

# Guidelines for EXEL Homeschool Co-op

All families who desire to participate in EXEL must agree to abide by its rules and guidelines in order to register and attend classes and activities.

## A. Mission Statement

EXEL Homeschool Co-op exists to come alongside Christian homeschooling families who are striving to walk in accordance with God's Word and to aid them in their homeschooling journey by providing educational opportunities and wholesome activities in an encouraging and respectful environment.

## B. Family Registration and Membership Responsibilities

1. Families must be regular in attendance and give notice as much in advance as possible of any absences, as this will require the assignment of another EXEL member to perform the absent parent's classroom duties or other assigned tasks. Vacations, doctor appointments, etc. should be scheduled on non-co-op days, as much as possible.
2. Families must commit to participate in EXEL through the entire semester, absent any unforeseen intervening circumstances.
3. Each family must enroll at least one child who is at least of kindergarten age or older; that is, at least 5 years old by September 1<sup>st</sup>, or by board approval if the oldest child's birthday is after September 1<sup>st</sup>.
4. All families must pay a Registration fee of \$40 per child, not to exceed a total cost per family of \$120 per semester; and pay Class fees per child that generally range from \$3 to \$12 per class but could be higher depending on materials needed. Class fees are also required for students who only want to audit a class (per approval). Registration fees are due upon registration to the co-op and again in December. Class fees are due upon enrollment in classes, before the start of each semester. A special events fee of \$20 will be collected with Class fees before co-op begins or before 2<sup>nd</sup> semester for new families.
5. Registration fees and class fees are non-refundable.
6. Class changes may be made by midnight on the second meeting day but will incur a \$5 administrative fee. After that, a student may be pulled from a class and moved to study hall at any point in the semester but will not be added to a new class. In both of these cases, no refund is given for the class they leave. The class fee for the new class is due the day the change is made. Exceptions to this will only be made with board approval.
7. If a student does not have all materials required for the class (listed on the class description on the website) by the 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting date, that student will be pulled from the class and placed in study hall. Class fees will be forfeited.
8. Parents who attend, or plan to attend, the co-op more than twice must agree to and pay for a background check.
9. A non-family member who lives with the family and attends co-op is included in the fees for the family.
10. A non-family member who does not live with the family, but is regularly homeschooled by the family, must register separately (and pay fees) but may attend with the family with whom they regularly homeschool.

11. Any family who leaves while a semester is on-going will need Board approval if they decide later to reapply for membership and may be subject to special limitations or a probationary period upon returning.
12. EXEL is a co-op founded on Christian principles that include love, respect, and grace. We recognize that there are varying convictions among families, so in an effort to respect those convictions and uphold Scriptural teachings such as found in Romans 14:13 (Therefore let us not judge one another anymore, but rather determine this – not to put an obstacle or a stumbling block in a brother’s way.), we have taken the following stances:
  - a. Halloween – while fall themes are welcomed, we avoid jack O’ lanterns, bats, ghosts, witches, and other symbols of Halloween.
  - b. Christmas – while celebrating the birth of Christ is encouraged, we avoid commercial themes of Santa and the like.
  - c. Valentine’s Day – as a compromise, we celebrate Valentine’s strictly at the lunch period when those who do not wish to participate have the option to leave for that period.
  - d. Easter/Resurrection Day – while we encourage the celebration of our risen Savior, we avoid commercial themes of the Easter bunny, Easter eggs, etc.
  - e. Pledge of Allegiance – If a teacher of a social studies class (history, government, etc.) would like to incorporate the Pledge of Allegiance as part of the class, we ask that this information be included in the class description so that the parents will be aware and can choose classes accordingly.

