

Parent Handbook

Dear ACA Parent,

This Parent Handbook provides valuable information concerning the major policies and procedures in effect at ACA. The education of each child is a vitally important matter. In partnership with the home and the local church, Ambassador Christian Academy seeks to equip children with tools of learning and a variety of experiences enabling them to use all of their God-given gifts and abilities for His glory.

The single most important thing you need to know about ACA is our commitment to a way of life centered in Jesus Christ and in the teachings of the Bible. We take seriously the Bible's call "to remember the Creator in the days of your youth" and Jesus' claim of abundant life for those who trust in Him.

Ambassador Christian Academy is a very special place, a place where learning that is Christ-centered is taking hold...in time...and for eternity. It's amazing to think that what we are doing "in time" is timeless and eternally significant.

Few things in our world endure for a lifetime, but a quality, life-changing Christian school education is one of them. When the Christian school joins the efforts of the local church and a home that honors the Living God, the combination works mightily in shaping young and impressionable lives for the glory of God.

Please refer to the Handbook as a guide that will help you to understand the many things that take place on our campus.

Sincerely, in Christ,
Christina Hutchings
Administrator

FACT SHEET

Overview

Ambassador Christian Academy is a Pre-K – 8th grade school which is a ministry of the First Baptist Church of Toms River. The Academy has been in the business of education since 1979, offering a solid academic program with a Christ-centered emphasis for students in pre-school through eighth grade.

ACA provides an interdenominational perspective within a historic evangelical Christian tradition. The Academy seeks to use a caring environment to foster excellence and personal achievement by every student.

In 2002, ACA achieved accreditation with Middle State Association of Colleges and Schools and the Association of Christian Schools International.

Located in Toms River, New Jersey, Ambassador Christian Academy enjoys the use of a beautiful campus in the heart of Ocean County within a mile of county government offices. An excellent media center, computer lab and art room complement good-sized classrooms to provide the school with an attractive educational setting.

Mission

Ambassador Christian Academy exists to provide a classical education based upon and dedicated to a Christ-centered ethos that inspires students, faculty and staff to know, love and practice that which is true, good and beautiful, and challenges them to strive for excellence as they live in the service of God and man for life and for eternity.

It is our goal to see that God's Word impact every aspect of life and learning. Our desire is to see a student who knows the Living God in a personal way and has tools to grow to maturity to honor the Lord with a lifetime of learning and service.

Currently

Students come from a dozen school districts via public or private transportation. Various churches are represented within our constituency and we encourage active church involvement for our families.

We have an expanded sports program featuring boys' and girls' soccer teams in the fall, boys' and girls' basketball teams in the winter, and coed track and volleyball in the spring in our Middle School (grades 6, 7, 8). Competitive,

interscholastic contests involve our teams throughout the year. A cheerleading squad adds to the excitement of the sports schedule.

Tuition rates are established annually prior to the re-enrollment period in February. Tuition payments along with gift income to the Annual Tuition Aid Fund provide the resources for our campus operation. The prayers of God's people have enabled much to be accomplished across the past two decades and we expect, with confidence and excitement, a great future ahead.

We invite you to discover what is available at Ambassador Christian Academy. It may surprise you to learn about the quality of our program and the excellence of our learning environment.

Ambassador Christian Academy admits students of any race, color, national or ethnic origin, and does not discriminate in the administration of its program.

Vision Statement

It is the vision of Ambassador Christian Academy to see that God's Word impacts every aspect of life and learning through a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. The Academy strives to equip the students with the tools of academic excellence and nurturing to grow to a maturity that honors the Lord with a lifetime of learning and service.

Core Values

Truth

God's Word is foundational as the source of all truth.

"Wisdom and knowledge will be the stability of your times and strength of salvation; the fear of the Lord is His treasure."

Isaiah 33:6

Biblical Integration

Jesus Christ is at the heart of all learning because in Him

"are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge."

Colossians 2:3

Personal Salvation

Every child is created in God's image and needs to come to experience saving faith in Christ alone, according to the Scriptures.

"Nor is there salvation in any other: for there is no other name under heaven given among men, by which we must be saved."

Acts 4:12

Educational Excellence

A program of educational excellence that gives attention to the many aspects of a child's life: the physical, social, academic, emotional, and spiritual needs present for each individual.

"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom."

Proverbs 4:7

Christian Character

A caring atmosphere creates an environment where learning is maximized, with God's help, resulting in a child's character being shaped increasingly to be like that of Jesus Christ.

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control."

Galatians 5:22

Prayer

Prayer is a strategic exercise to maintain spiritual vitality. ACA was birthed in prayer, is continually bathed in prayer, and Lord willing will be built on prayer for the years to come through prayer.

“Continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving.”

Colossians 4:2

Unity

Christian schooling works best when family, school, and church are in harmony with the learning outcomes of each child.

“Behold how good and pleasant it is for brothers to dwell together in unity.”

Psalms 133:1

Kaizen

Continuous improvement...Kaizen...marks the daily approach to campus life.

“I press toward the mark for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.”

Philippians 3:14

OUR HERITAGE

Ambassador Christian Academy was established as a ministry of the First Baptist Church of Toms River. Through much prayer and planning and with a strong vision of the need for Christian school education, Pastor Russ Thompson and Mrs. Susan Wylie were instrumental in the founding of the Academy. In 1979, ACA opened with 40 students in grades kindergarten through fourth. Mrs. Lynn Thompson became Ambassador's first salaried administrator.

