



Parent/Student Handbook

Requirements for Admission

1. New Students

- a. All application forms must be satisfactorily completed.
- b. Proof of previous grade completion must be presented.
- c. Entrance exams must have satisfactory scores. Academic records must be presented at the time of entrance exam. See *“g” (entering grades)*
- d. **Birth Certificate:** Two, three and four year olds must be two, three, or four on or before September 1st of the school year. First grade students must be six on or before September 1st and have completed a full year of Kindergarten. In accordance with Florida State law, testing for early entrance will no longer be permitted as of August 1983.
- e. **Custodial Rights:** In the event that parents have special legal arrangements for custodial rights of their child/children ABCA requires that the school has on file a copy of the Court Order(s) affirming these rights. ABCA cannot honor parent’s request for “protection” without these legal forms.
- f. **Health Rights:** The HRS 3040 Student Health Form and the HRS 680 Record of Immunization must be properly filled out, stamped, signed, and dated by a physician or the Health Departments.
- g. **Transcript of Academic Record:** Records from the last school attended including a current copy of most current report card, most recent achievement test results and student recommendation form must be presented at the time of the entrance exam for registration to be complete.

2. Returning Students

- a. All application forms must be satisfactorily completed
- b. Academic work, conduct and work habits/study skills must be satisfactory.
- c. Health records for all returning students in Kindergarten through grade 7 must be up-to-date.
- d. Financial Obligations to ABCA must be up-to-date.

3. General Policies Governing all Admissions

- a. Financial acceptance of students and grade level placement will be determined by the administration.
- b. Enrollment is understood to be for the full school year.
- c. It is understood that parents and students are in agreement with the policies of the school as stated in the “Parent Statement of Agreement” and signed by the parents at the time of registration.
- d. Students are expected to keep the school facilities and grounds in an orderly state.
- e. Gum chewing, spitting and other such behavior is unmannerly and not acceptable.
- f. Items such as knives, water pistols, and matches are dangerous and therefore not permitted. Radios, electronic games, cell phones, iPods, or other electronic devices will be allowed at school **only** with prior approval from the teacher or administrator. Weapons of any type will cause immediate expulsion and notification of local authorities.
- g. The writing or reading of personal notes and the passing or receiving of personal notes is disruptive to the learning process and will not be allowed.

- h. Since the students' welfare is our responsibility, they are not allowed to leave the school grounds from the time they arrive in the morning until they are dismissed at the end of the school day without permission from the administrator.
- i. The possession or use of drugs, alcoholic beverages, or tobacco products is forbidden at school or at any school function(s) off campus.
- j. Students are to abide by school dress code at all times. Uniforms are required in Kindergarten through grade 7.
- k. Since it is our goal to build up the child. "Put-down" remarks between students will be discouraged.

In general, students will be required to abide by these rules and all other regulations established by the school in the course of their education.

Code of Conduct and Discipline

The Bible teaches respect for authority (Romans 13; Hebrews 13:17) and requires discipline for children (Proverbs 6:23; 13:24; 29:15, 17)

Philosophy— We feel that all children are basically good and we use encouragement, availability and motivation as tools for behavior modification. Specific disciplinary procedures are outlined in the code of conduct. Visits to the office, follow-up on students, notes or calls home and conferences are all done prior to suspension or expulsion unless it is a very serious offense.

Discipline is properly defined as control. Students at ABCA are expected to abide by a certain code of conduct to maintain this control and positive relationship with the school. All conduct in situations related to ABCA is expected to be of such a nature as to bring a worthy reflection to the school, students and parents. This code of conduct will guide the student in his self-discipline, in his social relationships and in his general behavior during school functions.

Code of Conduct - It is the aim of the administration and the faculty to promote, through policies and regulations, the highest possible standard of Christian conduct in an atmosphere conducive to good learning. Self-discipline for every child is a **priority** goal at ABCA. Compliance to school standards for the academic program, behavior and dress are important elements of the school experience. ABCA strives to motivate and encourage each child in his mental and physical development as well as the development of Christian character.

