

Excel Christian Academy

A Ministry of Gospel Lighthouse Pentecostal
Church of God of Powderly, Texas

Family Handbook

Effective April 1, 2016

Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one.

Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and
with all your strength.

These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts.

Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home
and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get
up.

Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads.

Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.

Deuteronomy 6:4-9 NIV

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Introduction

This Family Handbook should serve as a convenient source of information about Excel Christian Academy. Please study it carefully together as a family upon receiving it, and keep it ready for reference during the year.

These policies and procedures represent the most recent expression of the leadership of Excel Christian Academy's intention to provide equitable and consistent treatment of students and families. Neither this handbook nor anything in it is a contract. To assure that Excel Christian Academy achieves and maintains the purpose of this policy manual and to assure the school's continued ability to meet its needs and those of its students and families under changing conditions, Excel Christian Academy reserves the right to modify, augment, suspend, or revoke any and all policies, procedures, practices, and statements in this handbook.

Questions about policies or procedures should be directed to the school's Principal, Pastor Chris Kelley. It is the goal of Excel Christian Academy to endeavor to create an environment where Christ is honored every day and where learning distractions are limited.

May God bless our school family as we work together to serve our Lord and Savior.

About Excel Christian Academy

Excel Christian Academy began as a dream birthed into the hearts of Pastors Chris and Faith Kelley. A dream of building and establishing a Christ-centered educational institution where students could excel in their relationship with Christ and in academics. This dream was given nine years before the first student would be enrolled, but in 2012 this dream finally became a reality as Excel Christian Academy opened its doors as a ministry of Gospel Lighthouse PCG of Powderly, TX. To God be the glory for all He has accomplished through ECA and for all He will continue to do!

Section 1

Statements of Faith

Excel Christian Academy is a ministry of Gospel Lighthouse Pentecostal Church of God of Powderly, Texas and shares the Statements of Faith of Gospel Lighthouse.

Fundamental Truths

There is one God, eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Jesus Christ is God Himself, came to earth in the flesh, was born of a virgin, and lived a sinless life. He died a substitutionary and atoning death on the cross. He arose bodily from the grave and ascended into heaven where He sits at the right hand of God.

Man was created in God's image and being descended from Adam inherited a sinful nature and cannot save himself from the natural consequences of sin.

Men and women are saved and justified by faith in the shed blood of Jesus Christ and are born again by the Holy Spirit and become children of God by accepting Him as Lord and Savior. There is a spiritual unity of all believers in our Lord Jesus Christ.

Statement on Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality

God creates each person as male or female. These two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God (Genesis 1:26 27). Rejection of one's biological sex rejects the image of God within that person.

The term marriage has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as described in Scripture (Genesis 2:18 25).

God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman married to each other. God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman (1 Corinthians 6:18, 7:2-5; Hebrews 13:4).

Any form of sexual immorality (including adultery, fornication, homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, and use of pornography) is sinful and offensive to God (Matthew 15:18 20; 1 Corinthians 6:9 10).

All persons employed by the Church, including the School, in any capacity, or who serve as volunteers, must agree to and abide by this

Statement on Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality to fulfill the purposes of the Church and to offer a biblical role model to the community (Matthew 5:16; Philippians 2:14-16; 1 Thessalonians 5:22).

God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ (Acts 3:19-21; Romans 10:9-10; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11).

We must show compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity to everyone (Mark 12:28-31; Luke 6:31). We will not accept hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual.

Statement on Gender Identity

God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God. Rejection of one's biological sex rejects the image of God within that person.

Participation in any program or activity limited to individuals of one biological sex is exclusively limited to individuals who are persons of that biological sex.

Access to facilities (including restrooms, changing rooms, and nursing rooms) designated for use by only one biological sex is exclusively limited to individuals who are persons of that biological sex.

In the rare cases of intersex or repentant transgendered individuals, the Church Board may allow for proper accommodations.

We must show compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity to everyone. We will not accept hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual.

Statement on Life

God creates all human life in His image. Human life is sacred and of immeasurable worth in all its dimensions, including the pre-born baby, the poor, the orphan, the widow, the aged, the physically or mentally challenged, and every other stage or condition from conception through natural death.

We are called to defend, protect, and value all human life.

Statement on Biblical Authority

The Bible is the inspired and infallible Word of God. The Bible is the final authority on truth, morality, and proper conduct. The Bible is the ultimate and only source of all we believe.

The Church Board is the final interpretive authority on the Bible's meaning and application regarding our faith, doctrine, practice, policy, and discipline.

Statements of Faith

It is essential the Members, Directors, Officers, Senior Pastor, employees, and volunteers of the Church, including the school, agree to and abide by the Fundamental Truths, the Statement on Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality, the Statement on Gender Identity, the Statement on Life, and the Statement on Biblical Authority (Statements of Faith).

Section 2

Mission Statement and Vision

Mission Statement

The mission of Excel Christian Academy is to develop students with a heart for God who grow as Jesus did in wisdom, stature, and in favor with God and men. Excel Christian Academy considers its employees to be ministers of Christ to the students and families they serve.

