

Cowboy at the Cross Homeschool Co-op

Thank you for expressing interest in our homeschool co-op! It is an exciting and rewarding endeavor to be in control of what and how your students are learning.

Cowboy at the Cross Homeschool Co-op IS....

A collaboration of parents and experienced educators, homeschooling their children using biblically based curriculum, with each family registered and operating under CHEC Independent School (Christian Home Educators of Colorado), an umbrella school of their choice or submitting a Letter of Intent to the local School District.

A support system for families. We offer individual classes for students who only need a class or two to 'round out' their homeschooling OR we offer full days of classes for those who need more oversight completing their course work.

Dependent on parental involvement. Families are welcome to be as involved as they would like to be *during co-op meetings*, from dropping their kiddos off or staying to help facilitate learning. We have a 'Deeds or Dollars' policy. We ask for an hour a week of volunteer time from the parents or the equivalent in 'dollars'. Details will be outlined later in this document.

Only 49% responsible for student learning. Parents are responsible for a minimum of 51%.

* NOTE: It will be your responsibility to provide standardized testing for students, but we can give you direction on how and where to get this done. There are some great online options as well as in-person.

Cowboy at the Cross Homeschool Co-op IS NOT...

A full time school.

A private school.

100% responsible for student learning.

Mission Statement

Our mission at Cowboy at the Cross Homeschool Co-op is to educate students who confidently and respectfully engage the culture with compassion and discernment. We endeavor to teach students as effective communicators and leaders in their homes and communities to advance the Gospel of the Kingdom.

It is our mission to support parents in providing the above education for their students in whatever capacity we are able to offer assistance. From a single class to fully supported educational options, we wish to serve parents in educating young adults prepared to influence the world for Christ.

Our vision is based upon Four Cornerstones:

- **Biblical Worldview**
 - Apologetics
 - Why do I believe what I believe?
 - Can I defend it?
 - Help students find their God given passion
 - Develop Independent thinkers
 - Teach the pursuit of wisdom - Proverbs 14:6
- **Spiritual Warfare**
 - Ephesians 6 - We acknowledge the battle for our children's future must be engaged in the spirit realm and fought with the spiritual weapons of prayer and the Word of God.
 - Strive for unity among students and teachers
 - Cultivate Godly fellowship and relationships
 - Funding - Rely on God's Kingdom Resources
- **The 3 R's**
 - Focus on proficiency in reading, writing and mathematics
 - Teach the 'why' of learning
 - Academic benchmarks that exceed state standards
 - Students must 'study to show themselves approved.' II Timothy 2:15
- **Academic Fundamentals**
 - Regular learning assessments
 - Know the right questions to ask
 - Educate critical thinkers with a Biblical Worldview - Daniel 1:17
 - Teach with Socratic Questioning

Each day we meet, we will begin with a prayer, pledge and a devotion time.

Required Co-op Classes:

Junior High/High School

Core Classes are adjusted based on a student's realistic academic ability and plans for higher education.

CORE CLASSES:

- * US Government/Constitution - 1 year
- * Personal Finance (Semester) /Economics (Semester)
- * General Science
- * Physical Science
- * Biology
- * Math
- * History (Ancient, World, American)
- * Literature/English Grammar
- * Essay Writing
- * Speech - Fall Semester
- * Debate - Spring Semester
- * Bible
- * Logic (informal fallacies, thinking skills, beginning formal logic)

REQUIRED PROFICIENCY: (student can test out of)

- * Penmanship
- * Typing/Document Formatting
- * Technological Literacy
- * Research Skills

ELECTIVE:

- * Chemistry/Physics/Environmental Science
- * Photography
- * Shop (auto, construction, welding)
- * Cake Decorating
- * Sewing
- * Home Economics
- * Horticulture
- * Dance
- * Horsemanship
- * Drawing/Art
- * Music
- * Spanish/German
- * Health
- * Street Law

Elementary

Core Classes:

- * Phonics/Reading Comprehension
- * Arithmetic
- * Language Arts
 - Penmanship
 - Spelling
 - Vocabulary
 - Writing
 - Literature
- * History
 - Geography
- * Bible
- * Science

Curriculum:

Humanities (History, Literature, Worldview, Geography, Art/Music History, Philosophy) -

Tapestry of Grace - Through this 4 year cycle, students will study the humanities from a biblical perspective. They will read historically relevant 'living' books (the most important of which is the Bible itself!), practicing reading, writing and speaking skills. Students will develop critical thinking and verbal skills as we navigate our learning together in Socratic discussions. Most weeks, students will apply their learning in a hands-on project or field trip. Each quarter, we will hold a themed celebration for the families of the Tapestry of Grace studies. It is not possible to be part of the Co-op without participating in the history studies as they are the framework. If your student does not wish to be in the history class, please discuss your options with the Co-op director.

