

# Cedar Grove Handbook

## **Mission Statement**

We desire to teach our children a Biblical worldview in an environment that fosters a love for learning, knowledge, and truth about God's world. In this environment, we hope that friendships among our children will strengthen and encourage their faith in Christ. We intend to create a support system for our families that will benefit parents by sharing the load of academic and extra-curricular instruction and benefit students by exposing them to the gifts and strengths of other godly adults besides their parents.

## **Statement of Faith**

1. We believe the Bible alone to be the word of God, the ultimate and infallible authority for faith and practice.
2. We believe there is one God, eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. He is omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent.
3. We believe in the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, in His virgin birth, in His sinless life, in His miracles, in His vicarious and atoning death through His shed blood, in His bodily resurrection, in His ascension to the right hand of the Father, and in His personal return in power and glory.
4. We believe that the gift of repentance and regeneration by the Holy Spirit is absolutely necessary for the salvation of lost and sinful men.
5. We believe that salvation is by grace through faith alone.
6. We believe that faith without works is dead.
7. We believe in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit, by whose indwelling the Christian is enabled to live a godly life.
8. We believe in the resurrection of both the saved and the lost: those who are saved to the resurrection of life and those who are lost to the resurrection of damnation.
9. We believe in the spiritual unity of all believers in our Lord Jesus Christ.
10. We believe God created marriage between one man and one woman.
11. We believe human life begins at conception, and we should protect all human life.
12. We believe God created man in his image, "male and female he created them."

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## **CEDAR GROVE BOARD**

A. **What is the board?** The Board is a group of co-op members who work as a governing body and dedicate time to work proactively and collectively to make co-op decisions.

### **B. What are the purposes of the board?**

1. To determine and make decisions that fulfill the mission, purpose, and goals
2. To consider the members as a whole, routinely assess the overall direction of the co-op, and make adjustments where necessary
3. To select and maintain a competent board and appoint officers if necessary
4. To assess and maintain memberships by routinely evaluating current members and facilitating the opportunity for growth through the addition of new members
5. Establish and enforce policies pertaining to the co-op structure, such as membership requirements and selection, student requirements, classroom discipline policy suggestions/ideas, safety procedures, etc. The board reserves the right to dismiss a family if the behavior, attitude, or pattern of that family harms the co-op, its goals, or its members.
6. To provide direction and ensure effective planning in areas such as communication between group members, class and curriculum selection and schedules, teachers and volunteer schedules and responsibilities, etc.
7. To provide the opportunity for member involvement by hosting meetings to allow for discussion and suggestions
8. To protect member's fiduciary investments by keeping fees as low as possible
9. If a conflict cannot be resolved by the mutual consideration of the parties involved, the board functions as an authority to aid in resolving conflict.

C. **Current Board Members/Responsibilities:** Contact any board member for questions. Members may be redirected to the board member who is most knowledgeable and available for particular needs.

**Seth Carter:** 307-202-2049 *PE Coordinator*

**Kim Feathers:** 307-272-8111 *Transcripts, High School Planning*

**Doug Siggins:** 307-254-3993 *Mediator*

**Steve Thomas:** 307-254-0324 *Finances*

**Jessie Thompson:** 307-899-4487 *Calendar, Scheduling*

**Heidi Werbelow:** 307-899-4119 *Administration, Applications*

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## PARTICIPANT RESPONSIBILITIES

### D. Family Contribution

All families volunteer at the co-op. Contributions vary based on the number of classes a family's children participate in. For every four class hours a family receives, an hour of service is required for that day. The maximum number of contribution hours required per day/family is four. Round up when calculating contribution hours.

**Contribution Calculations:** 1-4 classes = 1 service hour, 5-8 classes = 2 service hours, 10-12 classes = 3 service hours, 14-16+ classes = 4 service hours

Well-suited contributions are our goal! While not always possible, we strive to match people with their stated strengths. One or multiple family members may contribute. Members only need to be present part of the co-op day as long as they contribute in the agreed-upon method and their children have adequate supervision.

