



**Student/Family Handbook  
2015 – 2016**

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[www.altuschristian.org](http://www.altuschristian.org)

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# Student/Family Handbook 2015-2016

## Faculty/Staff 2015-2016

Dana Darby	Administrator
Kim Abernathy	4 <sup>th</sup> grade teacher
Kelli Baker	Custodial services
Bryan Beane	Physical education teacher
Alisa Beltran	Full-day 4-year-old pre-k teacher; Early education coordinator
Shirley Booker	2nd grade teacher
Charnta Brockett	Full-day 4-year-old pre-k teacher assistant
Morgan Burnam	Part-day 3-year-old pre-k teacher M/W/F; Part-day 3-year-old pre-k teacher assistant T/R
Kathryn Chapman	Full-day 4-year-old pre-k teacher assistant
Jordan Coppock	Part-day 4-year-old pre-k teacher
Kyle Cumby	1 <sup>st</sup> grade teacher
Sandy Fanning	5 <sup>th</sup> /6 <sup>th</sup> grade reading, language arts; 5 <sup>th</sup> grade Bible
Kelly Farquhar	Part-day 3-year-old pre-k teacher assistant M/W/F
Meghan Freeman	Early education program mentor and reading consultant
Kayla James	5 <sup>th</sup> /6 <sup>th</sup> grade math, science, social studies; 6 <sup>th</sup> grade Bible
Melinda King	Kindergarten teacher
Heather Kirby	3 <sup>rd</sup> grade teacher
Cindy Lansdale	Teacher assistant
Mandy Lemus	Full-day 3-year-old pre-k teacher
Andrea Nichols	Office manager/school secretary
Jessie Paquette	Part-day 3-year-old pre-k teacher T/R
Brenda Pettijohn	Art teacher; kindergarten teacher assistant am; kindergarten teacher pm
Pamela Powell	Instructional support
Angela Rogers	Administrative assistant
Jodie Strain	Full-day 3-year-old pre-k teacher assistant
Jolene Tellgren	Kindergarten teacher assistant and before care
Amy Weaver	Music teacher

## Board of Directors 2015-2016

Amy Dodson, President  
Norm Weber, Vice-President  
Tatum Gallagher, Secretary/Treasurer  
Kyon Wallace, Member

Dick Chapman, Member  
Michelle Hoppes, Member  
Joe Kelly, Member  
Jenny Winters, Member

## **Philosophy and Foundations**

The following statements set forth the beliefs, purpose, and vision for Altus Christian Academy. They serve to guide decisions and unify the constituents of the school. Families are not required to agree with the statements, but they must agree to abide by the statements and the policies and procedures derived from them. These statements reflect the Christian distinctive of ACA and its commitment to a Christ-centered, biblically-based education for all students. These statements were developed with input from board, faculty/staff, and parents and are reviewed annually at the staff retreat and the board retreat.

### Mission

To build excellence in education through biblical principles

### Vision

Train up a child in the way he should go, even when he is old he will not depart from it.  
Proverbs 22:6

### Core values

Christ-centered – imitating Christ in all thought, word and deed.

Biblical Principles – the traits, values and belief system taken from the Bible and applied to everyday life.

Professionalism – demanding honesty, integrity, and excellence from students, staff and parents in all endeavors.

Nurturing Environment – providing a spiritually, physically, and mentally safe learning environment while challenging students to become independent, responsible learners.

Excellence – the highest qualities of learning that build a strong foundation for future success.

### Philosophy

We believe that each child is to be valued as a unique creation of God, fearfully and wonderfully made (Psalm 139:13-16). Each child has particular traits, talents, and abilities and has a distinct learning profile of strengths and weaknesses. Children should be in an environment in which those differences are recognized and developed.

