

EXPLORERS HOMESCHOOL CO-OP

Guidelines



Mission Statement

Explorers Homeschool Co-op was founded by a community of Christian homeschooling families with a shared desire to enrich the education of school-age children (ages 5–19). Our goal is to offer classes that are best experienced in a group setting or that require specialized knowledge beyond what every parent may individually possess. We believe that by pooling our time, talents, and resources, we can provide our children with a richer, more well-rounded educational experience.

We meet bi-weekly on Friday in **Pace** from  **9:00 AM – 12:30 PM** for **16 weeks each school year**.

Children are grouped by age and may choose from a variety of classes, which are taught by parent volunteers. These classes are planned collaboratively during our annual planning sessions.

We believe every parent has something valuable to contribute. Therefore:

-  Each parent is required to serve during every co-op meeting by teaching and/or assisting in at least two of the three class periods.
-  Parents must remain on-site throughout the morning and be available to help during any period they are not actively teaching or assisting.

The strength of Explorers lies in our shared commitment. This co-op can be as excellent as we make it—or as mediocre as we allow. Together, we shape the experience.

Class Groupings

- Children are placed by age using public school cutoffs.
- Special placement requests (within 1 year of age) may be considered.
 - Minnows: Birth to 2 years
 - Starfish: 3-4 years
 - Sailors: K5-2nd grade
 - Navigators: 3rd-5th grade
 - Captains: 6th-8th grade
 - Admirals: 9th-12th grade
- **All enrolled high school teens** are required to stay and help with clean-up after co-op.
- **Infant–PreK** children remain in their classroom all three hours; teachers rotate to them.
- **Sailors** transition between classes with teacher guidance using their nametags.
- **Older Students** transition between classes on their own using their nametags.
- Parents pick up children at designated locations at the end of the day.



Member Family Requirements and Commitments



Parental Involvement

- **100% parental involvement is REQUIRED.** One adult from each family must be present and actively participating at every co-op meeting.
- Each parent is expected to **teach and/or assist** during all meetings, serving in at least two of the three class periods.



Student Eligibility

- The oldest child in each participating family must be at least **Kindergarten age (K5)**, using the public school cutoff date.
- **Drop-offs are not permitted.** Children may not be left at the co-op without a parent or guardian present.
- In rare and extenuating circumstances, a parent may request permission from the Director to have their child attend with another Explorers family. **This must be approved in advance. This will still count toward absences.**



Orientation & Communication

- A **mandatory parent orientation** will be held at the beginning of each school year. Attendance is required for all participating families.
- All announcements and event updates will be shared:
 - During the **morning assembly**
 - On the **private Official Explorers Facebook page**
 - Photos taken during classes are encouraged to be shared in the official FB group.
 - There is also a private Explorers Community Facebook page for community engagement.
- Please note: We are **unable to provide email or text notifications**. It is each family's responsibility to stay informed through the designated channels.



Attendance & Punctuality

- Families are expected to **arrive on time** and **stay for the full co-op day**.
- **Tardy = Arrival after the 9:15 AM assembly begins.**
- By enrolling in Explorers, you are committing to attend **all 16 weeks** (or the remainder of the school year if joining mid-year).
- **Illnesses and family emergencies** are understandable exceptions; however, consistent attendance is expected. Please communicate with the admin team regarding any emergency absences.
- All absences must be reported to the Substitute Coordinator via the **absence form AND a text** for parents and Admirals.



Absence & Tardy Policy

- Families with more than:
 - **2 absences**,
 - **4 tardies**, or
 - a **combined total of 3** (e.g., 1 absence + 2 tardies) in a semester will be placed on **probation** for the following semester.
- While on probation, the maximum allowed is:
 - **1 absence** and
 - **1 tardy**.
- Exceeding this limit while on probation will result in the family being moved to the **waitlist** and being ineligible to register for the next semester.
- When notifying the substitute coordinator of an absence, please **briefly explain the reason** via the absence form (link found on Facebook).



Refund Policy

- Unfortunately, we are **unable to offer refunds**, as funds are distributed and used early in the term



Illness, Injury & Liability

- **Do not attend co-op if your child has had fever, vomiting, diarrhea, severe runny nose, persistent cough or any symptom of an illness that could be communicable in the past 24 hours.**
- Contact the Substitute Coordinator if you must miss a meeting.
- Contact Substitute Coordinator if your Admiral must miss a meeting.
- A first aid kit is available for minor injuries.
- For accidents involving bodily fluids, please ask the Facilities Manager for assistance with cleanup.
- In the event of a serious injury, parents will be contacted immediately. If life-threatening, the attending teacher should seek emergency treatment.
- Parents are responsible for all medical costs and for the health and safety of their children at all co-op functions.
- Explorers Co-op, Woodbine Baptist Church, the Admin Team, and their representatives are not liable for any illness or injury sustained during co-op events.
- If an accident, injury, or medical incident occurs, please notify a member of the Admin Team as soon as possible so that we may document the event and ensure appropriate follow-up. Our goal is to care for our families well and keep our environment safe.

