

# Constitution

## Article 1 - Definition

1. The Ontario Christian Home Educators' Connection (**OCHEC**) is a Christian organization. It shall base all of its policies and actions on Christian principles and shall take the Bible as its moral and spiritual guide. Officers and Regional representatives of the Board of Directors must be believers in Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour.
2. **OCHEC** shall function as a network in the Province of Ontario that will link together individual homeschooling families and home education support groups whose members are home educators. It will endeavour to provide information, encouragement, ideas and resources to all its members including through research and dissemination of information at meetings, conferences, and other communications.

## Article 2 - Philosophy

1. **OCHEC** affirms the primacy of parental responsibility for the welfare, socialization and education of their children.
2. **OCHEC** is dedicated to the education and socialization of children in the natural setting of the family.
3. **OCHEC** acknowledges that the state has an interest in the education of the young, but asserts that such interest is secondary to the responsibility of parents over education.
4. **OCHEC** believes that the right to home education includes not merely a right over the place in which education occurs, but a right to determine the content, process and timing of this education.
5. **OCHEC** holds that student assessment is an integral aspect of the education process, and that therefore parents have the ultimate right and responsibility to determine the methods and instruments to be used.
6. **OCHEC** holds that the state must exercise its interest in the education of the young by the least intrusive means.
7. **OCHEC** pursues and recommends, within the framework of its philosophy, a policy of constructive interaction in dealing with officials of the Ministry of Education and local school boards.

## Article 3 - Purpose

The purpose of **OCHEC** is to serve the home education community primarily (but not exclusively) in the province of Ontario.

**OCHEC** exists...

1. To promote Christian home education over alternative forms of education.

2. To promote sound, high quality home education programs, which address the spiritual, intellectual, emotional and physical, needs of children, and contribute to their development of Christ-like character.
3. To provide encouragement and information to those interested in home education.
4. To aid in the creation and growth of home education support groups throughout the province of Ontario.
5. To obtain and disburse information regarding the legal climate for home educating families in Ontario, and in Canada.
6. To advocate for the freedom to home educate in Ontario and in Canada.
7. To conduct and encourage home education research and the dissemination thereof.

## **Article 4 - OCHEC Statement of Faith**

- Scripture:** We believe the Bible to be the inspired Word of God, the final authority for faith and life, without error in its original writing both in doctrine and historical details, and that all true knowledge is consistent with its revelation. (1)
- God:** We believe that there is one God, eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. (2)
- Jesus:** We believe in the deity of Christ (3), His virgin birth (4), sinless life (5), and miracles. We believe in His vicarious and atoning death (6), resurrection from the dead (7), ascension to the right hand of the Father (8), and in His personal return in power and glory. (9)
- Man:** We believe that man was created in the image of God. (10) He sinned by disobeying God; thus, he was alienated from his Creator. (11) That historic fall brought all mankind under divine condemnation. Man's nature is corrupted, and he is thus totally unable to please God. (12) Every man is in need of regeneration and renewal by the Holy Spirit.
- Salvation:** We believe that salvation is a free gift of God brought to the sinner by grace and received by personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ alone, (13) whose substitutionary death on the cross paid the penalty for man's sin. (14)
- Marriage and Family:** We believe that the God of the Bible established marriage as the exclusive lifetime covenant of union between one man and one woman. (15) It is His unique gift that echoes the union of Christ and His church, (16) and is the ideal environment that He has ordained for procreation and for the raising of children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord to the glory of God. (17)  
 We believe that children belong to God who has given the responsibility and authority for their discipleship and education to their parents. (18)  
 We believe that there is no neutral academic discipline and that all education is religious in nature since one's view of the world and life is inevitably involved in teaching.
- Government:** We believe that civil government has been instituted by God. (19) Such government exists to serve the people through the promotion of justice and order.

