

Can a Micro School be a Homeschool Group (and avoid some headaches)?

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Topics

- Definitions that are hard to pin down
- Difference between homeschool co-ops/hybrids and micro schools
- Litmus test: Are you a homeschool group?
- *“Just have parents file to homeschool”* Is it that easy?

Handout at



Definitions

I'M GOING TO TRY MY BEST...AND PROBABLY FAIL!



The pandemic taught us: Just being at home doesn't make you a homeschooler.

**Words have meanings!
Choose them carefully!**



Homeschool Co-op

Gatherings of homeschool families.

Volunteer teachers

Usually **once a week.**

Nonprofit organizations.



Homeschool Tutorials or Hybrids

Paid teachers/tutors teach homeschooled children in classes

Usually **once or twice a week**

Most are **nonprofit** organizations, some are **for-profit businesses**.



Micro School

Small group of students, mixed ages

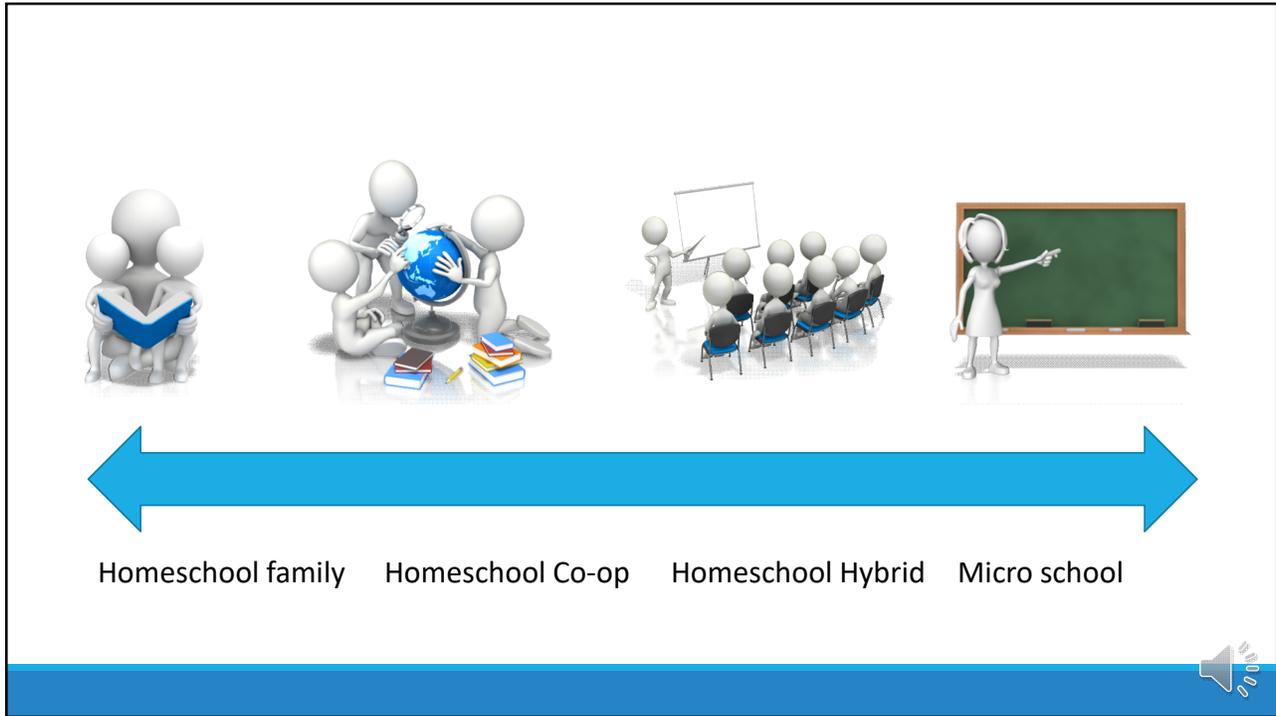
Taught by a **paid teacher**.

Most are **5 days/week**

Many are **for-profit businesses**

Most register as **schools**.





Differences

I'M GOING TO TRY MY BEST...AND PROBABLY FAIL!

Compulsory Attendance

HOMESCHOOL GROUP

Parent is responsible for compliance. Most states require **Notice of Intent (NOI)** to homeschool (to avoid truancy)

MICRO SCHOOL

School is responsible and keeps attendance. Attendance in most states is **180 days** per year.



