

Houghton Area Homeschoolers Handbook

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Houghton Area Homeschoolers (HAH)

NYS LEAH Chapter #08-019

HSLDA #292155

A Little Bit of History:

The idea of homeschooling swept through America in the early 1980's, thanks to radio broadcasts from Focus on the Family and an outpouring of helpful books from those in the homeschooling movement purporting the benefits of educating one's child at home. It came at a time when some were disillusioned with the philosophies being taught at public schools. Those pioneers in the homeschooling movement endured many criticisms from family and friends for attempting something so bizarre as educating their own children at home. Those in the teaching profession could not believe that mere parents could successfully prepare their children for the adult world. Decades later, the studies have been done, the statistics have been compiled, and children educated at home have graduated into the adult world and have gloriously shown that homeschooling is a viable option for those willing to accept the challenge.

*A group of pioneers in New York State undertook the task of organizing a Christian based support group in 1983 named **Loving Education at Home, Inc.**, also known as **NYS LEAH** or commonly referred to: **Homeschool NY - LEAH**. Today, there are over 140 chapters throughout the state willing to share information or be a listening ear. (please note: the term LEAH may be substituted for NYS LEAH throughout this document)*

History at the Local Level:

Laurie Smalley of Houghton, NY had a vision for bringing local homeschooling families together for fellowship in 1994. The group she organized, Houghton Area Homeschoolers (HAH), joined forces with NYS LEAH in 1997 becoming one of their local chapters. Since that time, countless individuals have served faithfully to sustain the vision and focus of this organization to bring support and encouragement to our local homeschooling community. We are truly blessed to share in this journey of bringing education into the home and raising our children in the focus of God's truth to be life-long learners.

Benefits:

(a) Benefits from being a part of NYS LEAH include:

1. Support for our local Executive Board to perform the tasks of running a 501(c) (3) organization under the provision and guidelines of NYS LEAH
2. Distribution of information about New York State Homeschooling Regulations
3. A quarterly state newsletter (The LEAH Messenger)

4. Invitations to sponsored geographic regional events (such as the Great Homeschool Conventions with national keynote speakers, workshops, and exhibitors)
5. Information from the National Center for Home Education
6. Updates on state and federal legislation related to homeschooling
7. Support for Parents Instructing Challenged Children (PICC)
8. Networking with other state homeschooling organizations
9. Being part of a prominent organization whose goal is to be positive voice for homeschooling
10. General Liability Insurance and Sports Insurance as a LEAH Chapter
11. A discount on membership in the Home School Legal Defense Association (HSLDA)
12. An identification label on the LEAH Messenger for members to use in order to get a "teacher's discount" at stores such as Barnes and Noble, Michael's, JOANN's, etc.

(b) Benefits of our HAH local chapter:

As we are an organization comprised of volunteers, we offer opportunities for our membership to serve in areas of interest, and together create meaningful times of instruction, support and fellowship. Because of this, we seek to offer as many of the following activities as possible, and we appreciate your support in bringing these and other ideas to fruition. To find the focal point of our invested energy, we ask that you participate in our surveys to give us the feedback to plan effectively.

Events and Networking Opportunity:

Parent Meetings: We have parent meetings monthly (or approximately 6 per year). We strongly encourage our members to attend. They are an informative and important time of fellowship and support. We also offer a time at co-op for moms to meet together during their free period to receive training and support from seasoned members of our community.

Annual Activities:

Annual activities depend on the interests and input of the group, but in general we may offer:

- | | |
|------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Fall: | Social Mixer/Meet & Greet for new and seasoned homeschoolers |
| Spring: | Combination Talent Show/Craft, Art and Science Fair |
| September-May: | Homeschool co-op, 1st and 3rd Thursday of the month at the Houghton Wesleyan Church, depending on church availability and holidays. No co-op in January due to weather. |
| December: | Christmas Craft & Seasonal Party |
| September-May: | Various Field Trips |
| September-July: | Workshops or Educational Enrichment Classes & Clubs (<i>These are based solely on interest and individuals to run them. They include activities such as: group science labs, public speaking, art intensives, Lego clubs, tea parties, STEM projects, life skill training opportunities, etc.</i>) |
| September-June: | Parent meetings: times vary each year. Announced via email. |

- May or June:** Annual meeting for elections of officers and an open forum for members to share ideas
- June:** Opportunity to participate in the NYS LEAH Commencement Ceremony
(Registration must be completed online with LEAH before January 31st to participate.)
- June:** Year End Picnic and/or Field Day
- Summer:** Curriculum sale (Often, moms will bring their used curriculum to co-op to donate during the year. Occasionally, however, we will offer a time for moms to get together to sell and swap.)
- Summer:** Playground days & other fun group games/activities
- All Year:** Moms' Night Out: opportunity for moms to get together for fun and fellowship

Executive Board:

Houghton Area Homeschoolers Local Executive Board (husband/wife representatives):

President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Co-op Coordinator, Co-op Co-coordinator **Board**

Meetings: (4-6 times per year) to discuss concerns, issues, decision-making, etc.

Elections: Voting for officers takes place annually at the last co-op or parent meeting for the current school year.

How To Join:

Contact the **Vice President** of our group via email or telephone. They will send you the application forms. If you do not have their contact information then **email: hahcommunitylink@gmail.com** with a subject heading: **"Request for New Membership to HAH"** for their contact information.

There is an annual membership fee to participate in our group's activities. **Current membership in LEAH and HAH is required for children to participate in our HAH chapter co-op or sponsored sports activities.** Families who wish to join as "support members" can enroll as HAH members only. Support members will be part of our email distribution list and may come to our parent meetings, field trips, and annual picnic/field days, but won't be able to participate in co-op, gym, or any organized athletics, sports, or gym-like activities. See the current membership form for the LEAH and HAH dues.

