

LEAH, LLC - POLICY STATEMENT

Low-Country Educators' Association of Homeschools, LLC, hereinafter referred to as the "Association" or "LEAH" provides association membership, regardless of race or creed, as required under SC Statute §59-65-47.

Our Purpose

1. To offer legal status under SC Code 59-65-47
 - A. Maintain membership records
 - B. Report attendance to school districts
2. Offer other services including, but not limited to:
 - A. Curriculum counseling;
 - B. Transition support from public/private to homeschooling;
 - C. Guidance counseling/support for high school students.

Upon receipt and after appropriate review of the Application, The Association will send Notification and/or Certification of Membership via email and posted mail. Each individual family bears responsibility to strive for academic excellence within their homeschool. The Association **is not liable** for the following:

- the ability of the parent to teach;
- the effectiveness of academic instruction or results;
- the ability of student members to internalize learning or develop skills;
- the effectiveness of specific curricula;
- test outcomes;
- qualification for and/or acceptance in the job market;
- **does not and cannot guarantee** admission to college, eligibility for scholarships, grants, or job placement.

There will be a general Orientation for members who have not homeschooled previously and/or who have not belonged to a support group in their area. This Orientation will be held in January and July. When applying, we recommend that you attend the next available meeting.

All new members who have students taking high school classes for credit toward graduation are required to attend at least one High School Orientation which will be held in January and July. If previous attendance at a High School Orientation given by the Administrator within one year prior to membership can be verified, then attendance may be waived for the current year.

Please read the following Membership Requirements **carefully** before signing the Application. A signature to the application indicates that the member(s) fully understand(s) and agree(s) to comply with all of the following requirements (<http://ed.sc.gov/agency/Accountability/Federal-and-State-Accountability/Accreditation/HomeSchooling.html> excerpt republished 05/09):

OPTION 3 (S.C. Code Ann. § 59-65-47)

Parents or guardians may teach their children at home if the instruction is conducted under the auspices of a home school association which has no fewer than fifty members and meets the requirements of this section. The home school association chosen by the parent must assure that the following requirements are met:

1. The parent must
 - hold a high school diploma or
 - have earned a General Education Development Certificate (GED) and
 - have become a member of a home school association which has no fewer than fifty members.
2. Instruction for the home-schooled student must include the following:

- provide an instructional year that is at least one hundred and eighty days and
 - provide basic instruction in the areas of reading, writing, mathematics, science, and social studies (but not limited to) and
 - provide additional basic instruction in composition and literature to students in grades seven through twelve.
3. The parent/teacher must meet the following requirements:
- maintain educational records by the parent-teacher to include
 - 1) a plan book, diary, or other written record indicating subjects taught and activities in which the student and parent engage;
 - 2) a portfolio of samples of the student's academic work; and
 - 3) a semiannual progress report including attendance records and individualized documentation of the student's academic progress in each of the basic instructional areas (specified in item 2.b. and 2.c. above).
4. The home school association must report the number and grade level of children home-schooled to the children's respected school districts by January 30 of each year.

Home Schooling of a Foster Child (S.C. Code Ann. § 59-65-46)

A foster parent may teach a foster child at home as provided in Option 1, 2 or 3 if, in addition to any other requirements, home schooling of the child has been approved by the Department of Social Services or other agency having custody of the child.

Additional provisions required by LEAH to implement compliance with the above statutes:

1) Attendance: The school year may begin at any time after June 15 as long as the required 180 days are completed by June 15 (see ¶2 above) but, no later than June 15th, unless an extension is granted by the Association. Please advise the Association as soon as it becomes apparent that an extension is needed.

2) Compliance: To assist parental compliance, New Member and High School Orientations will be conducted in **January** and **July** of every school year. Dates and locations of the meetings will be broadcast to the membership via the Website or other electronic communication. Attendance at these meetings is required at least once within the calendar year as they will be opportunities to share and gain information about the Association accountability systems and encourage portfolio development in a member-friendly environment.

3) Document Submission/Deadlines: Documents to be submitted to the Association and those to be maintained in the portfolio will be available on the Website under Downloads, including:

- Attendance Record
- Proposed Courses of Study (PCS), one per student;
- Course Descriptions (CDs), one per course taken for high school credit;
- Semester Grades and Attendance Reports (derived from the PCS),
- Portfolio Checklists, one per student per semester.

