



# Homeschool Co-op Policies and Procedures

## Policies and Procedures

### Philosophy

**SEEK exists to supplement home education with an organized enrichment program that facilitates physical, mental, social, and spiritual growth. This is accomplished by creating a welcoming environment where collaborative, classroom-style learning and resource sharing take place.**

### Values

SEEK is dedicated to upholding the biblical values of loving, respecting, and serving others. Every leadership decision is made in accordance with principles reflected in the following verses:

...encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with them all...always seek to do good to one another and to everyone. (1 Thessalonians 5:14-15)

Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality. (Romans 12:12-13)

...what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God? (Micah 6:8)

### Program Structure

SEEK meets on Fridays for 10 weeks, from September through November, and again after a winter break, from February to April. Each class day begins PROMPTLY at 9am with a 15-minute general assembly time followed by three 50-minute classes. The school day ends at 12 noon with another general assembly time for picnic lunch and discussion of the day's successes and challenges.

SEEK has many dedicated parents offering their time and expertise to prepare engaging lessons and lead 10-week courses. SEEK teachers are not necessarily professional educators but receive training and resources to ensure success in leading a class.

Every child is unique and the beauty of homeschooling is parents can easily adapt education to accommodate different gifting and learning styles. SEEK desires to celebrate those differences within a classroom setting. Interactive classes and extracurricular subjects allow teachers to meet diverse needs and allow students to complement each other's skills.

### ***Enrollment and Class Structure***

To enroll children into the SEEK Co-op, parents/guardians must complete the electronic enrollment form found on the SEEK website. Once the leadership receives the form an email confirmation containing next

steps will be sent to the parents/guardians. Leaders will add enrolled students to the appropriate class rosters so teachers can prepare sufficient course materials.

**Students must be enrolled by the 2nd week of the semester in order to take the current classes (see Calendar).** If the semester is three or more weeks along, new students will be added to the following semester rosters.

### ***Fees***

Fees cover the cost of class consumables and may range from \$30-75 per child per semester depending on the course offerings. Drop-off Student Fees are paid by families who are unable to commit to a volunteer role (see Drop-off Option for more details). Drop-off Fees cover the cost of special programs, general supplies, and other class related expenses. All fees may be paid by check or cash on the first day of classes. Exact semester costs are posted by the last week of the previous semester. FEES ARE NON-REFUNDABLE.

### ***Class Placement***

Students are placed in classes based on their age, according to Maine State requirements. This is to increase efficacy when preparing relevant lessons, allocating appropriate class space, and promoting friendships. If student numbers are low in a particular class, grade levels may be combined to sustain classroom energy and excitement.

Grade breakdown: \*According to Maine State requirements\*

- K4 (4 years old by October 15th)
- K5 (5 years old by October 15th)
- Grade 1 (6 years old by October 15th)
- Grade 2 (7 years old by October 15th)
- Grade 3 (8 years old by October 15th)
- Grade 4 (9 years old by October 15th)
- Grade 5 (10 years old by October 15th)
- Grade 6 (11 years old by October 15th)
- Grade 7+ (12 years old by October 15th)

Exception to assigned grade levels: If a child is struggling, or is anticipated to struggle, with a particular subject or course material, that child may be allowed to take classes that are one grade level below the child's age.

## **Service Roles**

- Lead Teacher: Develop a 10-week, age-appropriate course that supplements the student's home education. Submit a comprehensive class outline/syllabus to the Teacher Services Director by a predetermined deadline. Determine the cost of the class per student, according to the expense incurred for supplies, and provide the cost to the Teacher Services Director. The Teacher Services Director will distribute supply reimbursements to teachers. Work closely with Assistant Teacher to ensure that the assistant is well prepared to lead the class in the event that the Lead Teacher is unable. Keep in regular contact with the families of students. Work with families to accommodate special student needs. Work with Assistant Teachers to evaluate students at the end of the semester.
  - This is a crucial role to the quality and depth of SEEK. The nature of this leadership role requires that all Lead Teachers complete teacher training and sign the SEEK Teacher Agreement.
- Assistant Teacher: Abide by the Teacher Agreement. Support the Lead Teacher. Become familiar with the class and the children. Be prepared to lead the class in the event the Lead Teacher is unable. Take classroom attendance each week. Ensure that the classroom is left in the same condition in which it was found and prepared for the following week. Assist with student evaluations.
- Set-up Team Member: Physically prepare the facility for the SEEK day with guidance from the Operations Officer. May include setting up tables, chairs and a/v equipment, ensuring the bathrooms are equipped, etc.\*
- Clean-up Team Member: Physically organize the facility in preparation for the following week, with guidance from the Operations Officer. May include storing tables, chairs, gym equipment and a/v equipment, closing windows, shutting off lights, checking bathrooms, etc.\*

Specific guidelines for serving will be provided by the SEEK Leadership.