Please note: **Co-op dues** are separate from the annual LEAH and HAH membership dues and are collected at the beginning of each semester of co-op. The cost of co-op varies **each semester** depending on the cost of needed supplies and use of the building.

Our chapter year runs from: September 1st to August 31st.

However, if circumstances require, you can join LEAH and HAH after the August 31st deadline at any time. (Note: Co-op fall semester registration closes after August 31st. The co-op spring semester registration closes December 31st.)

PLEASE NOTE: Neither LEAH nor HAH prorate fees, and your membership will still expire on August 31st, at which time you will need to renew.

For example: If you just moved to Fillmore in May, and would like to join HAH, you could do so. It will cost the current membership fees and would still expire August 31st. Basically, you receive more for your money if you join when our membership opens in July and is processed by our Vice President for the upcoming school term. On the other hand, families do not have a waiting period to join; they can have immediate membership once the dues and membership forms are processed.

Membership Checklist:

_____ Read, carefully and thoroughly, the Houghton Area Homeschoolers (HAH) BYLAWS and STATEMENT OF FAITH & PRACTICES.

_____ Fill out the membership application. Then send the signed and completed application, along with the survey and membership fees, to our Vice President.

Reminder:

Did you Know? The label on the back of your LEAH Messenger is also a membership/ID card, which can be used for discounts at major book stores, craft/sewing stores and possibly more.

How do I know when I am officially a member of HAH and when do I register for co-op?

Membership/renewal is processed once our local chapter Vice President has received your completed paperwork and the required dues. If you are looking to participate in our co-op, please note that we require membership (both LEAH and HAH local dues) to be active and renewed by August 31st for the Fall Semester. If you are a new family or your membership has lapsed, an active membership is due by December 31st for the Spring semester. Please feel free to contact the President or Vice President if you have any questions about membership. For questions regarding co-op, we recommend you contact our Co-op Coordinator directly.

We Highly Recommend:

- **Download the NYS LEAH Manual (free)** . You may acquire one from the LEAH website: www.LEAH.org (<https://www.leah.org/resources/regulatory-manual/>). For example, sample forms for your annual Individual Home Education Plan(s) - **IHIP**, quarterly reporting, state regulations, homeschooling with special needs and additional information is included in this manual. It will answer and guide you through most of your homeschooling questions.
- **Join the Home School Legal Defense Association (HSLDA)** . Their website is www.hslda.org. The annual fee is reduced if you are a LEAH member. Use the LEAH Chapter number #08-019 or HSLDA #292155 to identify your affiliation with the NYS LEAH organization.
- **Attend a state-wide homeschooling conference**, such as the Great Homeschool Conventions, or a local Regional Event hosted by the LEAH Regional Representatives and their volunteers. These events and more can be found on the LEAH website (www.LEAH.org), on the “Homeschool New York/LEAH: Loving Education At Home” Facebook Page, or on our “Houghton Area Homeschoolers” Facebook Page.

Networking with Houghton Area Homeschoolers (HAH):

Newsletter:

Periodically we send out a newsletter to our membership to give a calendar of events and ideas for upcoming parent meetings.

New Member Packet:

At the time of this revision, HAH is putting together a “New to Homeschooling” packet (at the cost of printing and materials) for those that would like reference material and ideas from seasoned homeschoolers, as well as fun ideas to get started. Also included in this publication are FAQs for the pressing questions concerning IHIPS, Quarterly Reports, transcripts, local summer employment, and different paths toward graduating your children from homeschool. Even if you are not new to Homeschooling and would like a copy for reference, check in with the Executive Board to see if this is currently available.

Email Distribution Through Gmail Groups:

Once you have completed the membership paperwork, we will enter your email into the group and you will begin to receive messages from: hahcommunitylink@gmail.com . If you wish to send something out to the whole group – send your message to this group email and our Secretary will forward it to everyone.

Other Uses for the Group Email: invitations to collaborative activities with other homeschool groups, co-op sign-ups and updates, information regarding local community activities, field trips, summer programs, parent meetings, moms' night out, praise reports, prayer requests, curriculum information (including the buying and selling of material), shopping tips and, at times, some good old fashioned humor and encouragement!

Directory:

Members of HAH will receive a list, made available at co-op, of the current address, phone number, and email of our member families. We do ask that you do not distribute this list, but use it for personal reference only. If you have not received one or need a replacement, please contact our Secretary.

Facebook:

We have a Facebook page for the **Houghton Area Homeschoolers**. Here we have a vision to share community events as well as information pertinent to both HAH and homeschooling issues at large. Feel free to share a post to our page, according to these guidelines, and one of our Social Media moderators will post it after it is vetted.

(Revised 04/20)

Houghton Area Homeschoolers Bylaws

A Local Chapter of New York State Loving Education At Home, Inc. (Homeschool NY - LEAH)

ARTICLE I - NAME

The name of our organization is Houghton Area Homeschoolers (or otherwise known as HAH), a chapter of New York State Loving Education At Home, Inc. (NYS LEAH) or otherwise known as Homeschool NY - LEAH.

ARTICLE II - PURPOSE

Houghton Area Homeschoolers (HAH), is a Christian homeschooling support group whose intent is to encourage, inform, and provide fellowship for homeschooling families. We are a group of Christian families who are seeking to teach our children principles, in all subject areas, based on Biblical teaching and its application into everyday life. Opportunities for training and fellowship for parents, as well as educational and enrichment activities for children will be provided. This chapter is a member of NYS Loving Education at Home (LEAH), Inc. As such, its establishment, leadership and operations, and final dissolution are subject to the oversight of the Board of Directors and in accordance with the Bylaws of NYS LEAH.

