



GREATER GLENS FALLS CHRISTIAN HOMESCHOOLERS

LEAH

LOVING EDUCATION AT HOME

Co-Op Handbook 2009-2010

Welcome to the Greater Glens Falls Christian Homeschoolers Cooperative

This co-op exists as a ministry of and under the leadership of Greater Glens Falls Christian Homeschoolers, a local chapter of New York State Loving Education at Home (LEAH). All participating members of the co-op must also maintain memberships in good standing in GGFCH and LEAH, or of another local LEAH chapter. All members have reviewed and signed the Statements of Purpose, Faith, and Dress & Conduct of GGFCH or other LEAH chapter. All of these statements, and all of the guidelines to follow, are put into place to help ensure that we are providing a safe, God honoring place for our children to learn.

Vision Statement

GGFCH Co-op is a ministry of Greater Glens Falls Christian Homeschoolers, providing homeschooling families an opportunity to enhance their children's learning experiences one day each week.

How?

Co-op meets in ability-based and age-leveled classes, providing children an opportunity to develop friendships and learn study skills in a fun, group environment. We believe that being involved in the education of our children is a unique ministry, and as such, co-op teachers and steering committee members must not only sign the GGFCH Statement of Faith, but must agree not to teach contrary to it.

Join us?

We'd love to have your family participate with us in co-op this year. We will meet Fridays at the Gospel Lighthouse Church in Hudson Falls. You may choose to participate in one or all of the classes, as space permits. All we ask is that when your children are at co-op, unless you have made other, specific arrangements with the steering committee, you are available to help. In order for co-op to run smoothly, we need teachers, classroom assistants, hall monitors, "study hall" monitors, and a cleanup crew. By each filling a need, we are able to keep our costs low and our cooperation high.

There is a \$10 per child co-op fee for the entire year, with a cap of \$40 per family. Individual classes may require textbooks or other specialized equipment (to be purchased by parents) or additional materials fees (due at the time of registration); these requirements and costs will be indicated in the class descriptions included with the enrollment packet. Fees are due at the time of registration, and your child will not be officially enrolled until they are received. If fees present a financial difficulty to your family, please speak to a member of the steering committee.

The age designations for each class are a guideline. If you feel your child would enjoy and do well in a different age group for a particular class, feel free to register him or her for that class. However, if a teacher feels a child is struggling, we ask parents to work together with the teacher to find a solution.

Teachers have first opportunity to register their children, and then general registration will take place. Teacher registration opens at GGFCH Knowledge Fair on June 13, 2009. On June 14, registration will be available via our website or mail. Classes are filled on a first-come first-served basis, and each has a size cap imposed by the teacher. Registration will close to existing members at the summer picnic on August 7, 2009, while new members to GGFCH will be able to register for classes when they join the group, should space still be available. Co-op will run for 24 weeks from September 25 to October 30, November 6 to December 11, January 8 to February 12, and February 26 to April 9. Unless marked otherwise, classes are scheduled to run for the duration of the co-op year.

Student Profile Forms

All parents are asked to complete a Student Profile for each child enrolled in co-op. As we are a diverse group of homeschoolers, families may have differing perspectives on home education, as well as what they would like to get out of co-op classes. The information in the Student Profile forms will help teachers understand parental expectations for their students, as well as alert them to any other issues (behavioral, medical, learning) that may impact the classroom or curriculum.

Snow Day Policy

If school is cancelled in the Hudson Falls School District because of inclement weather, co-op will also be cancelled. Please watch or listen to the local news, as you will not be personally notified of the cancellation

Sick Child Policy

If your children have had a fever more than 100.5 degrees, vomiting, diarrhea, or other contagious illness within 24 hours of co-op, please do not bring them. If they become sick with any of the above symptoms during co-op, please take them home. In both instances, notify a member of the steering committee, so that your classroom responsibilities can be covered.

Teacher Absentee Policy

Teachers must make an effort to schedule a substitute for their classes if they will not be attending co-op on a particular day. Once a replacement is found, please email or call Susan Nicholson, the teacher and assistant coordinator, to let her know about the change. We understand that unexpected, last-minute illnesses or other situations can occur. If you are unable to find someone to teach for you, call Susan and she will assist in finding a fill-in. However, please make every attempt to find a substitute on your own first. A list of available substitutes during each period will be given to teachers at the beginning of co-op.

