

# Olive Plants

**A Home Education Extension Program**

## *Handbook*

*updated May 2022*

*All members must maintain the standards of student life as spelled out in this membership handbook. The Board may vote to revoke membership at any time due to failure to meet all the standards, resulting in a decision to not renew membership for the following school year due to failure to meet these standards.*

## ----- *Policies and Procedures* -----

### ***Requirements for membership:***

- Each student and parent/guardian must attest by signature to having read - and agree to follow - the ***Olive Plants Handbook*** before registering, along with submitting signed copies of the Olive Plants Co-op ***Statement of Faith and Purpose, Waiver of Liability, and medical release*** forms that are included in the registration packet.
- Member families must pay yearly dues to the co-op, as indicated in registration packet, per family in-person. New applicants are additionally required to submit a \$50 one-time application fee. Late registration carries an additional \$50 fee added to yearly dues for everyone.
- Students will only be allowed to advance one grade above their age level or remain one grade below their age level.
- Kindergarten students must be 5 by November 1<sup>st</sup> to register.

### ***New members:***

- Each student must demonstrate academic readiness by providing grade reports from their previous school service and/or pass pre-testing in math and English to be provided by Olive Plants Co-op. If a new member homeschooled the previous school year, the parent must submit a list of classes completed at home with final grades.
- New families must provide written references, preferably by a church pastor/leader, but community contact will be acceptable, as well as schedule an interview with members of the board during available registration periods.

### ***Entering and Exiting the Building***

- GREENHOUSE STUDENTS (K through 4<sup>th</sup>) – students will enter the Christian Family Life Center entrance at First Baptist Church on Church Street. The drop off line must be utilized for Kindergarten through 4<sup>th</sup> grade students. First period tutors will escort their students by elevator to their classroom. *Any students not arriving during the initial drop off period must be escorted by a parent or trusted individual to the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor check-in. For end-of-day pickup, all Greenhouse students must be picked up from the covered parking area door – entering from Haralson Street. If you are picking up at any time besides the end of the day (or end of Kindergarten class), you must enter from Church Street entrance and checkout your student from the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor.*
- MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL (5<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup> grades) Parents may use the drop off line for first period - as room permits. You may also park and students can escort selves to the Christian Family Life Center entrance on Church Street. Upon entry, students

will take the elevator to their left directly to the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor. *Pickup for middle/high is also on Church Street unless you have a Greenhouse student you are picking up as well at the end of the day.*

- No loitering or wandering the building. All students must remain on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor, in the classroom area unless you are on lunch break, study hall, assigned volunteer area, or have been dismissed for the day. No running or horseplay while in the building.

### ***Food/Drink***

- Students may bring lunch to eat or purchase something from the OpShop. Greenhouse students are given the opportunity to order from the OpShop in the morning before class, to be delivered later. Each tutor will determine if a snack or drink may be brought into their classroom.

### ***Cell Phones and other electronics***

- Cell phones and other devices must be stored out of sight during class, preferably contained within a purse or backpack, unless indicated by tutor for class participation.
- A student's phone may remain in a pocket UNLESS it becomes a distraction to him/her or others.
- Talking, texting, gaming, or other "activities" are strictly prohibited during class unless a parent or other adult needs to contact the student for an urgent situation.
- If your child removes his/her phone/device from storage during class for any reason other than for a parent call, he/she will be given one verbal warning.
- If the device is seen a second time, the teacher will hold the phone/device until class is over.
- Any inappropriate activity using devices could face immediate dismissal upon Board review. Parents will be responsible for honoring payment contracts within 30 days of dismissal.
- Absolutely no electronics of any kind for Greenhouse students.

### ***Dress Code***

- A specific uniform is not required, and dress is relaxed/casual, yet modest. If a question about modesty is raised or reported, parents will be notified, and if needed, the student will be removed from class and a parent will be called to bring a change of clothing or to pick up.

### ***Student Drivers***

- All student drivers must possess a valid driver's license from their state of residence. Please do not park in handicap parking areas. No other students are permitted to leave or hang out in another student's car. You must have prior permission from Olive Plants for one student to leave with another.

### ***Contacting Tutors***

- Please contact your tutor for homework help as indicated in your class contract. Allow him/her a reasonable response time.
- If you have a more pressing concern, please schedule to meet with your tutor.
- Please document all conflict-resolution attempts, then notify the Board if not satisfied.

### ***Phoning During Co-op Hours***

If you need to contact a tutor or your children during co-op hours, please email us or text/call Christy 706-616-3816.

**Do not call** First Baptist Church or staff and ask to speak to or send a message to your child or their tutors.

### ***Absences/Tardies/Class compliance***

- If your child is running a fever, has a headache, or showing other signs of being contagious, please remain home.
- Students are responsible for making up all work they miss due to an absence.
- To retain membership status, all students must attend classes regularly, submit assignments regularly, and maintain acceptable academic progress.
- Families who do not purchase required curriculum, attend regularly, or turn in assignments regularly will be considered non-compliant.