Vision

The vision of Excel Christian Academy is to ignite and transform students to impact our communities through world-class, Christ-centered educational experiences.

Section 3

Philosophy and Goals of Excel Christian Academy

Our Philosophy

The educational philosophy of Excel Christian Academy is based on a Biblical view of God, man, truth, and education. Since God created and maintains all things through His Son, Jesus Christ, the universe and all life are dynamically related to God and have the purpose of glorifying Him. This is especially true of man who was created in God's image, different in kind from all other creation, with the unique capacity to know and respond to God personally and voluntarily. Because man is a sinner by nature and choice, however, he cannot, in this condition, know or honor God in his life. He can do this only by being born again through receiving Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord and thus be enabled to do God's will, which is the ultimate purpose in life.

The entire process of education is a means used by God to bring the student into fellowship with Himself, to develop a Christian mind in him and to train him in Godly living so he can fulfill God's total purpose for his life. He must be taught the Bible so he may understand God and his own nature and role as a person created in God's image. He must be developed and related to God as a whole person, spiritually, mentally, physically and socially. He must learn to see all truth as God's truth and to integrate it with his own unique abilities and personality. He must interact with and be taught by parent and teacher models who are themselves born again and have this perspective of life.

The authority for such an education comes both from God's command that the children be taught to love God and place Him first in their lives, and from the fact that parents oversee the total education and training of their children. At the parents' request, the Christian school, with the church, becomes a partner in giving this education.

Excel Christian Academy provides a Biblically-integrated instructional program in a disciplined environment that encourages spiritual commitment and academic excellence.

Therefore, our school is dedicated to:

- (a) Leading each student to a vital, personal relationship with God through faith in Jesus Christ;
- (b) Assisting each student in developing a Christian mind and a Christian lifestyle;
- (c) Promoting a Biblical integration of faith and learning;
- (d) Developing a comprehensive educational program that helps each student achieve full academic potential;
- (e) Maintaining a diverse extracurricular program designed to assist each student in developing social skills and the expression of individual personality;
- (f) Preparing and encouraging each student for effective service for Christ in whatever career he/she chooses;
- (g) Supporting and assisting the Christian home and the Bible-teaching local church.

Our Goals

To fulfill these responsibilities it is the goal of Excel Christian Academy to:

- (a) Christian Faith and Values.
 - (1) Help each student increase in knowledge of God and accept Him as the source of knowledge and wisdom.
 - (2) Encourage each student to accept Christ as personal Savior and to continue to grow and develop in the knowledge of Christ to become more like Him (Ephesians 4:13).
 - (3) Help each student understand the present ministry of the Holy Spirit, who lives in each believer, and guides each believer in the understanding and application of Biblical principles (John 14:26, John 16:13, I Corinthians 6:19).
 - (4) Help each student gain a knowledge of, appreciation for, and confidence in the Bible as the only inspired, infallible, and authoritative Word of God, and encourage each student to be consistent in personal Bible study.

- (5) Help each student understand the significance of the local Bible-teaching church and the necessity for regular attendance and involvement.
 - (6) Help each student identify and develop his/her unique gifts and abilities, and the importance of using them for the benefit of the entire Christian community (I Corinthians 12:7, Ephesians 4:16).
 - (7) Help each student with developing personal Christian convictions and values, and encourage commitment to them during times of pressure and adversity (Ephesians 6:11-13).
- (b) Christian Missions and Service
- (1) Encourage each student to be sensitive and responsible to the needs of others (Philippians 2:4).
 - (2) Help each student develop the abilities and skills needed to communicate the Gospel of Christ (Romans 1:16).
 - (3) Help each student develop a knowledge of and spiritual concern for other people and cultures, and assume the responsibility each Christian has in world missions (Matthew 28:19-20).
- (c) Intellectual Development
- (1) Assist each student in recognizing that each area of instruction, whether scientific, historical, mathematical, literary, or artistic, must be understood within the pattern of God's truth as revealed in the Bible.
 - (2) Assist each student to acquire proficiency in the basic skills necessary to intelligently meet the demands of life.
 - (3) Help each student gain a thorough command of the fundamental processes used in communicating with others.
 - (4) Challenge each student to strive for excellence and maximum achievement in every area of the instructional program.

- (5) Prepare each student to pursue independent study, to reason logically, and to develop a life-long interest in learning and intellectual development.
 - (6) Prepare each student with the knowledge and skills for further study and occupational competence.
 - (7) Assist each student in developing creative and critical thinking skills, using Biblical principles and criteria as the basis for evaluation.
- (d) Physical Development
- (1) Assist each student to understand that the body is the temple of God and is to be kept clean and pure, capable of responding to God's direction.
 - (2) Encourage each student to accept personal responsibility for achieving and maintaining physical fitness and practicing good health habits.
 - (3) Develop in each student an awareness that a healthy physical body contributes significantly to a sound mental, spiritual, and social state.
 - (4) Assist each student in recognizing the dangers inherent in using substances harmful to both physical and spiritual well-being, and in accepting responsibility to avoid the use of such substances.
 - (5) Assist each student to develop an interest in the skills needed for life-long involvement in physical activities.
- (e) Social Development
- (1) Encourage each student to develop Christian attitudes, accept principles of behavior, and base decisions on the spiritual, moral, and ethical values of the Bible.
 - (2) Prepare each student to assume the responsibility and privileges of citizenship.
 - (3) Teach each student the Biblical principles regarding marriage and family life and the personal commitment needed to

establish and maintain Christian families, including the belief that a biblical marriage is limited to a covenant relationship between a man and a woman (Matthew 19:4).