Guest Speaker Policy

When planning a guest speaker, the teacher must first notify the co-op steering committee. The teacher will then be expected to notify parents via email of the upcoming guest speaker, and to communicate openly with the children and their parents afterward, particularly if the speaker taught something contrary to the GGFCHS Statement of Beliefs.

Co-op Guidelines

In order to create and maintain an environment where learning can occur, students can practice respect for authority, and all will be able to enjoy the benefits of this co-op, the following guidelines have been established:

For Parents

- Parents are responsible for the behavior of their children. Therefore, a parent must be present and aware of where their children are and what they are doing. If a parent has

received permission for his or her child to attend co-op alone, that parent must assign another present adult to be responsible for his or her child.

- Parents are expected to participate in the co-op (hence the term cooperative). Everyone should be doing something to assist in some way. If parents are unwilling to contribute, they could jeopardize their child's spot in co-op, and will be approached by a member of the steering committee in regards to the same. Children will not be registered for co-op until their parents sign up for a spot in which to help.
- If you are unable to attend co-op for any day, PLEASE find someone to cover your spot, and notify the teacher/assistant coordinator of that change.
- Parents will strive to work with teachers in a cooperative manner, dealing with any problems that are brought to their attention in a timely and respectful way.
- Parents will endeavor to remember that we all approach the education of our children from slightly different perspectives, and we are all volunteers in this effort. Please give teachers some latitude, and discuss any concerns directly with them, if necessary.
- Parents will complete a Student Profile for each of their children before the start of co-op, in an effort to provide teachers with important information, such as what the family's expectations are of the co-op (Is this counted academic work or strictly enrichment? Will you be requiring your child to complete assigned work assignments?), as well as behavioral or medical items of note for the child.
- Parents will check their emails for general co-op updates and weekly messages from teachers, understanding that most communication will occur this way.
- When visitors are brought to co-op, parents need to be sure they are signed into the visitor log at the front table.
- One of the "co-operation jobs" for parents is clean-up at the close of co-op. We need to leave the church facility better than we found it.
- From the Sick Child policy: If your children have had a fever more than 100.5 degrees, vomiting, diarrhea, or other contagious illness within 24 hours of co-op, please do not bring them. If they become sick with any of the above symptoms during co-op, please take them home. In both instances, notify a member of the steering committee, so that your classroom responsibilities can be covered.

For Teachers

- Every effort will be made to have two adults in each classroom at all times. Similarly, one adult should never be alone with one child who is not his or her own child. When a child is escorted to the restroom, the adult is to wait outside for the child, and then return him or her to class.
- Teachers will strive to work with parents in a cooperative manner, communicating freely, respectfully, and often with them.
- Teachers will review all of the Student Profiles for their classes, and will contact parents or a steering committee member with any questions raised by them.
- Teachers will provide a syllabus or course description before or at the start the co-op year. Expectations will be made clear to parents and students up front as much as is

possible. When appropriate (all school age classes under 6th grade), teachers will communicate weekly assignments to parents via email. Children in 6th grade and up will be expected to maintain an assignment notebook, of which teachers will facilitate the use.

- Teachers are expected to choose classroom material in such a way that is consistent with the vision of the co-op and with biblical principles. Assistance in this is available from the steering committee. If there is any doubt or question, please check first.
- When visitors are brought to co-op, teachers must be certain they are signed into the visitor log at the front table.
- Classrooms or work areas will be picked up at the end of each period, and any spills (from food, art...) need to be cleaned thoroughly.
- If you are unable to attend co-op for any day, PLEASE find someone to cover your spot, and notify the teacher/assistant coordinator of that change.
- From the Guest Speaker policy: When planning a guest speaker, the teacher must first check with the co-op steering committee. The teacher will then be expected to notify parents via email of the upcoming guest speaker, and to communicate openly with the children and parents afterward, particularly if the speaker taught something contrary to the GGFCHS Statement of Beliefs.

