

LOVING EDUCATION AT HOME, INC.

Bylaws

ARTICLE I NAME

The name of this organization shall be New York State Loving Education at Home, Inc., also known as New York State Loving Education At Home; NYS LEAH; LEAH, Inc., and LEAH. The name LEAH, Inc. will be used throughout these Bylaws.

ARTICLE II DEFINITION

Section 1 Biblical Basis

1.1 LEAH, Inc. is a Christian organization, the members of which are like minded Christian home education support groups made up of families dedicated to observing the Biblical commands of Deuteronomy 6:4 10, Proverbs 22:6, and Ephesians 6:4. We promote home education as the Scriptural design for education whereas institutional education is alternative to the home. Member support groups are known as Member Chapters of LEAH, Inc. while families who are members of LEAH, Inc. chapters are considered Member Affiliates of LEAH, Inc.

Section 2 Philosophical Statement

2.1 We believe that every family has the God-given legal and constitutional right to home educate in New York State, regardless of their philosophy of education or religious affiliation. LEAH Inc. is not a church nor is this organization meant to replace the ministry of the local church to the home education family.

2.2 LEAH, Inc. exists primarily for its membership as an organization whose two main purposes are the education of and consultation by its Member Chapters and Member Affiliates. The secondary purpose of LEAH, Inc. is to assist others outside the organization interested in home education.

Section 3 Legal Standing

3.1 LEAH, Inc. is a New York State Not-For-Profit Corporation and Federal Tax-Exempt under 501(c) 3 of the IRS code.

ARTICLE III PURPOSE

Section 1 Purposes of the Organization

LEAH, Inc. is organized primarily for the purpose of providing service and support to member Christian home education support groups within New York State including but not limited to the following ways:

1.1 Aid in the creation and growth of Christian home education support groups throughout New York State.

1.2 Provide information regarding the legal climate of home education in New York State and in our nation.

1.2.1 Encourage home education families to seek appropriate legal counsel.

1.2.2 Monitor and advise the State Department of Education and other appropriate officials.

1.2.3 Monitor cases before family, state, and federal courts in this regard.

1.3 Do whatever is necessary to protect the future freedoms of home education in New York State and in our nation.

1.4 Promote the advantages of home education over alternative forms of education outside the home.

1.5 Promote sound, high quality home education programs by parents or legal guardians for the purpose of developing Christ like character, and which will satisfy the spiritual, intellectual, physical, and emotional growth needs of their children.

1.6 Review and disseminate home education materials and information considered vital to home educators, this serving as a resource to parents desiring to educate their children in the home.

1.7 Publish a state newsletter.

1.8 Plan and conduct annual state home education conventions and other educational opportunities designed to provide information and training that will help parents and others involved with or interested in home education.

1.9 Support accurate home education research and its publication.

1.10 Institute whatever other programs or services in the future as may be deemed necessary by the membership of this organization.

ARTICLE IV STATEMENT OF FAITH

Section 1 Preface

1.1 Our Statement of Faith includes only those truths upon which all true Christians agree. It concerns the Authority of Scripture, Deity of Christ, the Person and Work of Jesus Christ (the Gospel) as revealed in Scripture. It is the faith once delivered to the saints (Jude 2, Ephesians 4:5) which distinguishes believers from non-believers. There are many other precious truths taught in the Bible over which godly men have differed in understanding. Therefore, this is not a statement of all that is important to believe, but of all that is essential to believe for Christian fellowship and unity. (Romans 15:7).

Section 2 We believe:

2.1 The Bible to be the inspired, infallible, divinely preserved Word of God, the supreme and final authority for all faith and life.

2.2 That there is one God, eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

2.3 In the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, His virgin birth, His sinless life, His miracles, His vicarious and atoning death through His shed blood on the cross, His bodily resurrection, His ascension, and His imminent bodily return in power and glory.