The following deadlines are effective for the current school year:

First Semester: January 30

- Submission of First Semester Grades and Quarterly Attendance Reports
- Completed End-of-Course Evaluations (on CD form))
- Portfolio Checklist – First Semester

Second Semester: June 15th.

- Final Grade Report and Quarterly Attendance Records

EOY Reports: June 30th

- Completed End-of-Course Evaluations (on CD form)
- Portfolio Checklist – Second Semester
- Completed copy of LEAH Attendance Record form

*Juniors and Seniors must report final grades NLT May 30th or at such other deadlines deemed sufficient to process grades in order to be ranked for scholarship eligibility. Parental Certification of Compliance is indicated by signature on the Portfolio Checklist. The Portfolio Checklist will be reviewed and notated in the following manner:

- 1—In Compliance
- 2—In Compliance w/a Comment (i.e. evidence of a course not meeting grade standards, but correctable ;)
- 3—Not in Compliance, (i.e., missing documentation, failure to meet, etc.).

4) Failure to Comply: Members will be notified if they are deemed Not-in-Compliance and will be given 15 days after such notification to bring their records into Compliance as listed in **Items 2 and 3** above. A Member or the Association may request a meeting to bring records into Compliance.

5) High School Students: Parents and high school students must choose one of the following Tracks: Track I (College Prep); Track II (Technical Prep); or Track III (Certificate of Completion); and indicate that choice on the membership application. Further explanation of these Tracks is as follows:

Track I (College Prep Diploma Program): is for students planning to pursue higher level education via a four-year college or university and desiring to be eligible for in-state or out-of-state colleges and scholarships. The Association recommends adopting, and if possible, exceeding the standards set forth by the SC CHE, including issuing numerical grades of each student's work and keeping samples of work for each subject as certified to on the Portfolio Checklists. Final Transcripts will be issued if requested in writing and must include grades computed according to the SC UGS (Uniform Grading Scale).

Track II (Tech Prep Diploma Program): is for students desiring to prepare for technical studies via two-year technical programs and/or apprenticeships. The Association recommends adopting, if not exceeding, the standards set forth by the SCDE, including issuing numerical grades of each student's work, keeping work samples for each subject, as certified to on the Portfolio Checklist. Parent must submit reports of grades and attendance on a semi-annual basis or, if deemed necessary by the Association, at more frequent intervals. Final Transcripts must include grades computed according to the SC UGS (Uniform Grading Scale).

The difference between Tracks I and II is primarily the difference in the number of credit requirements and difficulty level of coursework. Electing to follow a Track II plan may result in insufficient preparation to enter a four-year college or university.

Track III (High School Certificate of Completion): is for students **who plan not to attend** an institute of higher learning or technical school or enlist in the U.S. Armed Forces or any place of employment requiring a high school diploma. High School Certificates indicate a student has completed the required number of courses for credit (24) according to the SCDE, but may have failed to meet the standards that indicate the ability to receive satisfactory End-of-Course Evaluations in diploma programs.

6) Guidance/Transcript Services: Guidance counseling will be offered for grades 11 and 12, including: class ranking, transcripts, signatory for scholarship applications, college admission documents, as needed, and guidance for preparation of the high school portfolio. **Tier 5 Fees cover** up to four Final Transcripts which will be issued by the Association upon written request. More copies may be requested at additional cost. Final Transcripts will include grades computed according to the SC UGS (Uniform Grading Scale, Pub. 01/07 or any revision thereafter).

7) Signatures: Both parents are required to sign all applications. If one of the parents is deceased, or is on military deployment and is unavailable to indicate agreement to all the terms of the Membership, please advise the Association upon application.

8) Non-Custodial Consent: In cases where divorce has occurred, the custodial parent must sign the application and a *Notice of Non-Custodial Consent* must be signed by the non-custodial parent. The *Notice of Non-Custodial Consent* is available for download from the Association website. The Association will take no sides in custody cases.

9) Foster Parent(s): In cases of foster parenting, the custodial or foster parents will submit all required documentation according to §59-65-46 and 59-65-47.

10) Pending Government Cases: If the applicants have any pending official investigations, truancy or disciplinary hearings, have ever been involved in a child abuse or neglect case, please complete the *Pending or Previous Government Case* form and submit it with the application.

11) Notification: All members are required to advise Association of changes of street and email addresses and telephone numbers. The Association will publish updates via the Website and email, so it is recommended that members check email accounts weekly and visit the Website at least monthly to read announcements and reminders and the schedule of events.

