

FSP Co-op/ SOAR

Sharing Opportunities for Achievement and Relationship

SOAR strives to provide homeschool families with affordable, fun-filled, quality academic classes within a nurturing Christian environment. The idea of a cooperative (co-op) is to bring homeschooling families together to share teaching. A home-school teacher may choose books for instructing her own children, and prepare her lessons in a way that benefits her unique students. But some subjects are easier to teach in a group, and in this way, labor can be shared so that the teacher's preparation applies to more students. Cooperative teaching is a means of utilizing a teacher's specific gifting and area of interest. Classes may be offered that some teachers could not accomplish at home on their own. A co-op also provides a context of accountability so that core areas are being reinforced weekly. Students can learn group behavior and public speaking skills.

1. Policies

A family committing to joining the co-op is expected to be a member of Covenant Life Church's Family Schools Program, and as such in compliance with FSP's Statement of Faith and CLC's Child Protection and Oversight policies. This includes having a current application and background check on file in the Discovery Land office, renewed every year by the close of registration. Teachers and students in the co-op will be expected to carry out their work responsibly and serve other members with an attitude of love.

GENERAL INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS:

Students are expected to:

- Show respect to teachers/ assistants and other children at all times, including others with kindness and grace in all activities.
- Attempt to work out conflicts between each other. If the conflict continues, children are expected to inform an adult and ask for assistance.
- Not leave their classrooms without their parent or two other adults. Only students in 6th-8th grade may leave a classroom unaccompanied, if permitted by their parent.
- Bring designated class materials each week.
- Complete specific class assignments in a timely manner.
- Dress appropriately for SOAR and SOAR-related events. We do not have a formal dress code, but please be open to input, especially from teachers and coordinators.
- Leave all toys, gadgets (including electronic devices) and pocket knives at home or with a parent during all SOAR-related activities.

BEHAVIORAL POLICY:

This policy uses a team approach to communicate and enforce behavioral expectations to create a safe and healthy learning environment for all students.

Student:

- Sign the SOAR Behavioral Expectations form and return it to the leadership team.
- Adhere to SOAR Behavioral Expectations.

Teacher:

- Communicate to students behavioral expectations appropriate for the classroom setting at the beginning of and throughout the school year.
- Notify parents when the student does not comply with behavioral expectations and has been taken out of the classroom.

Assistant:

- Reinforce the behavioral expectations of the teacher to allow the teacher to focus on teaching.
- Monitor students during class and intervene when behavioral issues arise.
- Speak to the student and remind them of the classroom expectations in situations when the student is not following the rules.
- Move the student to another seat to stop further disruption. If the student does not respond to correction, the assistant may take the student to the hallway with the hall monitor present to repeat rules. If the student agrees to change their behavior they may return to the classroom; otherwise, the student will be sent to their parent.

Parent:

- Review the SOAR Behavioral Expectations form with the student at the beginning of the school year to ensure they understand and agree with the expectations.
- Sign the SOAR Behavioral Expectations form and return it to the leadership team.
- Determine the consequence (if any) for the student's behavior in conjunction with the teacher. Consequences may include cleaning duty after SOAR (emptying trash cans, vacuuming, etc.) or the loss of lunchtime privileges. The video room will be available for the student (supervised by their parent) to eat lunch away from the rest of the group.

SOAR Leadership:

- Provide support and guidance to teachers, parents, and students when behavioral rules are not followed.

TEACHER EXPECTATIONS:

SOAR is committed to providing solid, interactive learning experiences in fun, hands-on, meaningful ways. In order to fulfill this commitment, all parents must commit to be an active part of a teaching team and use creative and fresh ways to teach their class. Each teacher must complete the following:

Develop and submit a class syllabus

Teaching teams should meet over the summer to develop the class syllabus. The syllabus and teaching team distribution must be submitted to the leadership team for review and approval no later than August 31st.

Clearly communicate class expectations and homework assignments to student's parents

Homework assignments and class schedules should be clearly communicated to parents in a timely manner. New assignments must be posted no later than the Wednesday prior to the next class to allow students enough time to complete assignments.

Ensure that the teaching reflects the class description advertised at the time of class registration

Changes in curriculum or syllabus must be approved by the leadership team in advance.

Ensure a majority of class time is dedicated to fun, hands-on, and meaningful interaction

Teachers must dedicate sufficient time and thought to ensure quality classes are provided for the students. The majority of learning in science, history, and writing will occur at home through the completion of homework assignments. For science, at least 50-75% of class time is spent on classroom experiments. For all other classes, 50% or more of class time should be hands on and interactive. The use of lecture-based classes is not recommended for the ages of the children that SOAR serves.

Communicate with the leadership team if additional support is necessary to successfully meet teaching requirements

The leadership team wants everyone to be successful and can provide support in lesson planning, classroom management, and ideas for hands-on activities. If a teacher is unable to fulfill their teaching responsibilities, they must communicate to the leadership team for additional support.

SOAR Financial Policy

SOAR is committed to making sound financial decisions in all aspects of the program. SOAR fees and classroom material fees are well thought out and money is used in the best interest of the program.

