

Student and Parent Handbook

KINDERGARTEN POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Age/Ability Requirements

For the benefit of all students and staff at HOPE Academy, the following age guidelines have been put into place:

Children entering school must be:

- 5 years old by September 1 for K5 class, potty-trained

Fee Payments

Matriculation, Book and Registration fees are non-refundable. These fees include student curriculum, pencil boxes with appropriate items and Teacher's materials. Monthly tuition is due on the first school day of each month, beginning in August. You are responsible for ten (10) tuition payments. NO REFUNDS or exceptions will be made because of absenteeism, vacations or sickness. Please contact the office if financial problems arise. Diploma and graduation fees (K5) are due by February 1st. The K5 graduation package includes a cap/gown/tassel, 5 invitations and a reception following the ceremony.

Important: Any student whose account is not paid in full by May 7, will not be admitted to class the next school day. No K5 student will be permitted to participate in the graduation program until the account is paid in full.

Dress Code

Students are allowed to dress in comfortable, neat and well-groomed clothing. Parents should provide a backpack or bag with an extra set of clothes in the event of an accident or spill.

Snacks

Parents should provide a snack for their child each day. Please make sure that they are on the "approved" snack list. If other snacks are sent, they may be sent home and an alternative snack provided. Approved snacks include saltines, cheez-its, fruit and graham crackers. Please do not bring snacks such as pop tarts, snack cakes, candy, cookies, etc.

Behavior

All preschool classes operate on a 3 tiered behavior system. Students are given a verbal warning after the first offense of inappropriate behavior. Once a verbal warning has been issued, the student will be given a "strike" for the 2nd and 3rd offense. If any further instances of inappropriate behavior occur, the student will not be allowed to receive any optional privileges afforded to the class. Parents will be notified by the teacher and the student may or may not be sent to an administrator.

School Hours

The school day runs from 8:30 – 2:30. We ask that students be dropped off by 8:25 so that they have a chance to unpack and use the restroom prior to the start of class. If you have any questions for the teacher, please keep them brief or schedule a time outside of school hours so that the teacher can focus her attention on the class. You are welcome to come visit your child for lunch or special occasions in the classroom. A "Visitor's Pass" is needed to enter the building. These can be obtained in the School Office. Passes must be returned after each use.

Toys

Please do not allow your child to bring toys or other non-school items except on designated "Show and Tell" days.

GRADES 1-12 STUDENT AND PARENT HANDBOOK

REGISTRATION INFORMATION

Billing and Payment Procedures

HOPE Academy endeavors to keep low tuition rates for the benefit of each family. For this reason, we will conduct annual fundraising programs and anticipate each child's and/or parent's participation in helping raise additional funds needed for designated school projects, and/or operations. The school receives no state or federal assistance, neither is it endowed or supported by any other organization.

Important: We are unable to accept post dated checks.

Fee Payments – Payments for all fees and tuition are expected on a required time schedule.

- Enrollment Fee – Payment of enrollment fees are expected at the time of enrollment. Enrollment fees are non-refundable and non-transferable.
- Registration Fee – Payment of registration fees are expected at the time of enrollment or no later than Orientation Night. This fee is also non-refundable and non-transferable. If the Orientation Night deadline is not met,

the student's reservation will be canceled to make room for those on waiting lists.

- Book Fees – Payment of book fees are due by June 1st or at the time of enrollment if that date falls after June 1st.
Please Note – Books will not be ordered until all book fees are paid in full.
- Tuition – Tuition is a yearly payment that we allow to be divided into 10 monthly installments. Tuition payments are due on the first school day of each month. Payments that are not received by the 7th of each month will be assessed a \$25 late fee. Tuition that is not paid by the 20th of each month will result in your students immediate attendance privileges and will not be allowed to return until the balance is paid.
- Bank Fees – Any payment returned unpaid by your financial institution will be assessed a \$12 bank fee plus a \$25.00 service fee. Any account with more than two returned payments will be changed to a cash-only account.
- Past Due Accounts – Past due accounts are subject to late fees. If payment arrangements are needed, please contact the school office as soon as possible. Failure to communicate with the office will result in the loss of privilege of payment arrangements. Any account which is **20 days** delinquent will result in loss of attendance privileges until the account is paid in full. Any payment arrangement that is not kept may prevent any further arrangements for the remainder of the year.
Please Note: Any late or unpaid charges will result in a delay of progress reports, reports cards, retrieval or transmittance of school records. A hold will be placed on the account until all charges are brought to a zero balance.
- Shared Financial Responsibility – In the event you are in a situation where financial responsibility is shared between two parties, HOPE Academy holds the parent(s) who enrolled the student financially responsible. We are unable to split balances or send multiple statements in the event of a shared responsibility.