ARTICLE III - STATEMENT OF FAITH AND PRACTICE

Section 1. Preface.

- (a) Our Statement of Faith includes only those truths upon which Christians historically agree. It concerns the Authority of Scripture, the Deity of Christ, and the Person and Work of Jesus Christ (the Gospel) as revealed in Scripture. It is the faith once delivered to the saints (Jude 3, Ephesians 4:1-6) which distinguishes believers from non-believers. There are many other precious truths taught in the Bible over which godly men have differed in understanding. Therefore, this is not a statement of all that is important to believe, but simply what is essential for Christian fellowship and unity (Romans 15:1-6). The Statements on Gender, Morality and Family (section 3) define the principles upon which LEAH chapters are expected to function in society and upon which we, the Houghton Area Homeschoolers, concur.
- (b) We affirm the spiritual unity of believers through our common faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and that individual doctrinal or practical differences which may exist, outside of the succeeding (Section 2 and 3), should not hinder the unity of Christian home educators.

Section 2. We Believe.

- (a) The Bible to be the inspired, infallible, divinely preserved Word of God, the supreme and final authority for all faith and life.
- (b) That there is one God, eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- (c) 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.
- (d) That man was created in the image of God, but fell into sin and is therefore lost, and only those who put their faith in Jesus Christ alone, not trusting in any personal works whatsoever, can be saved.
- (e) That salvation is the free gift of God brought to the sinner by grace and received by personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, Whose substitutionary death on the cross paid the penalty for man's sin.
- (f) That the ministry of the Holy Spirit is to convict mankind of sin and to indwell, guide, instruct, and empower the believer for godly living and service.

Section 3. Statements on Gender, Morality and Family

- (a) That God created mankind in His image: male (man) and female (woman), sexually different but with equal personal dignity. Consequently, members must affirm their (and all others) biological sex and refrain from any and all attempts to physically change, alter, or disagree with their predominant biological sex. (Genesis 1:26-28, Romans 1:26-32, 1 Corinthians 6:9-11)
- (b) That God created and ordered human sexuality to the permanent, exclusive, comprehensive, and conjugal "one flesh" union of man and woman, intrinsically ordered to procreation and biological family, and in furtherance of the moral, spiritual, and public good of binding father, mother, and child. Consequently, members must affirm the sexual complementarity of man and woman and resist any and all same-sex sexual attractions and refrain from any and all same-sex sexual acts or conduct. (Genesis 1:27, Genesis 2:24, Matthew 19:4-6, Mark 10:5-9, Romans 1:26-27, 1 Corinthians 6:9-11, Ephesians 5:25-27, Revelation 19:7-9, Revelations 21:2)
- (c) That the term "marriage" has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated by Scripture. (Genesis 2:18-25) God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other. (1 Corinthians 6:18; 7:2-5, Hebrews 13:4) God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of marriage between a man and a woman.

- (d) That any form of sexual immorality (including but not limited to: adultery, fornication, homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, and use of pornography) is sinful and offensive to God. (Matthew 15:18-20, I Corinthians 6:9-10)
- (e) That the term “family” means either a married couple as defined in 3(b) and 3(c) who are usually blessed with one or more child or grandchild through birth, legal guardianship or adoption; or a single adult with one or more child or grandchild through birth, legal guardianship or adoption.

Section 4. Biblical Basis.

LEAH, and likewise HAH, is a Christian organization dedicated to observing the Biblical commands of Deuteronomy 6:4-10, Proverbs 22:6, and Ephesians 6:4. We promote home education as a key element of the Scriptural design for training children.

Section 5. Philosophical Statement.

We believe that every family has the legal and constitutional right to home educate in New York State, regardless of their philosophy of education or religious affiliation. LEAH is not a church, nor is it meant to replace the ministry of the local church at which the Chapter members worship.

Section 6. Code of Conduct.

We believe that the teachings of Christ would have us live in community, honoring each other with authentic living, kindness in speech and humility in service. While we understand that certain truths are convictions of our faith upon which we hold secure, we feel that we can share our thoughts in a manner filled with grace and truth. Because we look to the Scripture for guidance in how to conduct our lives, we consider the following Scriptures for reference: Phillipians 2:1-5; 4:8, Colossians 3:8, 2 Timothy 2:22-25, I Corinthians 13:4-7, Galatians 6:1-4, Matthew 5:3-10, and Luke 10:25-37.

ARTICLE IV - MEMBERSHIP

Section 1: Membership of HAH Chapter in LEAH and appointment of HAH Chapter Leaders:

The membership of the Corporation [NYS LEAH] shall consist of Chapters comprised of three or more families engaged in Christian home education. The Regional Representatives of the Region in which the Chapter is located [HAH is in Region 8] will appoint Chapter Leaders [based upon the

recommendation of the HAH Executive Board] for the Local Chapter [namely, HAH]. All voting rights given to members of NYS LEAH under the Corporation's Certificate of Incorporation, the NYS LEAH Bylaws and the Not-for-Profit Corporation Law shall be vested with the Chapter Leaders.

To summarize: NYS LEAH's membership consists only of the representative Chapter Leaders [note: Chapter Leader is defined by our Bylaws as the individual(s) fulfilling the role of HAH President]. All members of our organization, The Houghton Area Homeschoolers, who are in active standing with their LEAH membership, are thereby affiliate members of NYS LEAH.