PayPal: All payments are made via PayPal. All participants must have an active PayPal account to pay registration fees and material fees.

SOAR Registration Fee: SOAR registration fees cover general classroom supplies, fellowship room supplies, nursery supplies, printing/copying costs, and all SOAR special events. The registration fee will be evaluated each spring to determine whether the fee will remain the same or need to change. Registration fees are due at the time of registration.

Material Fees: Prior to advertising a class, teachers will come up with a reasonable, well thought out material fee. Fees should include the cost to cover all the materials used in class. Fees may not include reward money, end-of-semester gifts, or field trips. Reward money or end-of-semester gifts should come from the teacher's personal money if the teacher desires to do so. Teachers should keep track of the money spent by using a spreadsheet or other method to ensure money is used appropriately. Teachers should make every effort to use all of the material fees collected for the class. If the material fee will not be used in its entirety by the end of the semester or by the end of the year, teachers will reimburse families the leftover money if the amount is greater than \$5/student. If the amount left over is less than \$5/student, please find a way to use the funds for materials/projects which will be used prior to the end of the semester/year OR reimburse the leftover amount to SOAR to be used the following school year. Funds reimbursed to SOAR will be dispersed into the general fund. Reimbursement can be done via PayPal and should be completed by the last day of SOAR.

Material fees are due mid-August and are paid via PayPal. Families will be notified of the total amount due in early August.

Dropping a Class: Material fees are due mid-August of each year. Families may make changes to their class schedule prior to this point without having to pay the material fees. Once material fees have been paid and payment has been sent to the teachers, families will not be eligible for reimbursement. Teachers will have already bought materials at this point and it will not be possible to get the money back.

Adding a Class: If you add a class after classes have begun, you will need to pay the materials fees where applicable. Talk to the teacher about any adjustments in fees if you are not participating in the full number of classes. Material fees for adding a class will be paid directly to the teacher.

SECURITY POLICY:

- SOAR follows the policies laid out in the Discovery Land Handbook, which can be found here: [Discovery Land Handbook](#). Please thoroughly review this handbook.
- All teachers, assistants, and students will have an ID for speedy entry into the building.
- All parents and students must check out at the security desk before leaving the building.
- Schedules, rosters, incident report forms, and fire drill instructions will be posted in classrooms for teacher security use.
- Hallways will be monitored by all teachers during class transitions.
- Bathroom breaks will abide by the 2-Adult rule, which states two adults must accompany **all** students in the building. Students are encouraged to use bathrooms during breaks, when the 2-Adult rule is upheld by hall monitors.
- Transitions of classes – Both teachers and students will be moving from class to class.
- First Aid – Anyone requiring more than a band aid or a tissue will be returned to the parent; supplies for first aid can be found in the check-in room.
- Walkie-Talkies – We will use the MCI walkies to stay tuned to the emergency channel.
- Fire drills – as CLS conducts fire drills, we will participate in moving students as a class to the back parking lot. Teachers will be given instructions on how to conduct drills at the Orientation meeting. It is critical we practice these procedures, and students must understand the importance of following directions of the classroom instructors for their safety.

2. Scope:

The church can provide classrooms to host up to 8 groups of children. All ages will be provided for, including childcare and preschool rooms, up through middle school (grade 8). Groups will be divided based on grade and number of teachers available. See schedule and class offerings document for suggested groups. These group divisions are suggestions; for example, if a parent feels their kindergarten student can participate in a 1st-4th grade class, they can register the child for that class.

Parents can register their children for all classes periods or as little as one. Parents are required to be on site at all times when their children are attending classes. They are responsible for the safety and behavior of their own children.

Preschool will have language and math components as well as stories and free play. Elementary and middle school groups will cover history, literature, and science (with activities), with electives such as art, dance, and P.E. The subjects should be integrated as much as possible, e.g., reading literature from the same period and doing activities or art projects that coincide.

Preferred class size is 10-15 students. If a class has fewer than 3 students, it will be cancelled and students registered for that class will be incorporated into others. Teacher approval will be needed for a class size exceeding 15 students.

3. Parent responsibilities:

Any parent wishing to register their child(ren) for the co-op must commit to teaching 12 classes. Parents may choose to team teach a full year class and each teach 12 classes; team teach two semester long classes and each teach 12 classes; or teach on your own one semester for 12 weeks. A minimum of two adults must be with a child at all times: in class, this will be the teacher and the assistant; for bathroom breaks, it will be a teacher/assistant and hall monitor.

Because of the need for committed teachers, please consider carefully whether you can fulfill your commitment to the co-op for all the yearly meetings. Absence is strongly discouraged, except in the case of sickness. Teaching responsibilities may be swapped among members of the teaching team for that class in the event of necessary absences. Notify the leadership team as soon as you know you will not be present. If you are a primary teacher and will be absent, you are responsible to get your teaching materials to the co-teachers who will cover your class.