The following are some of the specific behaviors that are expected:

- Students are to respect the authority of the teachers as well as other staff members
- Students are to be courteous and mannerly to all adults and students.
- Students are expected to exhibit standards of Christian behavior, and therefore, public displays of affection, fighting, profane language, possession of obscene literature, drawing of indecent pictures and vulgar behavior at school or on field trips are all prohibited.
- Care of school property is expected. Therefore, parents and/or students are responsible for the replacement of, repair of, or payment for malicious damage to such. Pulling a fire alarm will result in the parent being charged for the fire department call fee.
- Students are expected to meet the academic standards and abide by the rules and regulations of the school.
- The school reserves the right to dismiss a student whose presence in school is considered detrimental to the best interest of the student himself, his fellow students or of the school in general.
- The School reserves the right to refuse re-admission to any student at the beginning of any semester.

- Since all children are created in the image of God, no student will be denied admission because of race, color, or national origin.

Enforcement of the CODE of Conduct – Generally, individual teachers will handle discipline in their own way, in harmony with their own methods and abilities.

The following procedures are to be used in the disciplining of students. They are listed in order of severity. A principal may also issue any forms used by the teacher.

- **Verbal reprimand** – in a way that does not embarrass the student in front of his peers. Students should not be humiliated.
- **Silent Lunch** – requires silence during lunch from the student
- **Time Out** - a missed recess or an enjoyable activity.
- **Additional written assignments** – Students should not write repetitive sentences or Bible verses. The Bible should not be used as punishment. A vocabulary list is appropriate to use and is available in the office.
- **Parent communication** – a written note of phone call to the parent is in order to inform them of the status of the student's behavior and enlist their aid. A Student Referral may be used for this purpose.

Penalties –

- A one or two-day in-school suspension may be issued if unsatisfactory behavior continues

- If behavior continues to be inappropriate after serving an in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension then follows (1-3 days).
- Expulsion – it is left to the discretion of the administration whether an immediate dismissal is warranted. All other steps may not be followed.

Suspension – The school reserves the right to suspend any student for his transgression of the following code of conduct:

- Smoking or the possession of any form of tobacco on campus or at off-campus school activities.
- Cheating, forging parent's signature, stealing, lying, or other similar behavior.
- Leaving school grounds without permission.
- Repeated violations of the dress code (school uniform).
- Flagrantly abusive language and/or disrespectful conduct or attitude
- Repeated fighting on school grounds or at school functions.
- Intentional destruction or damage to school property.
- Ringing of the fire alarm or 911 calls without justifiable cause. This misdemeanor will also be turned over to the Sheriff's Department, subjecting the child to arrest and parents will be billed for the fire department fee.
- Delinquent accounts (see Parent Statement of Agreement).
- Student behavior detrimental to the moral development of the other students.

Complaint Or Problem Procedure – Occasionally during the course of the year misunderstandings or problems can arise between a teacher and a student; teacher and parent; parent and the administration; or any one of several possible areas. This is often the result of lack of communication between those involved.

The school has established a policy for these situations; therefore, complaints or problems will be handled in the manner prescribed below:

- All questions, problems, or complaints should be brought directly to the teacher ***first***, before anyone else is involved.
- If the situation is not resolved at this level through direct contact, it should be taken to the Director. Please **do not** bypass the teacher.

ABCA follows “The Matthew 1 Principle” as described in the ACSI publication. A brief summary of this principle follows:

- Keep the matter confidential. The very pattern of sharing the problem only with those directly involved establishes the principle of confidentiality. The Bible has much to say about those who gossip or malign others with their words. “A hypocrite with his mouth destroyeth his neighbor; but through knowledge shall the just be delivered.” (Proverbs 11:9).
- Keep the circle small. “...if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone...” The first step and usually the only step needed in solving a person-to-person problem is for one of the two people involved to initiate face-to-face dialogue. Most problems are solved at the two-people level.
- Be straightforward. Jesus tells us to be forthright and to love honestly. Restoration and improvement can only come when the issues are lovingly, yet clearly, presented.

- Be forgiving. “If he shall hear thee, thou has gained thy brother.” Once the matter is resolved, we should wholeheartedly forgive and restore the person whose fault has offended us. Galatians 6:1 reads “If a man be overtaken in a fault, ye who are spiritual restore such a one in the spirit of meekness, considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.”

