

Dear Partners in Parenting,

General Assembly Academy welcomes you and your child! We believe that your association with us will be a happy and rewarding experience. Our staff will be glad to assist you in any way we can, so do not hesitate to ask for assistance and guidance.

This handbook will explain to you the rules and regulations of your school. We ask each parent to study the handbook carefully and accept the responsibility of instructing their children on its contents. We ask each student to be governed by the intended spirit of the handbook. If there are any questions concerning this publication, please feel free to ask any staff member for an answer.

We believe the commitment that you have taken toward Christian education represents an important step in your attempt to provide a Christ-centered education for your children.

In the Master's Service,

The Staff

SCHOOL POLICY STATEMENT

The General Assembly Academy is an inseparable part of the ministries of the General Assembly and Church of the Firstborn. The policies of the Academy are determined by the controlling authority of the local congregation. (Pastor and Elders)

GENERAL PURPOSE

It has always been a part of God's plan that parents are ultimately responsible for the education and development of their children (Deut. 6:6-9, Eph. 6:4). The general purpose of the Academy is to assist parents with the moral and spiritual training of children and to provide technical assistance to the parent and child in mastering academic skills and concepts.

STATEMENT OF FAITH

We believe that both the Old and New Testaments is the inspired Word of God revealing the one God manifested in Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

We believe in the Incarnation and virgin birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ as true God and true man.

We believe that man was created in the image of God, but became separated from God by sin.

We believe that man is redeemed by grace through faith in Christ's vicarious atonement for sins, the shedding of His blood on the cross.

We believe that the gift of eternal life is available to all men, that those who receive Christ by faith are regenerated by the Holy Ghost and thereby become children of God.

We believe in the bodily Resurrection of Christ, His imminent return, and the resurrection of His people.

PHILOSOPHY OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

The Academy starts with the premise that the only true education is a Christian education. This premise is based on the fact that only Christian education deals with all the dimensions of life as viewed from a Biblical perspective.

In order for an educational program to be academically sound and instructionally effective, it must be founded upon Christian education principles that recognize the true nature of God, of truth, of knowledge, and of man. Implicit in Christian education are these basic truths:

1. Man does possess a spiritual dimension (Gen. 1:26-27).
2. Education involves the total being.... spiritual, intellectual, physical, and social (Prov. 9:9)
3. Each person possesses unique individual potential, traits, and needs (Rom. 12:3-8)
4. The educational experience must involve (as a primary emphasis) the development of Christian beliefs, attitudes, and skills toward zealous application.
5. An integration of Bible truth will be an inseparable and primary part of the total educational process. Christian concepts will be unified with, inseparable from, and central to the academic offerings.
6. Youth needs a steady influence while preparing to live in a complex society. Only the Bible has the answers to man's needs and longings, and therefore, will serve as our final authority on all questions.

WHY THE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL?

Parents are mandated by God to educate their children (Deut. 6:6-9; Eph. 6:4). Children are gifts from God (Ps. 127:3-5). Parents are responsible to “train up” their children in the way of the Lord and not in the ways of the world (Prov. 22:6; Eph. 6:4). God’s people are told, “Thus saith the Lord, learn not the way of the heathen. . . . For the customs of the people are vain. . . .” (Jer. 10:2-3). Proverbs 19:27 states, “Cease, my son, to hear the instruction that causeth to err from the words of knowledge.” It is obvious that God has been very careful to instruct and warn parents as to the type of education a child is to receive.

In God’s economy of things, He has ordained three basic institutions: the Family, the Church, and the State. In fulfilling parental responsibility for the education of the children, the family usually seeks help and support from one of the institutions outside the home, since there is no Biblical authority for the state being involved in education, the creation of a Christian school under the direction of the church serves as an extension of the home in assisting the parents in fulfilling their responsibility to “train up” their children.

BASIC EDUCATIONAL GOALS

- A. It will be the goal of this school to aid the home and church in teaching children the Biblical principles and knowledge necessary to prepare them for life and eternity.
- B. The school will provide the atmosphere and opportunity for the children to receive a basic education that states the Bible is the Word of God and the guide for all areas of life.
- C. The school will be an aid to the home in developing in children good study habits, the ability and desire to continue the process of education after school, an appreciation for physical labor, strong moral character, honesty, dependability, a fear of God and obedience to His Word.
- D. The school will teach the children the proper respect for authority in the home, church, school, and state. The children will be taught not to speak evil of those in authority, but rather to be subject to them and to pray for them.
- E. Children will be taught to be self-supporting as adults and to avoid becoming a liability to the society in which they live.
- F. The school will focus on the fundamentals of Bible, Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies, and Science with an appreciation of the arts.