Science - Apologia Creation based Curriculum - Elementary students (K-6) will learn together using the Apologia Exploring Creation Series. Our 7th and 8th graders will alternate between General Science and Physical Science. High Schoolers can choose from the Apologia High School courses Biology, Chemistry and Physics.

Language Arts - K-7 **Abeka** Curriculum and **Tapestry of Grace**

Math - K-7 **Abeka** Curriculum. 8th -12th **Math-U-See**.

Government - 11th-12th **Patriot Academy**

Homeschool Co-op Expectations

For Parents

If students only receive the education provided by Homeschool Co-op 2-3 days a week, that will not be enough to provide a quality education for the student. Therefore, parents are expected to support students' education by providing a structured environment for students to flourish at home. We are working alongside you. An envelope containing the weekly assignments, schedule, and other communication letters will be sent home with your child every week. This will be our main form of communication with the parents. The envelope needs to be emptied, signed and returned to the Co-op teachers every week.

We understand that some students need additional support in specific subjects. We are offering tutoring in the mornings two days a week. Please inquire about this option.

Clear communication - Please feel comfortable sharing both your struggles and successes as the school year progresses. Especially for those families making a transition to homeschooling, this is an essential part of our support group!

Out of respect for our Co-op teachers, who spend a lot of time preparing lessons and materials for class, please notify your child's teacher ahead of time (if possible) of any absences. This applies to both core class and elective class teachers.

You will be expected to:

- provide a sack lunch.
- provide transportation to and from classes.
- ensure your child brings all required materials (binders, books, paper, pencils, and pens) to class.
- actively work with your child on the assignments given for at-Home completion.
- follow the biblical principles of conflict resolution as outlined in Matthew 18:15-17.

You will need to supply your students' curriculum books and materials from a list that we will provide for you. 'Tapestry of Grace' History and Literature books can be checked out from the Co-op library for a refundable deposit of \$150. At the end of the year missing or damaged books will be deducted from your deposit and the remainder of the funds will be returned to you. We have a library catalog system to keep track of books lent to your student.

Deeds or Dollars Program - It is our desire to keep our cost as low as possible. In order to do this we rely heavily on volunteers. As the parents of enrolled students we will ask you to contribute some time each quarter, the equivalent of one hour per week. We understand everyone finds themselves in a different situation. With respect to that we are offering you an opportunity to volunteer your time or pay the Co-op at a rate of \$10 per week. Volunteer time can be spread out or lumped together. We have needs for everything from inventorying books in the library to teaching a class, helping as a Teachers Aid for Elementary or supervising Study Hall. We should be able to work with your schedule as there are things you can do outside of Co-op hours for those who work full time.

Parents of Junior High and High School students must attend a 2 hour monthly class to stay connected with their students' Worldview studies. Parents of Elementary students are invited, but not required to attend. Activities will be provided for your younger children and students during this time. We will have a meal together and a fun night of family fellowship.

Parent Signature

Date

Homeschool Co-op Expectations

For Students

Students will be expected to:

- complete assignments and turn them in to teachers neatly and on-time.
- uphold basic classroom and building rules. These will be clearly outlined and posted.
- respect each other and our surroundings/property.
- allow everyone the opportunity to learn.
- keep hands, feet and objects to themselves.
- be active listeners.
- communicate both struggles and successes, as will be modeled by parents and Educators. Galatians 6:2
- follow the principles outlined in Matthew 18:15-17 when conflicts arise.
- bring their best effort every day. While we all have off days which may affect what our "best" looks like we should give the best we are capable of each day. 2 Tim. 2:15
- present himself or herself in a way that honors God both in character (no gossiping) and physical appearance. 1 Tim. 5:13, Prov. 16:28, 2 Tim. 2:16

No personal cell phones will be allowed in class. All phones need to be checked in at the start of classes. Laptops or computers will be allowed for in class use (research/typing) only and strictly monitored.

Instrumental study music will be provided in class, by the teacher. No personal study music will be permitted via student earbuds.