As successive grades were added, enrollment increased until facilities and programs were full and overflowing with students. As time went on, it was determined that our present campus structure was best suited to meet the needs of pre-schoolers, elementary and middle school students. In recent years, ACA has established enrollment goals and class size limits designed to provide a solid academic experience up through the 8th grade.

OUR PERSPECTIVE

America's great schools are known by what they value, because what is valued will be taught! At ACA, education begins with the realization that all truth is God's truth and that only in seeking God's truth will a person be fully educated. Art, history, language, math, music, science and every other academic subject is viewed from an historic Christian perspective. A truly educated person is able to understand much of life from this vantage point.

ACA is committed to providing the very best possible academic and spiritual environment for all of our students. The development of Christian character and the skills to form healthy, positive relationships complement each student's academic growth. Throughout the year, encouragement and caring is directed to each child as Ambassador Christian Academy seeks to “honor all our students.”

ACA SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Ambassador Christian Academy is governed by a committee of dedicated, concerned Christians who have a love and commitment to the students and families of the Academy. Regular meetings with the Administrator are held in order to keep current with all that takes place in the life of the school.

PARENT TEACHER FELLOWSHIP

The purpose of the PTF is to assist and support the Academy in providing the best education possible for each student. Annual fundraisers provide resources for classroom, playground and computer equipment. The PTF also coordinates fellowship opportunities for the entire ACA family with meetings and activities planned throughout the year. The PTF is governed by a set of by-laws and an Executive Committee whose members are selected from the membership at large.

ADMISSIONS

General Admission Standards: Ambassador Christian Academy is committed to a Biblical philosophy of education which integrates Christian principles and Scripture truths with the academic and social experiences of every student. Students seeking admission are evaluated on the basis of previous school records (report cards, standardized test scores), interviews, and the potential to perform satisfactorily at ACA. Ambassador Christian Academy is not equipped with the resources required to serve children seeking to be admitted into special education programs. The first six weeks is considered a trial period for all new students.

Kindergarten Admissions: To enter kindergarten, the child must be five years of age on or before October 1st to be eligible for admittance in September of that year. All prospective students entering kindergarten must take an entrance test to ascertain their readiness for our kindergarten program. An official copy of the student's birth certificate is required.

Non-Discriminatory Statement: Ambassador Christian Academy admits students of any race, color, national or ethnic origin, to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to the students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship, athletic and other school-administered programs. Ambassador Christian Academy does reserve the right to select students on the basis of academic performance, religious and philosophical compatibility, and a willingness to cooperate with the ACA administration and abide by the policies of the school.

RE-ENROLLMENT

An important decision is made every year: parents choosing to continue their child(ren) in a Christian school. Re-enrollment information is sent out to every family in early February. In order to hold a space for a child in the coming school year, the re-enrollment form and the discounted registration fee needs to be paid by the announced deadline in the spring. As explained in the Tuition & Fee Schedule, the registration fee is non-refundable.

A second step of commitment on the part of ACA families comes in the month of June when the first month's tuition payment is due. This non-refundable payment allows a classroom seat to be held through the summer months. As space(s) allow, new applicants to ACA are accepted.

PAYMENT OF TUITION AND FEES

Tuition payment typically follows a ten or twelve-month schedule with the first payment due in June; ending in March or May. Report cards and official school records cannot be released unless the student's account is current or completely paid. The Delinquent Accounts Policy on the next page gives more details concerning tuition payment.

Policy Statement: Delinquent Accounts

Purpose: To lay out a practical, enforceable policy for the handling of delinquent accounts. The ACA Committee believes that the conscientious management of delinquent accounts is not only critical to the financial integrity of ACA, but also a key component of Biblical stewardship.

Policy: Steps to be taken for delinquent accounts shall be as follows. Note that an account shall be considered delinquent upon reaching two weeks (14 calendar days) past due.

Step 1 – At two weeks past due, a letter shall be sent to the family advising of delinquent status. The letter shall be signed by the Head of School and shall be post-marked no later than the 14th calendar day past the due date.

Step 2 – At one month past due, the delinquent account shall be reported to the ACA Committee for action. Once at this step, each delinquent account shall be reported to the Committee via two means:

No later than the 30th calendar day past the due date, the Head of School shall advise the full Committee via e-mail

At each month's regular business meeting, the Head of School shall provide the Committee with a complete and accurate written list of delinquent accounts 30 days or more past due

Step 3 – At two months past due, the subject student(s) shall be disenrolled and the account shall be turned over to the designated collection agency.

In addition to the above, the following restrictions apply:

End of School Year – Official school records shall not be released at the end of the year for any account not paid in full. Eight grade students shall not be permitted to participate in the class trip, attend the graduation ceremony, or receive a graduation diploma for any account not paid in full.

Beginning of Following Year – To be admitted for attendance at the start of the school year, each student's account must satisfy the following criteria:

1. Prior year's account is paid in full
2. Current year's account is current (not delinquent)

Enforcement: Enforcement of this policy is the responsibility of the Head of School. The ACA Committee is involved in the process as outlined above under Policy, Step 2; however, it remains the Head of School's responsibility to ensure full compliance with this policy.

