

Home Oriented Private Education (H.O.P.E.)

Promoting Christ-Centered Education-Raising Men and Women of Godly Character

Member Handbook



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H.O.P.E. Governance

H.O.P.E. shall be governed in its operation by its Constitution, as well as the H.O.P.E. Statement of Faith, Bylaws and Standing Rules.

- A. Statement of Faith- H.O.P.E. is committed to a Christ-centered, biblically sound, home education. Members are requested to sign in agreement to the Statement of Faith. Associate H.O.P.E. members (those who do not sign the Statement of Faith) are required to read the Statement of Faith and must understand that though they may not agree on all points, nevertheless they must agree to support and not contradict the tenets of the Statement of Faith whenever participating in H.O.P. E. group activities. The statement is designed to provide agreement on basic core beliefs for Christians and is not intended to promote any particular denomination or group, nor shall members endeavor to promote, recruit for, or advocate any particular church or denomination at any H.O.P.E. function.
- B. Bylaws- The bylaws for H.O.P.E. stand as a body of secondary rules for the organization subject to amendment by the membership as needed.
- C. Standing Rules- The H.O.P.E. standing rules exist as those rules necessary for the day to day operation of the organization and are subject to amendment by the Executive Committee.

H.O.P.E. Statement of Faith

The Bible is the inspired and infallible Word of God and constitutes His completed and final revelation to man. The Bible, in its original autograph, is without error in whole and in part, including theological concepts as well as geographical and historical details. (2 Timothy 3:16; Psalm 89:34; 2 Peter 1:20-21; Revelation 22:18-19)

God has existed from all eternity in three persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Jesus Christ was God come in human flesh, virgin born, being fully god and fully man, except without sin. (Genesis 1:26; John 1:1-3,14; Matthew 28:19; 1 John 5:7; revelation 1:7-8; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Matthew 1:23)

All men are in violation of God's righteous requirements and His holy character both by nature and act, and are therefore under His wrath and just condemnation. (Romans 5:12)

The central purpose of the coming of Jesus Christ was to pay the penalty for man's sin through His substitutionary death on the cross, the successful accomplishment of which was attested to by His subsequent visible, bodily resurrection. (Revelation 6:23; Romans 5:9; 1 John 2:2; 1 Peter 2:24; Hebrews 9:22; 1 Corinthians 15:3-6)

Salvation is offered as a gift, free to the sinner. This gift must be responded to in individual faith, not trusting in any personal works whatsoever, but in the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ alone. (Ephesians 2:8-9; Titus 3:5; John 1:12)

God wonderfully and immutably created each person as biologically male or female at the time of conception. These two distinct, complimentary genders together reflect the image and nature of God. (Genesis 1:26-27; Genesis 5:1-2; Psalm 139:13-15; Jeremiah 1:5)

God established systems of responsibility to maintain order in His Creation. Mankind benefits when individuals respect and uphold the institution of marriage between one man and one woman, and the authority of parents in the family. (Genesis 2:23-24, Deuteronomy 5:16; Ephesians 6:1)

Code of Conduct

This handbook defines the Code of Conduct for parents and students of H.O.P.E. and is in fulfillment of our purpose and biblical distinctives as a Christian homeschool organization. The goal of the H.O.P.E. Code of Conduct is to assist parents in providing the best environment for spiritual growth and academic development for their family. The Code of Conduct is published in the form of policies, rules, and expectations and may be updated at any time by the H.O.P.E. Executive Committee. By virtue of being a member of H.O.P.E., each parent and student agrees to understand and abide by the Code of Conduct for the duration of their membership.

The Executive Committee of H.O.P.E. has adopted standards that will help promote an environment that is conducive to spiritual, academic, and social growth. Where God's Word directly addresses a matter, standards have been set accordingly. Where the Bible does not directly address an aspect pertaining to H.O.P.E., biblical principles have been followed and conservative expectations have been established to help encourage faithful Christian living. By registering for membership with H.O.P.E., each parent and student must personally accept and agree to follow the guidelines set forth in the handbook. We ask that parents read and discuss these guidelines with their students to ensure understanding and compliance.

