

Redeeming Grace Church
Home School
Co-op
Policy Manual
2021 - 2022

Our Purpose

God has called us to raise our children to know Him and to love Him with all their heart, soul, mind and strength (Deut. 6:4-9). Thus, our desire is to live for the glory of God and to encourage our children to do the same. The local church is a means of grace to help parents accomplish this task. The purpose of the Redeeming Grace Church Home School Co-op is to encourage, assist, and support home schooling parents who are members, pursuing membership, or **sponsored by a co-op member** of Redeeming Grace Church. We want to provide a context where biblical relationships can grow between families, parents, and kids. Our desire is that participation in this Co-op will yield these relationships and will also stimulate academic growth in and provide academic help for participating students.

What We Are

The Co-op is a ministry of the church working in participation with the parents of the students. This Co-op should be seen as an optional tool for home schooling families to incorporate into their total home school approach. **The Co-op is for church members, those pursuing membership, or sponsored families of a co-op member** here at Redeeming Grace Church of Fairfax.

What We Are Not

The Co-op is not a school and assumes no responsibility to provide legal covering for home schooling. All tests should be proctored, put in an envelope, and signed by the parent and homework overseen by the parent. Teacher Manuals should be handled carefully at home to prevent unnecessary temptation. Nor do we guarantee that participation in the Co-op will ensure any measurable result on any standardized achievement test. Parents in the Co-op are responsible for the academic progress of their children. When/if a student graduates in our homeschool graduation, the church or the Co-op is not graduating the student. The parent is graduating the student (so the church or Co-op name will not appear on the student's diploma.). So, parents can choose not to graduate a student if they fail to meet the needed requirements.

We are a “families helping families program.” All paid classes are on Tuesdays and are carefully noted as such. Most classes do not include payment for those teaching them. Most teachers are home-schooling parents wanting the accountability of a Co-op setting, wanting their children to develop deeper friendships with their peers, and willing to include a few other kids as they provide a school subject that their own child needs. These teacher/helper positions are weekly, school-year long commitments. This Co-op is part of one of the “ministries” of our church (Home-Ed Ministry or “HEA”), and there is a pastor on staff that provides pastoral leadership, guidance and help with this ministry.

PASTORAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

Elder Oversight: David Falke

Church Office Contacts: Sharon Gingell

Leadership Team: Directors- Stacy Pratt (mompratt11@gmail.com) and Gloria Robinson (robin4sons@aol.com), Diane James (dianejamesconsulting@gmail.com), Rebekah Falke (rebekahfalke@gmail.com), Christina Cottrell (lucasandster@gmail.com)

Members of the Leadership Team are referred to as “Team Members” in this document.

POLICIES

Fees / Budget / Refund

Registration: **\$120** per student (**non-refundable after August 9**) payable to Redeeming Grace Church. The church will use that fee to cover overhead costs, which include two pizza parties, a portion of the copying costs, supplies, and general administrative costs associated with room set up and clean up. There are also individual class costs/fees payable at registration which goes directly to the teacher (these fees are variable depending upon the class). There are more details regarding registration on the Home Education page of the website (rgcfairfax.org). **Please note: Class fees are generally non-refundable, as the fees are spent on supplies for your enrolled student before classes begin.**

Age/Grade Level

Due to the size of the Co-op, first graders need to be six as of September 30 of that school year. If you would like to request an exception, please speak to a Team Member.

Parental Supervision

Our Co-op is not a drop-off program. Even if you only have high school students, you are expected/needed to serve. But we understand that there are times that you may need to leave the building. When your 1st – 8th grader is at Co-op, a parent needs to be at the building. If you need to leave, there will be a clipboard on the bulletin board table for you to write your student's name and the name of the adult who will be responsible for your student(s) while you are absent. **Only 9th – 12th grade students may be at Co-op without a parent or designated responsible adult.** (But parents of 9th-12th graders will be assigned weekly serving responsibilities.) If your 7th or 8th grader needs to be at the building without you on Tuesdays or late Thursday afternoons, please secure an adult to be responsible for your student.