Community & Character Expectations

Christ-Centered Foundation

Explorers is a Christ-centered organization. In all aspects of our program, we seek to honor biblical principles and bring glory to God. Our goal is to cultivate a community where Christ-like character is modeled, encouraged, and celebrated. Families are required to sign the Explorers Homeschool Collective's statement of faith. All participants are expected to follow these rules. Parents are responsible for their children's behavior at all times.

Foundational Values

- **Respect** – Toward one another and our host church. Leave people and places better than we found them.
- **Safety** – Always have two adults from different families present in each classroom. Seek help when needed.
- **Courtesy** – Arrive and dismiss on time. No cell phones in class.
- **Listening** – Listen attentively to teachers and peers. Take turns speaking to give everyone the chance to contribute.
- **Godliness** – Speak and act in ways that honors Christ. Speak life. No bullying. No gossip.

Social & Physical Boundaries

- Physical discipline is the responsibility of the parent only. Use redirection or a time-out as needed.
- Two unrelated adults must be present in each classroom.
- Adults should only be helping children wash their hands in the restrooms.
- A parent should be contacted if a child needs additional help in the restroom (exception: older sibling helping a younger sibling).
- Use appropriate physical gestures (e.g., high fives, fist bumps, side hugs).

Dress Code

Please remember we are in a **church** and **school** environment. The following dress guidelines apply to all adults and students attending Explorers. Everyone will get one warning; if there is a repeat offense in the school year, you will be asked to go home to change.

- No visible underwear.
- No tight, form-fitting, or see-through clothing.
- Shorts and skirts must extend below fingertips (approximately no more than 5 inches above the knee).
- Ripped jeans showing skin above fingertip length must be worn with leggings or long shorts underneath.
- No spaghetti straps on tops or dresses unless wearing an undershirt. Sleeveless tops must be at least 1.5 inches and not gap to reveal undergarments or torso.
- No low-cut tops exposing cleavage or crop tops exposing midriffs.
- No clothing with rude, obscene, or disrespectful language or imagery.

Conduct & Environment

- Use Christ-like kindness in all interactions—
 - No bullying of any kind - verbal, physical, or digital (online/texting).
 - No gossiping about anyone while at co-op, or about anyone from co-op at any time.
- Use God-honoring language—no curse words, or inappropriate jokes/innuendos.
- Walk calmly and use quiet voices indoors.
- Clean up after yourself and your children.
- Help protect and care for church property—no defacing, theft, or disruptive behavior.
- Leave the church better than we found it.
- Be on time for all classes and activities.
- Students may not skip class or wander the grounds.

Food Policy

- Parents are expected to send a snack with their child to be consumed during their PE class.
- Food may only be eaten during designated times and in designated areas (kitchen or outside).
- Throw away your trash, leave the building and grounds cleaner than you found them.
- Teachers may **not distribute food or candy** to students. Students should only eat the snacks they bring from home. No sharing snacks, no giving food to students, and no students raiding the snacks in the parent room.
- PE Teachers should have students eat as close to the middle of the co-op day as possible.

Electronic Device Usage Policy

To foster an engaged and distraction-free learning environment:

- **Students** should not use electronic devices (including phones, tablets, smartwatches, etc.) they must be **stored in backpacks, pockets, or with their parents** during co-op hours.
- **Parents and guardians** are asked to refrain from using phones or other devices during class sessions, except in cases of emergency or co-op-related responsibilities. This helps model attentiveness and supports our collective focus on community and learning.

Prohibited Items: Do not bring the following to any co-op function:

- Firearms (except for parents with a valid concealed carry permit).
- Knives, BB/pellet guns, or toy weapons.
- Alcohol, tobacco (including vapes), or any other drugs.
- Items that pose a fire risk (lighters, fireworks).

Media & Privacy

- Do **NOT** post photos of children outside the private Explorers Facebook group without parental permission.
- If you share photos outside of the private Explorers Facebook groups without parental permission, you will get **ONE** warning.
- If you violate this rule a second time, you will be **removed** from our private Facebook pages.