Exceptions: Exceptions to this policy must be approved by the ACA Committee.

HEALTH OFFICE

- Students should report to the Health Office for any medical problem or when prescribed medication must be dispensed. Medication both prescribed and over-the-counter requires a doctor's written order and parental permission in order to be dispensed in school. Contact the school nurse for specific medication permission forms and to advise the school nurse if your child is receiving medication at home.
- Parents should notify the school nurse if their child has been diagnosed with any chronic health problem or life-threatening allergic condition.
- Students should remain home if they appear ill or have a fever, and should not return to school until they are symptom free for 24 hours. Parents should notify the Health Office about specific medical problems. All contagious illnesses (e.g. Chicken Pox, Fifth Disease, Scarlet Fever) are to be reported to the school nurse immediately. In some cases a physician's clearance may be necessary prior to the child's returning to school.
- All cuts and abrasions should be kept clean and covered with a bandage. Any unusual amounts of drainage or swelling will be referred to the child's medical provider. If your child has impetigo and/or a draining wound that cannot be covered sufficiently, he/she needs to be kept at home until properly treated.
- If your child has a serious injury, surgery, or is hospitalized, a note from the doctor is needed to return to school. The note should indicate if there are any limitations or if your child is allowed to participate in all school activities.
- Parents must obtain a doctor's notice if their child cannot participate in gym.
- Should your child require the use of crutches due to an injury or illness, a physician's clearance note must be provided to the school nurse.
- Injuries that occur at home should also be treated at home. The school nurse does not diagnose or treat injuries that occur outside of school.
- According to the State Department Guidelines and school policy the following annual health screenings, dependent on age, will be performed during the school year: Height, Weight and Blood Pressure on all students in grades Kindergarten-8th. Scoliosis testing is provided for students in grade 5 and 7. Hearing test for students in Kindergarten-3rd grade and 7th grade. Vision screening for students in Kindergarten-8th grade. Upon request of parent or educational staff the Health Office will screen a particular student in the above areas if there is a particular concern. All screenings will be done unless written permission not to do the screening is sent in by the parent.

STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

Ambassador Christian Academy has the goal of establishing a positive environment for learning throughout the school where children will feel safe and secure.

Ambassador Christian Academy, as a matter of conviction and policy, disapproves of habits which debilitate the mind, the spirit, or the body such as the use of illegal habit-forming drugs, alcoholic beverages, smoking, or those habits which deplete the group spirit such as cruelty, abusiveness in language or behavior, cheating and stealing.

Students, by virtue of their enrollment, agree to accept the responsibility of adhering to these standards of conduct and to withdraw if they can no longer, with integrity, conform to them.

If ACA's standards of conduct are violated, the school will have to consider serious disciplinary action including suspension and, if necessary, expulsion. Such standards apply while on school property, attending school functions and traveling in school vehicles. It is also understood that the actions of students anywhere reflect on the institution in which they are enrolled. Therefore, disciplinary action will be taken towards those who find it impossible to abide by the spirit and purpose of Ambassador Christian Academy.

We desire students who learn to develop clean, healthful habits, trusting in Jesus Christ for personal fulfillment and a satisfying life.

Discipline and its application at Ambassador Christian Academy is grounded in Scripture, especially as seen in:

Proverbs 12:1 "Whoever loves discipline loves knowledge, but he who hates correction is stupid."

Proverbs 13:18 "He who ignores discipline comes to poverty and shame, but whoever heeds correction is honored."

Proverbs 22:15 "Folly is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of discipline will drive it far from him."

Ephesians 5:1-4 (includes warnings against greed, foolish talk, joking that is out of place)

Revelations 3:19 "Those whom I love, I rebuke and discipline. So be earnest and repent."

Other texts: Hebrews 12 and I Corinthians 13

THREE GOALS FOR DISCIPLINE AT ACA

- To develop and maintain a healthy environment for learning.
- To correct behavior which is disruptive or destructive.
- To train students in behavior patterns that will be helpful to them individually and which will contribute to a positive school experience for the entire school community.
- To remove, as a last resort, students who fail to comply with the standards of conduct in order that the learning environment may be maintained.

Basic School Rules

- Respect is to be shown toward all adults and other students.
- An attitude of helpfulness and courtesy is to be maintained.
- Students will engage in language that shows respect and courtesy for others and for the Lord's name.
- Care for campus property and the personal property of others shall be observed.
- The dress code shall be obeyed.
- Physical contact, whether amorous or combative, is not allowed.
- There shall be no running anywhere inside the school building.
- Gum-chewing is not permitted anywhere on campus.
- Radios, cassette recorders, CD players, MP3 players, cell phones, beepers and electronic games are not to be in a student's possession during school hours.
- Harmful objects which may endanger the well-being of others are not permitted.

Disciplinary Procedures

LEVEL 1 – Recess Detention

Level 1 misconduct includes but is not limited to:

- Disruptive behavior
- Dress code infractions
- Tardiness to class or to school
- Writing/passing notes in class
- Unauthorized eating/drinking in class
- Possession of unauthorized electronic/communication equipment
- Chewing gum

Level 1 detentions are served in school during recess period. The accumulation of 3 recess detentions will result in an after school detention.