- (4) Assist each student to acquire the attitude and skills essential to effective interpersonal relationships.
- (f) Career Development
- (1) Assist each student to acquire a basic knowledge of the economic system, to develop attitudes and skills needed to be a competent consumer, and to apply Biblical principles to the use of personal resources.
 - (2) Assist each student to develop respect for the dignity of labor and pride of performance.
 - (3) Assist students in developing values, attitudes, and basic knowledge essential to the world of work through career awareness and exploration.

Section 4

Curriculum

Accelerated Christian Education

Excel Christian Academy uses the Accelerated Christian Education curriculum.

Accelerated Christian Education (ACE) has a 40-year, proven academic record and is used in approximately seven thousand schools in over 145 countries.

ACE is an individualized self-paced curriculum. Every student is given a diagnostic test and placed on a level of curriculum most beneficial to them. The curriculum allows students to work on a level where they feel successful and are most capable to learn and excel.

The focus of Excel Christian Academy is on students actively learning and understanding. It is more crucial for us to teach students to learn independently than to teach them what they need to know. An

independent learner can manage their time wisely and take full responsibility for their own learning.

Graduates from the ACE curriculum are self-disciplined and ready for advancement.

ACE materials are prescribed individually. A student can move ahead faster or go slower at the best rate for him. Individualization makes it possible for each student to master the subject before moving on. Individualization produces academic excellence. Students take responsibility for their own learning. Biblical values and concepts considered foundational to relationships and productive living are conveyed throughout the curriculum in such a way as to become life-shaping influences.

ACE materials are self-instructional. Using the materials, a student can work on his self-instructional PACEs (Packets of Accelerated Christian Education) even when the supervisor is giving attention to another child. The student can work independently and learn how to take responsibility for learning. Supervisors are there to facilitate, motivate, and occasionally explain instructions or lead students in a thought process to arrive at an answer.

Each student should complete, on average, twelve PACEs a year in any subject. This is the average. Some will do more and others less. The learning limited are never left behind, and the academically gifted are never held back.

Students in grades 1st through 4th work in six main subjects: Math, English, Social Studies, Science, Word Building, and Creative Writing.

Students in grades 5th through 8th work in five subjects: Math, English, Social Studies, Science, and Word Building.

In High School, students pick up a sixth subject and concentrate on required courses for earning credits. Every twelve PACEs completed in High School counts as one credit and every six completed as one-half credit. In a normal school year, a student should complete 60 to 72 PACEs of work.

The Mastery System

The ACE Curriculum requires that a student score at least 90% on PACE tests 1001-1036, and 80% on PACE tests 1037-1144. If a student fails to achieve these scores, he must rework that PACE.

The educational concept of ACE is built on five basic laws of learning:

- (1) Students must be at subject levels where they can perform.
- (2) Students must set reasonable goals.
- (3) Students must be controlled and motivated.
- (4) Learning must be measurable.
- (5) Learning must be rewarded.

ACE History

- (a) From its beginning over 35 years ago, the ACE curriculum has held to these goals:
 - (b) A solid back-to-basics education program.
 - (c) A course of study individualized to meet a child's specific needs and learning capabilities.
 - (d) A program incorporating character-building and wisdom principles.

College

Colleges and Universities across the U.S. accept students that have completed the ACE program. The current list includes 94 colleges and universities in Texas, including:

- (a) Paris Junior College,
- (b) Texas A&M University Commerce,
- (c) Texas A&M University,
- (d) East Texas Baptist University,
- (e) Baylor University,
- (f) Sam Houston State University, and
- (g) The University of Texas.

Board of Directors

As a ministry of Gospel Lighthouse Pentecostal Church of God of Powderly, Texas, Excel Christian Academy is governed by the Church's Board of Directors. The primary function of the Board regarding the school is to set school policy. The Board reviews, analyzes, and revises policy where necessary.

The Board oversees the Principal and sets school policies and procedures. The Principal carries out the mission of the school and oversees the academic and spiritual development of the students.

Section 5

General Policies and Procedures

And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Colossians 3:17

Notice of Nondiscriminatory Policy

Subject to the faith-based standards and beliefs stated in Excel Christian Academy policies and procedures, Excel Christian Academy admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities accorded or provided to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs.

Admission

Excel Christian Academy was established on the biblical principle that God gives parents the primary responsibility for educating their children. The school enters a partnership with parents and Christian educators to facilitate academics in a Christian worldview. Excel Christian Academy's policy is to offer enrollment to students of Christian parents who desire a Bible-based education with academic excellence for their children. Excel Christian Academy staff partners with families who also teach their children what it means to have a

Christian lifestyle regarding personal and family relationships, such as demonstrating love for others, exhibiting a teachable spirit and sharing the belief that a biblical marriage is limited to a covenant relationship between a man and a woman (Matthew 19:4).