\*Roles reserved for families with preschoolers as these families are not available to serve in the classroom.

## **Adult Conduct**

- Make every effort to fulfill their responsibilities for the entire 10-week semester
- Be prompt and prepared to serve with humility, honesty, and integrity
- Make the safety and welfare of the children their top priority; modeling proper behavior, lovingly correcting, and being watchful of any potential danger
- Work in pairs, whenever possible, and should make every effort to never be alone with a child
- Refrain from physically touching students, when possible
- Address any seemingly inappropriate behavior by notifying SEEK Leadership

## **Drop Off Option (\*may NOT be available every semester\*)**

If a Parent/Guardian is unable to serve in any of the above roles, they have the option to pay a "drop off" fee of \$75 per student per semester, with discounts for multiple children. This option provides children the opportunity to be a part of SEEK even if their parents are unable to commit to a regular service

role. **Drop Off is available for students 8 years of age and older.** The collected fees are used for SEEK needs as determined by the SEEK Leadership Team and reflect how much parent service is valued.

Additional forms and procedures that ensure the safety and comfort of the students are associated with this option. They are outlined throughout this handbook and will be discussed at length whenever this option is exercised.

## **SEEK Class Day Procedures**

### ***Registration/Check-In***

- Check-in students with SEEK Leaders and ensure the roster reflects accurate contact information.
- Pay SEEK fees by cash or check.
- Sign and submit Policy Agreement, Liability Form, and Teacher Agreement (if applicable).
- Fill out name tags (week 1 & 2 only).
- Direct students to sit with their class.
- DROP-OFF parents - may leave their children once the children are checked in with Hospitality Director and seated with their classmates.
- Everyone should be sitting in the sanctuary once the music begins PROMPTLY AT 9AM. It is crucial that everyone arrive on time each week in order to minimize disruptions.
- Upon dismissal, students will remain in their class line until they reach their classroom.
- Students arriving late must go to the Launchpad to be checked in before being escorted to class.
- Once the first period begins, all of the entry doors will be locked for student safety.

### ***Bracelet System***

- Preschool students whose parent/guardian is teaching will be paired with an adult member of SEEK during the school day. The student and adult will each be given a matching bracelet by a member of SEEK Leadership.
- Eligible Drop-Off Students will also be part of the SEEK Bracelet System during the school day for added safety. Refer to the Drop-Off Student section for further instructions regarding eligibility and drop-off and pick-up procedures.
- Any needs of the student while their parent/guardian is teaching will be first addressed by the assigned adult.
- The assigned adult will not be legally responsible for the child, but serves an additional measure of safety and oversight.

### ***School Contact System***

Direct access to teachers will not be available during the instructional day. All urgent messages from parents to students regarding changes in dismissal plans or other family emergencies should be given directly to SEEK Leadership via email or FB messenger. SEEK leaders will make every effort to accommodate special circumstances but may not be able to fulfill all requests.

### ***Student Conduct***

- No running or yelling in any building
- Keep their hands to themselves

- Respect for other students, adults, and the facility is mandatory
- Use only kind language and only speak when the teacher is not speaking
- Arrive on time, prepared to listen and participate in class
- Stay with Teacher or Class Assistant. Older children may be allowed to use restrooms alone, with the permission of their teacher. Younger children will be taken in groups, by their teacher, to the restroom
- Remain in class until dismissal and move between classes quietly in a straight line
- Keep all belongings throughout the day
- Treat the facility and equipment with respect; careful not to damage anything on BCC property
- Never bring anything harmful onto BCC property

### ***Discipline***

Students who become disruptive in the classroom will be escorted to their parent. Removal from a class will occur if, after three requests to desist, a student continues to engage in behavior prohibited under the Student Conduct section of this handbook. If a child must be removed from a classroom, the teachers in the classroom, the Teacher Liaison, the Student Liaison, and the parents of the student must meet to reconcile the situation before the student will be allowed to re-enter the class.

### **After-Class Procedures**

#### ***Student Check-Out Procedure***

- Students must be checked out by the parent/guardian on record, with the Hospitality Director, in the Launchpad at class dismissal.
- The SEEK Homeschool Co-op school day ends at 12:00 PM. Any families staying in the Launchpad for lunch must first check-out and supervise their children.
- Students are to be signed out and released to the Parent/Guardian listed on our records only. A Parent/Guardian must give advance written notice to the SEEK Leadership when requesting a child to be released to someone other than designated person(s).
- Students in the SEEK Bracelet System will remain with their assigned adult in the Launchpad after dismissal until the Parent/Guardian on Record checks them out with a member of SEEK Leadership.