3 recess detentions in one school year = 1 after school detention

LEVEL 2 – After School Detention (2:10-3:00 pm)

Level 2 misconduct requires an after-school detention, and may be issued for but is not limited to the following:

- Misusing the Lord's Name
- Disobedient/disrespectful behavior toward ACA staff – 1st offense
- Disrespectful behavior (name-calling, bullying, etc.) toward another student
- Aggressive behavior
- Cheating/plagiarism
- Cutting class
- Lying to anyone
- Cursing, profanity

Bullying Policy

Students enrolled in Ambassador Christian Academy will not use any form of communication **on or off** campus that would adversely affect either themselves, a student or staff member or the reputation of Ambassador Christian Academy.

This includes but is not limited to:

- Sending cruel, vicious or threatening messages.
- Ridiculing others by creating websites with stories, cartoons or pictures that humiliate them in any fashion.
- Creating a rating page for others to respond to pictures or any description of a student or staff member.
- Misrepresenting themselves to others with the intention of tricking them into conversations that would reveal embarrassing information.
- Taking pictures of students or staff and using them in an embarrassing fashion.
- Sharing other's secrets with the intention of embarrassing them.
- Impersonating another person sending or posting information under their name.
- Not communicating gossip concerning another student or staff member.
- Using another student's name, family name or the Academy's name in a communication without permission.
- Any form of communication (including Internet, website) that can cause physical harm to themselves as well as others.

Students must attend after school detentions and arrange for transportation. The 3rd after school detention will be served at a pre-suspension meeting with a disciplinary committee.

Missed after school detentions will result in the following:

- 1 missed detention: double detention
- 2 missed detentions: suspension
- 3 missed detentions: expulsion
- 3 After school detentions in one school year = 1 (possible) suspension

LEVEL 3 – Suspension (on campus or off campus)

A student may be suspended for a serious infraction or for any recurring problem that is not resolved through lower levels of disciplinary action. The administration and a disciplinary committee determine the length of the suspension. Students may be required to serve on a work detail. A student serving an at-home suspension is not permitted on school grounds.

Level 3 misconduct may be issued for but is not limited to the following:

- Engaging in behavior when others could be endangered
- Fighting
- Cutting school/class or leaving school grounds without permission
- Blatant disrespect to another student, ACA staff member, or other adult in or out of school

- Stealing
- Purposefully defacing or damaging school/personal property (fee may be assessed)
- *a 3rd detention

*Possible Suspension

Students who receive a third after school (level 2) detention will serve the 3rd detention at a pre-suspension meeting with a disciplinary committee. This meeting is intended to restore, counsel and correct a pattern of errant behavior. A specific plan of action will be agreed upon and suspension will be considered.

The Possible Suspension Procedure is as follows:

- Parents will be notified of the 3rd detention and the pre-suspension meeting.
- The student will be given the opportunity to speak before a committee consisting of at least two of the following staff members: teacher, homeroom teacher, head teacher, principal.
- Parents may attend the meeting as observers.
- Decision of the committee will be made in closed committee.
- Parents will be notified of the decision in writing within two days of the meeting.
- In order to remain at ACA parents must agree to the conditions set by the committee for the student's restoration and discipline.
- Parents may be required to meet with members of the committee to discuss necessary steps to fully restore the student.

3 suspensions in one school year = expulsion

LEVEL 4 – Expulsion

The decision to permanently dismiss a student will be made by the Principal with the approval of the ACA School Committee. **Any of the following incidents** committed on or off campus are grounds for immediate expulsion from ACA:

- Carrying, using or threatening to use weapons of any type
- Possessing, distributing, using tobacco
- Possessing, distributing, using or being under the influence of drugs or alcohol
- Possessing drug paraphernalia of any type
- Possessing or distributing pornographic or violent material
- Striking any staff member
- Gambling
- Breaking any city, state, or federal law
- Blatant sexual misconduct
- Failure of the student or parent to comply with disciplinary action taken by the school
- Behavior leading to a 3rd suspension in one school year
- Any other behavior of a manner deemed inconsistent with Christian conduct and detrimental to the spiritual, physical, mental, emotional or academic welfare of others.

If a parent or student wishes to appeal the decision, they may write a letter to the Principal requesting that the decision be taken to the ACA Committee for reconsideration. A student may not attend school during the appeal process. If deemed appropriate by the majority vote of the committee members, the parents and/or student may appear before the committee to state their case. The decision of the ACA committee is final.

- 3 recess detentions = 1 after school detention
- 3 after school detentions = 1 (possible) suspension
- 3 suspensions = expulsion

WITHDRAWING FROM SCHOOL

In the event that it becomes necessary to withdraw a child from school during the school year, the parent or guardian is responsible for the payment of tuition for the month during which withdrawal takes place as well as the following month's tuition.