12) Support Group Membership: Membership in a Support Group is required; whether via a local group or statewide group (SCHEA). Proof of Membership must be submitted during the Application process either through written or email notification from the Support Group Membership Secretary. If a Member elects to join a local support group, then membership in SCHEA would be optional. Membership in HSLDA is also optional and requires a minimum of 10 applicants per group. Members of the Association interested in applying for discounted membership to the above two organizations must submit fees to LEAH and payable to SCHEA and/or HSLDA respectively by October 1. HSLDA members must also complete other forms as noted on the Website. Please see Group Services, Discount Membership Enrollment Forms, <http://www.hsllda.org/join/discountgroups/discounts.asp#member> .

13) Achievement/College Aptitude Testing: The Association's **School ID Number is 411909** should be used when registering for SAT, PSAT and ACT exams. Members will be required to have their students tested once every two years, from grades 4 through 12, and must submit copies of the test scores to the Association for verification of student progress. Test scores are used from students in Grades 11-12 for ranking as required by the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education (SC CHE) and other scholarship granting organizations. If transferring membership from another Homeschool Association, a signed Request for Student Records is required upon application for Membership. The Association will fax such requests to the previous Association, to gather official reports including attendance, progress and final reports, test scores and any other educational assessment previously made. Members applying for standardized testing will need to go directly to those testing organizations and must use this Association's ID number for tracking and reporting purposes, where applicable.

14) The Fee Schedule is based on the estimated time needed by each family to be administratively processed into the Association. The higher the student grade the more time is needed. The fee schedule reflects this time incrementally in amounts of \$30 per Tier. In the interest of keeping Membership Fees reasonable:

- The Application Fee covers administrative processing and one additional hour of time.
- The Tier Fee pays for additional hours based on the highest grade of the student enrolling; e.g., a family with a student in Grade 12 will be paying for five hours of time available through the year, and all other homeschooled students in the family are covered by this cost.
- The amount of time spent on each family will be tracked electronically.
- Every effort will be made by LEAH to reduce the amount of administrative time via orientations, group Workshops and Orientations, publication and revision of the High School Handbook, and electronic communications to allow more time for consultation.
- It will benefit the Member to take advantage of all the features at the Association Website to reduce administrative time.
- Membership fees pay for administrative and consultation time on an annual basis. No unused time will be rolled over to a successive year.
- Families who request assistance which requires more time than the hours paid for upon initial membership will be notified and will be required to pay for additional time.
- Additional time may be purchased at \$25.00 an hour.

Schedule of Fees:

Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3	Tier 4	Tier 5
Kindergarten	Grade 1-6	Grades 7-9	Grades 10-11	Grades 12
\$0	\$30	\$60	\$90	\$120

15) Limited Membership, Distance Learning and Virtual Schools. As stated in ¶1 of the Policy Statement above, SC Code §59-65-47 applies only to families that are not homeschooling under Option 1, §59-65-40, or Option 2, §59-65-45; and do not intend to enroll in any SC or out-of-state Virtual Charter School which is a publicly funded school.

Limited Membership is offered, however, to families who have students enrolled in a private school program where the student is enrolled in classes via on-line instruction and where that school grades the student work, issues report cards, and otherwise oversees the student progress, but is out of the State of South Carolina. It is the understanding of this Association that families who have homeschool students enrolled in private distance learning or on-line programs such as that heretofore stated, then it is still necessary for that family to also be enrolled in an Association such as LEAH, under SC §Code 59-65-47, in lieu of mandatory public school attendance.

Virtual School Program: The SC Virtual School Program is a program not a Virtual Charter School. Enrolling for high school courses through the SCVSP is the only exception whereby a student may take courses while registered in a homeschool Association. The number of courses allowable is limited to no more than three classes for high school credit per school year, and no more than 12 credits may be issued by the SCVSP toward a high school diploma. Furthermore, a homeschool is recognized as a "sponsor" school. At the end of a course taken via the SCVSP, the enrolled student must go to a designated public school campus in order to take an End-of-Course Exam. For further information about the SCVSP, go to www.elearning.ed.sc.gov. All applicants or members who desire to become a "sponsor" school, and to have his or her student enroll in a SCVSP class, must advise this Association, so that the Association may be aware of where to request official high school transcript information for credits awarded. **This Association does not assume any responsibility regarding enrollment to SCVSP.**

16) Returned Check Fees: The Association will assess fees commensurate with banking institution fees for returned checks.

Please keep a copy of this document for your records.