- Students who are withdrawn or graduate and have unpaid balances (tuition, fees, lunches, etc.) will NOT receive grades or other records until all balances have been paid in full. This includes records that are requested from other academic institutions.

Calendar

HOPE Academy follows a schedule that has been configured using both Clayton and Henry County Schools. We may also close for special events, religious holidays, etc. Please see your school calendar for up to date information. Monthly calendars are also sent at the beginning of every month.

Communication

HOPE Academy utilizes email as our primary source of communication. It is your responsibility to check your email regularly and to keep your information current with the school office. If you do not have an email account, it is YOUR responsibility to visit or contact the school office weekly to obtain paper copies of all correspondence.

Custody

Parents shall provide to the school a certified copy of any court order(s) regarding the custody of the child. Student enrollment forms, as well as other official documents of the school, must be signed by the natural parent or legal guardian with whom the child resides. Educational decisions concerning the child are reserved for the enrolling parent, although both parents can be involved in the process. If there is a disagreement between the two parties, the enrolling parent's decision shall be the governing decision. Under O.C.G.A. § 20-2-780, it is a crime for any person to make or attempt to make a change of custody of a minor child by removing the child from school without permission of the person who enrolled the child in school, even if the person attempting to remove the child has a court order granting that person custody. Court orders that specifically authorize or direct the release of

custody by the school will be followed. The school will not interject itself in custody or visitation disputes between parents.

Emergency Contact Information

It is critical for the school to be able to contact parents at any time students are at school. The school must have the parents' current address and home, cellular, and business telephone numbers. Emergency contact persons and their telephone numbers are needed in case a parent cannot be reached. This information is required at the time of registration and whenever a change occurs with the parents' address, telephone, or emergency contact information.

Grade Placement

If acceptable documentation for determining grade placement is not presented at the time students are enrolled, students will be temporarily assigned to a grade until determination as to final grade placement can be made.

Social Security Number

At the time of enrollment in HOPE Academy, parents are asked to provide their child's Social Security number. The enrollment of students will not be denied for declining to provide the student's Social Security number or for declining to apply for such a number.

Transfer Students

Prior to admission, the school must receive a certified copy of the student's academic transcript and disciplinary record from the school previously attended. A student may be admitted provisionally if the name and address of the school last attended and authorization to release all academic and disciplinary records to the school is provided.

Transcripts from non-accredited schools or home school programs will be considered on an individual basis. Additional information and testing may be required in order to make a determination of how much credit may be accepted from the student's previous school. School credits for work completed under an individual

tutor may not be accepted. Transfer credits will be validated by the student's guidance counselor.

The parent must disclose at the time the transfer is sought whether the student is currently serving a suspension or expulsion from school; whether the student withdrew from the last district attended in lieu of being ordered to serve a period of suspension, expulsion, or assignment to an alternative education program; and, whether the student has ever been adjudicated guilty of a felony. Any student who is currently serving and/or sentenced to a suspension or expulsion in another school system must complete and/or wait until they clear that suspension/expulsion period before any consideration will be given to their enrollment in HOPE Academy.

Withdrawal from School

At the time of withdrawal, students must return all borrowed or rented textbooks, library books, and other school-owned items. Any such items not returned, and any other school-related expenses for which the student is responsible (such as lunch charges), must be paid for at the time of withdrawal. The school may withhold grade reports, diplomas, and/or certificates of progress until restitution is made for lost or damaged textbooks and/or media materials.