Please notify the school office when you are considering making a change. A transfer card along with a copy of the child's health record is available, with a day's notice, to allow enrollment in another school. The reminder to parents is that all financial obligations must be met before official school records can be forwarded on to a new school. For school records to be official, they must be sent directly from ACA to the new school.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE & TARDINESS

Attendance

1. Regular attendance is required because it is essential for the student's successful progress. Any child not present after the school day begins will be marked absent. (Note tardiness guidelines below.)
2. A note from the parent is required for each absence stating the specific reason for the absence. The note is due on the day the student returns to school.
3. Parents are strongly urged to schedule vacations and non-emergency medical visits during regular school vacations and after school hours. If a child is going to miss school because of a home church activity, travel with parents or similar unusual circumstances, the classroom teacher must be contacted prior to the absence. The child is responsible for all work missed as determined by the teacher.
4. The school office or the child's teacher should be notified ahead of time if there is a doctor's or dentist's appointment needed during the school day. The student is to remain in the class until the office sends for them. The parent will sign out the student in the office when early dismissal takes place.
5. Absences totaling more than twenty days during the school year shall be considered cause for possible grade retention, especially if the child has been deficient in making up work. When a child's total reaches ten absences, the administrator shall be notified. Communication from the school to the parent shall take place after twelve absences have occurred.
6. Partial day absence: Students who are in attendance for a minimum of 3 hours will be considered present for the school day.
7. Perfect Attendance will be awarded to those students who are in attendance every school day with no more than ten tardies for the entire school year.

Tardiness

Students not in their classroom or homeroom by 8:10 am are late and will need to be given a late pass in the office in order to be admitted to class.

When a student is late to school 3 times a recess detention will be given as per "Level 1" under Disciplinary Procedures.

Disciplinary Procedures will be followed for any subsequent lates.

SCHOOL HOURS

8:00 a.m.....students report to classrooms
8:10 a.m.....late
10:00 a.m.....school starts for Late Openings K-8 only
12:10 p.m.....Early Dismissal time as per calendar
2:10 p.m.....bus dismissal
2:15 p.m.....carpooler dismissal

A.M.

Upon arrival in the morning, the students are to line up on the parking lot in their class lines. Students will not be allowed in the building until 8:00 a.m. when the entire school is dismissed to their classes. For security reasons,

students are not to be dropped off any earlier than 7:40 a.m. During inclement weather students are supervised in fellowship hall before school.

P.M.

Bus students are dismissed from their classrooms first. Once the buses have left and the staff in the parking lot have determined that it is safe, carpooling students will be dismissed. Parents are to wait in the parking lot for their students. Younger grades will be walked to the outside door in an orderly fashion by a teacher. Parents picking up their students after school are to park in the parking lot adjacent to the main building or in the far end of the lot by the Specialty Services trailer to allow space for the buses.

BUSING

ACA is serviced with busing by many school districts throughout Ocean and Monmouth counties. Busing to and from ACA is in conjunction with St. Joseph's and Donovan Catholic schools in Toms River. Students are bused from home on buses from their own district. They are taken to St. Josephs/Donovan Catholic where they board a shuttle bus to ACA. The reverse takes place in the afternoon when students board shuttles at ACA to St. Joe's/Donovan and then board their own buses to go home from St. Joe's. ACA staff are present at St. Joe's each morning and afternoon when students are making transfers from one bus to another to assist students when necessary. In the event that a student has a change in the normal routine, i.e. to be picked up by car instead of taking the bus, or take the bus instead of being picked up by car, the student must bring a note to the teacher stating the change and signed by the parent.

PLEASE NOTE that none of the school districts will allow students to ride home on any bus other than their own, even within the same district. If your student plans an after school activity with a friend, the parents are responsible for transportation.

Riding the bus is considered a privilege. Improper conduct on the buses will result in that privilege being denied.

REQUEST TO LEAVE SCHOOL EARLY

A request to have a child excused from classes early should be sent with the child on the morning of the dismissal. The time and reason for the dismissal should be stated and signed by the parent. Non-emergency medical and dental appointments are to be made after school hours when possible. No student will be released until they are signed out by a parent or recognized guardian in the school office. Parents are not to come to the classroom for their student.

HEALTH OFFICE

The functions of the Health Office are to insure that all students have the proper immunizations, administer essential prescribed medications, conduct annual screenings, and to attend to emergency health needs of our students. If it becomes necessary for a student to take any medication in school, it must be brought to the school office to be dispensed by the school nurse. The medication must be in the original container showing the prescription from the pharmacy. The Health Office will not dispense Tylenol, aspirin or cough drops without a specific doctor's prescription for an illness or chronic condition.

STUDENT USE OF THE PHONE

The school phone is for business purposes. Students will be allowed to use the phone in emergencies only. Forgotten homework, gym clothes and social plans, etc. are not considered emergencies. Students bringing cell phones to school must have them turned off during the school day.

EMERGENCY CLOSINGS

ACA subscribes to an emergency call system that will call all parents in the event of a weather related schedule change or emergency. The call ID will appear as 411-411-4111. The system will continue to call until the message is acknowledged verbally by answering the call.

If there is an early dismissal because of inclement weather, parents should listen to the radio for the student's school district to be announced. Generally when Toms River schools close, Ambassador will do the same. Each district makes its own decision as to when they will pick up students from ACA. When all districts have called, the students have been picked up, Ambassador will officially close. If it starts to snow during school hours and parents are concerned about their children, parents should feel free to come and pick up their children.

SCHOOL VISITORS

Parents are always welcome at Ambassador; however, all visitors including parents are to check in at the school office when they arrive at the building. Any items being brought in for students, i.e. lunches, gym clothes, birthday treats should be brought to the office and will be forwarded to the student through the office staff. The concern for the safety of all of our students requires us to restrict visitors in the classrooms and hallways. Parent compliance with these guidelines is greatly appreciated.