Notwithstanding anything else in this handbook, Excel Christian Academy reserves the right to select students and families on the basis of academic performance, Christian commitment, lifestyle choices, and personal qualifications, including a willingness to cooperate with our administration and policies. Therefore, Excel Christian Academy reserves the right, within its sole discretion, to refuse admission of an applicant or to discontinue the enrollment of a student on the basis of, without limitation, the inability to support the moral principles of the school or the inability to maintain a lifestyle consistent with Excel Christian Academy's Statements of Faith, mission, vision, philosophies, goals, and any related policies and procedures. (Romans 1:24-32, Galatians 5:19-21)

Fund Raising

The costs involved in operating Excel Christian Academy significantly exceed the amount charged in tuition and fees. Therefore, we ask that the school community support the ministry of the school above and beyond tuition and fees, as they are led by God to do so. Through these gifts, we can provide students with an academically advanced Christ-centered education.

Approval from the Principal must be obtained for all school-related fundraising projects prior to any sales or activities being conducted.

Inclement Weather/School Closing

In event of emergency school closings, such as inclement weather, notifications will be sent through these formats: ECA website, groupme, and personal text. Calls will be made to any parent who does not have access to these formats.

Miscellaneous Expenses/Fees

Besides tuition, there are other fees for various services or activities during the school year. These may include field trips, food service, sports, orchestra/choral participation, school pictures, yearbooks, class functions, athletic events, parking permits, music programs, plays, etc.

Most are optional. The school strives to keep these expenses to a minimum.

Responsibility for Debts

All families are expected to meet all financial responsibilities promptly. This includes tuition fees, library fines, and other obligations. Records will not be released until all debts are paid.

Safe School Commitment

Excel Christian Academy is committed to establishing and maintaining a safe learning environment for each of its campuses. Therefore, Excel Christian Academy reserves the right to routinely inspect and specifically search school buildings and grounds and anything brought onto school property or school facilities in accordance with the laws.

Security

The only access into the school buildings will be through the front gymnasium entrance. All other doors locked. All parents, guests, and other visitors must check in with school staff and be prepared to provide a government-issued ID when asked.

Traffic Safety

It is imperative that all drivers travel in a slow and controlled manner while on campus. Please observe speed limit signs, stop at all crosswalks, and be vigilant in watching for children. The safety of our students is a great concern.

All students are to be dropped off and picked up at locations designated for each school level. Also, please observe all traffic and parking instructions and zones, and use marked crosswalks when crossing the flow of traffic.

Tuition Policy

Tuition and other fees are necessary for Excel Christian Academy to successfully fulfill its mission. Families are asked to meet financial obligations under the standards of biblical stewardship.

This our tuition policy:

- (a) The application fee which covers processing is non-refundable.
- (b) The enrollment fee collected to confirm your child's placement is non-refundable.
- (c) Withdrawals after June 1 but prior to the start of school are subject to these financial obligation:
 - (1) After June 1, one-month's tuition is due.
 - (2) After July 1, two-months' tuition is due.
 - (3) After August 1 and prior to the beginning of school, three-months' tuition is due.
- (d) One year's tuition is due if a student withdraws after the beginning of the school year because the hiring of teachers and staff and the ordering of classroom materials are based upon anticipated enrollment. Student records will not be released until the account is paid in full. Parents will be expected to honor their full year's commitment to the school.
- (e) Tuition that becomes two months past due will require a parent and school administrator meeting to discuss past due tuition and a plan on moving forward.

Visitors

Excel Christian Academy encourages visitors, particularly parents of current students. Visitors must park and enter through the front entrance of the school. All other doors are locked and no admittance will be allowed. Upon checking in, visitors must be prepared to provide a government-issued ID when asked. All parents and visitors must also check in with school staff before proceeding to a classroom in order not to disturb the classroom instructions.

Website

The official website of Excel Christian Academy is <http://excelchristianacademy.weebly.com/>.

Permission to use a student's photo for publication and marketing purposes is implied unless the school office is notified in writing that permission is denied by the student's parent or guardian.

Section 6

Academic Policies

For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you and asking God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding. And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, and joyfully giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of light.

Colossians 1:9-10 NIV

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is using someone else's words or ideas in your writing without proper acknowledgement or documentation. Plagiarism is cheating. Discipline procedures for plagiarism include, without limitation, an office referral and a zero on the assignment.

How to avoid Plagiarism:

- (a) Document all direct quotations. Make sure that you have copied each quotation word for word and that the punctuation is the same as the original.
- (b) Document information you have paraphrased or summarized. This includes ideas and expressions you adapt from your sources.

- (c) Consider Biblical instruction: "Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth." II Timothy 2:15 NIV

Cheating

Discipline procedures for a student found to be cheating include, without limitation, an office referral, a zero on the assignment for both parties involved, a parent conference, and a half-day in-school suspension. Repeat offenders can expect increasingly severe consequences.

Retention

Satisfactory progress and developmental readiness determine promotion of students to the next ACE level. A student may need to repeat a PACE to master the material, or he may not be developmentally ready for the next ACE level.