Footnotes: (Note all quotes are from the English Standard Version of the Bible)

- 1) 2 Timothy 3:16 All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness,
- 2) Mat 28:19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,
- 3) John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

- 4) Matthew 1:18-25 Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: "Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel" (which means, God with us). When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife, but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called his name Jesus.
- 5) Hebrews 4:15 For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.
- 6) Hebrews 9:27-28 And just as it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment, so Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him.
- 7) 1 Corinthians 15:1-8 Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you--unless you believed in vain. For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me.
- 8) Acts 1:9-11 And when he had said these things, as they were looking on, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. And while they were gazing into heaven as he went, behold, two men stood by them in white robes, and said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven."
- 9) Hebrews 9:27-28 And just as it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment, so Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him.
- 10) Genesis 1:26 Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."
- 11) Genesis 3:17-18 And to Adam he said, "Because you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, 'You shall not eat of it,' cursed is the ground because of you; in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life; thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you; and you shall eat the plants of the field.
- 12) Romans 3:23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,
- 13) Romans 3:24 and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,
- 14) Romans 3:25 whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins.
- 15) Genesis 2:24 Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.
- 16) Ephesians 5:23 For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior.
- 17) Ephesians 6:1-3 Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. "Honor your father and mother" (this is the first commandment with a promise), "that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land."
- 18) Deuteronomy 6:7 You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.
- 19) Romans 13:1 Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God.

# OCHEC BY-LAWS

## Article 5 - Membership

### *Section 1: Membership types.*

Individual Membership (Individual Members) is open to all home educators and interested parties. Individual Members have all the benefits of OCHEC membership but do not have voting privileges. Individual members must affirm the Philosophy, Purpose, Statement of Faith and By-laws of **OCHEC**. For the purposes of counting the number of Individual Members in a Support Group, an Individual Member that belongs to more than one Support Group must select their primary Support Group to determine the number of voting delegates available to the Support Group.

Support Group Membership (Support Group) is open to all home education support groups whose members are home educators. Member Support Groups have voting privileges. A Support Group with five (5) to twenty-five (25) Individual Members has 1 vote. Each additional twenty (20) Individual Members in the Support Group, entitles the Support Group to an additional voting delegate from the Support Group. The person(s) selected as the voting delegate(s) for the Support Group must also be an Individual Member(s). Their Individual Membership counts towards the number of Individual Members in the Support Group. Only these Support Group delegates have a vote at the OCHEC Member meetings. Support Groups need not be designated as Christian but must affirm agreement with the Philosophy, Purpose, Statement of Faith and By-laws of **OCHEC**.

### *Section 2: Expectations.*

It is expected that all members will support **OCHEC** to ensure that its purposes are met:

- a) with their annual membership fees and dues, and/or
- b) by aiding in the work of the organization.

Members cannot make statements, representations, or take action on behalf of **OCHEC** without explicit permission from **OCHEC**.

### *Section 3: Use of OCHEC name*

The name “Ontario Christian Home Educators’ Connection”, its short version “**OCHEC**” and its Logo is the exclusive property of the Provincial Organization.

### *Section 4: Applying for Membership*

Individual membership applications must be submitted directly to **OCHEC**.

Support Group membership applications must be submitted to **OCHEC**.

### *Section 5: Term of Membership*

Support Group members will be required to make application to renew their membership upon expiry by re-affirming their agreement to the Philosophy, Purpose, Statement of Faith and Bylaws of **OCHEC**.

Individual members will be required to renew their membership upon expiry.

### *Section 6: Revocation of Membership*

If any Support Group’s or Individual Member's conduct is determined by the Board of Directors to be improper or likely to endanger the interests or the reputation of **OCHEC**, or if any member is in direct, public non-compliance with the statement of philosophy, purpose, Statement of Faith or by-laws of **OCHEC**, there shall be a meeting with the Board of Directors to consider the matter. Two weeks prior written notice shall be given to the party or parties involved. If the matter remains unresolved, the Board of Directors shall have the

power by vote of three-fourths of its Board members to remove the Support Group or the Individual Member from the membership roll.

## **Article 6 - Board of Directors**

### ***Section 1: Administration***

The affairs of **OCHEC** shall be under the policy direction of a Board of Directors. This Board shall represent the interests of its membership, in particular, and the Christian home educating community in the province of Ontario, in general.

### ***Section 2: General Requirements***

2.1 Board members shall be at the time of their appointment and throughout their term of office

- a) have reached the age of majority, and
- b) be current individual members of **OCHEC**, and
- c) be actively supporting home educators in Ontario, and
- d) either
  - i. be actively home educating as long as they have school age children, or
  - ii. be a former home educator with no school age children who has home educated for at least two (2) years, or
  - iii. been home educated for a minimum of five (5) years.