- (a) Any Chapter Leader or member Chapter may be removed from membership with or without cause by action of the Chapter Leaders of the Corporation [NYS LEAH]. The Board of Directors [as defined by Article V of the Bylaws for the governing Corporation NYS LEAH] may suspend a Chapter Leader or member Chapter by majority vote of the Board of Directors. Likewise, and in the same manner, any HAH member may be removed from active standing if they violate HAH Bylaws and will be reported to the LEAH Regional Representative.
- (b) Chapter Leader Membership in NYS LEAH is not transferable. Therefore, each new Chapter Leader must undergo the same appointment process. As per the guidelines for NYS LEAH policy, HAH Chapter Leader will go through an interview process by the Region 8 Representative and be thus appointed by the Regional Representative and not voted into the position by the HAH organization.

Section 2. Membership in Houghton Area Homeschoolers (HAH):

- (a) Membership is open to homeschooling families and those considering homeschooling who agree with the Statement of Faith and Practice, and who agree to abide by the Bylaws of this organization.
- (b) It shall be required of all member families to affirm, via a signed statement, that they subscribe to the Statement of Faith and Practice. This document is our HAH Membership Form issued to both new and returning members. The membership cycle runs from September 1st through August 31st and must be renewed yearly (see "How to Join" for more information on Membership deadlines and contact information). Furthermore, it is the expectation that members will act in accordance with the Statement of Faith and Practice.
- (c) If there are members whose actions harm the testimony of the Lord or the HAH LEAH chapter, they may be temporarily suspended by the HAH Chapter Leader. If efforts to resolve issues with a member have failed with our Local Chapter's Executive Board, in order to protect everyone involved and insure a fair process, the following procedure will be followed:
 - (1) If and when any member family is accused of being in confessional or ethical noncompliance with the Statement of Faith and Practice, or By-laws of this organization,

including conduct and/or activities within the chapter which are contrary to Biblical principles or the Code of Conduct, an investigation shall be conducted by the Leadership of NYS LEAH.

(2) If the NYS LEAH Leadership concludes that the allegations have merit or need further investigation, the NYS LEAH Leadership may, at its discretion, immediately suspend said member from any or all privileges of membership within LEAH and HAH until a final disposition of the matter is made, There shall be an opportunity given to the party or parties involved to petition for a hearing before the NYS LEAH Leadership to consider the matter. Such a hearing must take place within thirty (30) days of the request, with one week prior written notice of the hearing date given to the party or parties involved.

(3) After the time set for the hearing, the NYS LEAH Leadership shall have fifteen (15) days to consider the options of taking no action, of requiring specific corrective actions by the party or parties involved as a condition of continued membership in LEAH and HAH or of dropping the family from all membership. All decisions by the NYS LEAH Leadership, both interim and final, shall be promptly communicated to the parties involved.

(d) Benefits of Membership (see ***“Benefits”*** for a more comprehensive list of all the membership perks)

There are two different options for membership:

(1) HAH Local Support Membership ONLY

This membership allows families to be connected to our email distribution list and other networking opportunities.

(2) HAH Local Support Membership ~ PLUS ~ NYS LEAH Membership

This membership allows families to enjoy all the networking opportunities, sponsored events, and is most importantly, the only way to be involved in co-op.

ARTICLE V - ORGANIZATION:

(a) The affairs of this Chapter shall be under the direction and guidance of the Chapter Leadership. The Leadership of the Chapter shall consist of the Chapter Leader (who fills the role of President) in conjunction with the Leadership Committee (who fill the roles of: Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Co-op Coordinator, and Co-op Co-Coordinator). These entities together comprise the HAH Executive Board.

(b) The Chapter Leader and the Leadership Committee will work together for the effective administration of Chapter Activities.

(c) The Chapter Leader and the Leadership Committee are expected to work through any disagreements in policy or practice with Christian grace and charity. In the case of irresolvable disagreement concerning chapter governance, the Chapter Leader shall have the final authority. If the Leadership

Committee, by majority vote, feels that the Chapter Leader has not acted in accordance with the Statement of Faith and Practices, or Bylaws, an appeal may be made by a representative of the Leadership Committee to the Regional Representative of NYS LEAH.

(d) As per the NYS LEAH policy, the Chapter Leader shall consist of a married couple. Under exceptional circumstances, the Chapter may petition the NYS LEAH Board of Directors to waive the requirement of a married couple to allow an otherwise qualified person or two persons teaming together to serve as chapter Leader. In all cases, the Chapter Leader chosen shall meet the requirements set forth in the Bylaws of NYS LEAH, and receive approval from the NYS LEAH Board of Directors through the LEAH Regional Representative for that Chapter.

(e) When possible, we will have husband and wife teams to fill the offices of the Leadership Committee as well. Executive Board member spouses should be supportive of homeschooling and their spouse's decision to serve in a position, and are encouraged to attend board meetings when possible. These teams shall comprise the "Board." Such teams may be re-elected. Preferably these teams will only occupy one position on the Board, however, there may be circumstances where more than one role will be performed by one individual during a time of searching for the next candidate.

(f) Because of the Christian character of our group, everyone nominated to a position must sign a statement that they agree with all parts of the Bylaws, and specifically the Statement of Faith and Practices of this organization. They must also give permission to the Executive Board to contact a Christian character reference. Executive Board candidates must be NYS LEAH and HAH members, in good standing, for at least one year.