ADMISSIONS

The school is operated especially for the children whose parents are members of General Assembly Church. Exceptions may be considered on an individual basis, subject to the approval of the Elders of the congregation.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

It is the responsibility of the student and parent to create the habit of being punctual and regular in attendance. The school feels that faithful attendance is necessary for the maximum benefits.

Legitimate absences:

- A. Personal illness, injury, or doctor appointments that cannot be scheduled after school hours.
- B. Illness in the immediate family that requires the student's presence.
- C. Death in the family
- D. Absences with prior approval from the Administrator.

You must notify the student's teacher as quickly as possible concerning any absences.

Truancy:

Truancy is defined as an absence without the knowledge and consent of parents or the school staff. This would include leaving school without permission before the end of the day, or staying out of any scheduled class without permission. Such action will not be tolerated.

Tardiness:

Each student is expected to be in the classroom when the period begins. All students must come to class fully prepared with the materials needed for class. Discipline for tardiness will be left to the discretion of the student's teacher.

ENROLLMENT POLICY

All decisions concerning the admission and enrollment of a family into the school will be made by the Elders. Details of the enrollment procedure are developed by the school administrator. The enrollment procedure includes:

- A. Carefully reading the Handbook for parents and students.
- B. Attending an initial parent orientation designed to communicate to parents what is expected if accepted into the school.
- C. Parents scheduling an interview with a school official and/or admission committee. The student(s) should also attend the interview.
- D. Completing all forms in the "Enrollment and Student Cumulative Record Packet".
- E. Parents making the necessary financial arrangements required by the school.
- F. School arranging a schedule for testing and placement of each student.

FINANCIAL POLICY

The Academy operates as an integral and inseparable part of the Church. Therefore, the school is considered to be a "faith ministry." As such, the financial support for the school comes from tithes, offerings, and gifts of members of the General Assembly Church.

The monetary support for the school is treated as a regular budget line item of the General Assembly Church.

- A. Costs of student curriculum materials are to be paid by the parents.
- B. A registration fee will be charged at the first of each school year, this fee covers:

1. Fees charged by outside state or national organizations which keep us covered legally.
 2. Upkeep of the student's yearly files.
 3. Copying charge for extra student work.
- C. Parents will be informed prior to each school year what the approximate monthly costs will be to support each child in the program.
- D. Non-members permitted to send their children to this school by special arrangement will pay tuition as determined by the board of Elders.

KINDERGARTEN ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS

A child entering kindergarten must be five (5) years old on or before September 30.

Before a child can be admitted, the following records must be on file:

- A. Physical examination
- B. An up-to-date immunization record. If the required immunizations are not given, we must have a statement signed by the parent stating that the child has not been immunized and tuberculin-tested because of religious convictions or other objections to immunization.
- C. A preschool vision test
- D. A preschool hearing test

A record of these requirements must be on file in the office before your child is allowed to enter the Academy.

PARENT ORIENTATION AND INVOLVEMENT

The Academy assumes there will be active and substantial parental involvement in the education of children. Therefore, after enrollment into the school, parents are required to participate in the following activities:

- A. Parent Orientation Session(s) prior to the opening of each academic school year.
- B. All scheduled "Parent Conferences" to discuss student progress.
- C. All scheduled "Parent Information Nights"
- D. Daily monitoring and assisting with academic subjects as assigned by the classroom teacher.
- E. Parental work days. (Saturdays during the year identified "work days" when parents will be asked to assist with facility and playground maintenance.)

STUDENT CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE

A lifestyle that reflects Christian principles stands out in today's crowd. At the Academy we have standards of conduct and dress that we feel should be a part of the student's mode of living. Most of the standards are simply for the protection of our students and for the orderly operation of our school.