In addition, parents will be responsible for volunteering one to two times each per year in the following capacity: clean up, lunch monitor, special events, and providing snacks for the fellowship room.

Lunch Monitor

The lunch monitor is responsible for the following:

1. Remind students not to run in hallways.
2. No running or balls in the south lobby area.
3. Encourage moms to watch their children (outside playground, bathrooms & gym areas).
4. No climbing on stage and bleachers in the events center (gym).
5. No climbing on check-in desk, racks, or church furniture in the South Lobby.
6. Outside rules: children aren't allowed to pass the fence or play in the parking lot. No food on the playground. No climbing on trees.
7. Watch that only SOAR members use the South Lobby doors and they are NEVER propped open.
8. Make an announcement at 12:20, five minutes prior to end of lunch time, and admit families through the doors if necessary.

4. Time:

Meetings will be held in the Covenant Life Church classrooms on Tuesdays from 9:30 A.M. to 2:30 P.M. Orientation will be held September 4th, then classes will begin September 11th and end April 9th with some breaks for holidays and church closures. This allows for 2 semesters, a total of 24 meetings. April 16th will be reserved as a make-up day in case of unforeseen need to cancel (for example, the building is closed due to snow).

5. Weekly schedule:

Plan to arrive by 9:15 A.M.

Classes will begin at 9:30 A.M. and continue until 11:35 A.M. (9:30-10:30, 10:35-11:35).

Lunch, 11:40-12:20, will take place only in designated rooms, including an allergen-free

room for those with allergies. Parents are responsible for the supervision of their children during all pre-class and lunch activities. Two more class periods (12:25-1:25, 1:30-2:30) will take place after lunch.

Parking will be in the “finger lot” (1A), school parking lot, or the lot by the Events Center. Please reserve the front (guest) lot for use by handicapped, visitors and CLC staff. Entry and exit will be by the main lobby only. Parents will show their photo ID to be admitted by building security. They should then proceed to the SOAR check-in table.

See “Class Offerings” attachment for the schedule of classes available for each group. Further explanation is found below the schedule.

6. Curriculum:

The books assigned for each class will be determined by each teaching team, within the general framework outlined in the scope and schedule. Classes are determined based on parent and teacher input prior to registration each year.

7. Fees:

A one-time per year registration fee of \$30.00 per student, with a family cap of \$90.00, payable to the SOAR PayPal account, will cover basic supplies for teachers, ID badges, and facilities/security. Payment should be made upon confirmation of registration; refunds are available for those needing to cancel their registration before September 4, 2017 at the orientation meeting. Individual teachers may charge a materials fee as outlined in the Class Offerings. These classes may also require books or other materials that the parent will need to purchase. Some classes feature a professional teacher whose class carries a more substantial fee. Otherwise, all expenses are covered by the FSP tuition fee.

8. Weather policy:

The co-op will be subject to decisions made by the church office on whether the building is closed due to weather. SOAR will not meet if Montgomery County Public Schools are closed; if MCPS schools have a delayed opening, we will meet as scheduled. Confirmation of this will be by email by 10:00 P.M. the night before.

9. Sickness policy:

We leave it to the parent to determine whether their child is healthy enough to attend SOAR. If the child has a fever or is contagious, they should stay home. If the sick child can stay home with another adult, the parent may attend SOAR along with their other children if they are not contagious. If the parent needs to stay home with the sick child, their other children may not be sent to SOAR with another parent. Teachers are arranged in teams to compensate for parents who may miss due to illness.

10. Photo Policy:

Out of respect for the privacy of all families, if you take photos of children other than your own at SOAR, only share the pictures on SOAR's private Yahoo Group and not on social media unless verbal permission is specifically given by the parent(s).

11. Leadership Team:

The leadership team for the 2018-2019 school year will be as follows:

Director- Tracy Minyard

Registration/Administrative Coordinator- Jenny Dunbar

Onsite Coordinators- FSP Staff (Janet Segui or Candy Smith)

Finance Coordinator- Kathy Mercado

The directors of the co-op are directly accountable to the FSP Administrator and the board. A director will be on-site for each meeting and coordinators and teachers will report to them.

Leadership team contact information:

Tracy Minyard- tracy.minyard@gmail.com and 434-305-2129

Jenny Dunbar- jen.dunbar95@gmail.com and 301-875-2777

Covenant Life Church, Inc.

Waiver of Liability for Independent Program Held on-site at Covenant Life Church

Name of the independent organization: SOAR Co-Op (Sharing Opportunities for Achievement and Relationship)

Names of Child(ren) participating in program:

Name of parent/guardian of above named children _____

I hereby grant permission for the FSP SOAR program to provide Co-operative learning programs for the above named children. I understand that SOAR is a co-op of Family Schools Program parents and that Covenant Life Church permits these parents use of the facility for their program.

I hereby agree to hold Covenant Life Church, Inc. harmless for any wrongful acts committed intentionally or unintentionally by the overseers, leaders and participants of the SOAR program against me, my family, or my children. I release Covenant Life Church from liability for any such wrongful acts.

Signature of parent /guardian

Date