In situations where a custodial parent enrolls a child in school, that same parent must be the person who withdraws the child from school. However, the custodial parent who enrolled the child in school may give certified written permission to the school to allow a noncustodial parent to complete withdrawal procedures. A minor who is not emancipated may not drop out of school without the written permission of his/her parent/guardian. Prior to accepting such permission, the school shall schedule a conference with the student and parent/guardian to discuss the educational options available to the student and the consequences of not earning a high school diploma.

Students who are withdrawn or graduate and have unpaid balances (tuition, fees, lunches, etc.) will NOT receive grades or other records until all balances have been paid in full. This

includes records that are requested from other academic institutions.

ATTENDANCE INFORMATION

School Attendance

Attending school regularly is very important if students want to succeed in school. Georgia law requires that all children between the ages of 6 and 16 attend school unless they have a lawful reason to be absent. State policy defines the school year as 180 attendance days.

Students who have more than ten (10) days of unexcused absences during the school year will be considered truant. The legal penalties for truancy include referral of students to Juvenile Court and referral of parents to State Court. Any Georgia resident who has control or charge of a child who is convicted of violating mandatory school attendance requirements will be subject to a fine of not less than \$25.00 and not more than \$100.00, imprisonment not to exceed 30 days, community service, or any combination of such penalties per absence. In addition, failure to satisfy the state's attendance requirements can affect the opportunity for students to obtain or keep a driver's permit/license.

Arrival and Dismissal Times

The general beginning time is 8:30 a.m. and the general ending time is 2:30 p.m. HOPE Academy is not responsible for the supervision and safety of students prior to the beginning of the school day or after the end of the school day. HOPE Academy does not expect its staff to exercise charge over students who are left at the school campus before the beginning of the school day or who are not picked up after school in a timely manner. After school care is available to those who need it. See schedule of fees for pricing. Any student left past the dismissal time will be sent to After Care and a fee will be assigned to the student's account.

Absences /Tardiness / Early Check-Outs

Students are expected to attend all scheduled classes on time and each day. On the FIRST DAY students return to school from an absence, parents should provide the school with a written note explaining the reason for the absence. The note should include the date(s) of the absence, the reason(s) for the absence, and the signature of the parent or of the doctor who treated the student. Students who check in late or check out early must report to the school office, with their parent /guardian and present a written note explaining their absence/reasons. If students are frequently absent, and tardy, the administration may ask the parent to provide more information, such as medical documentation, about the absences and tardiness. Parents are encouraged to make every effort to schedule doctor and dental appointments outside of school hours.

Tardiness means the failure by a student to be in the assigned classroom or instructional space at the assigned time without a valid excuse, or arriving at school after the beginning of the school day.

Absence means the non-attendance by a student in an approved regularly scheduled class or activity, regardless of the reason for such non-attendance. An exception is when a student participates in an approved activity (such as, but not limited to – field trip, academic competition or approved athletic event), he/she may be excused from school, counted present, and shall be responsible for any work missed during the time he/she is away from school.

Please Note – 5 unexcused tardiness, late check-ins or early check-outs will result in 1 unexcused absence. For more information on unexcused absences and possible penalties, please see the “Attendance Policy” section.

Excused Absences

All absences must be documented in written form. Medical absences of more than one school day must be accompanied by a letter from a healthcare professional. Failure to provide documentation may result in the absence being listed as unexcused and work missed cannot be made up for credit.

Absences will be treated as excused if they occur for the following reasons:

1. Student illness that would endanger the student’s health or the health of others.
2. Serious illness or death in the student’s immediate family which would reasonably necessitate absence from school, in the determination of the principal or his/her designee.
3. A scheduled medical, dental or eye examination.
4. Special and recognized religious holidays observed by the student’s faith.
5. An order of a governmental agency, such as a court order or a pre-induction physical exam for military service.
6. An inability to attend school due to weather or other conditions making school attendance impossible or unreasonably hazardous.
7. Attendance upon a trip or event having significant educational value, provided the principal is notified of the absence in advance and he/she determines the trip or event has significant educational value.
8. Unusual or urgent circumstances requiring the student’s parents to be outside of Henry County overnight, and where the parents determine that it would be in the student’s best interest to accompany them. If prior notice cannot be given, a written explanation is to be provided no later than the first day the student returns to school after the absence.
9. Take Your Child to Work Day. Students who participate in this event will be excused but will be counted absent.
10. To visit with a parent serving in the armed forces of the United States or the National Guard. If such parent has been called to duty for or is on leave from overseas deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting, a student shall be granted excused absences, up to five (5) school days per school year, for the purpose of visiting with his/her parent.