Standardized Testing

Students in grades in K-12 are given a standardized achievement test in the spring of each school year. No student is required to take the test. Exact testing dates are established by the principals. Parents should strive to have their child in school during test week.

Academic Support

Consistent with our mission to develop every student with a heart for God, we also focus on individual success of our students in the classroom. Academic success is defined differently for every student, so we seek to provide a learning environment that enables our students to achieve their educational goals.

Section 7

Attendance, Arrival, and Dismissal

Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward.

Colossians 3:23-24 NIV

Arrival

Excel Christian Academy will accept responsibility for students arriving as early as 7:30 a.m.

Parent drivers should follow the prescribed student drop-off route. Parent drivers that want to walk their student into the school must park in the designated parking area. Please be very cautious and attentive when driving on school property to ensure safety for everyone.

High school student drivers should park in the designated parking area.

Students that walk to and/or from school must submit a parent letter of permission to the office prior to the first day of school stating that the parent knows of and gives permission for the student to walk to/from school. Students walking to school are to cross all roads at designated areas.

All students must be in their seats ready for class to begin at 8:00. Students should, therefore, arrive by 7:50 a.m. to eliminate the possibility of being tardy.

Students not in their seats by 8:00 a.m. will be tardy. Tardy slips must be obtained from the office before the child will be admitted to class. Excessive tardies will not be tolerated. Parents should not walk their child into the classroom. This could cause a disruption to the start of the instructional day.

Dismissal

All students will be dismissed at the front gymnasium door. Parents should follow the prescribed pick-up route. Students will only be dismissed to parents/guardians or parent/guardian approved adults. For the security of our students there will be no exceptions to this rule.

Student Drivers and Other Students

Students riding with a high school driver must submit a parent-signed letter of permission to the office prior to the first day of school, stating the name of the driver. The high school driver may pick up the student, just as walk-up parents do. The high school student will sign the elementary student out with his/her name.

Students consistently remaining after 4 pm may be subject to after school care fees.

Attendance Policies

Excel Christian Academy expects all students to attend school regularly. Regular and punctual attendance is essential for success as a student. Absences interrupt the smooth and complete process of learning. We urge students to be present every day.

Proper education relies on continuity of instruction, learning experiences, student-teacher interaction, and structured study. The principal will monitor attendance records for students accumulating excessive absences.

- (a) Students who accumulate 10 absences per semester (not necessarily consecutive days) for any reason, will be contacted by the administrator. The administrator will assist the parents in formulating a plan for resolving the difficulties preventing the student from receiving the benefits of daily school attendance.
- (b) A student who accumulates 11-20 absences per semester (not necessarily consecutive days), for any reason, must submit a doctor's note for each absence.

- (c) A student must be present 3 hours of the school day to be present for the day. Students who leave the classroom before completing 3 hours of the school day will be absent. Students arriving after 11:30 a.m. are absent for the day, and students leaving prior to 11:30 a.m. are also considered absent for the day.
- (d) If it is necessary for a family to keep a student from attending school for a family trip or vacation, these procedures are to be followed:
 - (1) Notify school staff of the dates on which the student will miss school at least two weeks in advance.
 - (2) School staff will formulate an academic plan to ensure the student does not fall behind.

Parent Responsibilities Regarding Attendance

- (a) Encourage prompt and regular attendance. Please schedule doctor appointments and family vacations so attendance at school is minimally affected.
- (b) When your student is absent, call the office before 8:30 a.m. to notify the school of your student's absence that day, the reason for the absence, and the anticipated length of the absence.

Absence Due to Extended Illness

When a student is absent due to illness or hospitalization for over five consecutive days, these guidelines should be followed:

- (a) The parents should contact the school when they learn the student will be absent for several consecutive days. This information will be requested:
 - (1) Doctor's statement of reason for absence.
 - (2) Location of the student (home, hospital, etc.).
 - (3) Approximate length of absence.
 - (4) School work and materials needed.
- (b) Parents should notify the school administrator two days prior to the student's return to class so the school can try to ease the student's return to school.
- (c) Upon return to school, this information is required:
 - (1) A signed release from the doctor.
 - (2) A list of medications the student will take at school.
 - (3) A written description of permissible and non-permissible activities.

Early Dismissal

Students who must leave school early for a doctor's appointment or some other emergency are to present a note/email from their parents to school staff. The note is to include the student's full name, date, time of departure, estimated time of return (if returning that day), reason for leaving early and a parent's signature. Once a parent arrives at the school, the student will be called down for sign out.

Students should never be picked up at the classroom. Prior notification is required for early dismissal for medical appointments.

Parents are encouraged to avoid early departure.

Late Arrival to School

It is important for students to always be on time to school and class. Being prompt demonstrates self-discipline, responsibility, and

maturity. These qualities are not only important for proper academic achievement, but they are essential for developing good habits and developing characteristics of success and good citizenship.

Lateness is rude and indicates a lack of adequate planning. Whenever a student enters a class late, the learning process is interrupted or delayed for all students in the class. Since school years are the habit-forming years of life, attention should be given to the importance of promptness. By being prompt, students demonstrate and practice desirable behaviors of adult life.