### C. Attendance and Absences

1. Absences for teachers/parents are limited to three unexcused per semester. Unexcused absences include any absence not related to illness, funeral, or similar. Elective trips, even if the board is informed before the semester begins, will be counted as unexcused absences. If this is exceeded, the family’s return for the next semester may be done under a probationary status.
2. Students who are absent are responsible for obtaining and completing work assignments from teachers and taking missed tests/quizzes. Absent students should also make arrangements for turning in their homework (for example, teachers may choose to have completed work emailed rather than waiting for it to be turned in the following week).
3. Children who exhibit symptoms of a communicable illness such as a fever or vomiting, or that have other infectious conditions such as lice, etc., should not attend classes. Members should be free of contagious symptoms for 24 hours (fever, vomiting, diarrhea). **Illnesses and family emergencies are excused absences.** Families should consider whether it’s in the best interest of the co-op for any of the family members to attend when one is sick.
4. Kindergarten or older child(ren) may attend the co-op day under the supervision of another family (who must be named to a board member) if their parent is unable to attend that week for reasons other than sickness and must have prior board approval. This also applies in the case of non-contagious illness in their family, also with prior board approval. This will be treated on a case by case basis, as the circumstances are most likely individual in nature.
5. Children are not allowed to attend EXEL classes or activities without their parent being present at the facility. A designated guardian is acceptable, but the family must provide advanced notice and obtain Board approval.
6. Parents are responsible for their children when they are not in class or a scheduled activity (before and after coop, as well as the lunch period).
7. A study hall will be provided for students in middle school and older who are not enrolled in class. Those students enrolled in study hall must stay in the study hall classroom and work quietly.

8. In the event of inclement weather, we will follow the closures of the local Canton Public Schools. A public-school delayed opening will be a co-op closure day. In the event we have more than 25% of teachers absent, co-op will likely be canceled. Please watch for a signal message for this information. IMPORTANT: please keep your Signal app updated and verified, or you will not receive messages.

## D. Family - General Appearance and Behavior

1. Family members are to exemplify excellent moral character, courteous and respectful speech, and gracious behavior, and will look for opportunities to help others and encourage them with kind words.
2. Family members will not use nicotine products, electronic cigarettes, vapes, nor consume or possess alcohol or illegal substances while at EXEL. Furthermore, no one will be allowed to participate in any EXEL activity or remain on campus while under the influence of alcohol or a controlled substance (prescription or otherwise).
3. Parents will teach and ensure that their children will abide by the following:
  - a. Respect all adults and students.
  - b. Respect the facility and leave it cleaner than they found it.
  - c. Be a blessing to their classmates, teachers, and others, and not be a distraction by being discourteous, late, or ill-mannered.
  - d. Obey the instructions of teachers and other parents working at EXEL.
  - e. Use the restroom/get water during the first 5-minute passing period, so as not to disrupt class instruction.
  - f. Be respectful of scriptural teachings in class, and of prayers led by the adults or other students.
  - g. Not participate in conversations or the sharing of materials, pictures, or videos, that would be considered inappropriate for children of any age, that are not in line with the EXEL Statement of Faith, or that are otherwise offensive, demeaning, or threatening to others.
  - h. Not participate in fighting, slander, profanity, the use of weapons, and physical or verbal insults. Profane and vulgar behavior/videos/writing will also not be tolerated on digital devices and will be grounds for confiscation by any adult, followed by a conversation with a parent to have the device returned.
4. Families are financially responsible for any damage done to the facilities by their children.
5. Family members will consistently wear name tags (printed/provided by EXEL) during co-op, so that their name is visible. A lost/misplaced name tag will be charged \$5 to the family account so that a new name tag can be provided. Please do not take these home as we use these for our attendance records.
6. Family visitors are allowed on EXEL class days with prior board approval. This includes children of an EXEL member who attend a private/public school but are out on break and need parental supervision as well as extended family, such as grandparents.
7. Only students enrolled in a class may attend; no other students are allowed in the room.
8. Dress Code
  - It is the desire of EXEL for families to honor God in our appearance; therefore, family members will wear clothing that is modest, not low cut, tight-fitting or otherwise revealing. Tightly fitted pants or shorts should have a long top to cover the wearer's bottom.
  - No see-through clothing or bare midriff when arms are raised.

- No tank tops.
- Undergarments, including bra straps, underwear, etc, should be concealed.
- Shorts should be mid-thigh or longer. Skirts should fall just above the knee or lower.
- No graphically offensive, vulgar, or inappropriate wording on clothing or hats, and offensive tattoos should be covered so that others are not made to be embarrassed, offended, or threatened.
- The board reserves the right to determine if an attendee's dress is appropriate for co-op days and co-op sanctioned events. When representing the co-op, the guidelines should be followed.