A student who serves as a Page of the General Assembly during the school year shall be counted present at school in the same manner as an educational field trip

Making Up Missed Assignments or Tests

It is the student's and parent's responsibility, not the teacher's, to make arrangements for make-up work. Students should ask their teacher for any missed assignments on the first day they return to school. The number of days allowed to complete make-up work will be determined by the administration or his/her designee but will not exceed the number of days absent. Failure to comply with this procedure will result in a grade of zero (0) being given for graded assignments missed during an excused absence.

Students may not be allowed to receive credit for graded assignments missed during an unexcused absence. Absences due to suspension from school are considered unexcused. Students assigned to In School Suspension who choose to serve their suspension at home will not be given the opportunity to receive credit for work missed during the period of suspension. In situations where students are suspended from school during the period of semester exams, principals will make arrangements to allow students to complete their exams.

Weather

In the event of inclement weather, please follow the closing information for Clayton and Henry County Schools. Official information on closings can be found on WSB-TV (Channel 2) and on WSB-AM radio (750AM).

GRADE REPORTING

Corrections

Test corrections will be used as study skills. It is left up to the teacher's discretion to offer bonus points for corrections, but will not be habitual or expected.

Semester System

Most middle school courses are yearlong in length. High school courses are scheduled on the semester system and students receive credit on a half-year basis. High school courses that are successfully completed translate into unit credits that apply toward graduation requirements.

Grading Procedures and Report Cards

Students are evaluated on a nine (9) week and eighteen (18) week basis with the semester grade being a cumulative grade that represents eighteen (18) weeks of work. Parents will receive a grade report at the end of nine (9) weeks, and a report card at the end of the semester (eighteen weeks) along with a mid-term report. Grades reported at the nine-week period represent the student's progress at that time in the semester. The semester grade is the final grade and represents how a student performed over the eighteen-week period.

Grade reports will show numerical grades for each subject in which the student is enrolled. These reports summarize the student's progress at that point in the eighteen-week semester. Informal progress reports may be sent at times other than the system wide grade report if a school chooses to do so. The letter equivalents for numerical grades are as follows:
90 - 100 = A 80 - 89 = B 74 - 79 = C 70 - 73 = D Below 70 = F

CODE OF CONDUCT

Believing that discipline is necessary for the welfare of the students as well as the entire school, each teacher is given the liberty of making and enforcing classroom regulations in the manner he/she feels is in accordance with Christian principles and discipline as set forth in Scriptures. HOPE Academy expects full cooperation from both student and parent in the education of the student. When the school feels that student/parent cooperation is lacking, the student may be requested to transfer out. Also, if the behavior of the student indicates an uncooperative spirit, he may be requested to transfer. The booklet *Under Loving Command*

(can be purchased in the office) and *Dare to Discipline* (can be purchased at most bookstores or online) by James Dobson are highly recommended as help to parents.

Expectations

Each student is expected to:

1. Behave in a responsible manner at school, and at all school-related functions on or off campus.
2. Demonstrate courtesy and respect for others.
3. Attend all classes, regularly and on time.
4. Prepare for each class, take appropriate materials to class and complete assignments.
5. Obey all school rules and cooperate with the school staff in maintaining safety, order, and discipline.
6. Communicate with your parent/guardian about your school progress.

The behavior code governs students' conduct on school grounds; off school grounds at a school activity; off school grounds at a non-school activity, but where the misconduct leads to a disruption of school or any other violation of the Student Code of Conduct and en route to and from schools, or any school-sponsored activity.

