



**Member Handbook
2024-25**

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Purpose of PCHE

Port Cities Home Educators (PCHE) exists to support families in home educating their children to train the next generation of Christian leaders and equip them for a life of service to their Savior, homes, churches, vocations, and communities. We fulfill this mission statement in the following ways:

1. Help and encourage parents to fulfill their God-given rights and responsibilities to educate their own children.
2. Provide information and advice to homeschooling parents regarding home education.
3. Support homeschoolers by facilitating social activities, field trips, and cooperative classes.
4. Provide an annual graduation ceremony for homeschool students.
5. Provide a means of communication with members via email.

Bylaws

A copy of PCHE's complete Bylaws can be found online at www.portcities.weebly.com/about.

Statement of Faith

The following is PCHE's official statement of faith. These statements are the foundation of our faith that every board member must agree to in order to serve on the board. As a member, we ask that you read the statements below to understand our Christian foundation. Upon registering, members must sign to acknowledge that they have read and will agree to abide by these statements at PCHE functions.

1. We believe the Bible to be the infallible word of God, the supreme and final authority for all faith and life.
2. We believe there is one God, eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
3. We believe in the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, His virgin birth, His sinless life, His miracles, His vicarious and atoning death through his shed blood, His bodily resurrection, His ascension, and His imminent bodily return in power and glory.
4. We believe man was created in the image of God but fell into sin and therefore is lost, and only those who put their faith in Jesus Christ alone can be saved.
5. We believe that salvation is a free gift of God brought to man by grace and received by personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, whose substitutionary death on the cross paid the penalty for man's sin and that is all that is necessary to remove our sins and make us holy from God's point of view.
6. We believe in the Genesis account of creation in which God created the world, animals, and mankind.
7. Statement on Marriage and Sexuality (Adapted from Alliance for Defending Freedom)
 - We believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two distinct, complementary sexes together reflect the image and nature of God (Gen. 1:26-27). Rejection of one's biological sex is a rejection of the image of God within that person.

- We believe that the term “marriage” has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture (Gen. 2:18-25). We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other (1 Cor. 6:18; 7:2-5; Heb. 13:4). We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman.
- We believe that any form of sexual immorality (including adultery, fornication, homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, or use of pornography) is sinful and offensive to God (Matt. 15:18-20; 1 Cor. 6:9-10).
- We believe that all human life is sacred and created by God in His image. Human life is of inestimable worth in all its dimensions, including pre-born babies, the aged, the physically or mentally challenged, and every other stage or condition from conception through natural death. We are therefore called to defend, protect, and value all human life. (Ps. 139.)
- We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ (Acts 3:19-21; Rom 10:9-10; 1 Cor 6:9-11).
- We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity (Mark 12:28-31; Luke 6:31). Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture nor the doctrines of PCHE.

The statement of faith does not exhaust the extent of our beliefs. The Bible itself, as the inspired and infallible Word of God that speaks with final authority concerning truth, morality, and the proper conduct of mankind, is the sole and final source of all that we believe. For purposes of PCHE’s faith, doctrine, practice, policy, and discipline, our board of directors is PCHE’s final interpretive authority on the Bible’s application. (Adapted from Alliance for Defending Freedom)

Becoming a Member

Membership in PCHE is open to anyone who is actively engaged in home education.

To join, we require:

1. A completed copy of the Membership Registration form, renewed annually. This is available online at portcities.weebly.com/membership.
2. As part of the registration form, members must agree to abide by our Statement of Faith and agree to our Release of Liability and Honor Code. PCHE welcomes all faith backgrounds. As such, members are not required to believe the Statement of Faith, only to adhere to it during PCHE functions.
3. Payment of annual dues. Annual dues cover, but are not limited to, group insurance, facility rent, special speakers, supplies, and post office box. Amount of dues is set by the Board and reviewed annually.
4. A commitment to contribute for the benefit of the group. For details, please see “Member Benefits and Obligations” on the following page.

Member Benefits and Obligations

Benefits

Some benefits PCHE Members may enjoy include:

- Annual Back-to-School Kickoff event
- Field trips
- Park play dates
- Social events (holiday parties, outings, etc)
- Academic events (Presentation Night, Science Fair, etc)
- Cooperative classes
- Mom-to-Mom events (Mom's Night Out, Book Club, etc)
- HSLDA discount
- Member directory
- Private FB group
- Senior Graduation
- Yearbooks
- Annual Open House meeting

Obligations

As a co-operative group, we expect members to contribute their time, talents, and wisdom to benefit the group. This is a volunteer-led and -managed organization, not a paid service or school. If members don't do it, it doesn't get done!