TEXTBOOKS

Students are given hardcover textbooks for use during each school year. Some softcover workbooks are consumable. There will be a charge for misuse and excessive wear of books during the time they are in the student's possession. Replacement costs for lost books must be paid by the student.

In general all hard covered textbooks are to be covered by the student and include the student's name and the subject clearly printed on the cover. No other cover marks should be made. Each student should have a Bible. Typically, scripture memorization is taken from the New King James Version of the Bible.

Teachers should note the condition of each student's non-consumable texts so those fines may be assessed at the end of the year for excessive damage.

Book Fines

New Hardcover Almost New Hardcover

Broken Bindings	\$20.00	\$20.00
Not Reusable	\$50-85.00	\$50-85.00

New Softcover Almost New Softcover

Broken Bindings	\$15.00	\$15.00
Not Reusable	\$25-45.00	\$25.45.00

LOST AND FOUND

A Lost and Found box is maintained by the school office. Unclaimed items are disposed of at various times throughout the year. Watch the LINK for reminders.

EMERGENCY DRILLS

Emergency drills are regularly scheduled throughout the year. Fire exit routes are posted in each classroom. Students are to proceed to the assigned fire exit without talking and in an orderly line as directed by the adult in charge.

TELEPHONE/ADDRESS CHANGE

Please notify the school immediately if there is a change in address, telephone number or emergency contact person.

LUNCH PROGRAM

Students may bring their lunches and beverages or purchase them a month in advance. The lunch menu, order form and cost of the hot lunch program available each day will be distributed each month. All students are encouraged to bring a healthy snack to be eaten in the classroom each morning.

LIBRARY

Students may use the school library when supervised. Most classes have a library session scheduled with an opportunity to check out books. Please help us maintain our library collection of more than 9,000 volumes by making sure books are returned on time.

BRINGING THINGS TO SCHOOL

Electronic or communication equipment may be used during the school day only with staff permission. No materials of questionable nature are permitted. The above will be confiscated and kept in the office. Valuable toys should be kept at home. Any toys brought for use at recess are the sole responsibility of the owners. Any item which disrupts a class will be prohibited.

PARENT-SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

Parents are encouraged to keep in regular contact with the school, especially with the child's classroom teacher by email, telephone, or note during the school day. If the teacher is called, the office will leave a note for the teacher to return the call. If a conference is requested, please call ahead to make an appointment. Drop-in conferences are not always convenient.

Incorporated into the ACA school calendar are Parent-Teacher Conference times. These are generally held in the Fall and in the Winter. All parents need to take advantage of these planned times to meet with their child's teacher(s), especially for the Fall conference. Watch for notices from the school office indicating sign-up times and other pertinent information.

Parent will receive email newsletters from the academy throughout the school year.

Teachers also send home and post on the school website class bulletins on a weekly basis with information about homework assignments, spelling words, the weekly Bible verse(s) and special announcements about field trips and other class activities.

In even the best-run Christian schools there may be concerns about issues/activities. If there is a concern with a teacher, it is important that the matter be handled politely and promptly. A conversation with the teacher or the person involved should take place before any other contact is made.

The following steps are based upon Biblical principles set forth in Matthew 18:

The parent meets privately with the teacher to seek resolution of the problem with a spirit of reconciliation.

If a satisfactory solution is not achieved, the parent requests a meeting with the school and the school administrator to see if a solution to the complaint can be worked out.

If the matter is still unresolved, the ACA Committee will receive and consider a written request for a meeting with the goal of achieving a final resolution.

GRADING SYSTEM

ACA seeks to have a consistent approach to grading a student's academic progress. The following symbols and letter grades are defined for your information:

O	Outstanding	S-	Noticeably Weak
S+	Above Average	N	Needs Improvement
S	Average	IM	Improving

A+	98-100	B+	90-91	C+	82-83	D+	74-75
A	95-97	B	86-89	C	78-81	D	72-73
A-	92-94	B-	84-85	C-	76-77	D-	70-71
F	69 and below						

HONOR ROLL

Students in grades 3 and up are eligible for the honor roll as follows:

High Honors	All A's
A Honors	All A's and B's (more A's)
B Honors	All B's and A's (more B's)

The honor roll is published and posted quarterly.

MIDTERM PROGRESS REPORTS

Every effort is made to communicate a child's progress throughout the year. Graded daily assignments and tests are the chief means of conveying a student's progress. In addition to class work to keep parents aware of student's academic achievement, progress reports are issued several times throughout the year.

RETENTION POLICY

Parents are notified after the second marking period if there is a concern about a student's progress which could lead to a retention. Final decisions concerning a grade placement and promotion rest with the school administration.

The following pages are taken from the faculty handbook and the school office files.

Homework Guidelines

General Statements

Homework is assigned to help each student improve skills that have already been taught, to complete assigned projects, to learn to work independently, and to experience academic enrichment beyond the walls of the classroom.

The amount and type of homework is planned in accordance with each student's grade level and ability.

It is the student's responsibility to know what the assignment is, to have the necessary materials on hand, to follow the directions of the teacher, and to complete the homework neatly and on time.

Parents are encouraged to provide the proper conditions at home for doing homework, to show interest in the assignments, and to praise satisfactory performance and effort.