### Common Contribution Examples:

#### 1. Lead Teacher and Co-Teacher (2 service hours)

- a. Create a class syllabus for registration
- b. Class Preparation
  - i. Implement textbook/curriculum - create a reading and assignment schedule based on the calendar, age level, classroom needs, etc.
  - ii. Secure supplies needed for classroom use
  - iii. \*Recommended - create a classroom management/flow plan
  - iv. Be prepared to start class on time during the year
  - v. Class prep and setup/cleanup (enlist students or assistants)
- c. Communicate with students, parents, and assistants
  - i. Send a welcome letter to parents/students before classes start
  - ii. Create assignments, deadlines, rubrics, etc. - will vary by grade level
  - iii. Classroom incidents - only some things need to be reported to parents. Normal classroom conduct correction and classroom skills development are a normal part of the classroom. An incident would include violence (physical or verbal) or continual and deliberate disobedience or defiance.
  - iv. Communicate expectations with your assistants.
  - v. Assign a "Cedar Grove" grade to high school classes
- d. Secure a substitute when gone (the first choice is the assistant). If the assistant subs for you as a teacher, you also need to find a substitute for the assistant (they are not the one missing class)

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## 2. **Teaching Assistant Responsibilities (1 service hour):**

- a. Understanding what the teacher's expectations are
- b. Being available during class to help the teacher
- c. Setup/cleanup, apply the classroom management plan
- d. The first choice to substitute for the class
- e. Find a substitute when absent

3. **Nursery/Childcare (1 service hour):** Responsibilities include being available in the nursery a few minutes before/after class for parents to drop off their children, being attentive to children in the nursery, securing a substitute when gone

4. **Substitute (1 service hour):** Responsibilities include being on the sub list, responding to communications, and expecting to sub 1 hour/day. Do not disregard a prior commitment (teaching, assisting, etc.) to fulfill a sub position unless prior arrangements are made.

5. **Opening/Closing (1 service hour):** Responsibilities may include opening /closing the church on co-op days, setting up the coffee area, making & acquiring coffee products, emptying garbage containers, vacuuming, turning off lights, etc.

6. **Administration** (board responsibility, hours vary/are seasonal): Responsibilities may include organizing schedules, creating documents, updating the website, delegating tasks, developing agendas, planning teacher meetings, and answering questions about co-op.

7. The board of Cedar Grove Co-op has the ability to make exceptions to how someone is serving whenever they see fit.

## E. **Contribution Substitutions**

Another family member or older sibling (age 16+) may volunteer their time instead of a parent's contribution. This person must apply, gain the board's approval, and meet all of the requirements of a co-op member.

## F. **Required Acknowledgements, Background Checks**

1. **Statement of Faith** - Contributing co-op members must agree with our Statement of Faith. This unifying statement recognizes like-mindedness for teaching and nourishing our children.
2. **Authority of Church Body** - Contributing co-op members (believing parents and children) must participate in and be under the authority of a church body. We believe that the Lord has given the church and under-shepherds (pastors and elders) to His people as an authority and a blessing. Without God-ordained authority and accountability in co-op members' lives, the board may be placed in a difficult position to make judgment calls on their walks with the Lord or any sin issues that might arise and affect the co-op. Furthermore, we see the commitment

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to a church body as an outward sign of members' agreement with our statement of faith. We set this boundary to protect and sustain the mission of our co-op.

3. **Background Checks** - All contributing adults must participate in a background check. The background check helps protect everyone in our group from speculation or harm. After applying online, you will receive a link to a child protection video to watch at your convenience. Completed background checks conclude the application process. All results are confidential.
4. **One-Adult Waiver** - We aim to provide two adults with background checks in each class or nursery hour to offer classroom and curriculum accountability and help in the case of an emergency. Two adults are not always available or necessary due to class size or maturity. For example, one teacher facilitates most high school classes. If your child is in a "one-adult" class, we ask that you mark the "one-adult waiver" on our registration to acknowledge that you are okay with only one adult in their class. You can sit in that class to meet the "two-adult" requirement. However, attending under these circumstances would not fulfill your volunteering contribution to the co-op.

## G. Education

Cedar Grove provides families with educational classes to support their efforts to educate their child(ren) at home. Co-op does not replace responsibilities toward the education of a member's children. It is the parent's responsibility to check that all homework, project, and test assignments are completed, keep current with how their children are progressing in their co-op classes, and contact class teachers directly with any concerns about classes. The parent should provide the help their children require for each class's assignments.

## H. Fees and Expenses

1. Building rent - each family pays a portion of our rent to Trinity Bible Church
2. Administrative fee - covers the cost of varying Cedar Grove expenses
3. Student fees - class fees vary by class selection/teacher preferences
4. Required texts - parents are responsible for purchasing all required texts as stated in the syllabus for each class
5. Background checks - each participating family is responsible for this fee
6. Other - varying fees may be presented for items such as assignment books, food for performances, etc.