Parents and students should carefully review ALL information contained in the Code of Conduct. Students are subject to disciplinary action for engaging in or attempting to commit any of the prohibited behaviors listed in the Code of Conduct.

Bullying

HOPE Academy believes that all students learn better in a safe school environment. Behavior that infringes on the safety of students, staff or volunteers will not be tolerated. Bullying, as the term is defined in Georgia law, is strictly prohibited. The Student Code of Conduct for all schools within the school system expressly prohibits bullying.

Bullying is defined as follows: An act which occurs on school property, on school vehicles, or at school-related functions or activities, or by use of data or software that is accessed through a computer, computer system, computer network, or other electronic technology of a local school system, that is:

- (1) Any willful attempt or threat to inflict injury on another person, when accompanied by an apparent present ability to do so;
- (2) Any intentional display of force such as would give the victim reason to fear or expect immediate bodily harm; or
- (3) Any intentional written, verbal, or physical act, which a reasonable person would perceive as being intended to threaten, harass, or intimidate, that:
 - (a) causes another person substantial physical harm or visible bodily harm;
 - (b) has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's education;
 - (c) Is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating or threatening educational environment; or,
 - (d) has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

Prohibited Behaviors

1. Behavior detrimental to learning, including but not limited to unexcused tardiness to school or class, and disruptions of the learning environment.
2. Being disrespectful to students, school personnel, or other persons.
3. Being in an unauthorized area.
4. Being insubordinate to school personnel or school volunteers.
5. Deliberately giving false or misleading information, including but not limited to forgery and altering records.
6. Displaying or using a cell phone, pager, or other electronic communication device during the school day without the consent of the principal or his/her designee. Cell phones must be turned off during the entire school day.

7. Exhibiting gang affiliation, as evidenced by a common identifying sign, symbol, tattoo, graffiti, attire, or other distinguishing characteristic.
8. Fighting
9. Gambling.
10. Inappropriate physical contact between students.
11. Inciting or advising others to engage in prohibited behavior.
12. Leaving school, skipping school, or skipping class without permission.
13. Possessing, using, selling, buying, giving away, bartering, or exchanging any tobacco product or smoking paraphernalia.
14. Possessing, using, selling, buying, giving away, bartering, or exchanging any material, substance, food item, or personal belonging that is inappropriate for school, including over the counter medication, without the consent of the principal or his/her designee.
15. Using profane, vulgar, obscene, insulting, or threatening language, gestures, graphics, or materials, whether spoken, written, gestured, or communicated in person or via any electronic device.
16. Violating any other school rule, including but not limited to failing to report to detention and/or violating rules of the In-School Suspension program.
17. Participation in written, verbal, or physical act(s) that meet(s) the definition of bullying as listed above
18. Damaging school property or the personal property of another student/staff member.
19. Using, selling, buying, giving away, bartering, exchanging, or being under the influence of any alcoholic beverage or illegal substance whether at school or any school-related activity

Progressive Disciplinary Actions:

These actions represent the most common progression of discipline for the above listed offenses, however, disciplinary action is at the full discretion of the administration and/or their designee.

1st Violation: Verbal Warning

2nd Violation: Pink Slip or other written notice

3rd Violation: In-School Suspension for two (2) school days.

4th Violation: In-School Suspension for three (3) school days.

5th Violation: Out-of-School Suspension for three (3) school days.

6th Violation: Out-of-School Suspension for five (5) school days.

7th Violation: The student will be suspended (In-School or Out-of-School) with the matter being submitted to the principal with the possibility of long-term suspension or expulsion from school.

Some of the disciplinary actions that may be used for student violations of the Code of Conduct include the following:

Warning/Reprimand: Students will be warned that they may be punished if the misbehavior continues.

Detention: Detention may be used to address tardiness, behavior detrimental to learning, and physical contact between students that is deemed inappropriate. For each day assigned to detention, students will be required to spend a period of time, not to exceed one supervised hour, completing assigned class work. No other activity will be allowed during detention.