In general, homework will not be given on nights of special school events in order to encourage parent attendance.

When students return from a school vacation period, no homework will be due on the first day back. Students have the same number of days to make up homework as were absent. For example, a student absent for 3 days will have 3 days to make up missed work. Work for planned absences needs to be arranged with the classroom teacher.

Time Limits

Time guidelines are outlined as a range of what parents should expect for homework on a school night. It is assumed that this refers to quality time, time where concentrated effort is taking place.

Grades 1-2	-	15 to 25 minutes
Grade 3	-	30 to 40 minutes
Grades 4-5	-	45 to 60 minutes
Grades 6-8	-	60 to 90 minutes

Summary Comments

It is the desire of Ambassador Christian Academy that our students have rewarding and positive experiences when it comes to doing homework.

These guidelines are given in recognition of the importance of the home and that excessive homework can interfere with family life. All children need some free time each day without the constraints of structure and schedule. As important as homework is, it should not dominate their lives at home. Certainly, all of this applies at the elementary levels. Middle schoolers, and subsequently high schoolers, will view homework in a more serious manner.

ACA – 10/5/93

AWARDS

Teachers' responsibilities:

1. Submit a list of names of students for: 1st-8th Bible Memory

3rd-8th Citizenship

1st-8th Most Improved

3rd-8th Year-long Honor Roll

(students who have been on

all 4 quarter honor rolls)

2. Submit a list and make out awards for: K – 4 Character Recognition

K – 5 Academic Achievement

6th-8th Subject achievement

1st Place

2nd Place

Honorable Mention

Bible Memory Given to students with a 97% or better average in Bible memory.

The Russell Thompson Eighth Grade Christian Character Award

- Nominated by the middle school faculty
- Approved by the entire faculty

...awarded to that student who exhibits sterling qualities of Christian character and Christ-likeness.

ACA Citizenship Award

- 3rd through 8th grade students
- recommended by the teachers (all of them)
- Approved by the administration
- A certificate plus Praying Hands Medallion awarded

Students receiving the ACA Citizenship Award need to have:

1. Good grades
2. Positive attitude
3. Be helpful and cooperative
4. Maintain good conduct in the classroom, lunchroom, on the playground and in chapel
5. Have character traits demonstrating honesty/integrity that shows an effort to live out the teachings of God's

Word

"ACA's Highest Award" these students set the standard of what we desire to see in an ACA student.

Academic Eligibility for Middle School

Extra-Curricular Activities

Extra-curricular activities include all inter-scholastic team membership, cheerleading, yearbook, student council, and other such activities where outside-of-school responsibilities require time commitments which will impact a student's academic success.

Eligibility is determined at the mid-term and end-term points of each marking period. A weekly review process is available in special circumstances.

Students should be aware that eligibility can be lost if academic work begins to become unacceptable. Parents and students will be notified as needed.

Specific Guidelines

1. All students with grades of C or higher with no more than one D are automatically eligible.
1. Students with two D's but with all other grades C or higher must have approval of the school administrator in order to be eligible.
1. Students with more than two D's or with an F are ineligible for extra curricular activities unless recommended that they be eligible by their parents and approved by the school administrator.
1. Note: these standards apply to all subjects where A's, B's, C's, etc. are part of the grading system. Guidelines were implemented by the middle school faculty during the 1992-93 school year.

Special Educational Services

Catapult Learning Services currently provides remedial instruction for our students through contracted services with Toms River Schools.

Speech

Each year all new students to ACA are screened by the speech specialist along with every kindergarten student. In addition, teachers may request screening for any student that they feel is a potential remedial speech candidate.

Compensatory Education

Students are placed in this optional program after meeting one of two criteria:

1. Student's standardized test scores in math or language arts qualify them for remedial help.
1. All Students who have been classified by a New Jersey child study team.

A certain number of minutes per week is established by state guidelines and the student is removed from class during the school day to receive special help in a site on campus.

Child Study Team

- Students may be referred to the child study team at the recommendation of a teacher.
- The teacher will be asked to fill out a questionnaire regarding the learning or behavior problems that have been observed.
- Parents must consent to a Child Study Team evaluation.
- The Child Study Team Evaluation consists of the following examinations:
Physician Social Worker Psychologist
Educational Specialist other specialist as needed

Standards for Volunteers

Overview

Volunteers are an important part of the operation of Ambassador Christian Academy. The volunteer's contribution of time and talent is much appreciated because it provides resources without which ACA could not easily function. In their contacts with our children, volunteers make a strong impact on impressionable lives that serves as a role model in a child's experience. It is very important that volunteers be in harmony with the goals and purposes of our school.

Guidelines

1. Volunteers must be approved by the school administration.
2. All volunteers are to be under the supervision of a person authorized by the school.
3. Any volunteer driving for a school activity must have a valid driver's license, an acceptable driving record and be approved to drive by the school administration after filling out a vehicle authorization form.
4. Volunteers are entitled to be fully informed about what is expected of them and to receive instruction, if necessary, to perform their duties adequately.