Biblical Conflict Resolution

- If a conflict arises: resolve the conflict biblically according to **Matthew 18:15-17** :
 1. **Speak directly and kindly** with the person involved.
 2. **If unresolved**, bring the concern to a member of the Admin Team privately.
 3. **Refrain from involving** unrelated parties.
- The Admin Team is committed to upholding these guidelines with fairness, consistency, and biblical integrity—ensuring all families are treated with equal respect, grace, and accountability.



Teacher Expectations



Responsibilities

- Plan and prepare engaging lessons.
- First hour teachers are expected to sit with their class in the sanctuary for assembly.
- Keep students in the classroom for the full class period, begin packing up 3 minutes before end.
- Clean and straighten the classroom after each session.
- Prepare a “**sub packet**” (lesson plan + materials) to be kept with the Substitute Coordinator.
- Notify the Substitute Coordinator via the **absence form** and direct message if unable to attend.



Supply Fee Policy

- Teachers may request supply fees or may choose to have students bring their own supplies.
- Teachers are not paid, supply fees are to be used for class supplies only, and are NOT a teacher's salary.
- As part of our 501(c)(3) operations, all supply fees provided to instructors must comply with nonprofit financial regulations and uphold the integrity of our co-op's mission. To ensure transparency and proper stewardship, please note the following guidelines:
 1. Receipt Submission
 - Instructors must submit itemized receipts for all purchases made with supply fees.
 - Receipts should be turned in by the end of the semester.
 - All purchases must clearly support student learning or classroom activities.
 2. Ownership of Materials
 - Consumable items (e.g. glue, paper, snacks) are expected to be fully used during the semester.
 - Non-consumable items (e.g. books, tools, manipulatives) must either:
 - Be sent home with the student who used them, *if intended for individual use*; or
 - Returned to the co-op for future use or distribution, *if intended for communal learning*.
 - Instructors may not retain any non-consumable items purchased with supply fees for personal use, in accordance with 501(c)(3) regulations.
 3. Unused Funds
 - Any unused supply fee funds must be returned to the co-op and may not be retained or redirected without prior approval from the board.
 - Any unused funds will stay with the co-op and not be returned to parents.
 - These funds will be put in the general fund.
- Due to transitioning to a 501(c)3, procedures for supply fees will be changing starting in January of 2026.
 - Supply fees will not be distributed to teachers until a receipt is submitted for reimbursement.
 - Please contact the Admin Team if this affects your ability to purchase supplies.



Attendance for Teachers

- Teachers are expected to attend **ALL** co-op meetings.
- Teachers should have **no more than one absence per semester**.
- Teachers who exceed this limit may be ineligible to teach the following semester.
- If you anticipate more than one absence, please serve as an assistant instead.



Perks

- Teachers receive **priority class registration** for their children over assistants.



Assistant Expectations

- Actively help with:
 - Classroom management
 - Distributing materials
 - Supporting student projects
 - Cleaning and restroom breaks
 - Helping younger students transition to their next class
- First-hour assistants are expected to sit with their class in the sanctuary for assembly.
- Third-hour assistants are **required** to escort children to their designated pickup location.
 - K-5 assistants are required to stay until all of the children in their class have been picked up.
- If the teacher is absent, **you will lead the class** using the provided sub packet, and a substitute parent will assist you.
- Please be respectful. Do not interrupt or attempt to override the teacher as they are teaching.



Child Participation

- Each co-op day includes:
 - Opening Assembly - sit with your 1st hour class
 - Two Class Periods
 - Snack/PE Time
- All students (Pre-K through 12th grade) must be enrolled in a class for each hour.
- Attendance is required at all classes, and students may not skip class or wander the grounds while at co-op.
- Students are expected to **participate actively** and **show respect** to teachers and peers.
- Admirals are expected to complete their assigned cleaning duties in full before leaving co-op.



Guests

- **In Place of a Parent:**
 - Must assist during two class periods.
 - Must sign an insurance waiver.
 - Notify the substitute coordinator in advance.
 - Indicate via the absence form whether they can fill the parent's usual roles or need reassignment.
- **Additional Adult Guests:**
 - May attend and assist if desired.
 - Must sign an insurance waiver.
 - Please inform the substitute coordinator beforehand.
- **Visiting Children:**
 - Children from co-op families who don't normally attend may join for one day (due to school being out) **if space allows**.
 - Contact the substitute coordinator to make arrangements. **This must be pre-approved.**