Personal Character

H.O.P.E. represents Christ as a Christian ministry and the conduct of its parents and students should always seek to glorify the Lord according to 1 Corinthians 10:31, "So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God." Each person is expected to act in a manner that reflects biblical values and to develop personal character traits which display the fruit of the Spirit. As a community of Christians, we should encourage and support others to live in a manner that is pleasing to God. Behavior and attire at H.O.P.E. functions should represent our Lord, Jesus Christ. These guidelines apply to parents, students, teachers, and guests of H.O.P.E. families. The H.O.P.E. Executive Committee reserves the right to take action up to and including revocation of memberships depending on the severity and circumstances of violations of these guidelines (Titus 3:2; Colossians 4:6; Ephesians 4:29).

Behavior Guidelines:

- Honor God, other people, and property- God deserves reverence and respect, and our lifestyle and worship should reflect the honor we owe Him. We are commanded to show respect to those God has placed in authority over us (Hebrews 13:17). Further, we are expected to encourage and uplift as well as regard each other with dignity, demonstrating mindful consideration of others and their property (Philippians 2:3; Romans 12:10). When attending H.O.P.E. sponsored events whether it is co-op, a field trip, student council meeting, a graduation ceremony, or other event, please be respectful of property (Luke 16:12).
- Kindness and consideration for others- Christians are to seek opportunities to show kindness and love towards others. Common courtesy and politeness are qualities each of us should seek to develop. Kindness is expected from parents as well as students in our interactions with one another at H.O.P.E. events. Good sportsmanship is also expected whether engaging in a board game or athletic endeavors (Matthew 7:12; Ephesians 4:32; Philippians 2:4).

- Love one another and display compassion- *God's great love for us is displayed when we live with an attitude of genuine care and concern for others. As members of H.O.P.E., we will seek to love one another as disciples of Christ (1 John 4:7-8; Ephesians 5:2).*
- Live honestly and with integrity- *God instructs us to speak the truth in all situations. It is necessary that all H.O.P.E. members deal truthfully with others and maintain a reputation for choosing to do what is right (1 John 2:21; Psalm 25:21; Proverbs 12:22; Philipians 4:8, Psalm 34:13).*
- Display self-control- *Christians are to exercise control over their emotions and desires so that behavior is appropriate (Galatians 5:22-24).*
- Provide a safe environment-*The possession and/or use of tobacco products, alcohol products, vape devices, illegal drugs, and the like is not allowed at H.O.P.E. functions. Students are not allowed to have firearms or dangerous weapons while at H.O.P.E. functions (Proverbs 3:29, Proverbs 11:17).*
- Etiquette, manners, and thankfulness- *H.O.P.E. members are expected to know how to speak and act according to what is age appropriate. General courtesy and thankfulness towards one another are expected at H.O.P.E. events (1 Thessalonians 5:18, Colossians 4:6).*
- Modesty and purity- *Christian parents and students are expected to maintain the highest moral standards as a reflection of God's holiness and as a protection against the effects of sin. The Bible indicates that all sexual activity is only intended to be within a monogamous, heterosexual marriage. Any other sexual activity or involvement in pornography or sexual communication (including jokes) whether verbal, written, or electronic is prohibited. There will be no romantic displays of affection between students (1 Timothy 2:9; 1 Timothy 4:12; 1 Corinthians 6:19-20, 1 Peter 3:3-4; Psalm 24:3-5; Psalm 119:9).*

- *Speak evil of no one-* Any behavior (even in jest) that places the health and safety of any student in jeopardy such as teasing, bullying, name-calling, or putting others down will not be tolerated (including such activities via text and/or social media).
- *Pure Speech-* The Bible instructs believers to guard against the use of profanity or obscenity, so H.O.P.E. members are expected to use speech that is edifying to one other. Inappropriate communication whether verbal, written or electronic is forbidden (Ephesians 4:29; James 5:12; James 1:26; Colossians 4:6; Psalm 141:3).
- *Reflect God's image-* God created each individual in His image with distinct attributes. For this reason, rejecting or changing biological gender/identity through alternate means such as medication, surgery, or appearance, dress, personal pronouns, etc., is not permissible (Psalm 139:13-14; Genesis 1:26-27; Matthew 19:4; Jeremiah 1:5).