#### ***Procedures for Parent/Guardian Changes in Normal Departure***

- Drop-off students must be picked up by 12:00 or a fee will be charged after 12:15. Due to limited resources, parents may need to find an alternative means of childcare, if SEEK is unable to accommodate a late pick up. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to pick up their child on time.
- Students will not be allowed to leave SEEK prior to the normal dismissal unless the Parent/Guardian comes to the SEEK and checks out the student from the SEEK Leadership. Parent/Guardian may be asked to show photo identification when signing students out of school. Parents/Guardians may be asked additional student identification questions.
- Contact the Communications Officer in the case of an emergency that requires a change to the normal pick-up procedure.

- In order to reduce congestion in the Launchpad, no student will be checked out during the last 15 minutes of the school day.

### ***Lunch Policies***

- Breakfast and Lunch will not be provided by SEEK Homeschool Co-op. Families are encouraged to bring lunch and snacks
- NO NUTS. SEEK is peanut and tree nut FREE. No snacks or lunch items may contain peanuts or tree nuts, including almonds, walnuts, pecans, cashews, pistachios, and pine nuts.
- No food may be sold, traded or given away. Students must never share food due to allergies that others may have.
- Leave tables and floor clean. Students are responsible for picking up their messes!
- Students will have the opportunity to sign up to sweep and empty trash.

### ***Absences/ Sick Policy/Cancellations***

- Parents must notify SEEK Leadership via email or FB Connection Group when their child will miss a SEEK class. If a teacher will miss a class, they must notify their assistant teacher and the Teacher Liaison immediately. Teachers must also ensure that the substitute teacher is prepared to lead the class.
- A child who experiences vomiting or fever, has symptoms of a stomach virus, strep throat, sinus infection, or any other contagious condition within 24 hours of a SEEK day, should not attend SEEK until they are well.
- If school is cancelled in North Berwick (RSU60) due to inclement weather, SEEK is also cancelled. All SEEK cancellations or scheduling changes will be posted on the SEEK Facebook page.

### ***SEEK Travel and Safety***

Parent/Guardian must arrive on time and adhere to the 5mph speed limit in the parking lot.

### ***Supervision***

No student is to remain outdoors unsupervised. If a parent/guardian does not pick up on time, the student must wait in the Launchpad until their parent arrives.

### ***Parking***

Parking a motor vehicle is only permitted in the parking lot. All grass areas are off limits unless by permission of the SEEK Communications Officer.

## Leadership

The SEEK Leadership Team is made up of SEEK members who live according to the Bethel Christian Church (BCC) doctrinal statement, are members of a local church, and are actively involved in ministry at that church. The SEEK Leadership Team is accountable to the leadership of Bethel Christian Church (BCC) and consists of the following roles:

**Director** – Ensure decisions are made to promote Bethel Christian Church’s interests and stay true to the vision and mission of SEEK. Provide guidance and resources for the leadership team. Oversee the operation of SEEK.

**Teacher Services Director** – Represent the interests of the teachers through regular contact. Provide training opportunities and resources for SEEK teachers. Maintain a classroom troubleshooting manual/FAQs. Develop templates for class syllabi and student evaluations. Ensure that all classes are properly staffed each week. Manage the schedule, student roster, fees, and teacher reimbursement.

**Student (family) Services Director** – Represent the interests of the families/students by keeping an open line of communication with the families, polling families about their SEEK experiences, and making homeschooling and networking resources available to families. Organize and manage the mentor program.

**Hospitality Director** – Welcome families on Friday mornings and track attendance. Manage rosters and enrollment. Oversee visits and ensure SEEK families get connected.

**Communications Director** – Manage the SEEK Facebook page and email correspondence (i.e. promote events, send reminders, announce cancellations). Create a weekly two-page newsletter. Manage events/calendar and reserve necessary space.

**Facilities Director** – Manage the classrooms. Ensure that the facility is clean and safe. Monitor and maintain the necessary classroom set-ups and supplies. Be available during class time to respond to any teacher/student needs.

**Preschool Director** – Maintain the preschool space, offer an age-appropriate activity during the school day, and provide for the needs of the parents of preschoolers. Be in regular contact with the preschool families in order to offer encouragement and support.

**Board Member (former SEEK leader)** – support director and leadership team to ensure SEEK carries out the core values and achieves the mission and vision.



## Homeschool Co-op Policies and Procedures

My child and I have carefully read the SEEK Homeschool Co-op Policies and Procedures Handbook. We understand the contents and agree to abide by them. We also accept any risk related to participation in SEEK activities and hereby release **SEEK** and its officers, employees, volunteers, or agents from any liability, costs, and damages resulting from our participation.

Student's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Name/Signature \_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

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### Photograph/Video Release

Your child may be photographed (video or still image) during SEEK activities/classes. These images may be used by SEEK for printed promotional materials and/or web content.

\_\_\_\_\_ I DO give my consent to have my child photographed for the uses stated above

\_\_\_\_\_ I DO NOT give my consent to have my child photographed for the uses stated above.

Parent's Name/Signature \_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_