

Life



Academy

Learning In a Family Envi-

Life Academy Handbook

Learning **I**n a **F**amily **E**nvironment

Jeremiah 1:4 "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart."

At Life Academy, we believe that children are gifts from God. We believe that every child is unique and gifted in some way and the way you educate should promote these gifts. We believe that parents know what is best for their children. We believe homeschooling is a viable choice for educating children.

In Alabama, there are four ways for parents to educate their children: through the public school system, through a private campus school (which may be either a private or church school under Alabama law), through a private tutor, and through home education (as a church school under Alabama law).

Each parent must be active in the education of his and her child, and must use his best judgment regarding which of these methods is appropriate for the child. No one choice is appropriate for every family.

There are many reasons families may decide to homeschool their children. Whatever your reason for considering home education, we believe it is your own personal right. We are here to provide you with a legal means of doing this in the state of Alabama.

We feel it is important to offer a place to unite and have assistance with support from advisors, educational resources, academic records, and a variety of programs and activities.

It is the purpose of Life Academy to:

1. Allow parents to assume responsibility for the academic, social, and spiritual growth of their children.
2. Support families with information, interaction, and supplemental projects.
3. Promote an accurate perception of home education as a viable and successful educational option.
4. Promote the highest educational standards without compromising or denying the role of any person's faith.

Proverbs 3:13 "Happy is the man that finds wisdom, and the man that gets understanding."

Organizational Structure

Life Academy is a ministry of Life Church of the Assemblies of God. We are dedicated to strengthening the role of family in society through the principles and teachings of Jesus Christ. Although a Christian organization, we are open to families of all faiths.

School Relations Board

The school relations board is comprised of the executive board consisting of the pastoral staff and deacon board of Life Church. The relations board gives final approval of the Director's policies, reviews operations, and audits expenditures of funds for each fiscal year.

The Administrative Board

The Administrative Board is comprised of parent-educators enrolled in Life Academy. Each member is a practicing and committed Christian, a member of Life Church, and an experienced home educator. Members of the Administrative Board recommend changes in policy, and serve as members of a disciplinary committee should such a convenement become necessary.

The Director

The director is responsible for making policy decisions in the best interest of the school. She will determine approval and termination of enrollment and eligibility to renew enrollment each year. She will provide the necessary counseling of prospective and participating families. She will also be the chairperson of any disciplinary committee which must be convened.

The Parent-Educator

The parent-educator is the parent or legal guardian of the enrolled children. He or she is responsible for a satellite classroom of Life Academy which becomes established in her home.

Parent-Educator is responsible for the following:

- selecting the appropriate education materials and/ or curriculum
- providing primary instruction to the students and evaluating their progress
- delegating teaching responsibilities at her discretion
- conducting the day-to-day operation of the classroom
- maintaining and submitting daily attendance and progress reports to the school office in a timely manner
- ensuring basic living standards exist in the satellite classroom at all times
- keeping the school office informed of any changes to residency status, enrollment decisions, change of address, telephone or email contact information
- providing students appropriate social interaction opportunities.

Guidelines

Admissions Policies

1. Only legal parents and guardians can enroll a child. All students of age must be **currently enrolled** in a public, private, or church school.
2. You will need to submit a copy of the enrolling child's birth certificate, a picture, and the name and address of each school previously attended. You must also submit a copy of the driver's license for the enrolling parent and anyone doing more than 40% of the primary instruction plus a one-time enrollment fee of \$20.00 per student.
3. Any student enrolling after September 10 will pay a \$50.00 enrollment fee per student.
4. Annual tuition is \$75.00 per family and must be paid before the student is withdrawn from a previous school. A \$10.00 late fee will be added for those students not registered by August 10.
5. We do not coordinate with noncustodial parents unless by court order, a copy of which must be submitted to our office.
6. You must let the school office know if you work outside the home between 8:00am and 3:00 pm weekdays, and supervisory arrangements for children under 12 must be made.
7. We gather information about your family situation and your home because you become a teacher of our school staff, and your home becomes a satellite classroom of our school. Although there is no correlation between a family's income and their focus on education, homeschooling does cost. Families should be sure there is enough money available in the budget to provide a good education and still maintain a livable situation in the home.
8. If you receive government services in the service of any special needs, our school will be required to coordinate with them. You will need to provide details to our school staff.
9. Because we seek to cultivate a wholesome, family environment, we must be made aware of any legal situations coming up for anyone in the home.
10. A Student Education Plan (SEP) is required for each child. The school office provides a form which may be used to assist families in determining their goals for each child during the upcoming year. The staff is always happy to provide assistance and make recommendations; however, the parent-educator chooses the educational method, determines the goals, and obtains the materials. An SEP meeting can be scheduled if you feel the need.
11. Life Academy is not responsible for any truancy charges arising prior to admission. Instructions for withdrawing your child from school will be given after all fees have been paid and after the SEP has been turned in. **Do not withdraw your student from school before this time.**