## E. Teachers - Classroom Responsibilities

1. Parents will instruct, co-teach, or assist each class period, or perform other tasks such as monitoring students or cleaning as approved in advance by the EXEL Board.
2. Teachers must submit an accurate and complete syllabus to the board three weeks before classes begin. The syllabus will include a list of assignments with deadline dates, along with the dates of any tests. If the syllabus is altered, the updated copy will be sent to the Admin. to upload to the website, and the teacher should create a forum post to inform students and parents of the change.
3. Teachers are responsible for leading and instructing students in a well-prepared manner, overseeing class participation, distributing assignments, and for administering tests and grading students' work. Teachers must also communicate in a timely manner with students and their parents about their progress in class, as well as regarding any health, safety, or behavioral issues that may arise. Junior and high school teachers are expected to keep grades on the website.
4. If a teacher of a social studies class (history, government, etc.) would like to incorporate the Pledge of Allegiance as part of the class, we ask that this information be included in the class description so that the parents will be aware and can choose classes accordingly.
5. The official position of EXEL regarding the origin of the world is from a young earth creationist perspective, so all references and curriculum should support this position.
6. Teachers and teaching assistants are prohibited while in class from using mobile or smart telephones, except in exigent circumstances that require their immediate attention such as an injured family member, accident or other serious event or emergency.
7. We expect the words of all teachers to reflect the Christian nature and biblical values of this coop. As such, there should be no swearing, coarse talk/jokes, nor personal stories of an inappropriate nature. We need to exemplify the qualities and behavior that we require of our students.
8. Teachers should use the last five minutes of class to supervise students in cleaning classrooms. Last period Teachers will make sure that classrooms are returned to the condition and placement of equipment and furniture as shown in the picture contained in the room file folder.
9. Teachers will be given information at the beginning of each semester regarding the budget amount that they may spend. Teachers should submit receipts to the treasurer as they spend it for reimbursement, up to the allotted amount. Both the teacher and class name need to be on the receipt. Once your budget is reached, there will be no more reimbursement. Tax is not reimbursable as we are a 501.c3; use the tax-exempt letter provided to avoid that expense. For those who choose Zelle, payment will be sent in the first week of each month and should be immediately received in their bank account. For those who choose reimbursement by check, payment will be initiated the first week of each month but may take up to 2 weeks to receive. Reimbursement is to be used for class expenses such as purchasing books and supplies, and materials for specific class-related projects or activities. Any left-over materials, supplies, and books are the property of EXEL and should be returned to the co-op at the end of year.
10. A supply closet is located at the co-op. Teachers are encouraged to check there for materials they need before purchasing.

## F. Parent - Interaction in the Educational Process

1. Parents have the ultimate responsibility for planning and monitoring their children's education, and are encouraged to communicate with and support the efforts of the teachers of their children.
2. Parents will ensure that their children are regular in attendance, promptly turn in all required assignments and take required tests/quizzes, and that they are reasonably prepared to fully participate in class activities.
3. If a student does not promptly turn in an assignment or take a test, the student's teacher will keep a record of the discrepancy. **Three such discrepancies by a student may result in a discussion between the parent and teacher, and possibly a member of the EXEL Board, concerning how to best proceed.** If the student should miss assignments or tests etc. due to illness, family emergency, or other urgent situations, the discrepancy may be waived at the discretion of the teacher.
4. Parents are responsible for generating their children's high school transcripts. EXEL maintains student records for class enrollment purposes but is not state accredited nor does it generate student transcripts.

