

**SARATOGA LEAH
BY-LAWS**

As Amended August 14, 2014

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ARTICLE I NAME

The name of this organization shall be Saratoga Loving Education at Home, also known as the Saratoga LEAH chapter. It will be referred to as “LEAH” or “the Chapter” or “this Chapter” henceforth in these Bylaws. NYS LEAH shall refer to the statewide organization of which this Chapter is a member.

ARTICLE II DEFINITION

Section 1 Biblical Basis

1.1 LEAH is a Christian organization, the members of which are like-minded 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.

Section 2 Philosophical Statement

2.1 We believe that every family has the God-given legal and constitutional right to home-educate, regardless of their philosophy of education or religious affiliation.

2.2 The Chapter exists primarily for its membership, member families who voluntarily assist and support each other in the endeavor of home education through a variety of activities.

2.3 LEAH members represent the diversity of traditions within the Christian faith that are united in their commitment to home education. LEAH is not a church, nor meant to replace the church fellowship.

Section 3 Legal Standing

3.1 This LEAH chapter is a member chapter of New York State Loving Education At Home (NYS LEAH), a New York State Not-For-Profit Corporation. As such, its establishment, leadership, operations, and final dissolution are subject to the oversight of the Board of Directors of NYS LEAH according to the bylaws of NYS LEAH.

3.2 This LEAH chapter is organized exclusively for charitable, religious, educational, and/or scientific purposes under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

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ARTICLE III PURPOSE

Section 1 Purposes of the Organization

LEAH is organized primarily for the purpose of providing service and support to member families in the greater Saratoga area, including but not limited to the following ways:

- 1.1 Providing and encouraging support and training for parents through such activities as the support group meetings.
- 1.2 Providing and promoting opportunities for children and families to interact with others through planned educational and recreational activities.
- 1.3 Providing information regarding the regulatory climate of home education
- 1.4 Encouraging home education families to seek appropriate legal counsel
- 1.5 By instituting whatever programs or services as may be deemed necessary by the membership of this organization in support of home education.

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).

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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 in LEAH is open to all home- educating families who are in agreement with our Statement of Purpose and who agree to abide by the Code of Conduct and the Bylaws of this organization.
- 1.2 It shall be required of all member families to affirm, via a signed statement, that they understand that the purpose and activities of LEAH are governed and guided by the LEAH Statement of Faith, and that the member family agrees to respect and honor those core values.

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Section 2 Requirements & Expectations

- 2.1 LEAH is a mutual support group. As such, all member families are expected to support each other and LEAH in the fulfillment of LEAH's purposes.
- 2.2 All member families are required to promptly pay their annual dues as specified by Article VIII, §3-4.
- 2.3 In order to effectively facilitate the purpose of the Chapter, the size of the membership will be at the discretion of the Chapter Leader.

Section 3 Applying for Membership

- 3.1 Applications for family membership must be approved by the LEAH Leadership (defined by Article VI).
- 3.2 The application process shall consist of the following:
 - 3.2.1 Completion and submission of any application materials that the Chapter Leadership may require. This will include personal affirmations by the member family of their agreement with the documents referenced in §1 of this Article.
 - 3.2.2 A family interview may be required at the option of the Chapter Leadership

Section 4 Discipline and Revocation of Membership

- 4.1 If and when any member family is accused of being in confessional or ethical non-compliance with the Statement of Faith, Statement of Purpose, Code of Conduct, 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 the Leadership of LEAH.
- 4.2 If the Leadership concludes that the allegations have merit or need further investigation, the Leadership may, at its discretion, immediately suspend said member 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 Leadership to consider the matter. Such a hearing must take place within thirty (30) days of the request, with one week prior written notice of the hearing date given to the party or parties involved.
- 4.3 After the time set for the hearing, the Leadership shall have fifteen (15) 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 in LEAH, or of dropping the family from membership. All decisions by the Leadership, both interim and final, shall be promptly communicated to the parties involved.
- 4.4 All disciplinary matters shall be dealt with through the head of the household.
- 4.5 All matters for possible disciplinary action are to be referred to the Chapter Leader first.

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ARTICLE VI CHAPTER LEADERSHIP & GOVERNMENT

Section 1 Chapter Leadership

- 1.1 The Affairs of this Chapter shall be under the direction and guidance of the Chapter Leadership. The Leadership of the Chapter shall consist of the Chapter Leader and/or a Leadership Committee.
- 1.2 The Chapter Leader and the Leadership Committee will work together for the effective administration of Chapter activities
- 1.3 The Chapter Leader and the Leadership Committee are expected to work through any disagreements in policy or practice with Christian grace and charity. In the case of irresolvable disagreement concerning chapter governance, the Chapter Leader shall have the final authority.

Section 2 Compensation

- 2.1 Members of the Chapter Leadership shall not receive any stated salaries for serving in Leadership. 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.
- 2.2 No part of the net earnings of the organization shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to its members, trustees, officers, or other private persons, except that the organization shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes set forth in the purpose clause hereof. Notwithstanding any other provision of this document, the organization shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on (a) by an organization exempt from federal income tax under section 501(c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code, or (b) by an organization, contributions to which are deductible under section 170(c) (2) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code.

Section 3 Meetings

- 3.1 LEAH shall have a minimum of two support meetings per year on a day to be determined by the Chapter Leader. At the discretion of the Chapter Leaders, additional meetings can be scheduled.

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ARTICLE VII SELECTION OF CHAPTER LEADERSHIP

Section 1 Chapter Leader

- 1.1 As per the NYS LEAH bylaws, the Chapter Leader shall consist of a married couple, as per Article IV, §2.7. Under exceptional circumstances, the Chapter may petition the NYS LEAH Board to waive the requirement of a married couple to allow an otherwise qualified person or two persons teaming together to serve as Chapter Leader.
- 1.2 The Chapter Leader will be chosen by recommendation of the current Chapter Leader.
- 1.3 In all cases, the Chapter Leader chosen shall meet the requirements set forth in the bylaws of NYS LEAH, and receive approval from the NYS LEAH Board through the LEAH Regional Representative for that chapter.
- 1.4 Saratoga LEAH membership may recommend a candidate to fill a vacancy of the Chapter Leader position but cannot elect or appoint a leader without the aforementioned approval of NYS LEAH.
- 1.5 The Chapter Leader is responsible for the overall functioning of the organization.

Section 2 Leadership Committee

- 2.1 Selection of Leadership Committee members shall be made by the Chapter Leader.

Section 3 Qualifications of Leadership Committee

All Committee 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 Be a member in good standing of the Chapter.

Section 4 Positions and Duties of the Leadership Committee

Positions and Duties of the Leadership Committee shall include:

- 4.1 **Treasurer:** The Treasurer shall keep records of all Chapter income receipts and expense disbursements and shall provide financial reports to the Chapter Leadership and to the membership at regular intervals, and to the Chapter Leadership upon request. The Treasurer shall have the authority to spend chapter funds upon decision of the Chapter Leadership
- 4.2 The Treasurer shall make financial reports available to the membership throughout the membership year, at a minimum on an Annual basis.
- 4.3 Additional positions may be established at the pleasure of the Chapter Leader and/or Leadership Committee.

Section 5 Term of Office

- 5.1 Leadership committee members shall serve terms of 1 year.

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Section 6 Vacancy

- 6.1 A vacancy on the Leadership Committee because of death, resignation, or removal may be filled by the Chapter Leader for the unexpired portion of the term.
- 6.2 Any Member of the Leadership Committee who is unable to fulfill his/her elected duties may resign by submitting a written letter of resignation to the Chapter Leader. Unless otherwise specified in the notice, the resignation shall take effect upon receipt thereof by the Chapter Leader. Acceptance of such resignation shall not be necessary to make it effective.

Section 7 Additional Committees

- 7.1 The Chapter Leader shall appoint any committees deemed necessary, to assist in the functions of the association.

ARTICLE VIII BUDGET AND DUES

Section 1 Fiscal Year

- 1.1 The fiscal year shall be from July 1 to June 30. An annual financial report listing income, expenses, and cash balance on hand shall be provided to the NYS LEAH Regional Representative for this Chapter.

Section 2 Adoption of Budget

- 2.1 A budget for each year shall be developed by the Chapter Leadership

Section 3 Determination of Annual Dues

- 3.1 Chapter dues for each member family will be set at a level necessary to support the budget, taking into account other estimated sources of income.
- 3.2 Chapter dues shall be determined by the Chapter Leadership.

Section 4 Collection of Dues

- 4.1 Each member family shall submit dues in the amount of the Chapter dues plus that member family's share of the annual dues levied on the Chapter by NYS LEAH.
- 4.2 In cases of financial hardship, the Chapter may, at its discretion, establish a means to provide for the dues of those families unable to pay their dues.

Section 5 Membership Year

- 5.1 The membership year shall be from September 1st through August 31st.

ARTICLE IX STANDARDS AND POLICIES

- 1.1 As needed, from time to time, rules may be established governing participation in Chapter activities. These rules will be submitted in writing to the Chapter Leaders. The Chapter Leaders shall approve all rules pertaining to Standards and Policies.

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ARTICLE X AMENDMENTS

- 1.1 Adoption of amendments to these bylaws will be by a majority of members present and voting in favor of the changes at a chapter meeting. Changes are subject to the approval of NYS LEAH. All member families shall be promptly provided a copy of the new bylaws.
- 1.2 Neither the Saratoga LEAH Purpose (Article III), nor the Statement of Faith (Article IV) can be altered or deleted, except by NYS LEAH.
- 1.3 All members in good standing will be notified of proposed amendments via regular mail, electronic mail, or in person.
- 1.4 Each family shall have one vote.

ARTICLE XI DISSOLUTION

Upon the recommendation of the Chapter Leadership and any other provisions of the bylaws contained herein, a petition to dissolve shall be submitted to the NYS LEAH Regional Representative. Upon approval of NYS LEAH, this chapter 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 home education organization, approved by NYS LEAH, or by transfer to NYS LEAH.

Adopted by a vote of the membership on April 06, 2006
Amended by a vote of the membership on October 11, 2012
Amended by a vote of the membership on August 14, 2014