### ***Severe Weather***

Olive Plants will defer to Troup County School System in the event of inclement weather. If they cancel or delay classes, we will too. If there is a severe weather **watch** issued, students will be taken to the storm shelter in the building and will not be dismissed until the **watch** is lifted.

### ***Conflict Resolution***

Our community is typically a peaceful place, and the Board is pleased with how well the students conduct themselves. However, as sinners who are reliant on God's Grace, we are bound to have a disagreement from time-to-time. We encourage all members to follow God's plan for conflict resolution as He teaches us in **Matthew 18:**

- a. Keep the problem as contained as possible by trying to speak directly to the person who has offended you. Don't gossip, complain, or talk about the problem to others who are not directly involved.

- b. If speaking to the person does not resolve the issue, please seek assistance from the tutor who is most directly involved.
- c. If the conflict/problem persists, please contact a member of the Board of Directors and allow the Board to review and address the issue.
- d. Should a problem arise between a student and a tutor or between a parent and a tutor, we ask that the parent try to resolve the issue with the tutor first. Please schedule a parent-tutor conference and talk face-to-face about the issue. Should you reach an impasse, both the tutor and the parent may bring the issue before the Board of Directors who will review the issue and work with both parties in finding a resolution.
- e. In all situations, love your neighbor as yourself.

### ***Weapons Policy***

Students are not permitted to carry weapons on the Olive Plants Co-op campus at any time for any of its meetings. The term “weapons” shall include the following items: any loaded or unloaded firearm, knife, defensive weapon, martial arts device, or any tool or instrument which school administrative staff could reasonably conclude as being capable of inflicting bodily harm.

### ***Tuition Payments***

- Tuition installments are due on the 5th of each month, August through May. You may also opt to pay the tutor in full at the beginning of each semester, August and January.
- Most, if not all, tutors have a PayPal or Venmo account to receive payments as well. Please defer to tutor contracts for instruction. Please pay the individual tutor as requested in class contracts.
- You are committing to a full year; however, should you have to drop out for anything beyond unforeseeable circumstances, you may be held responsible for the balance of the current semester.

### ***----- Behavior Guidelines -----***

***To promote excellence, we have set the following rules for all classrooms. Please read and discuss the rules with your children and have each enrolled student sign the agreement on the registration form. Your signatures indicate that your family understands and agrees to all rules and consequences.***

### ***Classroom Rules\****

1. Follow the policies as set forth in the *Policies and Procedures*.
2. Attend class regularly. Be prompt and prepared.

3. Listen to and respect each teacher. Do not talk over the teacher when he/she is instructing the class or helping other students.
4. Show consideration for all classmates by listening to them, not interrupting them, and doing unto them as you would have them do unto you. Name calling, bullying, threatening, rough-housing, horseplay, or other similar behavior will not be tolerated and may be considered as grounds for expulsion.
5. Turn in all assignments on time. All work should be completed as neatly and completely as possible, and with honesty in mind.
6. Be a good steward by using your own materials wisely, respecting the property of your teachers and classmates, and taking care of the building and property of First Baptist Church and the property of Olive Plants Co-op. Demonstrate thankfulness, kindness, and respect to the staff and members of the church for their generosity in loaning us their building, and be mindful of the Olive Plants volunteers who give their time so selflessly.
7. Cell phones must be contained during class. No texting or calling without teacher's permission, as well as gaming or inappropriate Internet use.
8. PDA – Public Displays of Affection. We realize there will be situations of young affection. Parents are responsible to set their own family's rules for these areas. However, kissing, hand-holding, and all other physical PDA will not be tolerated during co-op hours on RosemontFBC property, or any Olive Plants'-planned function or outing. Please refrain from being in a room alone with the opposite sex. There should always be an adult present or a study hall will be provided.
9. Social media. Remember you represent Olive Plants and the homeschooling community. Please make certain anything you post online is a good reflection of yourself, your family, and your community.

### **Consequences\***

1. You will be given a verbal warning by your teacher or removed from class if warranted.
2. An email will be sent to parents.

3. After **2** warnings or physical removals, there will be a parent meeting with the Board to establish a specific behavior plan and student will be placed on probation.
4. If behavior plan is not followed, the student faces being expelled from the program.
5. If expelled, the contract for payment is not voided, and payment is expected ***in full*** within **30** days of date of dismissal

## ***DROPPING COURSES***

Please note that we consider a family's registration request to be a well-intentioned COMMITMENT TO COMPLETE ALL REGISTERED CLASSES AND PAY ALL RELATED FEES for the ENTIRE YEAR.