** If Co-op expectations are not met on a consistent basis, the following steps will be taken:

1. Parent meeting with teacher(s) discussing missing/incomplete assignments. Older students (Dialectic, Rhetoric) may be present if desired.
2. Parent meeting with teacher(s) and Co-op leader to discuss further steps and start a mandatory 5-day enrollment until the student is caught up on assignments. There will be a \$100/month fee for these classes.
3. Expulsion from Co-op.

Student Signature

Date

Parent Signature

Date

Homeschool Co-op Weekly Overview

(This is an example only and subject to change before the start of classes. Class schedules will be posted in August for the coming School Year.)

Monday: Co-op, 9:30-3:00.

Tuesday:

Parents support students working at home OR

Morning - Optional tutoring or study hall.

Afternoon - Optional Elective classes

Wednesday: Co-op, 9:30-3:00.

Thursday:

Parents support students working at home OR

Morning - Optional tutoring or study hall.

Afternoon - Optional Elective classes

Friday: Co-op, 9:30-3:00. Group discussions. Review and evaluate progress. Extracurricular activities on Friday afternoon.

(Older students are not required to attend Co-op three days per week if they do not need to. Some benefit from more time at home to complete studies. Please discuss their individual needs with the Co-op Director prior to the beginning of classes.)

** Please read the following Statement of Faith and Purpose from Lampstand Press, the publisher of our Humanities curriculum 'Tapestry of Grace'. We will be teaching the students from this premise. It is not required that you agree with this statement to enroll your student with us, but if you enroll, it is with the understanding that we will teach your student from this stated purpose. You will also find enclosed, the Statement of Faith of the Cowboy at the Cross Church.

Tapestry of Grace (Lampstand Press)

Statement of Faith and Purpose

At Lampstand Press, we are committed to **classical Christian education**, based on our commitment to **God's glory**, our understanding of **child development**, and a deep appreciation for our **cultural heritage**.

God's Glory in The Purpose of History

We believe that God created time and space for His own glory, and that He is unfolding history to accomplish His perfect purposes for His people. Our passion for learning is a direct expression of our passion for God, as we seek to love Him with all our heart, our soul, our mind, and our strength.

We believe that it honors God for us to learn the truths that He has revealed in Scripture, in nature, and in history, whether such revealed truths fit into our preconceived notions or not. Our reason for studying history is to learn from the experiences of others more about God's character and more about our own frailties and calling. We want God to receive the glory He deserves for all His mighty acts in history.

Our intention in presenting *Tapestry of Grace*® and other educational products is to remain accurate and biblically oriented. *Tapestry's* Teacher's Notes and Student Activity Page questions emphasize God's sovereignty in history, frequently noting specific evidences of His work as we understand it. It is our belief that children need to be led in "connecting the dots" of the events of history with both Scripture and a sense of the loving, active presence of God in world events. It is our aim to strengthen in them a sense of both humility and destiny as they view the sweeping majesty of God acting in HIS story.

All men and women sin; no expression of the body of Christ or worldly community has been without sin. God has called us to love sinners and tell them His good news, not judge them for their lost condition. Our position is that if children are taught to view the sins or errors of others with compassion and a biblical interpretation, they will both be warned of their own human tendency to sin, and become compassionate, but accurate, historians. They will be better prepared to glorify God by serving His purposes in their own generation.

God's Glory in Church History

We believe Scripture and church history each help us to understand God's purposes and priorities, so we seek to study the full scope of church history at age-appropriate levels.

We do not know how to be truly unbiased about something as important as our faith, but we think we have been commanded to be honest about our own beliefs, humble about our own wisdom, confident in God's care, and respectful of our brothers and sisters from different persuasions.

We are Protestant, and are therefore most aware of Protestant resources for Church History. Church History readings are broken out in the Reading Assignment Charts as separate entities, so that those who choose to study Church History from a different theological position can easily substitute resources written from their perspective.

Child Development through Classical Education

“Classical education” has two different meanings for Christian home educators. It can mean a “Great Books” curriculum, which hands on the heritage of Western civilization, but it can also refer to a “grammar, dialectic, rhetoric” model of child development and training. We believe in “classical education” in both meanings of the term.

Medieval educators taught students to speak Latin, debate in Latin, and persuade in Latin before they considered them ready for more advanced learning. The three disciplines of “grammar,” “dialectic,” and “rhetoric” composed the Trivium, which prepared scholars for the rest of the seven “liberal arts.” Modern scientists have discovered that these three modes of learning correspond to specific stages of child development. Young children are remarkably good at memorizing facts and learning stories, children near the age of puberty excel at making connections; while youths and adults are best at analyzing and synthesizing.