## I. Child/Student Supervision

Members are responsible for their children at co-op, but as long as children have adequate supervision (see below), parents don't need to be present the entire co-op day.

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**High school students** are allowed to be at co-op without a parent present, with the understanding that the parent is responsible for monitoring their students' behaviors (setting expectations, participating in conflict resolution, and discussing and addressing behavioral concerns). Parents are responsible for offering appropriate levels of supervision to their high school students if there are issues with conflict during free time.

**All children 12 and under must be supervised at co-op unless they are in class or going to or from class.** During any free time (lunch, free hours, after or before co-op), parents must provide appropriate levels of supervision for their children. It is not the responsibility of board members or other members to supervise a participant's children. Although we extend a "grace space" in helping with supervision, parents are primarily responsible. Please note members are allowed to leave their children under the stewardship of another person as long as the expectation has been spoken and agreed upon with both the student and steward.

## J. Respect for the Building

### 1. Food and Drink Guidelines

- a. Food and drink are allowed in the fellowship hall, halls with a hard floor, the kitchen, and the small table outside the nursery.
- b. Water bottles are allowed anywhere in the building.
- c. Students and parents - clean up after food consumption
- d. Food (candy included) and drink are NOT allowed on the carpet or cloth furniture.
- e. Food (candy included) and drink are NOT allowed in the gym.
- f. Teachers who allow food in a classroom during class time are responsible for all cleanup. This includes using food for crafts, classroom parties, rewards, etc. Teachers may only allow food in a classroom during class and supervised times.

### 2. Kitchen

- a. All paper and plastic products in the kitchen are the property of Trinity Church. Do not use them.
- b. The reusable dishes may be used if washed, dried, and put away.

### 3. Furniture - no standing/kneeling on tables or chairs

### 4. Gym and Wheeled Items

- a. No students are allowed in the gym closet without adult supervision
- b. Wheeled items (roller blades, rip sticks, etc.) may ONLY be used in the gym

### 5. Hallway Etiquette

- a. Walk down halls and in the fellowship hall; running is allowed in the gym

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and outside

- b. Quiet voices or silence in the halls and fellowship hall when classes are in session

## 6. Free Items

- a. Free items are welcome at co-op
- b. Place them on the table by the kitchen in the fellowship hall
- c. Those items are the participants' responsibility unless somebody else claims them
- d. Remove your unclaimed items DAILY. It is not the board's, another member's, or Trinity Church's responsibility to steward the free items brought to the church.

## 7. NO GLITTER

### K. Winter Conditions and Driving

1. If the board cancels classes due to inclement weather, we will contact members by 8:30 a.m. on co-op days.
2. If we do not contact you, co-op will continue as normal. Members must personally consider roads, weather, and vehicles before driving.
3. Road condition website: [www.wyoroad.info](http://www.wyoroad.info)

### L. Information Sharing

1. Do not share contact information with anyone outside of the co-op without the permission of each family.
2. The co-op's email list is not to be used to communicate information that does not pertain to co-op business, including business promotions, church invitations, other homeschool activities, or personal invitations. We do not promote these items during co-op or co-op recitals. Participants are welcome to contact other members personally about these items.
3. We encourage all members to plan field trips, community service opportunities, and other co-op group activities. We can help members promote these events through our email platform when appropriate.

### M. Fundraising

The purpose of fundraising efforts may be to reduce the overall cost of Cedar Grove to all members in some way, to lower the cost of classes that would prohibit members from participating, to benefit individual members (individual fundraising), or to provide budgets for courses that require funds beyond what our members can provide. A monetary investment in co-op is integral to our Cedar Grove membership, so the goal isn't to make Cedar Grove "free." Depending on the fundraising effort, members may or may not benefit

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from the fundraiser if they opt out of participating. Specifics will vary based on the fundraising effort.

## JOINING OR WITHDRAWING

N. **Adding New Members** - We certainly welcome new applicants! Our application process helps determine whether our learning community is the right fit for potential members.

1. **Direct to our website:** potential members fill out our contact form and will be contacted to discuss the form
2. **Invite:** After the pre-screening, applicants gain access to the application
3. **Membership Decision:** The final decision on membership requires a board-approved application and family screening. If there is adequate room in the classes, families may join before the start of the semester. Mid-year applicants will wait until a new co-op year starts to join classes formally.