(g) We pray for God's guidance regarding leadership roles each year. Officers of HAH shall be elected by the Executive Board and affirmed by the HAH membership. The policy by which this occurs is as follows:

- (1) The slate of candidates shall be submitted by a representative of the Executive Board to HAH members prior to time the elections shall take place. Also, the date for the elections shall be made public via email to the membership.
- (2) Election to each office shall be by a majority vote of current standing HAH members present at the annual meeting, and shall be by paper ballot (one ballot per adult family member).
- (3) In the event that members present at the meeting do not elect a candidate, the board shall reconvene to nominate an alternative candidate for that office, and an opportunity for members to vote for the candidate will be rescheduled.

(4) Elections are held annually with terms for a two-year office appointment and until their successors have been elected and qualified (unless determined to be for a shorter term as needed). When possible, elections will be staggered using the general guidelines:

- During odd numbered years, the following shall be elected to hold office: the Vice President, the Secretary, and the Co-op Coordinator.
- During even numbered years, the following shall be elected to hold office: the President, the Treasurer, and the Co-op Co-Coordinator.

Likewise, in the event that a position becomes vacant mid-term, the Chapter Leader may appoint an interim Board Member to fill the vacant position until the election is held. The only exception to this clause is the appointment for the next Chapter Leader, which must go through the full appointment process via the NYS LEAH Regional Representative interview.

ARTICLE VI – DUTIES OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

All Executive Members are expected to attend local board meetings (approximately 4 - 6 per year). Their spouses are encouraged to attend these meetings as well. The Chapter Leader is expected to attend the NYS LEAH leadership meetings either in person or via remote connection, or by sending an individual as proxy.

Section 1. Chapter Leader - (The HAH Organization entitles this role: President)

The President is responsible for:

- (a) Being the liaison for HAH with LEAH Region #8 for the LEAH bi-annual Leadership Meetings and any other official governing requirement where Chapter Leaders are expected to attend. These meetings may require a proxy to be appointed if the Chapter Leader is not able to attend. Attendance in some of these meetings may be accomplished via Zoom or other on-line connection.
- (b) Planning and leading meetings of the Executive Board as well as general meetings to attend to the business and decision-making agenda items at hand.
- (c) Overseeing the general maintenance and health of Houghton Area Homeschoolers in terms of organization, communication, planning, education of members, legislation, finances, and spiritual tone.
- (d) Facilitating the HAH Chapter communication between the Board and its membership, as well as within the community.
- (e) Working together with the other Executive Board members for the effective administration of chapter activities. The Chapter Leader and the Executive Board are expected to work through

any disagreements in policy or practice with Christian grace and charity. In the case of irresolvable disagreement concerning chapter governance, the Chapter leader shall have the final authority.

- (f) Decision making is primarily a function of the Executive Board, but specifically the President's role is to pay attention to the broad scope of HAH while each board member maintains their specific area. Responsibility is further diffused throughout the group but with accountability in each area going up to the affiliated board member, then the Executive Board, and ultimately the President.
- (g) Maintaining Houghton area Homeschoolers handbook, including annual updates. The current handbook can be emailed to each board member every year to aid in distribution.
- (h) Sending in insurance information as needed, and requesting necessary certificates of insurance.
- (i) Working with other board members (when available) for the organizing and planning of parent meetings, moms' night out, and any other activities that need organizational support.
- (j) Sending out pertinent legislative updates and alerts to help the membership stay informed about regulation changes or Bills in process. The President will also share information gathered at LEAH Leadership meetings to the Executive Board to help in Local Chapter governance.
- (k) Working closely with the Vice President to create surveys, contact forms, and other materials, both for new members and membership renewal.
- (l) Staying up-to-date on the needs of the membership and, in turn, finding ways to assist in the training or support of the group's constituents. This also includes seeking out new Board candidates and helping to train them to take on the roles of their appointed duties.

Section 2. Vice President (VP)

- (a) Substituting for President when necessary.
- (b) Assisting the President and other Executive Board Members (and members) as needed.
- (c) Distributing and processing Membership forms and other informational documents.
 - (1) Membership Forms/Information:
 - For New Members: Handbook, Membership Forms, Yearly Survey, New Member Survey, New Member Packet (optional)
 - For Current Members: Renewal Membership Forms, Yearly Survey, Updated electronic Handbook if needed

- (2) LEAH Membership: Vice President is responsible to update LOIS database yearly with all current members and issue a pdf of any batch files run in LOIS to the Treasurer to send a check to the Regional Representative for the LEAH dues.

NOTE: New members will generally have most of their questions answered through conversations with the President, etc. before they contact the VP for membership materials. In such cases, the President may, in the course of answering questions, follow up with an email and handbook/application. The President will also inform the Vice President that they may be receiving the application. If other board members get inquiries, they should let the Vice President know to send membership materials, and email the President of potential members as well.

- (d) Maintaining, in coordination with the President and other board members, membership forms and informational documents.
- (e) Processing New Members - all year:
After receiving the new members' application and check(s) made out to HAH Homeschoolers, the VP will:
- (1) Send an email to prospective members notifying them they've received the forms and that they are being processed.
 - (2) Enter the information into the LEAH state-wide LOIS database system.
 - (3) Send checks to the Treasurer for deposit, or under the supervision of the Treasurer, deposit them in the Community HAH bank account, giving the Treasurer a record of the member name with their check numbers and individual amounts. Furthermore, the VP is responsible to work with the Treasurer to obtain a check and send batch in to the Region 8 Representative of NYS LEAH. The VP will make arrangements with the Treasurer to make this exchange, and provide a pdf of the batch files run.
 - (4) Send the Secretary email information so that new members can be added to the hahcommunitylink@gmail.com email distribution list.
- (f) Processing Renewals and New Members - in the summer:
- (1) The VP will work with the President to write the cover letter and update all the membership forms and surveys.
 - (2) The renewal membership paperwork will be sent out via mailing to all the current members as found in the LOIS database, as well as to any prospective members. All Board members will present the VP with the names, phone numbers, and emails for any inquiries sent to our group, as well as any known prospective members from the previous school term.
 - (3) Two renewal batches will be done. The first can be done in July following our elections and end of the year membership meeting opening up the renewal enrollment period. Additional renewals/new members that are received after the initial enrollment batch can be grouped together and done at the beginning of September, but MUST be completed before the first day of co-op. New members that may trickle in after that can be processed individually.