2.4 That man was created in the image of God, but fell into sin and is therefore lost, and only those who put their faith in Jesus Christ alone, not trusting in any personal works whatsoever, can be saved.

2.5 That salvation is the free gift of God brought to the sinner by grace and received by personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, Whose substitutionary death on the cross paid the penalty for man's sin.

2.6 That the ministry of the Holy Spirit is to convict mankind; indwell, guide, instruct, and empower the believer for godly living and service.

2.7 That God created man and woman after His own Image, and that God has ordained marriage, consisting of one man and one woman, to be the foundation of the family and to be the only legitimate and Godly expression of sexuality.

2.8 In the spiritual unity of believers through our common faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and that individual doctrinal differences which may exist, outside of the aforementioned (Article IV, §2.1-2.7), should not hinder the unity of Christian home educators.

ARTICLE V MEMBERSHIP

Section 1 Specifications

1.1 Membership is open to all home education support groups who are in agreement with:

- 1.1.1 The Statement of Faith,
- 1.1.2 Statement of Purpose,
- 1.1.3 and the Bylaws of this organization.

1.2 The membership of LEAH, Inc. shall consist of all Member Chapters in good standing.

1.3 Each Member Chapter shall consist of at least three (3) families who shall be known as Member Affiliates. Under special circumstances as determined by the Board of Directors, a Member Chapter with less than three (3) Member Affiliates may be granted a waiver in order to remain in good standing as a Member Chapter.

Section 2 Expectations

2.1 It is expected that all Member Chapters will support LEAH, Inc. in the work of the organization to insure that its purposes are met, and with their annual dues, paying dues for each Member Affiliate as specified by Article VIII, §3-4.

Section 3 Use of the LEAH Name

3.1 Member Chapters in good standing shall be authorized to use "LEAH" as a portion of their name if they so desire. They may also use the LEAH insignia on any of their printed or promotional materials.

Section 4 Applying for Membership

4.1 Applications for membership must be approved by the LEAH, Inc. Board of Directors. Member Chapters approved during the year and shall be announced to the membership at the next Annual Meeting. Acceptance of any new Member Chapters may be reversed by the membership, at its discretion, at that meeting.

4.2 Application process shall consist of the following:

4.2.1 An interview of the proposed Chapter Leader couple (§6.1) by the Regional Representative that is responsible for the geographic area in which the Chapter Leader lives.

4.2.2 Completion and submission of any application materials that the Regional Representative may require. This will include personal affirmations by the Chapter Leader of agreement with the documents referenced in §1.1 of this Article.

4.2.3 A recommendation from the Regional Representative to the LEAH Board of Directors that the application for Chapter Membership be approved.

Section 5 Membership Requirements

5.1 In order to remain in good standing, Member Chapters will be required to renew their membership on an annual basis, by the date established by the Board of Directors, by re affirming their Chapter Leader's commitment and agreement to the documents referenced by §1.1 of this Article, by updating their list of Member Affiliates, and by submitting the required dues for each Affiliate on that list. In addition, each Chapter shall submit a report covering the financial activities of the prior year (July 1 – June 30) at the time of renewal. The report shall consist of

- 5.1.1 An end-of-year balance sheet
- 5.1.2 A ledger of all income and expenses of the Chapter for the year.

Section 6 Chapter Leadership

6.1 Each LEAH chapter shall be headed by a married couple, as per Article IV, §2.7, who shall be referred to as the Chapter Leader. The LEAH Board may waive the requirement of a married couple in exceptional circumstances to allow an otherwise qualified person or two persons teaming together to serve as Chapter Leader.

6.2 The charter Chapter Leader, and all successors to that position, must proceed through the interview and application process as described in §4.1.1 and §4.1.2 of this Article and receive approval of the Regional Representative.

6.3 The leadership of each Member Chapter shall be considered by LEAH, Inc. to be vested in the Chapter Leader and the Chapter Leader shall represent the Member Chapter to LEAH, Inc. and shall exercise the Member Chapter voting rights at meetings of the organization. The Chapter Leader may designate another person to vote in their stead when they are unable to attend a meeting.