General Information

Holidays – ABCA respects the right of the parents to celebrate the holidays of Halloween, Christmas, and Easter with their families as they wish. Within the School program, however, the following scriptural principals serve as our school guidelines:

- **Halloween** – ABCA emphasizes a harvest theme at this time of the year, instead of “Halloween” as such. The traditional Halloween themes and symbols including witches, ghosts, and death (Deuteronomy 18:10-11), superstition, fear (Psalm 104, I John 4:18), and darkness (I John 1:5-7) are all contrary to basic Bible truths taught at ABCA. In general, smiling pumpkins, stalks of wheat, displays of produce, and the like, are acceptable harvest symbols: while witches, monsters, ghosts, gravestones, etc., are not.
- **Christmas and Easter** – ABCA treats these holidays as joyous times of the year to enthusiastically celebrate and emphasize both the birth of Jesus Christ and His Resurrection. Activities and symbols, such as Santa Claus, elves, the Easter Bunny, etc., which compete with these are deemphasized. We emphasize gift giving at Christmas and new birth in the spring.

Homework – ABCA believes that homework is an integral part of the learning process and is assigned at all grade levels. Students are held responsible for all assignments and are graded accordingly. Homework will not be given on Wednesdays or holidays.

Long-term assignments such as projects or reports will possibly require this additional time. However, no homework will be assigned on Wednesday nights to allow for church attendance. Thursday tests may occur, so plan ahead to allow adequate study time.

1. Homework objectives

- a. To stimulate voluntary effort, initiative, independence, responsibility and self-direction.
- b. To reinforce school learning by providing the necessary integration and application.
- c. To enrich the school experience through related home activities.
- d. To encourage carry-over school interests into leisure interests.
- e. It is the responsibility of the parents to supervise these home assignments by: scheduling a consistent time each day and providing a quiet place in the home where the child can work uninterrupted, giving limited Help if needed (without doing the homework), checking to see that the assignments are completed and neatly done, and seeing to it that the child returns the assignments to school the following day or the day they are due.

- 2. Grades K – 2 – the amount of homework should not exceed 45 minutes for the average child. Unfinished seat-work that is sent home is in addition to the homework. Enough time is provided in class for most children to complete the seatwork.
- 3. Grades 3 – 5 – The amount of homework should not exceed one hour for the average child. Unfinished seat-work that is sent home is in addition to homework. Enough time is provided in class for most children to complete the seat-work.
- 4. Grades 6 – 7 – The amount of homework should not exceed 1½ hours for the average child

Homework tips for Parents

- Although we all want our children happy, we also need to make them responsible and independent; two of homework's most valuable byproducts. This strong expectation must be set at home.
- Allow your child some time to unwind and relax after school. Sometimes a snack will help them concentrate better later.
- Set and agree on the rules such as when and where homework will be done and the consequences if it is not done.
- The study area should be well-lit and free from distractions such as television and family conversations; some students work better with background music. Studies have shown that listening to classical music particularly Baroque and Mozart, can sharpen concentration.
- A weekly calendar to schedule homework along with church activities, sports practices and games, music lessons, and other involvement should be kept. A monthly calendar can identify long-term projects or special occasions.
- Limit or ban TV viewing on school nights. Decide how much TV is acceptable and stick to it. Remember that TV is also known as a social educator, which represents a powerful influence on the behavior and lifestyle patterns of our children. The psalmist David said, "I will set before my eyes no vile thing." (Psalms 10:3). Much of what our children see contradicts wholesome family values and must grieve the heart of God.
- Don't overlook ways of making learning fun. Play study games with your child when time allows. Use flashcards to drill multiplication facts or spelling words. When the child answers correctly, he wins the flashcard. When your child complains that homework is boring, assure him that life is full of boring, but important tasks.
- If your child keeps you tethered to his desk, break away and make it clear that you will help but he must do his homework on his own. Make a child tackle a problem at least twice before you help him/her.

- Never do your child's homework. It cheats him/her out of valuable practice, teacher feedback, and self-esteem.

Even if our child is making good grades, watch out for bad habits such as procrastination, or watching TV while doing homework. As your child matures, the schoolwork becomes more demanding and grades can go down. Good habits need to be developed early.

Money sent to the office – All money sent to school with your child for payment should be exact and placed in a sealed envelope labeled with your child's name, grade, purpose and amount. We also request that children do not carry or be given large sums of money such as payment for tuition, etc.

Lost and Found – Most articles that are lost will be put in the Lost and Found box. Other items such as jewelry, money, or other valuables will be turned in to the office. All garments (jackets, sweaters, P.E. shoes, etc.), books, book bags, lunch boxes, and other personal items should be labeled. If articles are unlabeled unclaimed, they will be given to a community charity during the summer.