Outside Policies

Parents are always responsible for their children. **On Tuesdays**, students may not be outside unless a parent can be an outside supervisor. **On Thursdays**, at lunchtime, students may be at the soccer fields, at the playground (with a parent), or at the picnic tables. Students may not walk across Rt. 123 to go to the gas station or to the store. The only time a student may walk off church grounds is to walk home, and they must have their parent's permission for this. Students may not be outside between classes (including in a car) and need to be inside when waiting for a ride. There are to be no bikes, skateboards, scooters etc...in the parking lot during Co-op hours unless prior arrangements have been made and parental supervision is available.

Parking

Please park in front of the basement auditorium unless your driver is in high school. High school drivers are required to part in the side lot adjoining the Buddhist Temple. **Please, no parking in the Visitor parking spaces in front of the church building.**

Bulletin Boards

All important Co-op information will be communicated via email. In order to be informed of upcoming HEA meetings, Co-op activities, seminars, classes, registration information and material, it is very important to make sure you provide an accurate and current email address. Many Co-op documents are available on our website such as our schedule, calendar, policy manual and our inclement weather policy. Please join the Co-op facebook group (Redeeming Grace HEA Group) where Co-op members can communicate about community events, curriculum for sale, and any other information that might be of interest to the Co-op members. The bulletin boards at Co-op are for information and upcoming events. Feel free to post advertisements for upcoming events, curriculum for sale etc....

Building Use Form

If for any reason you would like to reschedule a class or schedule an additional event at the building for your class, please obtain a building use form from the church website (go to “Resources” and then “Forms”) and talk to a Team Member.

Building Requests/Special Class Activities

If you have special room change or set-up requests, plan to have an outside speaker or activity and have unique needs for that, need something from “the building”, or anything of this nature, e-mail Gloria Robinson (robin4sons@gmail.com) with your request/need. All Co-op/HEA communication and needs should go through a Team Member.

Calendar

Classes meet primarily on Thursdays with some upper-level classes meeting on Tuesdays. A few classes meet Tuesdays and Thursdays. An upper-level class may have a special lab day, a mid-term, a final exam, a make-up or a final class in addition to the regularly scheduled Tuesday and/or Thursday classes. This information is usually found in the course description for your class.

Curriculum

Parents have full responsibility for their child's education, and Redeeming Grace Church is not responsible for the curriculum presented by any of the teachers. Each teacher is required to teach in accordance with Scripture and with the practices and beliefs of Redeeming Grace Church. If parents have a concern about a specific curriculum, they are encouraged to discuss this with the appropriate teacher, and if necessary, a Team Member. Note to Teachers: please review your curriculum, and if you think that any of the material might be questionable, please discuss this with a Team Member.

Coursework

The student is expected to attend all classes, meet deadlines, participate respectfully, and perform to a satisfactory level on quizzes, tests, and assignments.

Homework on Scheduled Breaks

Co-op's scheduled days off are listed on the Co-op calendar. Teachers, please try to schedule a “light to normal” work load over the breaks. No Sunday due dates. Teachers, if possible, please have tests due on Tuesdays or Thursdays.

Photocopying

The copier is not available for personal copies. Each teacher may copy up to his or her estimated and paid for number of copies. If you need to copy more than that, please talk to a Team Member. You must comply with the copyright laws for the material you are reproducing.

Classroom and Supplies

The classrooms are for the primary use of Children's Ministry (CM) on Sundays. Please remove supplies and personal belongings from the room at the end of a class. Please put your name on the supplies you store in the Co-op storage room and remove them at the end of the Co-op year. (Everything needs to go home at the end of the year!) Please do not store food in the Co-op storage room! Also, please do not use any of the consumable Children's Ministry supplies in the classroom or in the CM storage room (except dry erase markers). In an effort to leave the rooms ready for Sunday mornings, please adhere to the following:

- Pick up any trash
- Wipe tables as needed
- Erase white board
- Vacuum the classroom as needed
- Remove students' belongings

Note to Teachers: Please end your class promptly, both to allow time for cleanup and to allow the

next class to begin on time. Please adjust your classroom clock to match the Co-op clock in the basement lobby (if you are relying on that clock). Also, please do not release your students early as it causes too much noise in the lobby and hallways for the other classes.