And we assume that families DO NOT REGISTER FOR CLASSES THEY BELIEVE THEY ARE LIKELY TO DROP LATER or SIGN CONTRACTS THEY DO NOT INTEND TO KEEP

**As a member of Olive Plants Co-op, you are an important member of a community, and your commitments are not just to the tutor him/herself, but also to the other members. Therefore, it is the policy of the board of directors that classes SHOULD NOT BE DROPPED unless there are GENUINE EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES.**

### ***WHAT QUALIFIES AS A GENUINE EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCE?***

Situations that will receive the board's consideration are as follows:

- ***Extremely well-documented dissatisfaction:*** Families with this claim must demonstrate that they have followed OP's conflict resolution policy and have given the tutor the opportunity to correct the situation. Problems must have been addressed as soon as possible. An "eleventh hour" claim against a tutor—one brought to the board just before the end of the semester or over Christmas break--will not be considered. All claims must be submitted via email at: [oliveplantscoop@gmail.com](mailto:oliveplantscoop@gmail.com)
- ***Your family is relocating.***
- ***Sudden Illness*** (student or family member who is financially responsible)
- ***Other hardships*** (that did not exist at the time contracts were signed.)

If you email/contact a tutor to inform the tutor you are dropping a course without having discussed it with the tutor previously, the tutor has the right to bring the situation immediately to the board and demand payment in full.

***WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I WANT TO DROP A COURSE?***

1. Talk directly to the tutor about your concerns as soon as possible. Be open to potential solutions.
2. If your circumstances are extenuating, ask your tutor to release you from the contract.
3. If your circumstances are personal, but not extenuating, have an honest conversation with the tutor and try to work out a solution. **The board will not review your case unless you have 1<sup>st</sup> spoken with the tutor.**
4. The tutor has the option to release you from the contract or hold you to it. If you reach an agreement, follow through.
5. If you do not reach an agreement, please email Christy Holloway at [oliveplantscoop@gmail.com](mailto:oliveplantscoop@gmail.com) to request that the board review your case. The board meets once per month and will review and vote at the next meeting that follows. You may schedule a time during that meeting to present your case to the board.
6. The board will vote to give your claim one of 3 statuses:
  - a. **No fault:** You are released from the contract with the tutor.
  - b. **Partial fault:** You are released from the contract with terms, e.g. You must pay a portion of the tuition.
  - c. **Denied:** You are held to the contract and owe the tutor the full amount for the entire year.
7. The decision of the board is final.
8. Dropping a course will affect your standing in the co-op in the following ways:
  - a. **No fault:** Does not affect your standing.
  - b. **Partial Fault:** 1 partial fault drop places you on a “drop risk” list. You will have to have each tutor sign off on your registration form before being added to his/her roster for the next school year.
  - c. **Multiple Partial Faults:** The board will vote on whether you will remain in good standing for the next school year’s registration.
  - d. **Denied:** The board will vote on whether you will remain in good standing for the next year’s registration.

**e. Refusal to pay:** If the board's ruling includes that you must pay a portion or all of the tuition due to a tutor, you will not be allowed to register for any Olive Plants Co-op courses until you have paid the determined amount to the tutor.

----- *Homeschool Compliance Agreement* -----

- **Member families must be legal residents of the State of Georgia or the State of Alabama.**
- **Member families must be actively home educating member students in accordance with all laws governing home education in their home state.**

**About Georgia Attendance Law:**

We are admonished in Scripture, both by example and by command, to obey the laws of our country.

*Let every person be in subjection to the governing authorities; for there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God. Therefore, he who resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves.*

*Romans 13: 1-2*

In Georgia, God has blessed us at this time with a supportive home schooling law. Olive Plants Co-op supports this law and requires its members to abide by it. The failure of a few to comply hurts the reputation of our group and home schooling as a whole. Our state law requires:

- Filing a yearly Declaration of Intent with the Georgia Board of Education
- Standardized testing of students in grades 3, 6, 9, and 12 and the keeping of those scores for 5 years.
- Yearly record keeping, including attendance and a written progress report for each student enrolled in your home study program, to be kept on file in home records.
- **Failure to file Declaration of Intent will effectively withdraw the student from the home study program. Monetary fines are also included within our law.**

**File your Georgia Intent here:**

<https://www.gadoe.org/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/Pages/Home-Study-DOI.aspx>

**Be sure to print a copy of your Intent for your records.  
It is very difficult to get a copy once it's filed.**

Do your homework! It's up to you as the parent of record to educate yourself on any changes in the homeschool law. Please visit [www.ghea.org](http://www.ghea.org) or [www.hslda.org](http://www.hslda.org) for more home schooling information and any changes in requirements and laws.

If you are an Alabama resident, please note that your homeschooling laws differ from Georgia's.

**Virtual Public School/Charter School Users**

If you are enrolled in an online charter or government funded program for your home school curriculum, please note that you are not legally defined as "home educating" and are not required to file a Declaration of Intent with the state BOE.

*Additionally, according to HSLDA, "Attending a virtual public school means accepting the bureaucracy and government supervision that are linked to receiving tax dollars."*