Section 7 Chapter Membership

7.1 Membership in a LEAH Chapter shall be by family units.

7.2 The members of a LEAH Chapter shall be known as member affiliates of LEAH, Inc.

Section 8 Chapter Governance

8.1 The governing structure of the Chapter may follow any model or form that is acceptable to the Chapter and its own by-laws, with the following provisions:

8.1.1 The Chapter Leader shall have final authority within the Chapter, especially in matters that pertain and relate to the Statement of Faith, Statement of Purpose, and Bylaws of LEAH, Inc.

8.1.2 Each LEAH chapter shall have Chapter governing bylaws which conform to the By-laws of LEAH, Inc., as determined by the LEAH Board. Each LEAH Chapter shall have their Chapter by-laws in place prior to their next Member Renewal following the adoption of this requirement.

8.1.3 Chapter-governing by-laws shall include a provision to dismiss from membership a member affiliate who, in the judgment of the Chapter leadership, does not follow the Code of Conduct or who is divisive or disruptive to the well-being of the chapter.

8.2 Each LEAH Chapter shall adopt a Code of Conduct. The Chapter Code of Conduct shall be inclusive of the LEAH, Inc. Code of Conduct, but may contain additional requirements as desired by the leadership of that Chapter. The LEAH, Inc Code of Conduct shall be proposed by the LEAH Board of Directors and approved at a meeting of the organization.

Section 9 Discipline and Revocation of Membership

9.1 If and when any Member Chapter is accused of being in confessional or ethical non compliance with the Statement of Faith, Statement of Purpose or By laws of this organization, including conduct and/or activities within the chapter which are contrary to Biblical principles or the Code of Conduct, an investigation shall be conducted by that Member Chapter's Regional Representative who shall make a report and recommendation to the Board of Directors.

9.2 If the Board of Directors concludes that the allegations have merit or need further investigation, the Board may, at its discretion, immediately suspend said chapter from any or all privileges of membership until a final disposition of the matter is made, There shall be an opportunity given to the party or parties involved to petition for a hearing before the Board of Directors to consider the matter. Such a hearing must take place within sixty (60) days of the request, with two weeks prior written notice of the hearing date given to the party or parties involved.

9.3 After the time set for the hearing, the Board shall have thirty (30) days to consider the options of taking no action, of requiring specific corrective actions by the party or parties involved as a condition of continued membership of that Chapter, or of dropping that Chapter from membership. All

decisions by the Board, both interim and final, shall be promptly communicated to the Chapter Leader, and the parties involved. Any such action taken by the Board may be reversed by the membership of the organization, at its discretion, at the next regular meeting or special meeting of the organization.

9.4 If it is determined, during any investigation and hearing process under § 9.2, that an affiliate member or members are guilty of gross violations of the NYS LEAH Code of Conduct, the Board shall be empowered to disallow membership of said affiliate member or members from any or all Chapters of NYS LEAH. Any affiliate member so affected by such a Board action shall be notified in writing within 15 days of the decision. The affiliate member shall have 30 days to petition the Board for an appeal hearing. The timetable, procedures, and final disposition of the affiliate member appeal hearing and subsequent Board decision shall be the same as described in § 9.2 & § 9.3 for Member Chapter hearings.

ARTICLE VI GOVERNMENT

Section 1 General Powers

1.1 The Affairs of LEAH, Inc. shall be under the policy direction and implementation of a Board of Directors. This Board shall include four (4) executive officers: a President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer; and seven (7) Regional Representatives representing one of the seven Regions of New York state: New York City/Long Island; Hudson Valley; Albany/Adirondack; Syracuse/Central New York; Binghamton/Southern Tier; Rochester/Finger Lakes; Buffalo/Western New York. The boundaries of these seven Regions may be adjusted by the Board of Directors, at its discretion, from time to time so as to provide administrative equity. The members of the Board of Directors shall be the legal trustees of the corporation.