Plan to be at school by 7:50 a.m. This plan provides a cushion of several minutes to deal with unavoidable delays encountered.

Students should never be brought to the gymnasium door if arriving late. Any student arriving after 8:00 a.m. must give reason for tardiness. The reason for the late arrival will be recorded.

It is imperative that students be in their seats, ready for class to begin at 8:00 a.m.

Consequences for Tardies

- (a) Each tardy must be made up after school. The first 3 tardies, the tardy student will remain in class for the amount of time the student was late.
- (b) The next 3 tardies, the student will remain in class for double the amount of time of tardiness.
- (c) After 6 tardies the parents, students, and school administrators will meet to discuss a plan for going forward.

****If a student is absent due to an appointment that cannot be scheduled after school hours and a note is brought from that appointment, this tardy will not be counted.**

Illness during the Day

Students who become too ill to remain in class must report to their teacher and then to the office. Contact will be made with the home and a decision reached whether the student is to remain at school and

return to class or go home.

Students must be fever free (less than 100°, unmedicated) and diarrhea/vomiting free for 24 hours before returning to school. Unmedicated means that no drugs such as Ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil) or Acetaminophen (Tylenol) have been given to the child. Students who return to school after having had a documented fever or vomiting/diarrhea in the previous 24 hours or have been ill with the same at home in the previous 24 hours, will be sent home.

If home contact cannot be made, the student will remain at school unless contact can be made with an emergency number provided by the parents, or the illness or injury is serious enough to call the EMS unit.

Over-the-counter medications (such as Tylenol, Ibuprofen, cough medications, Tums) will be provided by the school. These medications can be administered by office staff if a Medication Release Form with a parent's signature has been completed and is on file with the office.

To administer prescription medication, a letter must be submitted, signed by a parent, and brought in with the medicine. All prescription medications must be properly labeled with the name of the student, name of medication, and method of administration. Medication improperly labeled will not be administered. In addition, a new letter must be submitted if there are any changes to the original instructions.

Bible

My purpose is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

Colossians 2:2-3 NIV

Bible Instruction

The Bible is God's direct revelation to man and contains the divine answers to man's problems and needs. We teach the Bible both as a textbook and as a guide to enable students to develop a personal relationship with God and to critically evaluate all life's situations by the standards in the Bible so they can make proper decisions based upon Biblical mandates and its examples. Therefore, the Bible is the center of our curriculum and the foundation for Christian Education at Excel Christian Academy. A Bible lesson is taught each day. Scripture is committed to memory each week.

Chapel Program

All students attend a weekly Chapel program. Chapel is a time of worship through music and Christian speakers invited to speak at Excel Christian Academy. Students participate in each program through drama, music, or sharing of their testimony. ECA welcomes any parent or extended family to our chapel services held each Wednesday at 12:30.

Section 8

Conduct

Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it.

Behavior Guidelines

Discipline at Excel Christian Academy is a process by which students are guided to develop Christ-like characteristics. Each teacher maintains classroom behavior under Christian principles guided by scripture. Proverbs 22:6 NIV

Appropriate and acceptable behaviors are God-honoring and allow students to grow in favor with God and men (Luke 2:52). Parents and students can refer to Galatians 5:22-23, Matthew 22:37-39, Colossians 3:12-14, and Philippians 2:3. Compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, patience, forgiveness, and self-control are examples of desired behaviors. Ultimately, our purpose is to develop students with a heart for God who grow as Jesus did in wisdom, stature, and favor with God and men.

The majority of classroom discipline is handled by the teacher. However, a teacher may find it necessary to send a student to the administration for one or more of these actions:

- (a) Discussion of problem.
- (b) Supervised detention.
- (c) Conference with administrator or teacher and parents.
 - (1.) If, due to the severity of the student's behavior, the administration deems corporal punishment necessary the parent/guardian will be required to administer the corporal punishment to their own child.
- (d) In-school suspension.
- (e) Out-of-school suspension.

A partnership of mutual trust and respect between parents, teachers, and administration is vital. This partnership involves clear and timely communication by both teachers and parents. Parents are encouraged to contact teachers with questions. Typically situations are resolved by a call, conference, or email. If inappropriate behavior continues, the

administration will be consulted to determine a suitable course of action. Persistent unacceptable behavior may result in the student being placed on disciplinary probation with the possibility of expulsion from school.

Classroom Standards

The administration will establish the expectations for classroom procedures and student behavior. The administration will communicate these expectations to each teacher and each teacher will communicate these expectations with students and parents. Students may be graded in the areas of conduct and work/study habits.

Discipline Policies

The Church Board and the Administration of Excel Christian Academy believe that the full potential of academic excellence can be accomplished only where leadership is strong, discipline is firm, but fair, and moral and spiritual values are emphasized within a loving, caring Christian atmosphere.

It is our belief that students learn self-discipline through four aspects which reflect God's principles of human behavior:

- (1) Order is the organization which provides a good environment for learning.
- (2) Training is the process of practicing what is right.
- (3) Correction is the discouragement of wrong behavior.
- (4) Praise or affirmation is used to encourage students to continue in obedience.