Attendance Policies – In order to maintain high educational standards, consistent attendance and punctuality are imperative. Regular attendance provides students the opportunity to master required skills at each grade level. Many integral activities, including class discussions, group experiences, field trips, and direct instruction, cannot be simulated or replicated with written work. Therefore, with the goal of promoting student success, the following policies have been adopted to discourage unnecessary absences and tardiness during the school year. Since the school calendar affords many days of vacation, parents are encouraged to take their vacations and family trips during scheduled school holidays. It is our intent to encourage honest, accurate and consistent adherence to this policy by all students, parents, teachers, and administrators.

- Absence may be excused if due to sickness, medical or other family emergency or required doctor visits. A note or documentation for the student file is requested.
1. Make-Up Work – all work missed during absences is to be made up after the student returns to school within the same amount of days as were missed. Parents may request homework assignments for grades K-5th as of the first day of an absence and grades 6th-7th as of the third day of an absence.
 2. Tardiness – Tardiness, even in kindergarten, is detrimental to the child and disrupts the education process in the classroom. Students in all grades, K-8th, are considered tardy in the morning when they are not in the classroom by 8:00 a.m. When a student arrives late, he must report to the office for a tardy slip. Tardiness upon arrival in the morning or after a medical appointment (K-8th grades) requires student to come to the office to obtain a pass in order to enter class.
 - Excused Tardiness – Tardiness due to the same reasons as excused absences are excused as well.
 - Each seven unexcused tardy marks in a grading period will be counted as an unexcused absence day.

Health Precautions – Please do not send children to school with fever, excessive coughing or sneezing, upset stomach, body rash, etc. Such symptoms may be communicable and are easily transmitted to other children. Children should not return to school unless they have been free of fever for a period of 24 hours.

Change of Address and/or Phone numbers – The office should be notified immediately about any change in the home address, telephone number, or parents' employment and telephone number, as well as any

other pertinent information. Such up-to-date information may make a difference in the welfare and care of your child in an emergency.

Fire/Evacuation Drills – Since ABCA is genuinely concerned with the safety and welfare of its' children, monthly fire drills are held to provide practice in receiving direction for safe and expedient evacuation of the school building if the need arises. Tornado or bad weather drills may also be held so children will be informed of safety precautions and hopefully will experience less anxiety if such an emergency occurs.

Forgotten Items – Books, homework, lunches, etc., which the child has forgotten at home are not to be taken to the classroom. If the parent brings such items to the office, they are reminded that the office staff is occupied with school business and is not always able to deliver these items to the students. Messages to teachers should be sent in a note to be delivered by the child instead of depending on the office staff to give the message to the teacher. Homework or schoolwork may not be faxed to the office.

Inclement Weather - in the case of severe weather situations (tornado, hurricane, etc.), ABCA will follow Orange County School System closures or delays.

Orientation – At least one parent is requested to attend this session with the teacher to get acquainted with the classroom and general policies of the school. Parents will be notified during the summer as to the date and time of this meeting.

Party Invitations – Party invitations should not be sent to school for distribution unless the whole class, all boys, or all girls in your child's class have been invited to attend. This will avoid hurt feelings for those not invited.

Personal Belongings – The school is not responsible for lost or damaged clothing, money, or any other valuables, such as jewelry that a student brings to school. *Clothing and other personal items should be labeled.* Nap items for kindergarten (blanket, small pillow, stuffed animals) should be left in the classroom. Do not bring toys to school unless directed by the teacher.

Protection of Children While at School – At no time will a child be released to anyone other than his/her legal guardian or parent unless a written request has been submitted to the office by the parent or guardian. If other persons can remove your child from the school grounds, their name must be on the registration form and they must have identification.

Uniform and Dress Code Policy – ABCA has chosen to be a uniform school and students are expected to be in full uniform attire each school day and at any school functions unless otherwise directed by school staff.

Uniforms are ordered through the school. Shirts are \$20 each and the skirt for girls is \$15. Ties are \$7. Order forms should be obtained, completed and turned in at the school office. Boys are to get their own navy dress pants.

- **Girls** should have uniform skirt, button down embroidered shirt, cross tie, with black shoes and socks. Girls may wear post earrings – No hoops or other jewelry. Hair should be neat with no unnatural color.
- **Boys** should have dark blue pants and an embroidered uniform shirt and navy tie, black shoes and navy socks. All boys hair must be a tapered cut, off the collar and ears. There are to be no dreads, Mohawks, designs, unnatural color, or unnatural designs. No combs or net caps.