Food

The Thursday lunchroom is the Basement Auditorium, or outside. The Tuesday lunchrooms are Rooms B07, B05, and B03 (and B01 if needed). Lunch may also be eaten at the round tables in the basement lobby. No eating in the stair wells, in the hallway near the bathrooms or on any other floor other than the basement. No food or drink in the classrooms unless permission is given by the teacher. No food in study hall. If you plan a special food day in your class, you must wipe your tables down and vacuum the floor when you are done. Please do not give your students food (like cupcakes) and allow them to walk out of the classroom eating them. This puts crumbs throughout the hall. **PLEASE PUT YOUR NAME ON ALL COOLERS AND LUNCH BOXES!!!** Unless your name is on it, and it is clear that you are still in the building, all food (including food that is in coolers and lunchboxes) will be thrown away after 2:30 to avoid the risk of it being stored in the Co-op room for a week. **PLEASE take your coolers and left over lunches to your car by 2:30.**

Coffee & Tea Table

Adults only may help themselves to the coffee and tea (and sometimes snacks) provided at the coffee table. Please use lids on your hot beverage cups. Please communicate to your children that this table is for adults only.

Snacks

Snacks are available for purchase on the coffee table at Co-op. Please communicate with your children whether or not they are permitted to purchase snacks at Co-op. This money helps to defray the costs of the coffee.

Spills

Please report all spills promptly to the facility manager or a Team Member for cleaning purposes.

Kitchen Use

If you need to use the kitchen for your class, please make sure you know how to use the equipment properly. If you need the kitchen during Co-op, please talk to a Team Member. In general, please do not use the kitchen for personal use during Co-op. Kitchen use must be scheduled prior to its use with a team member.

Give-Away Pile

There is a location in the hallway where you may put give-away items at Co-op, but at the end of the day, you must take home anything that has not been taken (or it will be thrown away by 1:30).

Fundraisers

Co-op has two standing fundraisers: two Yearbook bake sales. We ask that all contributions be nut-free.

Year End Event

Co-op's Year End Event is on the Sunday evening after Mother's Day. Teachers will have the option to have their class present a 2-3 minute stage presentation and/or have a table presentation.

SAFETY AND SECURITY POLICIES

INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY

If Fairfax County Schools are closed (due to road conditions):

- All Co-op classes are canceled. Teachers may contact their students with any assignments to complete for the following week or with further assignment instructions.

If Fairfax County Schools are opening one or two hours late:

- Co-op starts at 10:10 AM (period 2) (on Thursdays). All first period classes are canceled (9:00 to 10:00 AM). Teachers may contact their students with any assignments to complete for the following week.
- On Tuesdays, the 8:30 classes will be canceled. The 9:35 classes will begin at 10:00 and will run for only one hour. The 11:05 classes will be held at their regular time (and regular duration).
- If Co-op has a delayed start, but your family finds the roads in your area too dangerous to make it in, please stay at home.

You can find FCPS's weather cancellation and delay notices on FCPS's Emergency Announcement website (<http://www.fcps.edu/news/emerg.htm>).

Child Protection Policy

As a preventative measure, there should be two adults in a classroom with elementary age children at all times. If accompanying a child(ren) to the bathroom (or changing a diaper), please take a second adult with you (the hall monitor or an available mom.) There are to be no one-on-one teacher/student scenarios in a classroom. (Hallway or lobby is fine.) Please make sure that when you are in a teaching, tutoring, or personal capacity, you as an adult are not in a classroom with only one student. Ensure that there is always either a 2nd student (acceptable for post-elementary students) or a 2nd adult.

Fire Evacuation Procedures

When a fire alarm sounds, teachers and helpers should do the following:

- Remain calm. The children will take their cues from the teacher and helpers.
- Form a line in the classroom. Once the line is formed, the teacher should lead the line out of the classroom, out of the building, and to the predetermined rally point.
- Evacuation routes and rally points are posted in the classrooms.

STANDARDS FOR STUDENTS

Study Hall: The purpose of study hall is to provide a quiet, supervised environment to do school work or read when a student is not in a class. Please review the list below to make yourself familiar with our basic policies. In addition to these policies, anything that runs counter to our purpose is unacceptable. Each student must be registered for study hall so the monitor knows who should be there on a given hour. Parents, please communicate with the study hall monitor if your student's study hall schedule is altered for the day or permanently. Students, please make it easy for our monitors by your cooperation.

