschoolers recognize that unforeseen hardships occur. In the event of a qualifying Family Emergency, the Board may, at its sole discretion, approve a prorated refund of semester fees even after the standard deadline. Such requests must be made no later than two weeks after the start of classes.

Qualifying Emergencies are strictly defined as:

* Severe medical illness or hospitalization of self or an immediate family member.
* Death in the immediate family.
* Sudden, involuntary job loss.
* Military deployment or mandatory relocation due to employment.

Non-Qualifying Circumstances include, but are not limited to, dissatisfaction with classes, scheduling conflicts, or voluntary job changes.

Requirements for Emergency Requests:

Documentation: Requests must be submitted in writing within 14 days of the emergency event and include appropriate documentation (e.g., physician's note, death certificate, layoff notice, deployment orders).

Refund Calculation: Approved refunds will be prorated and minus any costs already incurred on the student's behalf (e.g., purchased supplies, reserved curriculum, or allocated administrative fees).

4. Process for Requests

All refund requests, including emergency exceptions, must be submitted in writing to the Treasurer at anchorchs@gmail.com.

Decision Timeline: Decisions regarding emergency clauses are final and will be communicated within 14 business days of receiving the complete request and documentation.

Payment Method: Approved refunds will be issued via check from ACHSWMO Inc.

Reimbursement

Classroom expenses should be clearly outlined in the Class Suggestions submitted for the semester. Teachers may either request materials be purchased by Leadership or seek reimbursement for up to **$50 per class**. This allowance is intended for items not available in the

co-op supply closet. All reimbursement requests must be submitted during the same semester the purchase was made; no reimbursements will be issued after the semester ends.

Reimbursement requests should be submitted online and must include a physical receipt. Reimbursements will be made up to the amount allocated for each class. If a class requires more than the **$50 allowance**, teachers must submit a class plan along with a justification and list of required items for approval.

For classes that need additional funding beyond the student supply fee, a separate class fee may be added. Teachers are responsible for determining if this is necessary and must coordinate with the leadership team to confirm available funding. This fee must be clearly listed in the class description when submitting class offerings for the semester.

Benevolent Fund

Anchor Christian Homeschoolers is pleased to offer a Benevolent Fund specifically designated to assist families with semester dues when financial hardship threatens their continued participation in our co-op. Because resources are limited, assistance is provided strictly on a priority-needs basis and may cover all or part of the required dues.
Families seeking aid must submit a formal application detailing their current financial situation. The Board of Directors will review each request, determining whether to approve full or partial assistance based on the urgency of need and fund availability. Approved assistance is paid directly to Anchor Christian Homeschoolers to cover the family's account. Due to the finite nature of this fund, the Board reserves the right to prioritize the most critical cases and cannot guarantee that every application will be approved or fully funded.

Disaster Plan Policy

Fire Response Standard Operating Procedure

1. Discovering a Fire – Fire extinguishers can be found in the Family Life Center:
   - Kitchen
   - Lower level, west end (2)
   - Upper level, west end (2)

If the fire is **small (the size of a trash can)**, use a fire extinguisher and follow the R.A.C.E. protocol (explained below).

If the fire is **larger than a small trash can**, locate and activate the nearest wall fire alarm.

2. **R.A.C.E. Protocol** (for small, manageable fires):
R – Rescue: Evacuate and guide anyone in immediate danger to the nearest exit.
A – Alarm: Pull the nearest fire alarm if the fire cannot be controlled with an extinguisher.
C – Contain: Contain the fire by closing doors and windows around it, if it is safe to do so.
E – Evacuate: Evacuate the building through the nearest exit if the fire cannot be controlled.

3. Communication and Coordination:
In the event of a fire, or other emergency requiring evacuation, Leadership will inform church staff and assist in Evacuation Procedures. All teachers should lead their classes outside to the field adjacent to the parking lot on the south side of the building. Assistant teachers are responsible for bringing the attendance roster with them. Once safely outside, have students sit down so teachers can take accountability. If any student is missing, notify leadership immediately. Do not re-enter the building. Keep students together and calm while leadership coordinates family reunification.

Tornado Response Standard Operating Procedure

In the event of a tornado, all lower level classes should seek shelter in the lower level bathrooms and hallways; upper level classes should seek shelter in upper level bathrooms and/or under stairwells. Close doors if time permits. If a tornado is imminent and there isn't time to reach these areas, take shelter in the nearest hallway or bathroom, staying away from doors and windows. Assistant teachers are responsible for bringing the attendance roster with them. Once safely sheltered, take role and notify leadership immediately, if any student is unaccounted for. Keep students together and calm until leadership gives an "All Clear".