Age-segregated classrooms have trouble taking full advantage of modern science and of the medieval model because they must serve all the children in the room, whether they are best at memorizing, organizing, or synthesizing information. We believe this is why educational experts keep promoting “higher order thinking skills” at ever-earlier grades. We would rather take advantage of “lower-order” thinking skills while the child still has them. Young children excel at absorbing stories, songs, sounds, vocabulary words and other material at the “grammar level.” When the child matures enough to develop “higher order thinking skills,” we want him to first organize a rich storehouse of previously-acquired information, and then synthesize in useful and meaningful ways.

The “grammar,” “dialectic,” and “rhetoric” learning levels are objectively real but have no clear boundary lines, any more than “infancy” or “adulthood” do. We therefore make it easy to select assignments from more than one level at any time. A child may try some “hard” material for a while and then decide to drop back for a bit. We are not afraid that this will result in a lot of malingering. When children play games, they don’t “coast” at the easy level. Just as with this type of entertainment, with the right mix of encouragement and opportunity, we expect children to be eager to advance into more challenging work.

Cultural Heritage

The term “classical education” does not just mean an emphasis on the learning levels of the Trivium. It is also routinely used to mean an education in the Great Books of Western civilization, sometimes known as the “Western Canon.” Until recently, a “liberal arts education” necessarily included broad and deep exposure to works by Plato, Shakespeare, Tolstoy, and others. In the latter half of the twentieth century, this approach has often been derided as “works by dead white males.” Since the 1970s, most secular universities have abandoned the goal of passing on any specific cultural content.

While we appreciate the insights of non-Western thinkers and want our students to be able to communicate effectively with people from any culture, we do not believe a “critical” or “multi-cultural” education is the best way to achieve that goal. A child who has no culture of his own is poorly prepared to truly understand a person who is willing to die to preserve his faith or heritage. We believe it is better to be a humble but patriotic citizen of some country than a proud but cynical “citizen of the world.”

Because of this, we utilize and recommend many of the Great Books of the Western Canon at the high school level. We try to serve English-speaking students in general and Americans in particular by helping them study the threads of their own history.

Conclusion

Our goal is not to raise students who are puffed up with knowledge, but to help students understand themselves and the world around them clearly enough to realize their individual and our collective need for a Savior. Our sincere hope is that through these pages, we can all grow in our understanding of Jesus Christ, the Lord of history.

So, come, and magnify the Lord with us, and let us exalt His name together!

Cowboy at the Cross Summary of Statement of Faith

God

1. We believe in one God, Creator of all things, holy, infinitely perfect, and eternally existing in a loving unity of three equally divine Persons: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. We believe that God created everything just as He records in Genesis, by His spoken word, out of nothing, and that it was good. Having limitless knowledge and sovereign power, God has graciously purposed from eternity to redeem a people for Himself and to make all things new for His own glory.

The Bible

2. We believe that God has spoken in the Scriptures, both Old and New Testaments, through the words of human authors. As the verbally inspired Word of God, the Bible is without error in the original writings, the complete revelation of His will for salvation, and the ultimate authority by which every realm of human knowledge and endeavor should be judged. Therefore, it is to be believed in all that it teaches, obeyed in all that it requires, and trusted in all that it promises.

The Human Condition

3. We believe that God created Adam and Eve in His image, but they sinned when tempted by Satan. In union with Adam, human beings are sinners by nature and by choice, alienated from God, and under His wrath. Only through God's saving work in Jesus Christ can we be rescued, reconciled and renewed.

Jesus Christ

4. We believe that Jesus Christ is God incarnate, fully God and fully man, one Person in two natures. Jesus—Israel's promised Messiah—was conceived through the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He lived a sinless life, was crucified under Pontius Pilate, arose bodily from the dead, ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father as our High Priest and Advocate.

The Work of Christ

5. We believe that Jesus Christ, as our representative and substitute, shed His blood on the cross as the perfect, all-sufficient sacrifice for our sins. His atoning death and victorious resurrection constitute the only ground for salvation.

The Holy Spirit

6. We believe that the Holy Spirit, in all that He does, glorifies the Lord Jesus Christ. He convicts the world of its guilt. He regenerates sinners, and in Him they are baptized into union with Christ and adopted as heirs in the family of God. He also indwells, illuminates, guides, equips and empowers believers for Christ-like living and

service. The gifts of the Spirit listed in 1 Corinthians 12 are given to believers by the Holy Spirit when and how He chooses. We believe they are a gift and should be used as the Holy Spirit gives the believer use of them. We are not to shun the gifts of the Spirit, or try to produce them in our own strength. The gifts of the Spirit should be used for the building up of the church body and for reaching unbelievers. Use of the gifts needs to stay within the guidelines given in 1 Corinthians.