- (4) Local membership is generally valid within 7-10 days of receiving forms. Due to the volume of enrolling members in the summer, both new and returning, membership in NYS LEAH will be valid when batch files are completed.
- (g) Maintaining the Master address list (this can be done in early fall, but there will be continual updates):
 This needs to be ready for the kick-off event/social mixer in early September. The Vice President needs to send one original copy to the Secretary one week before the event, who will then be responsible for the distribution at co-op. The VP will also send updates to the board members as new families join.
- (h) Ensuring insurance is in place for LEAH families by having current membership renewal completed before the first day of co-op; therefore, the busiest months for the VP will be JulySeptember.
- (i) Providing a list of all current members to the Co-op Coordinator before sign-ups and a print-out of the LOIS current membership list when requested.

Note: The Vice President will serve as liaison between HAH members and the Executive Board members for information and data (i.e. the VP works very closely with the President, Secretary and Treasurer to ensure that information regarding memberships, dues, etc. is communicated in a timely manner and accurately recorded).

Section 3. Secretary

The Secretary is responsible for:

- (a) Working with the President for developing and publishing the tri-annual (Fall, Spring, and Summer) newsletter.
 (The newsletter is optional and does not need to be elaborate. It could be printed and issued via US mail or via email.)
- (b) Providing the President with extra copies of the newsletter for the co-op information table.
- (c) Taking minutes at the board meetings and sending copies to the President and the Board.
- (d) Providing copies of the address list for members at the beginning of co-op sessions in the Fall. The Secretary may also email abridged lists to the whole group.
- (e) Monitoring and forwarding emails to our hahcommunitylink@gmail.com email distribution list.
- (f) Adding new members to our email distribution list as they join. The VP will email names to the Secretary and the President. The Secretary will then email new members a brief welcome to

our group, informing them they've been added to our email distribution list, and will include a current newsletter and member address list.

- (g) Optional: The Secretary may choose to help assist the President in planning events and moms' night out activities.

Section 4. Treasurer

The Treasurer is responsible for:

- (a) Maintaining the HAH checking account.
- (b) Preparing a budget data sheet to hand out at board meetings.
- (c) Bringing a copy of the bank statement to board meetings.
- (d) Collecting and depositing co-op dues. The co-op dues are part of the HAH checking account, BUT the Treasurer maintains a separate data sheet for the co-op budget.
- (e) Counting funds immediately when the Treasurer collects cash/coins (a good example would be the co-op dues), along with another member of our group for accountability, which is a standard procedure in all organizations.
- (f) Assisting with tax exempt purchases and maintaining the necessary paperwork for such.
- (g) Depositing incoming membership/insurance checks received from the VP and providing a check to be sent to LEAH for LEAH membership dues. The Treasurer will work with the VP for this exchange.
- (h) Sending yearly postcard to keep tax-exempt status.
- (i) When required by LEAH, using Excel, Word, or other financial statement software, preparing and sending a signed chapter year-end financial statement to Regional Representative for Region #8. Emailing digital information is preferred, but a paper hard copy of the statement will be accepted. Signed report is due by the time of chapter renewal.

Section 5. Co-Op Coordinator

The Co-Op coordinator is responsible for:

- (a) Attending and assuming general supervision for weekly co-op activities.

- (b) Serving as the initial contact person for the co-op.
- (c) Setting up co-op organizational meetings and conducting the meetings.
- (d) Working with class coordinators on the general planning and scheduling of classes.
- (e) Preparing and distributing the co-op schedule.
- (f) Maintaining or assigning maintenance of attendance sign-in sheets and parent work assignments.
- (g) Sending co-op updates to members periodically, via email.
- (h) Making spontaneous decisions related to the co-op (i.e. in the case of extenuating circumstances) and consulting first with the HAH board as time allows.

Section 6. Co-Op Co-Coordinator

The CO-OP Co-Coordinator is responsible for:

- (a) Attending and assisting with general supervision for co-op activities.
- (b) Being present at co-op organizational meetings and assisting as needed.
- (c) Assisting the Co-op Coordinator with the general planning and scheduling of classes as needed.
- (d) Attending the front desk on co-op mornings and handling varying needs (collecting dues, sign-in sheets, sign-up sheets for field trips and other activities, answering questions, etc.).
- (e) Substituting for Co-op Coordinator when absent.
- (f) Assisting with Co-op Coordinator in receiving calls for teacher absences or other changes in the schedule.
- (g) Assisting, on a rotating schedule with the Co-op Coordinator, in staying after co-op to be sure areas have been cleaned up by assigned families and that the building is back to its original condition.

ARTICLE VII - AMENDMENTS

These HAH Bylaws may be amended by proposed changes, by the HAH Executive Board, in compliance and with the Bylaws of NYS LEAH. HAH Bylaw amendments that reflect the changes in the NYS LEAH Bylaws, as provided to the Chapter Leader by the Regional Representative and/or LEAH Board of

Directors, do not need a vote by the HAH membership to be made effective. These changes need to be ratified by a majority of the HAH Executive Board.