1.2 The Board members shall serve for terms of two years, with half the Board up for re-election each year.

Section 2 Quorum

2.1 A majority of the Board of Directors shall constitute a quorum. If a quorum is not present at any meeting, a majority of those present at any meeting may postpone the meeting to another time without prior notice.

Section 3 Board Decisions

3.1 The act of majority of the Board of Directors present at a meeting at which a quorum is present shall be the act of the Board, unless the act of a greater number is required by this Constitution. Each position on the Board of Directors shall have one vote to cast on matters under their consideration.

Section 4 Executive Committee

4.1 The Executive Committee, consisting of the four executive officers (President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary) may meet from time-to-time in person or via remote communication methods. A quorum, consisting of a majority of the Executive Committee, shall have the authority and power to undertake actions as may be necessary to facilitate the smooth day-to-day operation of the organization.

4.2 All such actions undertaken by the Executive Committee shall be consistent with the current-year budget, with the current policies and practices of the Board of Directors, and within the expected consensus of the Board. All such actions undertaken shall be promptly communicated to each member of the Board of Directors via some form of rapid communication (email, telephone, etc), and the minutes of Executive Committee meetings shall be presented in full to the Board of Directors at the next meeting of the Board, at which time any action so undertaken by the Executive Committee may be reversed or modified by the Board. The minutes of Executive Committee meetings shall be incorporated into the minutes of the next meeting of the Board.

Section 5 Compensation

5.1 Members of the Board shall not receive any stated salaries for serving on the Board. Nothing herein stated shall preclude any member from being reimbursed for expenses incurred while fulfilling board duties, i.e. travel related expenses, phone calls, etc., or from being compensated for services performed above and beyond sitting on the Board.

Section 6 Meetings of the Board of Directors

6.1 The Board of Directors shall meet quarterly (4 times) during the year. Except in extenuating circumstances, no more than two (2) of the four (4) meetings may be held using remote communications methods. The physical meetings shall be rotated geographically in an orderly fashion as decided by the Board of Directors.

Section 7 Meetings of the Organization

7.1 The Board of Directors shall schedule an Annual Meeting of the organization at a time convenient to the membership. In addition, a Semi-Annual meeting may be scheduled approximately six months apart from the Annual Meetings. All Chapter Leaders of the Member Chapters, or their appointed designees, are expected to be present at the Annual and Semi-Annual meetings. The Semi-Annual Meetings shall be rotated geographically in an orderly fashion as decided by the Board of Directors.

7.2 The Annual Meeting of the organization shall include election of Officers and Regional Representatives, adoption of budget and determination of dues as well as any other necessary business deemed important by the Board of Directors.

7.2.1 Membership approval of the amount of dues to be assessed each Member Chapter shall not limit the Board of Directors from establishing late fees and other penalties for Chapters not renewing their membership in a timely fashion.

Section 8 Special Meetings

8.1 Special Meetings of the organization may be held at the discretion of the President, or a majority of the Board of Directors. Alternatively, one fourth of the Member Chapters may petition the Board of Directors with a proposed agenda. Upon such a petition, the President or Board of Directors shall call a special meeting within 30 days. A Notice of Special Meeting shall be communicated to all Member Chapters at least two weeks prior to the meeting date and shall include the topic(s) to be considered. Only those topics shall be dealt with in the Special Meeting.

ARTICLE VII ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Section 1 Officers

1.1 Officers of LEAH, Inc. shall be elected by the leaders of the Member Chapters at the Annual Meeting from a slate of candidates presented to the membership by the Board of Directors. The slate of candidates shall be submitted to the membership at least four (4) weeks prior to the Annual Meeting at which the elections shall take place. Each Member Chapter shall have one vote.

1.2 There shall be four (4) Executive Officers consisting of: President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. The Board shall propose one (1) candidate for each of the four offices. Each candidate shall be elected to their respective office unless at least 50 percent of all Member Chapters in good standing vote not to elect that candidate.