Clothing

Dress Code: Modest- H.O.P.E. has applied these guidelines in an effort to align with the spirit and intention of biblical principles, reflect conservative values, and to express the principles of modesty, distinction, and appropriateness. These standards are to be upheld by parents and students at all H.O.P.E. sponsored events. "...decide never to put a stumbling block or hindrance in the way of a brother" (Romans 14:13).

- Clothing and accessories may not have writing or pictures that are offensive, divisive, inappropriate, frightening, suggestive, immodest advertising (alcoholic beverages), or otherwise contrary to Biblical principles.
- Clothing should be appropriate to be seen by all ages from preschool to elderly.
- Jeans with holes are permitted as long as they are on the front of the jeans and undergarments are not revealed.
- Leggings, tights, and yoga pants must be worn with a longer shirt that covers the wearer's bottom at all times.
- Shirts must be a modest length- tops must cover midriff, and cleavage-no crop tops or immodest slits.
- Sleeveless tops are permitted as long as underarm openings and necklines are appropriately fitted (no cleavage).
- Tank tops and muscle shirts are not permitted.
- Shorts are permitted; however, they should be a modest length-no "short" shorts allowed and rips/holes are not allowed.

- Dresses and skirts must be of a modest length. Mini-skirts and mini-dresses are not allowed.
- Formal ball gowns must be one-piece that do not expose midriff, and excessive slits are not allowed. The gown should be modest, covering cleavage.
- Jeans are not acceptable at spring formal.

Biblical Peacemaking/Resolving Conflict

It is inevitable that conflict will arise from time to time; however, it is our desire to commit to building a "culture of peace" that reflects God's peace and the power of the gospel of Christ in our lives. As we stand in light of the cross, we understand that bitterness, unforgiveness, and broken relationships are not the will of God for those He has redeemed (John 13:34-35; Colossians 3:12-13; Ephesians 4:32; Luke 17:3-4; Matthew 6:14; Mark 11:25; 2 Corinthians 2:7).

Therefore, we look to the Scriptures and the Holy Spirit for guidance on how we should respond to conflict in a way that will honor God, reconcile relationships, and preserve our witness for Christ.

In addition to the Scriptures, we also recommend the book, *Resolving Everyday Conflict* by Ken Sande and Kevin Johnson.

Personal Peacemaking

- Whenever we are faced with conflict in our group, the primary goal will be to glorify God with our thoughts, words, and actions (1 Corinthians 10:31).
- We will resolve to remove "the logs out of our own eyes" before focusing on what we perceive others to have done wrong (Matthew 7:3-5).
- We will seek to give others the benefit of the doubt and overlook minor offenses (Proverbs 19:11).
- We will refrain from all gossip, back-biting, and slander (Proverbs 17:9, 16:28, 15:3, 26:20, 11:9, 20:19; Exodus 20:16, Colossians 3:8).
- We will seek to make charitable judgements towards one another by believing the best about each other until we have the facts that prove otherwise (1 Cor. 13:7).

- If we believe someone may have an offense against us, we will go promptly to that person to seek reconciliation (Matthew 5:23-24; 18:15).
- When it is necessary to correct another person, we will do so graciously and lovingly with all humility and gentleness with the goal of serving and restoring them (Ephesian 4:2; Galatians 6:1; Proverbs 12:18; Philippians 4:5).
- When someone needs to correct us, we will seek God's assistance to help us resist prideful defensiveness and to accept correction with humility having a teachable spirit (Psalm 141:5; Proverbs 15:32; Hebrews 12:3-11; James 4:6-10).
- When others repent, we will ask God to extend us grace to forgive just as He has forgiven us (Ephesians 4:32).

Assisted Peacemaking

- When two of us cannot resolve a conflict privately, we will commit to seeking formal assistance from H.O.P.E. co-op leaders (if it pertains to an issue regarding co-op), or from a member of the H.O.P.E. Executive Committee (or a person they appoint), and we will submit to their counsel and correction (Matthew 18:17-20).
- When we have a business or legal dispute with another Christian in the group, we will make every reasonable effort to resolve the conflict within the body of Christ through biblical mediation or arbitration, rather than going to civil court (1 Corinthians 6:1-8). If the other party attends another church, our leaders will offer to cooperate with the leaders of that church to resolve the matter.