Positive Student Relationships- No Bullying Allowed

Under the mission of Excel Christian Academy, efforts are made to help students develop positive, respectful relationships with others. Appropriate interaction is taught and reinforced so students may learn how to relate to their peers in a constructive manner. Students who fail to be kind and respectful of others will be corrected, and may be encouraged to make amends to benefit their own spiritual and relational growth.

Excel Christian Academy will not tolerate verbal, physical, or social bullying behaviors in our schools. Any instances of bullying will be addressed immediately and with appropriate consequences.

Bullying: Intentional and repetitive verbal or physical mistreatment in which there is an imbalance of power, often characterized by a desire to demonstrate power over another.

Direct Bullying: Overt physical or verbal aggression or intimidation such as name calling, punching, threatening physical violence, slapping, kicking, etc.

Indirect Bullying: Characterized by the goal of social isolation through gossip, criticism, manipulation, and exclusion, and intimidation of those who wish to socialize with the victim.

The consequences for bullying behavior may include:

- (a) Verbal warning with discussion and parent notification.
- (b) Denial of activity (eating lunch in cafeteria, recess, field trip, etc.), with parent notification.
- (c) Detention and required sessions with school staff or documented help from an outside source.
- (d) Suspension: 1-3 days of in-school or out-of-school Suspension.
- (e) Dismissal from school.

Sexting

In keeping with Excel Christian Academy's responsibility to provide a safe learning environment for all students, these policies have been established regarding sexting.

Sexting: the act of sending, receiving, or forwarding sexually explicit or suggestive messages, photos, or images via cell phone, computer, or other digital device.

Students engaged in sexting activities on or off campus are subject to state laws and school discipline.

Sending, sharing, possessing, or even viewing pictures, text messages, or e-mails that contain a sexual message or image violates this policy.

Such a violation will result in-school discipline, up to and including expulsion, and the notification of local law enforcement. Students are required to immediately report any incident of sexting to a teacher or school administrator.

Dress Code Guidelines

Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body.

1 Corinthians 6:18-20

The goal of our dress code is to establish high Christian standards for our school and our students. The code fosters a student's self-respect, maintain an atmosphere consistent with instructional goals and to provide the opportunity for students to make a positive statement in our community.

Students must be in dress code beginning with the first day of school. To the greatest degree possible, uniform guidelines will be followed consistently.

Uniforms

Uniforms are to be worn by all students. Obedience, even in what may be perceived as minor things, is honoring to God and respectful to classmates who adhere to the uniform dress code. Thank you for reinforcing our core value of obedience by ensuring your student is in uniform dress.

Pants, Slacks, & Shorts: Solid khaki, preferably without labels. Shorts and skirts must reach to the knees.

Shirts: Red or white long and short sleeved polo(collared) shirts. Red or white collared button up shirts. Shirts are not required be tucked in.

Sweatshirts: Sweatshirts, with no pictures or lettering other than Excel Christian Academy logos, pictures, or mottos, must be worn with a uniform shirt.

Jackets: Jackets may be worn in the classroom. Hats, hoods, and other outerwear are not permitted in the classroom.

Shoes: Shoes are required and must be worn at all times.

Hairstyles: Hairstyles are to be neat, clean, moderate, and combed. Hairstyle extremes are not acceptable. Non-traditional or extreme changes in hair color are not permitted. Girls' hair accessories should not be a distraction. Boys' hair length should not extend beyond the top of the shirt collar or extend below the bottom of the ear and may not come past the top of the eyebrow.

Jewelry: Jewelry should be worn in moderation. Girls may wear only two pairs of traditional pierced earrings. Boys may not wear earrings to school or to any school activity.

Tattoos: Neither permanent nor temporary are not permitted.

If clothing items or accessories become a distraction or safety concern, school staff will have the discretion to ask for a change.

Cell Phones: Cell phones are not allowed during the school day. If cell phones are brought they are to be turned off before 8:00am and not seen, heard, or used until after dismissed from school.

Dress Code Non-Compliance

Inappropriate dress will require teachers to complete a dress code violation form which parents will sign and return to school. On-going or serious dress code violations will be brought to the administration's attention. Administration, at their discretion, will take action which could include requesting a change of clothing to be brought to school. Failure to conform to established dress code could result in suspension.

Section 9

Additional Information

For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

Ephesians 2:10 NIV

Abuse: Reporting and Investigating Suspected Child Abuse

Excel Christian Academy complies with all state laws and regulations in reporting and investigating cases of suspected abuse.

Lunch and Snack

Students must bring their own sack lunch each day. Refrigerators and microwaves are available. Students are encouraged to bring a healthy morning snack such as a banana, peanut butter crackers, or package of fruit snacks.

Behavior in the lunch room: Proper eating habits and acceptable behavior must be practiced in the lunch room. Students are expected to walk, stay in their seats until they are dismissed, use indoor voices, and clean up after themselves. Each student is periodically assigned weekly lunchroom clean-up duty.

Electronic devices: Cell phones, Readers, iPads, iPods, etc.