## O. **Withdrawing from Cedar Grove**

Members should be aware that if they withdraw from the co-op during the school year (August to May), they forfeit any fees paid for that year. They may be placed on a waiting list if they wish to rejoin Co-op later.

P.

## CLASS RELATED CONCERNS

### P. **Nursery/Childcare**

We provide childcare for children whose parents are teaching or assisting in class. Parents with small children who are not teaching or assisting are welcome to sit in the nursery with their children during their free hours.

### Q. **Adding/Dropping Classes and Refunds**

Add/drop protocol may vary from year to year. In general, once registration is complete, classes cannot be added before the start of the school session (early September) or once classes have started. Classes may be dropped for a refund by the date indicated in the registration documents. Refunds may not be available if a class is dropped after the refund deadline. We understand that personal schedules are subject to change. Our advice is to sign up for all possible relevant classes during registration. If a class must be dropped, do so by the refund deadline.

### R. **Late Fees**

Late fees apply to any registrations received after the deadline due to changing classes, dropping classes, adding classes, a late registration form, etc.



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## S. Class Structure and Age Groups

### 1. **Preschool/Kindergarten** - *ages 4-6 (3-year-olds on a case-by-case basis)*

Curriculum used in the classroom is supplementary to the student's home program. Co-op helps students learn how to listen in a group, respond to teachers and peers, follow directions, and develop a love for learning through play, snacks, games, and songs, among other activities.

### 2. **1st-2nd** - *Emergent readers and writers*

Some classes are co-op stand-alone classes without homework. Other classes require parents to read a lesson and engage with the curriculum at home. Typically, if students take all the 1st-2nd grade classes, they will also need math and a language arts program to round out their curriculum. The parent is responsible for developing an education plan for their student.

### 3. **3rd-5th** - *Exhibit some confidence and independence in reading and writing*

Some classes are co-op stand-alone classes without homework. Other classes require parents to read a lesson and engage with the curriculum at home. If students take all the 3rd-5th grade classes, they need math and a language arts program to round out their curriculum. The parent is responsible for developing an education plan for their student.

### 4. **6th-7th** - *Students working toward or who have obtained independence in reading, writing, and completing coursework.* This class bracket offers more classes than the elementary grades, although the core subjects (science, history, etc.) will remain the same to allow for easy reading as a family.

### 5. **8th** - *High school prep year*

8th graders learn alongside our high school students. Specific 8th-grade classes or levels may be available depending on the year. Please be advised that all classes offered to the 8th+ grade level may only suit some students. The classes are more demanding and taught at a high school (9th-12th) grade level. Parents, you must walk alongside your student, make adjustments when necessary, and be engaged in your student's progress.

### 6. **9th - 12th** - *High school students, primarily independent learners & communicators*

In large, class selections are based on the requirements for the Hathaway scholarship in Wyoming. Generally, co-op provides a complete high school curriculum if students add math each year. Although there is a general plan for high school, the extra-curricular classes change as the Lord provides teachers to teach those subjects.

### 7. **Placing a student above or below their age/grade level** - Availability will be determined year to year by the size of the age groups. If there is room, parents may place a student in an alternate age group AFTER being approved by a board

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member AND the class teacher before registration is due. When making the syllabus for their class, the teacher can place a limit on students based on the number of students in the age group for which the class is designed. The interested student must be on either side of the recommended age group within one year. Furthermore, the teacher should keep the class material aimed at the age group for which the class was designed.

- a. If the board, teachers, and space allow, 7th graders may move up to classes in the 8th-12th grade bracket that are solely 8th-grade classes (i.e., General Science). It is our desire to preserve a consistent level of education and space for both our 6th-7th and 8th/9th-12th grade classes and to support our teachers by keeping the grade levels as condensed as possible.

## T. Conflict Resolution

We encourage participants to consistently approach conflict biblically by praying, pursuing the parties involved, and keeping short accounts. In a conflict, the participant must address their concerns with the appropriate parties (students, other parents). If a conflict cannot be resolved, a board member may be approached as an authority and for help.

## U. Code of Conduct

We have developed a code of conduct based on the ethical and moral principles of Scripture. Please communicate these expectations with your children. All students are expected to abide by the code of conduct. When, not if, the students fall short, each teacher will use a classroom management system to help the students understand and comply with the code of conduct. Classroom management may vary from teacher to teacher. If you need help developing a system for your classroom, please speak with a board member or other fellow teachers. Students who do not follow the code may be subject to disciplinary action.