## G. Student Responsibilities and Discipline

1. Students are responsible to adequately prepare themselves before classes to fully participate in class discussion/activities.
2. Students will complete and turn in all homework assignments and take tests/quizzes when they are due.
3. Students may not use mobile phones or other communications or entertainment devices during class, and all such items must be put away; otherwise, they may be confiscated by the teacher and returned after class ends.
4. Students who consistently fall behind in a class due to an inability or unwillingness to participate or promptly complete homework assignments or tests will be removed from class and reassigned to study hall when it is clear they no longer can obtain a passing grade. While the student will not be readmitted to the class, he may finish class materials at home under the supervision of a parent. In the event a student is removed from a class, there are no refunds.
5. Students will stay in designated areas during appropriate times that are approved in advance for their use and are not to leave the EXEL facility grounds without parental permission. No students should be in classrooms during lunch period.
6. Students may not engage in displays of affection, inappropriate or offensive touching, nor make improper gestures or statements toward others.
7. Students are forbidden from possessing any type of weapons while at EXEL, and such conduct will be grounds for immediate removal from the facility. Pocketknives, if kept under control, are allowed.
8. Students who are disruptive or uncooperative, or who engage in improper, unlawful or harmful behavior, may be required to remain in their parent's continuous presence while at EXEL, or depending on the severity of the circumstances, may be removed from class, temporarily or indefinitely suspended, or expelled.

## H. Conflict Resolution

Unfortunately, interpersonal problems do occasionally occur, whether from personality conflicts, misunderstandings, or differences of opinions. It is important that these situations are addressed according to the Biblical principles found in Matthew 18. First, we encourage parents to seek to resolve these issues on their own, even when it involves a classroom concern. If the situation involves children of any age, we encourage parents to walk alongside their children and guide them in applying the Biblical principles. If a mutual resolution cannot be met, then we encourage the parties to seek additional help from a member of the leadership board.

## I. Nursery

1. Children registered in the nursery are required to bring a bag including diapers, wipes, change of clothing and snacks/drink.
2. Only authorized persons will be allowed to be in the nursery classroom.

## J. Special Accommodations and Notice of Medical Conditions

1. Families must make any requests for special accommodation for their children in writing with the EXEL Board. Specific issues may include requests not to publish a child's photos in the EXEL yearbook or on its website, or in other outside media, or to excuse the child from participating in specific activities or be related to specific learning challenges.
2. Students with medical disabilities who need special accommodations: this should be brought to the attention of the EXEL Board prior to registration to ensure that adequate provisions can be made.
3. Families with children who have allergies or other health issues that require special attention or may result in the need for medical attention are required to fill out a form to submit at registration. EXEL is NOT an allergy-free environment. Teachers will be notified of student allergies and will take precautions, but the ultimate responsibility lies with the parents. Parents should also talk to the teachers/assistants about severe allergies. A note can be made on the student's nametag to alert adults working with said child.
4. Families must promptly disclose prior to registration the existence of any mental condition or behavioral issues their children have that may result in a danger to themselves or others.

## K. Graduation

EXEL may help sponsor a graduation for any senior that is or has been part of EXEL Homeschool Co-op at any point. Expenses for graduation are the sole responsibility of the families that are involved. The EXEL board will support the graduation event by guiding the participating families with past graduation information. While the families of graduates must plan and execute the graduation exercises, EXEL families may be invited to participate in multiple capacities, including serving, ushering, etc.

## **EXEL HOMESCHOOL CO-OP**

### **Policy**

### **Sexual Misconduct and Interpersonal Violence**

#### **PURPOSE**

1. EXEL has zero tolerance for sexual misconduct or harassment, or any type of physical violence or psychological intimidation, whether threatened or actual, that is committed against an individual participating in our program. This policy also prohibits any other types of conduct that unreasonably interferes with an individual's work or academic performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, humiliating, or offensive academic environment.
2. EXEL is committed to maintaining an educational environment free from harassment or discrimination based on an individual's gender assigned at birth, or ethnic or national origin, race, or age.
3. EXEL's Leadership Board has the discretion to implement disciplinary action against any EXEL member who violates the prohibitions or requirements of this policy. This could include the removal of an individual or entire family from further membership and participation in the Co-op.
4. All members of EXEL Co-op are required to refrain from engaging in any misconduct covered by this policy.