Local policy changes as they pertain to the policies for co-op, HAH group activities or timelines for membership and meetings, are also at the discretion of the HAH Executive Board, and do not need to be voted on by the members. However, it is required for the Executive Board to provide a copy of the updated Bylaws to the membership for a signature of affirmation to confirm these changes and to put them into effect. This may be accomplished by the signature of the member on the Membership Renewal Form.

ARTICLE VIII - DISSOLUTION

(a) Upon the recommendation of the Chapter Leadership and any other provisions of the bylaws contained herein, a petition to dissolve shall be submitted to the NYS LEAH Regional Representative. Upon approval of NYS LEAH, this chapter may be dissolved and its activities closed. After payment of all bills and proper claims, remaining assets shall be disposed of in cash or in kind by transfer to a similar home education organization, approved by the NYS LEAH, or by transfer to NYS LEAH.

(b) Houghton Area Homeschoolers(HAH) is organized exclusively for charitable, religious, educational, and/or scientific purposes under section 501(c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

(c) No part of the net earnings of Houghton Area Homeschoolers(HAH) shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to its members, trustees, officers, or other private persons, except that HAH shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes set forth in the purpose clause hereof. No substantial part of the activities of HAH shall be the carrying on propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and HAH shall not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office. Notwithstanding any other provision of this document, HAH shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on (a) by an organization exempt from federal income tax under section 501(c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code, or (b) by an organization, contributions to which are deductible under section 170(c)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code.

(d) Upon the dissolution of HAH, assets shall be distributed for one or more exempt purposes

within the meaning of section 501(c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of

any future federal tax code, or shall be distributed to the federal government, or to a state or local

government, for a public purpose. (Revised 04/20)

Houghton Area Homeschoolers CO-OP

Mission Statement:

We are a group of Christian families who are seeking to teach our children Biblical principles in all subject areas, based on God's word. This co-op provides enriching activities and fellowship that will supplement the education of our homeschooled children. This co-op will also provide our children with an academic environment that is interactive in nature, allowing for learning opportunities best achieved in a group setting.

Houghton Area Homeschoolers currently provides a bi-weekly co-op from Mid-Sept. until May (no classes in January due to weather). We meet at the North Park Wesleyan Church on the first and third Thursday of each month from 9:45-12:30 (12:30 – 1:30 hour for lunch). Our meeting times may vary from year to year depending on the needs and interests of the group.

Who Can Attend CO-OP?

You must be a member of our HAH Local LEAH chapter, prior to attending co-op. Once you are a member, you are eligible to join co-op at the next enrollment opportunity.

Only children who are members of our LEAH Chapter can attend co-op.

For example: Your neighbor asks if you can babysit their 3-year old on Thursday for the day. You can not bring this child to co-op. A choice needs to be made:

"I can babysit," or "I can participate in co-op."

This would also includes nieces, nephews, and other non-member relatives.

A nursery is provided for parents who participate in co-op.

The co-op will be coordinated and scheduled by the co-op coordinators. Proposed class ideas need to be submitted to the co-op coordinators by a deadline, determined by the coordinators. It is their job to determine if the class fits with the stated mission of the group and the present needs of the students and families, as well as considering the needs of the facility and scheduling decisions, before offering the class. Submitting proposed classes in advance enables the coordinators to best schedule a smoothly running co-op.

There will be a family registration fee to attend co-op each semester, to cover the cost of utilizing the building as well as costs for some necessary supplies. Families will be asked to make their payment for the semester on the first day of co-op.

*Additional costs may arise for supplies for various activities. This will be noted at the time of sign-up.

Parental Involvement Requirement:

A co-op is a wonderful experience that provides our children the opportunity to interact in a group while under the leadership of an adult. In order to provide these opportunities, we need to have full participation of all the parents whose children are involved in the co-op. Parents will need to be involved in the following ways:

Teaching/Assisting: To make the co-op work smoothly, it is essential that **all parents participate in the teaching process**. Each parent/legal guardian* is required to **teach** at least **one** full course and **assist** in one. If there are three periods, parents will then be a float for the third. Floats may be asked to assist or fill in an area, if needed. If there is no need during that period, parents may use this as free time for visiting and fellowship. Parents are asked to stay in the building however, as they are still responsible for their children. Parents may choose to teach 2 classes, instead of teaching/assisting, but are not required to. Teacher sign-up will be on a first come, first served basis. So, the earlier you sign up, the more options you have of which class to teach.

*If there are extenuating circumstances and a parent/legal guardian is unable to teach a class, the family may make an appeal to the HAH Executive Board to meet face-to-face to find a solution in order for their children to attend co-op. Also, if there are special needs or allergy/health considerations, please talk to our Board to help make appropriate accommodations for your child(ren).

Possible areas for your **assisting** time might include:

- Volunteering in the nursery
- Assisting in classes

Cleaning: North Park Wesleyan Church is allowing us to use their building for the co-op, so each family will be required, at some point, to help clean. We will provide a cleaning schedule at the commencement of co-op, and all participants will contribute to clean up. There are seasons where we may hire someone to clean the building, and at these times there will be a nominal cleaning fee added to the semester co-op dues.

Your Presence: Since parental involvement is essential to making this co-op succeed, parents must remain and participate at the co-op while their child(ren) is/are there. If a parent is unable to stay on a given day **due to unavoidable circumstances**, arrangements must be made with another adult at co-

op, who is also a member of our LEAH chapter, to be the child's/children's designated "guardian" for any given day/session. This must be noted on the sign-in sheet in the foyer. This adult will assume full responsibility and notify coordinators of change for your child/children in your absence.