1. Students are to refrain from language and actions that are vulgar, inappropriate, and demeaning to others, God, or mankind.
2. Students will respect the property and belongings of others and Trinity Church.
3. Students will refrain from rough physical conduct with other students (such as hitting, punching, tripping, wrestling, etc).
4. Students must obey instructions from the teachers and support parents promptly. Talking back and arguing will not be tolerated. The students and the teachers will maintain an atmosphere of mutual respect and courtesy.

## V. Classroom Discipline Guidelines

Real and potential discipline problems will be dealt with at the classroom level. The manner and amount of discipline (within these stated guidelines) will be determined by

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the teachers and/or assistants. In repeated or unresolved behavior, the classroom facilitator (teacher or assistant) is expected to address the student's parent(s) to cooperatively assess, manage, and restore the student to their facilitators and fellow students. The specifics and nature of each discipline incident and the individual personality of the student involved will be considered in the administration of the discipline. Love and forgiveness will be an integral part of the discipline of a child.

## W. Classroom Emergencies

If there is a medical emergency during class, the teachers should work together to assess the situation. Call 911 if necessary. If the child's parent(s) are present at the co-op, they should be found. However, if the child's parent are absent, the class assistant should get the child's medical release form, another adult, and the child to the emergency room if calling 911 is unnecessary. The child's parent should be contacted ASAP. Copies of the medical release forms and a directory are stored in our online forms.

## X. Visitors

1. **Can teachers have guest speakers in class?** Yes, teachers may invite guest speakers to their classes. However, if it is more than a one-time visit, the speaker must complete a background check and sign our statement of faith before their second visit. Teachers need to make parents aware of an upcoming guest speaker before their visit so that parents can be present to observe the class. The board holds the teacher who invited the guest speaker responsible for any behavior/comment that may not align with our statement of faith.
2. **Can visitors attend class?** This will vary depending on the year and the size of the co-op class. Make all visitor arrangements with a board member AND each teacher before class.

## Y. "How To" Section

1. **Access the website**
  - a. [www.cedargrovecop.com](http://www.cedargrovecop.com)
  - b. Member's password: Truth\_2022
  - c. Application password: CG\_Apply
2. **Create a syllabus** - teachers are fully responsible for their syllabi
  - a. Login to the website
  - b. Download a syllabus template from "Forms and Documents"
  - c. Adjust ALL the information on the template to fit your class needs
  - d. Email or share the syllabus with the co-op email address
  - e. Make adjustments if directed by a board member
3. **Teachers - Set a budget, keep receipts, get reimbursed**

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- a. Set a fee for your class on your syllabus. This, times the number of students in your class, will determine your budget.
  - b. Check our website for your balance once rosters are available
  - c. Record receipts by take legible pics or scanning them
  - d. Keep a copy of your receipts for records
  - e. Submit receipts by emailing Steve Thomas with your name, class, age range, & class title.
  - f. Receive reimbursement as a check by mail.
4. **Contact and secure a substitute teacher** - Teachers, assistants are your first choice for a sub. Remember, you also need to secure a sub for your assistant.
- a. Login to the website
  - b. Go to "Directory & Substitutes"
  - c. Contact designated subs first (any order)
  - d. Use the calendar & contact list to contact members who might be available. Any member can be a substitute, not just designated subs.
  - e. Contact board members as a last resort to sub
  - f. In a crisis, the board is available to help
5. **Help classes run smoothly - general suggestions/helps**
- a. Develop a classroom management plan
  - b. Communicate with parents/teachers on assignments/classroom items
  - c. Communicate concerns with teachers/parents promptly
  - d. Make a consistent effort to be punctual - classes start on the hour or half hour; the understanding is that students would be in class, seated, ready to start learning at that time, not wandering in at that time; it is helpful to be at co-op before classes start so students/teachers can get settled
6. **Plan a field trip**
- a. Field trips do not need to be approved by a board member. Any member can arrange a field trip but is fully responsible for the details.
  - b. Schedule the field trip on a non-co-op day if possible
  - c. Research location, price, time frame, etc.
  - d. Contact parents with sign-up details, liability waivers, etc.
  - e. Collect funds, if necessary
  - f. Facilitate in a way that best suits the group