For Students

- Students will be active participants in their classes.
- Students will be respectful of their teachers and other parents.
- Students will not be disruptive in the classroom, and will understand teachers do have a three-step process in place to deal with behavioral problems, as well as the prerogative to ask them to leave the class.
- Students in 6th grade and up will maintain assignment notebooks in order to keep track of their teachers' expectations.
- Students will stay within the areas of the church specified for co-op use and will not use/play with anything that belongs to the church unless they have been given permission to do so. Students will treat the church building with respect, not running through it or mistreating it in any way.
- Students may not run/play in the parking lot, or in any outdoor area unless supervised by an adult.
- Students will dress modestly, in an effort to relate to each other in a Godly way.

Building Expectations

All involved with co-op are expected to be respectful of the Gospel Lighthouse Church building and staff. The co-op is unaffiliated with the church, and no one should borrow church supplies or use church facilities in a manner unspecified for co-op. The steering committee has extra supplies (pencils, glue, staplers, etc.) and a first aid kit available at the

front table. Please always look for your help there, rather than the church office. Let us strive to make as little of a disruption in the church's daily operations as possible, allowing it to further God's work without distraction from our presence.

Classroom Behavior Expectations and Discipline Policy

Teachers will set specific classroom rules and expectations, which will be clearly communicated to the students, and made available for the parents as well. If a teacher believes a student is behaving in an inappropriate manner, there is a three-step process to follow:

1. The teacher will address the student directly about the problem in as private a manner as possible.
2. If the problem behavior continues, the student will be asked to leave the class for the day, and be escorted to his or her parent/responsible adult.
3. If the problem behavior occurs again, the teacher will request a meeting with the child's parent and a member of the steering committee. All effort will be made to resolve the problem in a manner satisfactory to all involved. If, however, it cannot be resolved, the child may be asked to permanently leave the class.

If problems occur consistently across various classes, a member of the steering committee will meet with the child and his or her parent to attempt to resolve the issue. If a solution cannot be reached, for the safety and benefit of all of the children in co-op, the steering committee reserves the right to remove this child from co-op.

It is our hope that co-op would provide a positive and productive learning environment for our students. Please pray for the teachers and students. It is our hope that we can work together and exhibit Godly love as a community of believers.

Thank you for your part!

GGFCH Co-op Steering Committee

Michael and Carolyn Bailey
Co-leaders and GGFCH Chapter Administrators

John and Kathie Graham
Co-leaders and Co-op Administrators

Carolyn Bailey
792-8142
Co-op Treasurer

Kathie Graham
747-7410
Webmaster/Parent Liaison

Shannon Lankford
798-1460
Secretary

Susan Nicholson
743-9770
Teacher & Assistant Coordinator

Christa Patterson
761-0844
Registrar

April Wilhelm
745-7841
Facilities Manager

Greater Glens Falls Christian Homeschoolers Statement of Beliefs

(This form needs to be completed and returned, one for each family.)

Statement of Purpose:

Greater Glens Falls Christian Homeschoolers (GGFCH) is a Christian homeschooling group that seeks to encourage homeschooling families in the education of their children.

Statement of Faith:

1. We believe the Bible to be the infallible Word of God, the supreme and final authority for all faith and life.
2. We believe that there is one God, eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
3. We believe in the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, His virgin birth, His sinless life, His miracles, His vicarious and atoning death through His shed blood on the cross, His bodily resurrection, His ascension, and His imminent bodily return in power and glory.
4. We believe that man was created in the image of God, but fell into sin and is therefore lost. Only those who put their faith in Jesus Christ alone, not trusting in any personal works, can be eternally saved from just payment for their sin and guaranteed eternal life.
5. We believe that salvation is the free gift of God brought to the sinner by grace and received by personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ alone, Whose substitutionary death on the cross paid the penalty for man's sin.
6. We believe that the ministry of the Holy Spirit is to convict men of sin, indwell, guide, instruct, and empower the believer for godly living and service.
7. We believe in the spiritual unity of believers through our common faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and that individual doctrinal differences which may exist, outside of the aforementioned (1-6), should not hinder the unity of Christian home educators.

Statement of Dress and Conduct:

For the purpose of bringing glory to God and to avoid causing an offense to others, we ask our members to please ensure that all dress at GGFCH is modest. In addition, we ask that all language and activity be in accord with biblical principles of speech and behavior.