Electronic games/readers/music devices are not permitted in school unless approved by school staff. If a student has a phone at school, it is to remain turned off and in the student's backpack during school hours. Our preference is NO cell phones for students. If electronic devices are taken from students, parents must pick them up from the office after a 24-hour wait period. Additional violations of this policy may result in the item being kept for an extended period.

Emergency Procedures

Personal: Every student is to have emergency information on file at ECA, making it possible for the school to contact someone in the family or other designated adult.

Fire/Tornado/Disaster/Intruder Drills: Classroom teachers will be sure all students know and understand the procedures for all drills. Drills are conducted periodically

An emergency evacuation plan is in place.

Field Trips

Field trips extend the classroom and mission of the school system. Written parental permission must be received for students to participate.

- (a) No student is allowed on an off-campus trip without specific written parental permission.
- (b) Students may not leave a field trip with their parent without written notification presented to the teacher before departing on the field trip. Parents must sign the student out with the teacher.
- (c) Students may not leave a field trip with another parent.
- (d) Chaperones must give their full attention to the care of students; therefore, siblings may not go on field trips.
- (e) All students will wear uniforms on field trips unless otherwise informed by the supervising teacher or administrator.

- (f) If a student fails to turn in a permission slip by the requested date, he/she may not be allowed to go on the field trip.

Field Trip Driver's Guidelines

To insure safety when a parent drives on school-sponsored field trips, these rules must be observed:

- (a) Any parent wishing to drive students on a field trip must submit the proper paper work for a driver background check. This check will be completed once drivers are determined for each field trip.
- (b) All students are to be buckled in by seat belts.
- (c) Drivers are expected to follow the route selected by the teacher unless prior approval for a route deviation has been secured.
- (d) The primary responsibility of the driver is to care for the students in the group assigned to that driver. Unless directed otherwise by the teacher in charge, keep those students with you. Do not leave any location without having accounted for all students for whom you have responsibility.
- (e) When students have returned to campus, remain with them until the teacher in charge has arrived and taken full responsibility for the class.
- (f) Drivers are to adhere to the field trip schedule. For example, making an unscheduled visit at a fast-food restaurant before coming back to the campus is not permitted.
- (g) Drivers are the authority in their vehicles and are expected to correct any unsatisfactory behavior. Drivers should inform the supervising teacher of any student(s) who fails to respond appropriately.
- (h) If the driver allows media (music, video, etc.) to be played in the vehicle, only Christian-themed media is permissible.

Messages

Please do not request that a message be delivered to your student unless it is an extreme emergency. In the case of an emergency, call the school office giving the student's name and a concise message.

The student will be given the message at the earliest convenient time. Students may not make or receive phone calls during the school day.

Parent Dress at School Events and Activities: Field Trips, Volunteer Positions, Classroom Parties

Since all adults are to be models of modesty before our students, we ask that parents please be vigilant of their dress. Because of the current styles, we ask that traditional norms of modesty be demonstrated in skirt length, necklines, and style. Please avoid necklines that reveal cleavage and short or tight-fitting apparel while on campus or attending a school event or activity.

Party Invitations

Party invitations for out-of-school parties may NOT be distributed (or verbalized) in school unless there is an invitation for each child in the same grade. Parents are also asked to consider the impact of picking up some children with sleeping bags, etc. for an after-school gathering. Children can be hurt when it is so obvious a party is occurring and they were not invited.

Pets on Campus

Due to safety concerns, please do not bring pets to campus.

Pledges

The school day begins with the recitation of the pledges.

Pledge to the American Flag

I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

Pledge to the Christian Flag

I pledge allegiance to the Christian flag, and to the Savior for whose kingdom it stands, one Savior, crucified, risen, and coming again, with life and liberty for all who believe.

Pledge to the Bible

I pledge allegiance to the Bible, God's Holy Word, I will make it a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path and will hide its words in my heart that I might not sin against God.

Problem Resolution

Excel Christian Academy encourages families to create a partnership with teachers and school staff focused on developing their child. Open and frequent communication between teachers and parents benefits the students. Parents are asked to communicate directly with their child's teacher about questions regarding their child's performance, school programs, class activities, etc. Excel Christian Academy staff is committed to assist parents in answering their questions or resolving their concerns.

If parents have difficulty in resolving an issue with their child's teacher/person of concern or if they reach an impasse over an issue, they should use these guidelines to seek further resolution. These guidelines are based on biblical principles for conflict resolution found in Matthew 18:15-17. It is the hope of Excel Christian Academy that everyone work well together, communicate honestly with each other and maintain a mutual respect that will allow everyone to be examples of integrity.

If parents are concerned about a specific issue and they believe it needs to be resolved, they may follow these guidelines:

- (a) Notify the teacher and/or person of concern and meet to resolve the issue.
- (b) If after repeated meetings between these parties, the issue is not resolved, the parents may request a meeting with both the teacher and principal to discuss the issue. At this level the parents' concerns should be documented, with a clear explanation of the problem and the recommended resolution and submitted in advance to the principal.
- (c) If after this meeting the issue is still not resolved, the parents may request a joint meeting with the teacher and Principal.

- (d) If the parents can show that the school staff has violated a biblical principle or established policy, or failed to follow established procedures in managing this matter, they may appeal to the Church Board of Directors in writing.