The Church

7. We believe that the true church comprises all who have been justified by God's grace through faith alone in Christ alone. They are united by the Holy Spirit in the body of Christ, of which He is the Head. The true church is manifest in local churches. For membership requirements, see church bylaws. The Lord Jesus mandated two ordinances, baptism and the Lord's Supper, which visibly and tangibly express the gospel. Though they are not the means of salvation, when celebrated by the church in genuine faith, these ordinances confirm and nourish the believer.

Christian Living

8. We believe that God's justifying grace must not be separated from His sanctifying power and purpose. God commands us to love Him supremely and others sacrificially, and to live out our faith with care for one another, compassion toward the poor and justice for the oppressed. With God's Word, the Spirit's power, and fervent prayer in Christ's name, we are to combat the spiritual forces of evil. In obedience to Christ's commission, we are to make disciples among all people, always bearing witness to the gospel in word and deed.

Christ's Return

9. We believe in the personal and bodily return of our Lord Jesus Christ. The coming of Christ, at a time known only to God, demands constant expectancy and, as our blessed hope, motivates the believer to godly living, sacrificial service and energetic mission.

Response and Eternal Destiny

10. We believe that God commands everyone everywhere to believe the gospel by turning to Him in repentance and receiving the Lord Jesus Christ. We believe that God will raise the dead bodily and judge the world, assigning the unbeliever to condemnation and eternal conscious punishment and the believer to eternal blessedness and joy with the Lord in the new heaven and the new earth, to the praise of His glorious grace. Amen.

Application Process

Step 1: Submit the application Form

Step 2: Complete an interview with Co-op Director

Step 3: Student Assessment for placement with teachers/classes

(Tutoring classes for new students may be required if needed to get the student caught up with the class they have been placed in. We will supply these classes.)

Homeschool Co-op Cost

As we are not a school but rather a homeschool Co-op, students must provide their own curriculum, but we will supply a list of needed books and resources on where to find these as well as the opportunity to place bulk orders when appropriate or we have a limited supply of books that can be borrowed.

We will not turn away any student or family due to a lack of funds. These fees do not cover our expenses, they are simply a suggestion for those who wish to contribute towards their students' education. Ultimately, we are trusting God for the finances to keep the Co-op going and not relying on tuition. If you are able and wish to give more, please do so. If you cannot afford these recommended fees, then feel free to give what you can. We are always in need of teachers if you wish to teach a class in trade for your student's tuition.

Contributions can be made to 'Cowboy at the Cross Ministries'. Please 'ear-mark' your giving. Our secretary will allocate it to the Co-op fund. Thank you!

Suggested Donation:

3- Day Co-op Enrollment - \$175/student per month \$125/ additional student per month

Morning Tutoring OR Supervised Study Hall Classes (2 days/wk) - \$100/student/month

Afternoon Elective Class - \$50 per Semester (books NOT included)

(Tutoring & Elective class registration is made via a separate form on the website as they are separate from Co-op. These class fees are required, but if you need help with the cost we have a scholarship fund.)

Registration Deadline

Returning Students - May 15th

New Students - August 1st

(Applications can be turned in after this date but there is no guarantee of registration.)

Contact Information:

Tonya Huspen, 970-424-6515

tonya.huspen@gmail.com

Shane Kier, 970-216-7455

Cowboy at the Cross Homeschool Co-op Application

Name: _____

Address: _____ City/Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Email: _____

Circle one or both: ^Three Day Enrollment ^Tutoring/Study Hall
Circle your preferred Co-op location: Austin OR Olathe

Please list the names, ages and grades of your children interested in attending.

What are their previous educational experiences (Public School, Homeschool, etc)?

Why are you choosing this education for your family?

Do you have experience homeschooling or other educational experience?

Do you have a home church?

- If so, what is your home church?
- If not, are you OK with us teaching the Bible and Biblical principles to your child?

Does your student have any allergies or medical conditions?

Is your student on any medications? If so, please list them:

Are there any educational concerns you may have for your student?

How much time per week do you anticipate putting into your child's education?

How actively do you plan to be involved?

Please sign below indicating you have read the previous 12 pages and are agreeing to the conditions laid out within them.

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

Email to: cowboyatthecrossschool@gmail.com or Mail to: Tonya Huspen- 20503 Iris Rd, Austin, CO 81410