1. Bring enough schoolwork to do, a book to read, or something quiet to work on to keep busy the whole period.
2. No talking, including sign language, no whispering, no note passing and no texting.
3. Headphones/earbuds are now allowed with parental sign-off (form to be provided to parents). The noise level may not be heard by those around. Phones are allowed for music but no texting or Internet.
4. Computers are allowed for school work. Students may conduct research or complete school lessons but no videos (i.e. you tube) or streaming even if school-related. Computer screens must be facing the study hall monitor. Students may use earbuds IF they have permission slip on file in study hall.
5. If you need to leave study hall for any reason (i.e. bathroom, talk to Mom, etc...), please tell the study hall monitor where you are going and return promptly. You may not leave early unless prior arrangements have been made with the monitor.
6. No food is allowed in study hall. Covered drinks are allowed, but this policy will change if spills (onto schoolwork or computers) occur.

Hallways: Other than the 10-minute breaks between classes and during lunch, no loitering will be permitted in the hallways. Students must be in class, in study hall, or with their parent.

Respect: Students are to be respectful to adults and to other students at all times in their words, tone of voice, attitudes, gestures, and actions.

Behavior: Students should follow instructions and refrain from disruptive or inappropriate behavior. Inappropriate behavior includes (but is not limited to): violation of Co-op rules, lack of respect for authority or for peers, foul or sexual language or vulgar gestures, vandalism, and inappropriate physical displays of affection (defined as anything more than a brief hug).

Dress Code: Modesty and neatness are expected at all times.

Cell Phones: No phone calls or texting in classes or study hall. When in use, no inappropriate or sexual content, music or images on or shared through cell phones. Teachers may require students to put cell phones away during class. (Teachers, PLEASE have and enforce cell phone rules in your class.)

Dangerous Items: No weapons or dangerous items allowed on church property (in or out.)

Timeliness: Most Thursday classes are one hour, with a ten-minute break between classes. Most Tuesday classes are 90 minutes with a five-minute break in between classes. It is very important for students to arrive on time, as latecomers inevitably miss important instruction and disrupt the learning process. If tardiness becomes habitual, it will be treated as a disciplinary matter.

Attendance: Attendance is expected for every class. If a student is going to be absent, parents should notify teachers directly. If illness or emergency should arise, parents should contact each teacher directly as soon as possible. Any student who does not attend class for three consecutive weeks without contacting the teacher may be dropped from the class (and his space filled if there is a waiting list). It is the student's and/or parent's responsibility to learn of and make-up missed work.

Cheating: If cheating occurs (including plagiarism), the teacher should directly address the student and parent. At a minimum, the student will receive a "zero" grade for that assignment, with other consequences at the discretion of the parents and/or teacher. If the cheating persists, the below steps (#4,5,6) will be followed. An occurrence of cheating on a high-school level, transcript course will be treated very seriously.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION – MATTHEW 18

If concerning behavior occurs including academic issues, the following course of action will be followed:

1. The teacher will clearly and gently identify and explain to the student the inappropriateness of his behavior/academic performance and instruct him in the correct way to conduct himself. The teacher will decide whether or not to notify the parents.
2. If the student continues the behavior, the teacher will notify the student's parents, and the parents will be responsible to correct the problem. Teachers, feel free to get the student's mom involved during the class period (for younger students), and if necessary, send the student to study hall for the class period or ask the mom to remove the child for the remainder of the class time.
3. The teacher will speak to the parents to make sure her expectations are clear and to see if there is anything more she can do to serve the student and/or parents. The teacher will keep a record of these discussions to track progress and change.
4. If the problematic behavior persists, the teacher may suspend or remove a student from class. Please let the Team know if this occurs. Also feel free to bring a Team Member into the discussion earlier if that serves you.
5. If further steps are necessary, the Team will involve a pastor and the student could face a two-week suspension from all classes. The student will either receive no credit for the work missed or the teacher can work out a scenario for the student to make-up the work.
6. In rare instances, the student could be removed from Co-op for the remainder of the school year.
7. Any student arrested by the police may be suspended from Co-op for up to two weeks pending a discussion with the pastors, the parents, and the Co-op leadership to determine the student's suitability for ongoing involvement in Co-op.