Every institution has standards of conduct. These can be stated as rules, do's and don'ts, or as principles to live by. Rules tend to promote a legalistic and regimented interpretation and response. For example, a rule says: "Don't hit another student." The student could "obey" that rule and still have hatred in his heart. In so doing, he misses the spirit of love implied in the rule. However, a principle says: "Love your fellow students and treat them the way you would treat the Lord." This principle has many applications implied in it: giving of oneself to other students, supporting and helping them, putting them first, not doing or saying anything that would hurt

them, etc. Principles tend to promote a heart response or change in attitude that goes far beyond superficial behavior or outward actions. This, after all, is what learning the ways of God is all about; not learning just the “right thing to do” or how to “get by,” but having the nature of Christ formed in us (II Pet. 1:3,4).

Therefore, the following are examples of principles set forth as a standard or plumb line for student behavior.

- A. Faithfulness – covenant love, laying down your life for the brethren and the Lord; being dependable and trustworthy; patient and forgiving.
- B. Honor – the fear of the Lord and respect for those in authority; preferring one another; humility, submissiveness, and obedience; teachability; gratefulness.
- C. Harmony – dwelling together in unity; friendship and sharing; peace and joy; cooperation.
- D. Honesty – being truthful with God, yourself, and others; integrity and sincerity; transparency; fairness.
- E. Purity – holy to the Lord; cleanness; modesty; decency; noble and lovely.
- F. Order – under discipline and self-disciplined; neat and orderly; organized and clear thinking.
- G. Stewardship – accountability and responsibility; serving; diligence and perseverance; labor; bringing things to excellence; sowing and reaping.

DISCIPLINE

Correction of Offenses – Teachers will generally be responsible for the conduct of students throughout the school day. Students should expect to be corrected by a teacher whenever they are guilty of any one of the thoughtless acts that are not in the best interest of the school. In the case of minor infractions, parents will generally not be contacted unless the teacher’s corrective action has proven unsuccessful; in which case parents will be informed and involved. The school administrator will generally be responsible for handling the more serious offenses. Parents will be notified of the nature of the offense and also the disciplinary action taken.

Disciplinary Action Alternatives – Alternatives can be, but are not limited to the following: parent conferences, noon or recess detention, work detail, non-participation in extracurricular activities, paddling, and release to parental custody.

Corporal Punishment – General Assembly Academy reserves the right to corporally punish a student for rebellion involving major offenses or continued minor offenses. Paddling may be administered by a teacher or administrator, subject to approval by parents. (Prov. 22:15; Prov. 23:13-14). Direct parental involvement will be used when at all possible.

DAMAGE TO SCHOOL PROPERTY

It is expected that all damage, even if accidental, will be acknowledged by the person involved and a plan for reimbursement made.

DRESS CODE

A student’s appearance should reflect the impression that formal learning is important enough to call for precision and neatness in dress. Style of clothing should indicate a serious academic purpose on the part of the student. Our standards for dress and grooming are in keeping with the Christian ideals that we seek to establish in those who attend the school.

To achieve these standards we have adopted a mandatory uniform dress code. Information regarding the purchase of school uniforms can be obtained at the school office any time during the school year.

Some of the reasons for adopting a uniform dress code are: uniforms result in stronger discipline and academics, help improve a student's self image, reduce yearly clothing costs, eliminate daily decision of what to wear, eliminate competition in dress between potential social climbers, standardize and neutralize externals while enhancing individualization in the internal values, and give identification, which helps to build school spirit.

Students are expected to be hygienically clean when they arrive in the morning. They should have had a bath, teeth brushed, nails cleaned, and hair combed. Long hair (no longer than the top of a shirt collar) and earring will not be permitted for boys. Girls may wear only stud earrings.

BOY/GIRL RELATIONS

The General Assembly Academy provides opportunities for boys and girls to cultivate friendships. In some instances these associations will deepen into more than passing friendships. This is both natural and expected. However, all such friendships must be handled in a responsible manner. Public displays of affection (handholding, arms around each other, kissing, etc.) will be considered in poor taste and will be discouraged.

CHAPEL OR ASSEMBLIES

Chapel and assemblies will be an important part of the spiritual educational program of the Academy. Each school day will begin with either Bible study, devotion, prayer or a chapel service.