1.3 In the event that a candidate is not elected, the member chapters present at the election meeting shall form a committee of chapter leaders to nominate an alternative candidate for that office. The committee shall report back to the membership within sixty (60) days with a nominee. In the event that the committee is unable to nominate an alternative candidate within sixty days, the Board may appoint a person or persons to temporarily fill that position until the next Annual Meeting.

1.4 The Board of Directors shall facilitate a reasonable and fair means, acceptable to the committee, to facilitate the voting of the membership for that office. The alternative candidate shall be elected to the office if greater than 50 percent of the votes cast are in favor of the candidate. In the event of non-election, the committee shall have sixty (60) days to present a new candidate, or may choose to leave the office vacant until the next Annual Meeting.

Section 2 Regional Representatives

2.1 Regional Representatives shall be elected by the Member Chapters from the Region that they will be representing. This may be done at the Annual Meeting, or it may be done at a meeting of the Member Chapters of that Region in the 45 days prior to the Annual Meeting. There shall be seven (7) Regional Representatives each representing one of the seven (7) Regions as defined by Article 6, §1.1.

The slate of candidates shall be submitted to the membership at least four (4) weeks prior to the meeting at which the elections shall take place. The terms of election shall be the same as that for the officers (§1), with the exception that only the Member Chapters from that Region may vote in the election of their Representative. In the event of non-election of the candidate, only the Member Chapters of that Region may form the committee to nominate an alternate candidate for Representative of that Region.

Section 3 Qualification to Hold Office on Board of Directors

All Board Members must:

3.1 Sign a statement that they agree with all parts of the Statement of Faith, Statement of Purpose, and Bylaws of this organization.

3.2 Submit a brief, written personal testimony of their salvation experience.

3.3 Submit a recommendation from the leadership of the fellowship in which they worship.

3.4 Belong to a local Member Chapter.

3.5 Have educated their children at home for at least two years by the time their term of office begins.

Section 4 Duties of the Board of Directors

Duties of the Board of Directors shall include:

4.1 **President:** Responsibility for the overall functioning of the organization; presides over all meetings of the Board of Directors and the Annual Meeting; assigns members to committees; shall be an ex officio member of all committees; coordinates the dates of activities and functions sponsored by the organizations whose services are contracted by this organization.

4.2 **Vice President:** Shall execute functions of the President when said officer is unable to carry out a given responsibility, and such duties as shall be assigned by the President.

4.3 **Secretary:** Shall record all business conducted at board or general meetings and submit such records to the President; shall prepare the minutes of meetings of the organization in writing to be communicated to all members.

4.4 **Treasurer:** Shall be responsible for maintaining financial records of this organization; for payment of bills of the organization using the budget as a guideline; for procurement of necessary equipment; for providing regular financial reports; and for preparing the annual budget.

4.5 **Regional Representatives:** Shall represent and be elected by Member Chapters of each Region of the state, as defined by Article VI, §1.1; for encouraging the start and growth of local LEAH, Inc. chapters within their region; for hosting regional events; for representing their Region at Board meetings; and for any other activities which furthers the purposes of LEAH, Inc. within their region..

4.6 The Board of Directors shall review and decide upon all applications for membership submitted by the Regional Representative.

4.7 The Board of Directors shall contract with any individuals or organizations necessary to carry out its stated purposes under such conditions and votes of payment as the Board of Directors shall determine, provided such conditions are not inconsistent with this Constitution.

Section 5 Election and Term of Offices

5.1 Members of the Board of Director shall be elected at the Annual Meeting. The term of office shall be for two years from July 1 through June 30 (see Article VI, §1.2). During the transition period in which incumbent Board of Directors are still serving, the new Board of Directors members shall work both as the incumbents' assistants. There is no maximum number of terms a member of the Board of Directors shall be permitted to serve.