Membership Criteria:

1. All members must be in agreement with the statement of purpose.
2. All members must understand that GGFCH upholds this statement of faith. It is not necessary that you agree with the statement of faith; however you must agree to not be antagonistic towards it.
3. All members must agree to abide by the statement of dress and conduct.
4. All members must understand that GGFCH is not a local church, rather GGFCH encourages all of its members to be active members of a local church that upholds the GGFCH statement of faith.
5. All members agree to pay the yearly dues.

To become a member of GGFCH, please indicate with your signature that you have read this document and are in agreement with the membership criteria.

Signature _____ Date _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Handbook Agreement

(This form needs to be completed and returned, one for each family.)

I have read the Glens Falls Christian Home School Handbook. I agree to follow the listed guidelines, and agree to be responsible for my child doing so.

Parent signature/ Printed name

Date

Children's Signatures:

Medical Release

(This form needs to be completed and returned, one for each family.)

Medical Information

Although it our mandatory policy that parents remain on site with their children during co-op, because it is sometimes possible for children to attend under the supervision of a "substitute" mom, we need to keep your medical information on file for emergency purposes. Please rest assured this info is kept in the strictest confidence.

Family name:

Emergency contact info (who can we reach during co-op? do you have a cell phone?)

Doctor contact Info:

Insurance company name and policy #(s):

Noteworthy medical facts or allergies (list child's name and specifics)

I, _____, authorize _____ to seek medical treatment for any injury or illness to my child(ren), _____, while a participant at the Greater Glens Falls Christian Homeschoolers Co-op, and also authorize the physician and/or hospital near the event site to perform treatment to any illness or injury to my child. I authorize payment for treatment, either personally or through our family health insurance. This participant is in good health and physically capable of participating in the activities of the co-op. I agree not to hold the event host (GGFCH Co-op, or Durkeetown Baptist Church) liable in the event of an injury.

Effective dates:

Parent's signature _____

Parent's printed name _____

General Release

(This form needs to be completed and returned, one for each family.)

Understanding that even with diligent planning and careful execution, accidents do happen, I agree to release Greater Glens Falls Christian Homeschoolers and Gospel Lighthouse Church, and members of such groups, from any liability for injuries, known or unknown, to persons or damage to property sustained to myself or my child(ren) during the course of co-op or on the same grounds. I have carefully reviewed this release and sign it on my free accord. Greater Glens Falls Christian Homeschoolers Co-op strives to operate according to Godly principles, and believes that the Bible commands us to make every effort to live at peace and to resolve disputes with each other in private or within the Christian body (Matthew 18:15-20 and 1 Corinthians 6:1-8). Therefore, the parties agree that any claim or dispute arising from or related to this agreement shall be settled by biblically based mediation. The parties understand that these methods shall be the sole remedy for any controversy or claim arising out of this agreement or any dispute arising out of any activities or events associated with the co-op, and expressly waive their right to file a lawsuit in any civil court against one another. This agreement shall be binding on each member of the family, their personal representatives, heirs, and next of kin.

Parent's signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent's printed name: _____

GGFCH Co-op Student Profile

(This form needs to be completed and returned, one for each child.)

As we are a diverse group of homeschoolers and each family may have a different perspective on home education, as well as our expectations of co-op, please take a few minutes to complete a Student Profile form for each of your children. This information will assist teachers as they work to create a productive and fun learning environment for their students.

Child's Name _____ Age _____

Does your child have any unique learning challenges or behaviors his or her teacher should be aware of? Are there tips or techniques you find affective for working with him or her? Is there any point at which you would prefer the teacher come get you (in regard to non-disciplinary issues)?

What are your personal expectations for your child in regard to co-op? (Social, academic, somewhere in between?) Will he or she be completing homework and other assignments? Would you like to be notified if your child is not working to the standard set by the teacher?

While the co-op has a "No Nut Product" policy for classroom snacks, does your child have any food allergies, food sensitivities, or other dietary restrictions teachers should know about?

Is your child aware of these restrictions? Yes No

Any other concerns/comments? (Please use back if necessary.)

NOTES: