

Homeschool Co-ops: How to Start Them, Run Them and Not Burn Out

Presenter Carol Topp, CPA
www.HomeschoolCPA.com

Starting a Co-op:

Decide if it will be a for-profit business (owned and controlled by one person) or a nonprofit (run by a board). Easier to get volunteers in a nonprofit and no taxes to pay!

Pray and pick like-minded people for your first officers.

First Meeting: Decide four W's: What Where When Who and 2 C's : Content and Cost

Write a purpose statement: We are...and we do...

Launch your program! Advertise and have details on time, place, cost.

Get an EIN (Employer Identification Number) from IRS.gov. Go to HomeschoolCPA.com/Leader Tools/Articles and an article on "Getting an EIN from the IRS"

Open a checking account in the group's name with your EIN.

Running a co-op

Form a Board. Follow the example God gave to Moses:

"Bring me seventy of Israel's elders who are known to you as leaders and officials among the people.... They will help you carry the burden of the people so that you will not have to carry it alone." Numbers 11:16

Have a minimum of three people:

Director/President/Chair (person who sets the agenda for meetings, oversees everything),

Treasurer (person who manages the money and creates a budget),

Secretary (person who keeps the paperwork and minutes)

Use committees to handle specific projects

Schedule meetings. Don't wait for a crisis to meet. Schedule during co-op time if possible.

Keep minutes of action items and decisions, but not private details of family issues or how every member voted.

Bylaws are rules of how an organization will operate

Who are members? Requirements for membership?

Do members vote? On what? Perhaps just to elect the board.

How often are meetings held?

How are board members chosen? Can hold elections or board simply replaces itself.

Sample bylaws at HomeschoolCPA.com/Samples

Create a Budget. List your sources of income (fees, fundraisers, donations), expenses and some extra for uncertainties.

Avoid Burnout

- Get help. Form a board. Do not repeat Moses' mistake
- Have guidelines and policies to avoid making decisions in crisis
- Focus on your purpose. Your co-op cannot be all things to all people-so stop trying!

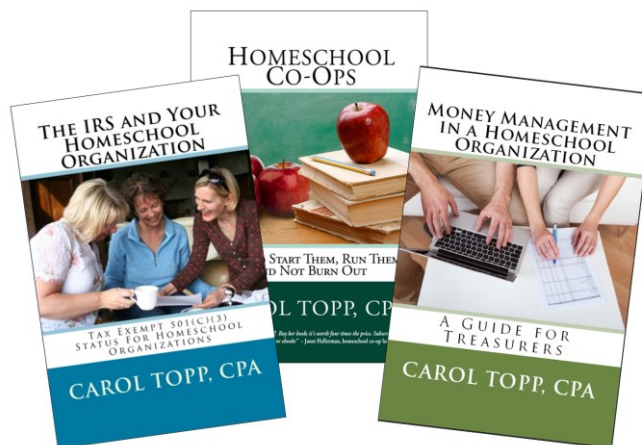
Read about

- 501(c)(3) Tax Exempt status. Read my book *The IRS and Your Homeschool Organization*
- Conflict Resolution. www.Peacemaker.net
- Insurance. Read article at HomeschoolCPA.com/LeaderTools/Articles
- Paying workers. Read *Money Management in a Homeschool Organization*
- Fund raising. You may need to register with your state attorney general. Avoid individual fundraising accounts (where fund raiser proceeds trickle down to a family)

Resources

My website: HomeschoolCPA.com

Click on Blog and then enter a term in the Search box (right column) to find what you need.



Homeschool Co-ops: How to Start Them, Run Them and Not Burn Out
The IRS and Your Homeschool Organization
Money Management for Homeschool Organizations

Carol Topp is available for consultation by phone, Skype, or Google+ video chat with your leaders.
Email her at Carol@HomeschoolCPA.com