## Sexual Misconduct Prohibited

Sexually based misconduct of any type is prohibited and includes, but is not limited to, the following:

1. **Sexual Assault or Molestation** - Described as any forcible or non-consensual sexual contact directed against another person, including instances in which an individual is incapable of giving consent due to their age or incapacity. In the case of children, any sexual contact with them is by law considered a crime.
2. **Sexual Exploitation** - Occurs when a person takes advantage of a child to exploit or otherwise cause them to participate in or be present during any sexually explicit or suggestive behavior. This includes suggestive language or actions that occur in the presence of a child, with or without the child's active participation or knowledge. The presence of pornography or any other sexually explicit or suggestive materials around children is by nature exploitive; and therefore, is prohibited while participating in EXEL Co-op sponsored programs or activities.
3. **Grooming** – Defined as befriending and establishing an emotional connection with a child or child’s family member, with the aim of lowering the child’s inhibitions with the objective of sexual abuse.
4. **Sexual Harassment** - This includes any unwelcome sexual advance or request for sexual favors or any other conduct of a sexual nature that is directed at an individual. Sexual harassment may include the use of fear or intimidation to induce the belief that compliance with a sexual advance is required to keeping a job or to be successful educationally or otherwise. Sexual harassment often causes severe physical and mental distress and a hostile educational or working environment.
5. **Dating Violence** - Defined as violence on the basis of sex committed by a person who is in or has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with another individual. This may include, but is not limited to, unwanted touching or sexual or physical abuse, or threatening language or actions, or otherwise repeatedly or severely harassing or intimidating an individual.



## Interpersonal Violence Prohibited

Interpersonal violence is defined as threatening or committing acts that are reasonably calculated to cause an individual to suffer substantial fear or anxiety or other harmful psychological or physical reactions or injuries. This includes the following behaviors that are expressly prohibited:

1. **Bullying** - Defined as repeated or severe aggressive behavior likely or intended to intimidate physically or mentally, control, diminish or harm another person or endanger their health, safety, or well-being. This may involve the use of threatening or verbally abusive language or provoking or touching an individual repeatedly without their consent.
2. **Stalking** - Defined as engaging in a repeated course of conduct such as following or threatening or intimidating an individual, that would cause a reasonable person to fear for their continued safety or the safety of others or cause substantial emotional distress.

## Discrimination Prohibited

Discrimination includes threatening or causing physical or psychological harm, or engaging in demeaning language or verbal abuse, or singling out and treating an individual detrimentally or in an unreasonable manner based on an individual's gender or ethnic or national origin, or race or age. This provision is violated when discriminatory conduct causes significant physical discomfort or mental anxiety, or diminishes an individual's ability to fully participate or continue in the educational process at EXEL Co-op.

## MANDATORY REPORTING AND COOPERATION

All members are obligated to immediately report any violation of this policy, whether directly witnessed or reported to them, to the EXEL Leadership Board. Any member who has cause to believe that a child's physical or mental health or welfare has been adversely affected by abuse or neglect by any person is required under state law to file a report within

48 hours with local or state law enforcement, or with the Department of Family and Protective Services.

Any member of EXEL Co-op who becomes aware that a child has been exposed to a dangerous or seriously threatening or traumatizing situation, must immediately take steps to safeguard the child and notify a parent so they can quickly respond to ensure the safety and well-being of their child. In a case where a child is seriously injured, members are obligated to immediately call 911 for emergency medical assistance.

All members are required to fully cooperate with any inquiry by the EXEL Leadership Board into reports or circumstances that involve a potential violation of this policy.

All members are prohibited from engaging in any form of retaliation or abusive or other inappropriate behavior or criticism toward any member who reports a violation of this policy, or toward any other members who provide information or conduct an inquiry into such matters.

The EXEL Leadership Board has the authority and may contact law enforcement, medical personnel or other governmental authorities in situations they believe have or are creating a substantial danger to the health and well-being or safety of a child or that violate the law.

EXEL Leadership Board will take whatever actions it deems are necessary to protect members from potential or actual threats to their safety and well-being, and to ensure compliance with this policy.

Members are encouraged to seek out more information about the topics covered by this policy, including how to identify and avoid situations in which their child could become a victim of sexual abuse.

Nothing in this policy should be construed as prohibiting a member from reporting to any entity a situation they believe violates the law or is a matter of public concern.

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Signature of Parent/Guardian (for entire document) Date