In-School Suspension: This program is designed to isolate students who violate certain school rules from their regularly assigned classrooms and school activities, while allowing students the opportunity to progress with classroom assignments. While assigned to In-School Suspension, students may not participate in or attend any extracurricular activity, including athletic participation and other school events. If students violate any rule of the In-School Suspension program, students will be suspended from the program and from school for the remaining number of days that students were assigned to In-School Suspension.

Short-Term Suspension: Students subject to a short-term suspension will be suspended from school for not more than five (5) days. This includes suspension from all regular school activities, extracurricular activities, athletic participation, and other school events.

Expulsion: Students subject to an expulsion will be suspended from school beyond the end of the current semester. This includes suspension from all regular school activities, extracurricular activities, athletic participation, and other school events.

School Administrators Are Authorized To Take Disciplinary Action For Misconduct That Occurs:

1. On school grounds;
2. Off the school grounds at a school activity, function or event;

Personal Belongings

Personal belongings such as toys, CD players, electronic games, playing cards, cameras, or recording devices of any kind may not be brought to school or on class field trips unless they have been approved as part of a class assignment. If such items are brought to school, they may be taken up and kept in the school office until parents come to claim them. Also, students are subject to disciplinary action for bringing inappropriate items to school without the consent of the school administration. The School is not responsible for lost, stolen or damaged personal belongings.

Student Searches

To maintain order and discipline in the schools and to protect the safety and welfare of students and school personnel, school authorities may search a student, student desks, student lockers or student automobiles at any time.

Tobacco

Students shall not possess, transmit or use tobacco or tobacco-related products in any form, including, without limitation, lighters, rolling papers, and matches.

Vandalism or Damage to School Property

Students who deface or destroy school property will be charged with the full cost of the damage and will be subject to disciplinary action as outlined in the Code of Conduct.

Weapons

It is unlawful for any person to carry, possess, or have under his/her control any weapon, explosive compound, firearm, or any toy or object that resembles a weapon while on school property, at a school function, on or off campus. Definition of weapons include: pocket knives, pepper spray, mace, guns, knives.

DRESS CODE

There are no regulations concerning uniform clothing. Students are requested to wear modest and appropriate clothing and adhere to the following:

- No shorts, skirts, or dresses that come above the fingertips
- Belts will be enforced for boys who choose to sag or allow anything under their pants to show
- No tank tops (boys included) or spaghetti straps unless there is another covering layered on top
- Leggings may not be worn as pants. Leggings may only be worn when covered by an appropriate shirt or dress that covers appropriately

LOST AND FOUND

Articles are taken to Lost and Found and may be redeemed for 25 cents. This policy has been established to help teach our students personal responsibility. Unclaimed Lost and Found articles at the end of each semester will be donated to charity. HOPE Academy is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

NOTES AND MONEY

When a parent or guardian sends a note and/or money to school with a student, please make appropriate communication with the child's teacher or office administration via email, note, etc. It should always be in a sealed envelope and include the following: Child's name and grade and the amount and purpose.

SCHOOL CONFERENCES AND PARENT TEACHER MEETINGS

Please feel free to consult with the school office regarding any problems or questions that concern your child. It is the desire of the administration and the faculty to be of service to both the parent and the student, and each teacher welcomes a visit from any parent.

We do urge, however, that such conferences be made by definite appointments with the teacher at a convenient after-school time. You may contact the school office and they will leave an appropriate message for your child's teacher.

Parents are requested to stop by the office if they need to leave something for the student or teacher or if they have to pick up the student. Please do not go directly to the classroom, as this interrupts teaching.

PARTY POLICY

Should you choose to celebrate your child's birthday at school, we ask that you abide by the following policies:

1. For elementary students, ALL parties must be held during the lunch time for your child's class. Any refreshments/goodies should be provided for all students who will be present so that none are excluded. Please check with your child's teacher for an accurate count prior to the day of your party. For middle/high school students, please communicate directly with your child's teacher to discuss the best time to hold this celebration.
2. Under no circumstances are balloons or other decorations that could be a choking hazard to be used.
3. It is the responsibility of the parent to set up and clean up all snacks, decorations and other materials. Failure to do so will result in a \$50.00 fee being added to your child's account.