Some ways that members can contribute to the group are to:

- Organize a field trip

- Teach a cooperative class
- Plan and/or host a teen/tween event
- Plan a holiday party (you don't have to do it alone!)
- Put together the yearbook
- Plan a Mom-to-Mom event
- Talk to your church about the use of their facilities - we rely on the hospitality of others for our events!
- Clean up and tear down for events

Do you have another idea? Contact someone on the board - they would love to hear about it!

Field Trip and Event Planning

Want to organize a field trip? Contact Laura Pope or email us. Keep in mind these details when planning:

- How long will the field trip run?
- Cost per person? How will the fee be paid (individually or in one group payment)?
- How many people can this trip accommodate?
- Do you need an exact headcount? If so, by when?
- What age group is this field trip for? Are younger/older siblings allowed? Strollers?

Is there an event you'd like to organize? Send us an email and we'll help you make it happen! Think about these details before you contact us:

- What ages is this event for? Teens, preschoolers, all ages?
- What days/times do you have in mind? Are you flexible?
- What is the cost? Will participants need to pay? Will any group funds need to be used for this?
- Do you need help with childcare? Supplies? A location?
- Do members need to RSVP? If so, by when and to who?

Board of Directors

Michaela Owens - President of the Board of Directors. Presides over board meetings, supervises and controls the business affairs of PCHE. She is also currently acting as Treasurer, managing the group's bank account and reimbursing members for approved group expenses.

Laura Pope - Vice President of the Board of Directors. Takes over duties of the President in the event of her inability or refusal to act. Laura also acts as Field Trip Coordinator.

Jennifer Long - Secretary of PCHE. Currently serving as the Email Coordinator. Manages the website and handles membership registration and dues. Jennifer will also be organizing cooperative classes this year.

Sarah Werner - Sarah acts as Teen and Tween Event Coordinator.

Carrie Loofbourrow - Our newest board member!

Student Behavior Guidelines

Students are expected to read and abide by the PCHE Honor Code every school year. It reads:

“On my honor, I will maintain the highest possible standards of honesty, integrity and personal responsibility. This means I will not lie, cheat, or steal. I will be considerate and respectful of those around me. I will dress as an ambassador for Christ in activity-appropriate clothing in order to promote a distraction-free learning environment, respecting the diversity of our Christian convictions pertaining to attire. I will listen to and respond respectfully to other parents, instructors, and speakers. I understand that I am responsible for my own behavior and actions. I will do my best to work cooperatively with others in PCHE and show respect for myself and others.”

Students who refuse to abide by the Honor Code or who are found to be habitually in violation may be asked to refrain from participating in PCHE activities until such time as the Board sees fit.

We recognize parents as the primary educators of their children. Parents are therefore expected to disciple and discipline their own children while at PCHE functions.

Conflict Resolution

PCHE is not a church or a school. The Board of Directors is not equivalent to a school board, nor is the President equivalent to the principal or pastor.

The role of the board is organizing and planning events and taking action in the rare case of a serious safety concern. Beyond that, we are a co-operative full of many different beliefs, personalities and backgrounds.

In the event of a conflict between members, PCHE would like to encourage all of those involved to prayerfully, and with grace, consider reaching out to each other with accountability and consideration for others. This is the Biblical model of reconciliation laid out for us as Christian brothers and sisters.

Please keep conflicts between yourself, the other party, and the Lord. Gossip, divisions, and factions have no place in this group as they do not promote its purpose and set an ungodly example for our students.

If there comes a time when a member has a concern which genuinely presents a threat to our students/members, the following steps may be taken:

1. Except in cases of imminent threat or extreme emergency, we ask that members observe a 2 week “cooling off” period. During this period, we encourage prayer, fasting, and personal reflection.

2. If the issue cannot be resolved and you believe it requires the attention of the group, you may fill out a Mediation Request form, available on the website at portcities.weebly.com/for-members. It will include the following:
 - a. Date of Incident
 - b. Who was involved
 - c. Any witnesses present
 - d. Nature of concern/what happened
 - e. Any actions taken
 - f. Steps made toward reconciliation

3. The Board will consider the matter and may make further inquiries. After such time, they may decide that the matter is outside PCHE's purview, or they may arrange a meeting with one or more of the parties involved. A minimum of two board members will be present for any conflict resolution meetings.