Important note: Any child who is in the nursery or pre-school class (through age 4) may not attend co-op without their own parent or grandparent, regardless.

Parents are expected to assume full responsibility for their child/children's behavior and actions while at co-op.

Class Guidelines:

- Punctuality is essential for class effectiveness. Please have your children arrive at 9:45 for announcements and opening prayer.
- Out of respect for the teacher and other students, please have your child **fully** prepared for class, bringing in **completed** work assignments, books, and materials.
- Classrooms must be cleaned up following class. This will be the responsibility of the teacher, but should mainly be carried out by the children. Help us teach our kids to cooperate and to leave the classrooms in the same condition they were found.
- Please be certain you have your child clean up their own lunch food/debris.
- Inclement Weather: if Cuba-Rushford Schools are closed for inclement weather, co-op classes will also be canceled. If there is a school delay, be sure to check your email for an update to see if co-op start time is affected or canceled before heading out.
- Each class should have both a teacher and at least one helper present during class.

Teacher Guidelines:

- If you would like to enroll your child(ren) in the co-op, it is **required** that you first sign up for your teaching and assisting positions. This ensures that all the classes will have a teacher and needed assistance.
- **Teacher/class Sign-up Deadline:** The coordinators will be designating a deadline each semester, for submitting class ideas for the upcoming session of co-op. This requires a name of the course, a short description, and any books, materials, or additional fees required for the class. This will be helpful in scheduling classes and letting everyone know what is being offered. *Please keep fees to a minimum.*

- **Class sign-ups:** Once you have signed up for teaching and assisting, you may then sign up for the classes of your interest. Please note the ages and class work. Some classes may be limited in size. When the class is full, sign-ups will be closed.
- **Student Sign-up Deadline:** This date will be determined each semester by the co-op coordinators. After that date, all classes will be closed. Interested members of HAH will need to wait until the next semester to join the activities at co-op.

Outside Teachers: Parents who are members of HAH and have read, agreed with, and signed our statement of faith will teach the majority of our classes. Occasionally, however, there may be an opportunity for teachers outside of our HAH group to teach. If their class involves more than a “guest appearance,” and is a course being taught, they must read, agree with, and sign our statement of faith. They do not necessarily need to be member of HAH. A member of HAH, however, should be present in class as a helper.

Absence Policy:

The parent, as an integral part of the co-op, needs to find a replacement for whatever role they have if they are going to be absent. Parents should contact their assigned class helper first to be a replacement in their absence. Floats can be contacted second. A list of the floats for each period will be made available for parents’ reference. **Parents can then notify the co-op coordinator of the changes, after they have been arranged.**

Outdoor Play:

- Children playing outdoors must play in the parking lot or play ground. No loitering around outside of this area will be permitted. Habitual wanderers will be required to sit with their parent. No one is permitted to wander into other people’s properties.
- Parents are responsible for their children while in the play area. If a child goes out to the play area, please ensure your child does not wander in and about the facility.

Indoor Etiquette:

- Children are not allowed to wander around the church unattended. They should walk inside (except for in gym class) and use quiet “inside voices.”
- Please do not allow your children to disrespect the building or anything in it. Please do not allow children to throw toys.
- Please keep items not related to co-op at home or in the car.

(Revised 04/20)

Houghton Area Homeschoolers Sickness Policy

The following applies to all co-op sessions, as well as group gatherings within our chapter.

Please do not bring your child/children if:

- They have had a fever or vomiting within the last 24 hours and are still not feeling well.
- They have moderate to severe coughing.
- They have nits due to lice or remaining lice from a recently diagnosed episode.
- They have been on an antibiotic less than 48 hours for a bacterial infections, such as strep throat.
- We ask that you please use caution and careful judgement if you suspect your child may be ill with a contagious viral or bacterial infection, or anything of this sort.

Discipline Policies

To keep our homeschool gatherings and co-op running smoothly and to avoid misunderstandings among children, parents, and group leaders, we plan to implement the following discipline policies. While the purpose of our group is NOT to be a miniature school, certain rules apply in group settings.

1. Group leaders need to let the children and parents know what behaviors are expected: raising hands, asking permission to leave the group, etc., as well as what behaviors are not to be allowed: switching seats, gum chewing, stick play, etc., for each class, gathering, or activity.
2. Children need to:
 - a. Cooperate with and respect group leaders, other adults, and classmates.
 - b. Walk inside (except in gym class)
 - c. Use quiet “inside” voices unless outside and/or appropriate
 - d. Please keep items not related to co-op at home or in the car.
 - e. Children are not allowed to wander around the church unattended.
 - f. Please do not allow your children to disrespect the building or anything in it. Please do not allow children to throw toys.
3. If there is a behavior problem, the following procedure will be followed:
 - a. The child will receive one or two verbal warnings.
 - b. The child will be asked to sit apart from the group or area where the problem occurred for 3-5 min.
 - c. The child may return to the group or area to try again (after an apology, if needed).
 - d. If two timeouts during a class period are ineffective, the child may be asked to sit with the “greeter” in the foyer during co-op, or a parent or other responsible adult.
 - e. Group leaders may withhold certain privileges if this is more effective with a particular child.
 - f. If a child is a danger to himself or others, the group leader may need to firmly, yet gently, restrain the child while he or she regains control.

- g. Parents will always be notified if a child has had repeated behavior problems during the co-op session, gathering, or activity.

(Revised 04/20)