The following guidelines will be used:

- A. Attendance is required of all students.
- B. Each pupil will demonstrate proper courtesy to the speaker.
- C. There will be no unnecessary talking, or disturbances; and
- D. Students will not be allowed to study during this time.

BASIC ACADEMIC MATTERS

Accreditation

Accreditation by a state or regional governmental agency is an administrative mechanism designed to ensure uniform education for all children in secular schools.

Accreditation was established as a governmental means for determining whether minimum academic and faculty standards were being met by secular tax-supported school.

The General Assembly Academy has not sought accreditation by any governmental agency for several reasons.

- A. The Academy is not interested in using textbooks adopted or approved by the state. Many of those texts are developed by secular authors who reject fundamental Christian principles and therefore are saturated with "humanistic" values.
- B. The Academy will not be bound by state curriculum or teacher certification requirements that are often contrary to those of Christian education standards.

- C. General Assembly Academy believes it is unreasonable for parents to withdraw their children from a government school with its academic and moral ills and place them in a private institution with the same curriculum methods and objectives.
- D. Accreditation of a Christian school is not necessary for a graduate who wishes to enroll in a college or university. The basic criteria for college admissions are student aptitude and achievement as determined through nationally normed standardized tests. The instructional program of the Academy is designed and implemented to allow those graduated to stand on their own academic merit and achievements.

Faculty

All staff members of the General Assembly Academy have been carefully selected on the basis of their education, experience, and integrity. The most outstanding requirements for the instructional staff are an unselfish spirit of dedication to children, a belief that the Christian school ministry is their service to God, and a complete and personal acceptance of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Facilities

The school represents a ministry of the General Assembly Church and is therefore privileged to use all of its facilities as needed. All activities of the school day will take place on the church premises unless parents are notified otherwise.

Homework

It will not be the policy of the school to assign large amounts of homework. However, when homework is assigned, it will be geared to the child's ability and relative deficiencies. A Homework Assignment form will be sent home to explain the work and to get your signature.

Every student is assigned daily goals in every subject to be completed in the allotted class time (usually 50-55 minutes per class). The only time a student should have homework is if they did not finish their daily work in class, if they need to do research which cannot be done at school, or if they need to study for tests.

SCHOOL ROUTINE

Field Trips

Permission slips will be sent out at the beginning of each school year to cover any field trips we might take during that current year. It is essential that parents sign this permission slip and return it to the school. Notes giving details of individual trips will be sent home during the year. Parents are **always** invited to participate in field trips.

Illness During School Hours

If a student becomes ill during the day, he may be excused to go home by the administrator. Before the pupil is excused, however, a parent will be contacted. For this reason it is important that the school have the correct home and work telephone numbers of both parents.

Lunch

All students are required to bring their lunch to school. On certain “special” days, the school will serve a hot lunch. Parents will be notified as to the date. Students who drive will be permitted to leave school for lunch with written parental permission.

Medications

Parents are asked to consider the potential danger of having students bringing medication to school. The school recognizes that medications are justified in chronic health conditions and short-term acute health conditions, but no medication will be administered without the written request of a parent and/or directive of a physician.

Physical Education

All students are expected to participate in physical education activities, unless specifically excused by the administrator.

School Calendar

The school calendar will be set up at the beginning of each academic year and distributed to the parents.

School Hours

School hours will be set at the beginning of each academic year. Supervision will be provided for students fifteen (15) minutes before school starts and fifteen (15) minutes after dismissal. We normally attend school seven (7) hours per day which builds extra days into our calendar.

Snow Days

The Academy has worked out a snow day (home school) policy to prevent unnecessary interruptions of the school calendar. To maintain this privilege we must follow the following guidelines set up by TANAS:

- A. Each student must check in by phone with their teacher to receive instructions for the day.
- B. Students are expected to study or be instructed by parents for at least four hours that day.

Student Injury

The staff of the Academy will attempt to exercise reasonable judgment for the care of students in the case of physical injury. In those cases where an injury appears to be serious, we retain the right to seek professional help, including ambulance, doctor, and emergency room services. Parents will be responsible for paying for the services obtained in the child’s behalf.

Transportation

Primarily due to cost and liability factors, the Academy does not provide transportation. Assistance will be given to help establish “car pools”. Any other effort of parents to facilitate transportation of students will be welcomed!