Cooperative Classes

Structure

PCHE typically coordinates 2 sessions of classes per academic year, one in the fall and one in the spring. They meet one morning a week for 8 weeks each. They have normally been on Fridays. The location varies each term and is usually a church building in the LC Valley.

Since classes are run completely by parents in our group, we do not make any promises about when they will be, how they will look, or even if they will be offered in a given semester.

Class details are emailed out to members shortly before each session. There are no registration forms or class schedules on the website since classes are for members only.

Responsible Adults

Classes are not drop-off events! We require that a parent or other responsible adult (grandparent, aunt, nanny, etc) remain on-site for the duration of classes. In the event that a parent cannot accompany their child(ren) on a given week, they may ask another parent in the group to be the on-site adult for their students. Please communicate this to your students and the front desk at the beginning of classes or send an email in advance.

Family Contributions

Cooperative classes are put on by the group, for the group. Only PCHE members may take classes. All of our classes are member-taught and organized. There are no paid teachers or staff! We expect every family participating in classes to contribute in some way. Usually this will include either teaching or assisting with a class and helping to clean up afterwards.

While we try to accommodate individual preferences, in some cases you may be asked to help out in a way that is not your first choice. We ask for grace and flexibility when this happens.

Fees

There is a separate fee for each session of classes, in addition to the annual membership dues for PCHE. This helps to cover group insurance, building fees, and supplies. Some specific classes also have a "Supply Fee" for each student. This is paid to PCHE at the start of classes, then passed on to the instructor of the class to help with materials. These are in addition to the class fee each family pays. All fees are due on the first day of each class session.

Teachers:

PCHE always needs more teachers! Parents in our group have a variety of skills and passions we would love them to share with our students. We also encourage members to collaborate and co-teach classes as a team!

Anyone wishing to teach a class with PCHE will be asked to sign our Statement of Faith and abide by it while teaching. Behavior contradictory to our beliefs while in the presence of students (taking the Lord's name in vain, promoting other religious views as truth, glorifying drug or alcohol use, promoting sexual immorality, gossiping, etc) will be considered grounds for dismissal.

If you have an idea for a class you would like to teach, please email us or fill out a Class Description form, available at portcities.weebly.com/for-members. If you would like to teach but don't have a class in mind, talk to any board member for ideas!

Assistants:

The duty of a class assistant is to support the teacher and students to the best of their ability. He/she is expected to set an example for the students by staying engaged in the class for its entirety. Please refrain from using your cell phone during class time.

Disciplinary Procedures:

PCHE's policy is to allow parents to guide and discipline their own children. **We ask that no teacher or assistant attempt to discipline a child that is not his or her own**, including time outs, spanking, or any other form of punishment. If a student is acting in a way that is disruptive during class and is not heeding warnings, please escort the student to his or her parent. If the

student will not go voluntarily, the teacher should find the parent and bring them to the student. If you do not know or cannot find a parent, see the front desk and someone will assist you.

Sickness Policy:

We request that you leave your child at home if he/she is not feeling well enough to participate in normal class activities, or if they have had either of the following symptoms in the last 24 hours:

- Fever over 100 degrees.
- Vomiting

As always, we ask that parents exercise discretion when deciding whether they or their children are well enough to attend.

Absences:

If you or your students will be absent from any week of classes, please send an email or contact Jennifer Long as soon as possible. If you are assisting with a class, it is also helpful for you to contact the teacher and help find a substitute for the week.

If you are teaching a class, please have a back-up lesson plan on hand and a substitute in mind for unforeseen absences. Your assistants often make great subs, but it's best if you communicate with them early in the session so they know your plan.

In the event that too many families are absent for classes to proceed, members will be notified as soon as possible. This may be as little as an hour before classes begin, so check your email before you leave home!

Contact Information

Email - portcitieshomeeducators@gmail.com

Website - www.portcities.weebly.com

Mailing Address - PO Box 2052
Lewiston, ID 83501

Member Directory -

Contact information for individual members and the Board of Directors can be found in the Member Directory. This is emailed out near the beginning of each school year and updated periodically throughout the year. Please print or save a copy of the Directory for easy access.