Days in session

HOMESCHOOL GROUP

Most states require parent to be "primary instructor" so co-ops limit to **1 or 2 sessions per week**

MICRO SCHOOL

5 days per week. 180 days per year is common.



(NOI) Notice of Intent to homeschool

HOMESCHOOL GROUP

Required in most states.
Some require listing of
non-parental teachers

MICRO SCHOOL

Not homeschooling, so
no NOI is filed



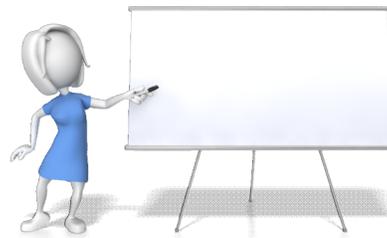
Instruction

HOMESCHOOL GROUP

Primarily **parents at home** 2-4 days per week. Instructors are usually **part time, frequently parents, frequently volunteers** in co-ops. May be "unqualified"

MICRO SCHOOL

Hired teachers. Usually well qualified.



Curriculum

HOMESCHOOL GROUP

What **co-op teacher** chooses. Hodge-podge or haphazard. Some hybrids offer fuller load of subjects.



MICRO SCHOOL

Teacher chooses curriculum. Usually full range of subjects. Follow state requirements.



Cost

HOMESCHOOL GROUP

Co-ops are cheap \$50-\$500/year/family. Hybrids more expensive \$200-\$2,000/year/child.

MICRO SCHOOL

Can be as much or more than private school; more than homeschooling



Business Structure

HOMESCHOOL GROUP

Usually **nonprofit organizations** volunteers, board. No owner.



MICRO SCHOOL

Usually for-profit business with one owner (sole proprietorship). Usually single member LLC.



School status

HOMESCHOOL GROUP

Not recognized as a school by the state or the IRS

MICRO SCHOOL

Most register as a private school (to meet compulsory attendance)



Litmus test: Can I call my micro school a homeschool program?

Limit to 2 or 3 days per week

Keep parents as primary instructor

Parents file NOI

Don't offer full course load

Don't call yourself a *school*



HSLDA advises 2 days a week

Manageable

Less risk of the **state classifying the homeschool program as a school.**

Keeps the **parent the primary educator**, which is the law in many states.

Going to three days a week or more seems like it's not really homeschooling because it lacks the parental involvement.



“Just have parents file an NOI to homeschool!”



...e on. The parents still wanted me to teach their kids so I started a tutoring business and they filed to home school their kids.



Call your micro school a homeschool group?

Please, don't! Unless you are!

Research your state laws that define homeschooling.

- Who can teach, days per week, reporting, NOI, testing, etc.

Could invite more regulation on homeschooling (and your micro school).

Be proud to be a micro school!



Homeschool groups still deal with:

Paying teachers, payroll taxes, employee status

Paying rent

Child safety, fire codes, background checks, mandatory reporting, etc.

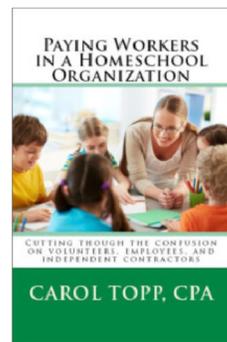
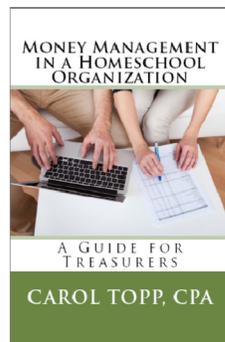
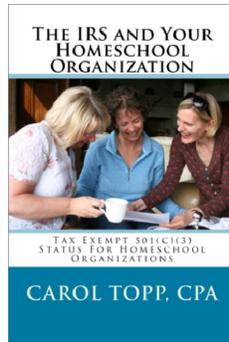
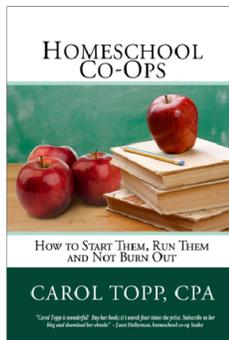
Daycare licensing

Zoning

Insurance



HomeschoolCPA



Webinars by Carol Topp, CPA

How to Start a Microschool: Legal and Financial Foundations

Teacherpreneurship: Making Accounting Less Painful for Teacherpreneurs

<https://www.meridian-learning.org/course-previews/>



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