Maintaining Enrollment

Life Academy maintains the right to terminate enrollment of any family who violates the stated policies of the school. School policies are those stated principles published in the school handbook.

Because homes become satellite classrooms of Life Academy, **the school will terminate enrollment of any student and/or family if they can no longer be reached using the contact information provided to the school.**

Returning students will be admitted only if the previous year's file is up to date.

This includes all fees paid and records completed for the previous year. Records will not be transferred to another school or homeschool covering if the file is incomplete.

Returning students must be re-enrolled by August 10 of each year. If not, a \$10.00 late fee will be assessed to the tuition. If not re-enrolled by September 10, all students will have to pay the enrollment fee of \$50.00 plus the \$85.00 tuition.

Report Requirements

Our school year begins June 1 and ends May 31 of each year. This allows families to learn in a natural, flexible manner.

All families must submit a student evaluation plan (SEP) at the beginning of each year. You may use the form that we supply, or you can choose your own. Your SEP can be altered or updated anytime throughout the year.

All families must submit attendance and progress reports at least twice a year - December and May.

Students in Kindergarten through Grade 8 must complete a minimum of 150 days; students in Grades 9-12 must complete 180 days.

A graduation exam, or its equivalent, is required in the diploma programs. Acceptable equivalents include: at least a 15 on the ACT exam, at least a 600 on the SAT (Scholastic Aptitude) exam, or a passing GED score.

Academic testing is not required by Alabama law, but is coordinated each spring for students in grades 3 -8.

Supervision Requirement

Life Academy does not accept responsibility for your children. Just as you are to provide appropriate educational opportunities in your home, you must provide adequate supervision for your children. Section 16-28-17 of Alabama Legal Code provides a truant officer the power to take into custody any school aged child who is unattended by a parent or guardian and who is not at home or at school during public school hours.

While families should feel free to move about society throughout the day, children should not be left unsupervised between the hours of 8:00am and 3:00pm. A child under the age of 12 years should not be left unsupervised at any time.

Some students may participate in activities outside the home which do not include parents, such as apprenticeships, part-time jobs, or college dual-enrollment courses. Identi-

fication Cards are available through the school office, if the family so desires, for a fee of \$10. Call the school office to make an appointment. Student should bring a passport photo.

Public Behavior

Life Academy operates on the following three principles of behavior.

1. **Respectful Behavior.** There should be no physical harm done to anyone at a Life Academy event. Physical confrontations are never appropriate. A disciplinary committee may be convened to address such incidents. Vulgar body gestures are disrespectful, and are as harmful as physical violence.
2. **Respectful Words.** People should be treated with an inherent human respect. Therefore, making fun, laughing inappropriately, teasing, and/or humiliating someone is never appropriate. Unkind words include talking back to parents or activity coordinators. Children should be encouraged to follow directions, and do so with a cheerful attitude, and should be encouraged to do so by the example of their parents. Unkind words also include foul, coarse and vulgar language.
3. **Respectful Appearance.** Clothing choices for activities should be appropriate to the situation, the weather, and the wearer. While most activities are casual in nature, dress and appearance should be clean and neat. Clothing should be of the appropriate size, so as to be modest in appearance. Cigarette and alcohol advertisements on clothing are not appropriate for group activities, nor are sexually suggestive material whether explicit or implied.

While individual parenting styles, standards, and methods may vary, the above standards of behavior have been adopted by Life Academy to best support the efforts of our enrolled families and present an appropriate public image of the school itself. Our behavior, words, and appearance show our respect for others as well as our respect for ourselves. As home educators, our actions also reflect upon the larger, extended homeschooling community.

The staff of Life Academy will bring inappropriate actions, words and appearance to the attention of the parent-educator, who will be expected to address and correct the situation. If the situation is not corrected, the family may be barred from further participation in school activities, and/or dismissed from the school.