Section 6 Vacancy

6.1 A vacancy in a board position because of death, resignation, or removal may be filled by the Board of Directors for the unexpired portion of the term.

6.2 Any Member of the Board of Directors who is unable to fulfill his/her elected duties may resign by submitting a written letter of resignation to the President or any Officer of the Corporation. Unless otherwise specified in the notice, the resignation shall take effect upon receipt thereof by the Board of Directors or such Officer. Acceptance of such resignation shall not be necessary to make it effective.

6.3 Any Board member may be removed by majority vote of the organization, when in its judgment, such Board member has been found to be in confessional or ethical non compliance with the Statement of Faith, Statement of Purpose, or By laws of the organization, or is in violation of the LEAH, Inc. Code of Conduct. This removal process shall take place at a regular or special meeting of the organization.

ARTICLE VIII BUDGET AND DUES STRUCTURE

Section 1 Fiscal Year

1.1 The fiscal year shall be from July 1 to June 30. Reports describing the financial health of the organization shall be provided to the membership at the Annual and Semi-Annual Meetings. These reports shall include the current balance sheet and a current ledger account of income and expenses.

Section 2 Adoption of Budget

2.1 The budget and annual dues shall be developed by the Treasurer, approved by the Board of Directors, submitted to the Member Chapters at least four (4) weeks prior to the Annual Meeting or Semi-Annual Meeting at which they shall be considered for approval.

2.2 Except as provided by §2.3, the budget shall be approved at the Annual Meeting of the organization.

2.3 The Board, at its discretion, may adopt a continuation budget for the next Fiscal Year by announcing its intention to do so at the Annual Meeting. This is permissible when the Annual Meeting occurs before shortly before the end of the Fiscal Year, and the next Semi-Annual Meeting occurs within five (5) months of the end of said Fiscal Year. Such a continuation budget shall have the same general distribution of expenditures as, and its total proposed expenditures must not exceed by more 5% of the total expenditures of, the most recent budget approved by the membership. A regular budget must be finalized and approved by the membership at the next Semi-Annual Meeting

2.4 An approved budget may be modified by the membership at any subsequent meeting of the organization, provided four (4) weeks notice has been given.

2.5 Annual dues for the succeeding membership year may be set at any meeting of the organization, provided four (4) weeks notice has been given.

Section 3 Determination of Annual Dues

3.1 Annual Dues will be based on the number of Member Affiliates belonging to each Member Chapter.

3.2 A family may be a participating Member Affiliate of more than one Member Chapter. Such a family shall be assessed annual organizational dues only once, by its primary Chapter.

Section 4 Collection of Dues

4.1 Organizational dues shall be collected annually by the leaders of each Member Chapter from its Member Affiliates and sent collectively to LEAH, Inc., according to the policies and procedures established by the Board of Directors.

4.2 In addition to organizational dues, each Member Chapter may assess, at its option, local dues in order to fund the activities of the Chapter.

ARTICLE IX PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

Robert's Rules of Order, latest edition, shall govern the proceedings of LEAH, Inc. in all cases to which they are applicable. However, when inconsistent with these Bylaws, the Bylaws shall control.

ARTICLE X AMENDMENTS

This Constitution may be amended by a majority vote of the Member Chapters present and voting at any regular meeting, provided that notice of the proposed amendment is first submitted in writing to the Board of Directors, who will then, at their option, submit it to the Members Chapters for consideration at least two weeks prior to the meeting.

ARTICLE XI DISSOLUTION

Upon the recommendation of the Board of Directors and a majority vote of the Member Chapters present at an Annual Meeting, this organization may be dissolved and its activities closed. After payment of all bills and proper claims, remaining assets shall be disposed of in cash or in kind by transfer to a similar state or national home education organization, as designated by the Board of Directors, seeking to achieve purposes similar to those of LEAH, Inc.

Amended 06/02/95, 11/01/97, 06/03/04, 10/29/11, 05/31/12