2.2 The **OCHEC** board of directors shall have not less than three (3) and not more than ten (10) members, as may be affirmed by the directors from time to time.

2.3 Each Board Member shall:

- a) have signed a statement that they agree with all parts of this Constitution; the definition, Philosophy, Purpose, By-laws and Statement of Faith of this organization.
- b) have submitted a brief written resume of their Christian experience and its importance in their life.
- c) have had an interview with two or more members of the Board of Directors to assess their commitment to the assignment.
- d) have demonstrated previously their commitment to serve home educating families either locally or in the province.

2.4 The Board of Directors shall meet frequently enough to provide vision and guidance to **OCHEC**.

### ***Section 3: OCHEC Member Meetings***

3.1 The Board of Directors shall schedule the Annual Meeting to which all members may attend.

3.2 Special meetings of the members can be held at the discretion of the Chairman of the Board or when called for by a majority of the Board of Directors or one-fourth of the member Support Groups may petition the Board of Directors with a proposed agenda. If petitioned, the Board of Directors shall call a special meeting within thirty days. A notice of Special Meeting shall be mailed to all member Support Groups at least two weeks prior to the meeting date and shall include the topic(s) to be considered.

### ***Section 4: Quorum***

4.1 A majority of the Board of Directors shall constitute a quorum.

If all the directors consent, a meeting of directors may be held by means of such telephone or other

communication facility that permits all persons in the meeting to hear each other simultaneously. A director participating in such meeting by such means is deemed to be present at that meeting.

4.2 Any action normally taken at a meeting of the Board of Directors may be taken without a meeting, if a resolution in writing setting forth the action to be taken is signed by two-thirds of the Board.

4.3 All questions arising at a Board of Directors meeting shall be decided by a majority of votes unless a greater majority is required elsewhere in this Constitution.

4.4 The act of a majority of Board of Directors members at which a quorum is present shall be the act of the Board.

## **Article 7 - Budget**

### ***Section 1: Adoption***

1.1 The budget shall be approved by the board annually and presented to the membership at the annual meeting.

### ***Section 2: Determination of Dues***

2.1 The fee for Individuals Members is set by the Board of Directors.

2.2 Where the annual fee is more than a 10% increase over prior year fee, voting members must approve by vote.

### ***Section 3: Collection of Dues***

3.1 Dues for membership shall be submitted to OCHEC upon expiry with their application for membership or renewal.

3.2 Individual member fees are paid directly to OCHEC.

## **Article 8 – Amendments**

### ***Section 1: Portion that Cannot be Amended***

Article I paragraph 1 and Article 8 section 1 may not be amended

### ***Section 2: Amendment Procedure***

This constitution may be amended by a majority vote of the voting delegates at the Annual Meeting.

Amendments may be proposed by the Board of Directors or by a Support Group member provided that notice of such proposed amendment is first submitted in writing to the Board of Directors. The proposed amendment will then be submitted to the Support Group members for consideration at least six weeks prior to the Annual Meeting.

## **Article 9 - Dissolution**

Upon the recommendation of the Board of Directors and a majority vote of the voting delegates (Article 5.1) present at an Annual or Special Meeting, this organization shall 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 provincial or national home education organization, as designated by the Board of Directors, seeking to achieve purposes similar to those of OCHEC.

### **Addendum: DEFINITIONS**

**Support Group** – home education support group whose members are home educators, which has applied

for and received membership with **OCHEC** and which membership is in good standing.

**Individual Member** – an individual who has applied for and received individual membership with **OCHEC** and whose membership is in good standing

14 June 2000 revision as per motion in 2000 Annual Meeting

25 May 2001 revision as per motion in 2001 Annual Meeting

2 May 2003 revision as per motion in 2003 Annual Meeting

29 April 2005 revision as per motion in 2005 Annual Meeting

3 May 2014 revision as per motion in 2014 Annual Meeting (included statement of faith)

3 Nov 2018 revision as per motion in 2018 Annual Meeting (changed board member requirements)

13 August 2020 revision per motion in 2020 Special Meeting (changed membership model)