5. All volunteers should be acquainted with, and adhere to, the policies and purposes of Ambassador Christian Academy.

Standards for Volunteers

1. As a role model before children, the volunteer needs to portray in conduct and lifestyle patterns avoidance of the use of tobacco, alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs, and any behavior that would discredit the school.
2. Because ACA is a Christian school, language that is crude, vulgar, or abusive is expressly forbidden. Proper dress code standards are to be followed.
3. The ability to act in a responsible, adult manner and be able to respond to the needs of children to ensure their safety at all times is a vital qualification for a volunteer. Should an accident or injury to a child occur, the question needing an answer is: "would a reasonable person serving as a volunteer in this type of situation act in the way this volunteer acted?"
4. No child is ever to be physically disciplined. The use of physical contact or restraint may be exercised only when a child's personal safety is in danger.
5. Attentiveness to assigned duties must take place so that distractions will not impede the volunteer's performance.

STUDENT DRESS CODE

All uniform clothing and footwear are available through Lands' End.

Lands' End is the *official* uniform provider and standard of dress at ACA. Lands' End Catalogs are available in the school office or online at www.landsend.com/school. Please use code **900064478** when ordering. (www.landsend.com/school, 1-800-469-2222)

REGULAR DAYS - ALL STUDENTS

Pants and shorts - chino (pleated or plain front) in khaki or navy (no corduroy or exterior pockets)

Shirts – Polo (long or short sleeved), turtleneck, in white, navy, light blue or red with ACA logo

Sweaters/fleece - Cardigan, crew neck, v-neck, or vests – white or navy with ACA logo

Socks - white, navy or black

Footwear

- Shoes - brown, black or navy (casual or dress). (Note: heels must be 2" or *less* in height) Boots may be worn to school then changed to appropriate dress code shoes.

- Sneakers – **MUST BE** all white with white laces or all black with black laces (no wheelies).

GIRLS

- Skorts and skirts -A-lined or pleated in navy, khaki or plaid (Hunter Classic)

- Jumpers – khaki, navy, and Hunter classic plaid with ACA logo (note: skirt/jumper length must be no more than 2" above mid-point of knee. Navy blue bike shorts or lollipops must be worn under skirts and jumpers.)

- Tights - white or navy

CHAPEL DAY DRESS CODE

Chapel day is every Thursday and is a special dress day.

GIRLS BOYS

Skirt or Jumper - navy, khaki or plaid (Hunter Classic) Pants - khaki or navy chino (pleated or plain front)

Shirts - dress oxford in French blue Shirts - dress oxford in French blue

Dress shoes – black, navy, brown (Aval. from Lands' End) Tie - plaid (Hunter Classic) or solid navy blue

Tights, knee highs, or ankle socks- white or navy Dress shoes - black or brown (Aval. from Lands' End)

Accessories – belts, socks (black/brown)

GYM DAY – ALL STUDENTS

All gym apparel MUST be purchased from Lands' End.

Gym T-shirts

Sweatpants/shorts

Sweatshirts

Sneakers – all white with white laces or all black with black laces (Available from Lands' End)

All shirts, sweaters, fleece, and jumpers require ACA logo.

Logo embroidering available through Lands' End or at Farro's Tees (1174 Fischer Blvd., Toms River, NJ 08753, 732-929-2228)

GRADUATION DRESS CODE GUIDELINES

Following a recent 8th grade graduation a number of ideas and proposals have circulated. The administrative staff has met with PTF personnel; letters from several of you have been read and reviewed. A number of conversations have taken place and this letter communicates what you need to know about June's graduation attire.

First, although it was considered, caps and gowns is not the route we will go.

Two concerns:

1. Attire that is increasingly more expensive which puts pressure on some financially
2. Clothing styles that do not contribute to modesty and appropriateness

Our perspective from God's Word...I Samuel 16:7b

"The Lord does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart."

We want our students to dress up for the occasion...to look sharp and presentable...to have an opportunity, as young ladies and gentlemen, to dress in a special way.

GUIDELINES

- Girls may wear special dresses/outfits of moderate expense. Modesty requires dresses/tops with straps which have a minimum half-inch width. (Option: to wear a shawl or sweater if the straps are less than a half-inch.) In no case will a strapless top be worn. Dresses/skirts may be full length but no shorter than two inches above the knee.
- Boys may wear a dress suit, sports jacket, or sweater. A dress shirt and tie are a must. Pants, suitable to chapel day dress, are acceptable. No formal wear...tuxedos, etc...will be permitted.
- Dress shoes are required for both girls and boys. What is acceptable for chapel day at ACA is acceptable for graduation.

Graduation night is a time of celebration for accomplishments and success for each student; we ask you to ensure your child's compliance with these guidelines.

Computer Facilities Acceptable Use Policy

Student Policy

Computer usage is to be limited to educational purposes, which includes use of the computers for classroom activities and research.

The following activities are not permitted on Ambassador computers.

- 1) Employing the system for commercial purposes
- 2) Sending or displaying offensive material
- 3) Downloading software or files
- 4) Installing software
- 5) Making changes to computer hardware settings, software, or wiring
- 6) Trespassing in other's folders, documents or files
- 7) Using obscene language
- 8) Making unauthorized copies of licensed software
- 9) Revealing your full name, phone number, home address or those of other persons when using the Internet
- 10) Using e-mail

The use of equipment, computers, network resources and the Internet is a privilege, not a right and the inappropriate use will result in a cancellation of those privileges.

The above student policy will be presented to the student body in grades 3-8. Each student will be required to read and sign a form agreeing to adhere to the policy.