We believe that knowledge is like a structure, needing a firm foundation. That foundation is the Word of God (Luke 6:46-49). We believe that knowledge cannot be simply “deposited” into the student; rather, each student must “build” his or her knowledge and be developmentally ready to incorporate new knowledge into his or her existing framework. Christ reflected this belief as he met people where they were and used stories they could relate to in order to teach them higher truths.

We believe that learning is exciting and fulfilling, and if it is not, parents and teachers should make every effort to uncover the reason and address the problem. Students enjoy being productive, and there are many different kinds of productivity that demonstrate learning.

We believe that learning best takes place in an environment of love, acceptance, and respect. Knowledge means nothing without love (1 Corinthians 13). Each child should see himself or herself as an integral part of the class and develop a network of friendships. It is within this context that students learn appropriate social skills.

We believe relational connections among parents, staff, and students are imperative to the educational process. Ongoing, personal relationships between staff and parents are the way we can best serve them and their children through trust, support, and communication. Personal relationships between teachers and students make possible the cultivation of each student spiritually, intellectually, physically, emotionally, and socially (Luke 2:52). Further, an environment where supportive, loving relationships exist among staff members encourages them to serve with excellence, perseverance, loyalty, and joy. We also believe students are best served in an environment of positive relationships among parents and among students (Romans 14:19, Romans 12, I Cor. 12:12-27, I Cor. 13).

We believe the Bible teaches the ultimate lessons of life (2 Timothy 3:16-17) and that no curriculum is complete that does not weave Biblical truths and values into the fabric of the classroom. This is taught explicitly through direct instruction. It is also taught implicitly through the daily lessons of repentance, forgiveness, sharing, unselfishness, and many others.

Lastly, we believe that God designs each of us with specific works in mind (Ephesians 2:10). The teachers at Altus Christian Academy have a passion for teaching and for students, and we believe this passion is God-given. We trust that He will equip us for the awesome responsibilities of educating young minds and living out a Christ-like example.

## Statement of faith

The following statements reflect the core beliefs at Altus Christian Academy. Educational as well as operational decisions will be based on these fundamental ideas. Families are not required to agree with these statements; however, they will be expected to abide by school policies and procedures based on these statements.

We believe...

1. the Bible is the inspired, inerrant word of God and through knowledge of the Scriptures people can be equipped for a productive, Christ-honoring life (2 Timothy 3:16-17)
2. the one God exists in three forms: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14)
3. God created the heavens and the earth (Genesis 1:1) and created people in His image (Genesis 1:26-27)
4. in the deity of Jesus (John 10:30)
5. Jesus was born of a virgin (Matthew 1:23); lived a sinless life (Hebrews 4:15); died so that people, all of whom have sinned (Romans 3:23), could be reconciled to God (Colossians 1:21); was resurrected from the dead (Matthew 28:6); ascended to the Father and will return someday (Acts 1:9-11)
6. people are saved by God's grace through faith, not by deeds (Ephesians 2:8-9)
7. the saved will receive eternal reward and the lost will receive eternal punishment (Romans 6:23)
8. the Holy Spirit indwells each believer and spurs us on to holy living (1 Corinthians 3:16; Galatians 5:22-23)

Because ACA is an independent school (not affiliated with a particular group), it does not engage in teaching specific doctrines. Questions or issues that are denominational in nature will be referred to the parents for clarification within the family.

## History

In February 2001, Advance Learning Center was launched as a tutoring and educational assessment service. Upon the closure of the local community college's preschool and child development lab in July 2002, Advance Learning added a pre-kindergarten program for 4-year-olds. The following year the learning center added a program for 3-year-olds, and the year after that, added kindergarten. Because of a desire in the community for a Christian school, a group of interested individuals completed a feasibility study and

through much prayer determined the right course of action was indeed to found a school. The group formed a board of directors and incorporated Altus Christian Academy as a not-for-profit organization in June 2006. The school offered pre-kindergarten and kindergarten as well as 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grades. ACA has now expanded to include sixth grade and has completed two years of utilizing Sevenstar Academy, an online Christian-based curriculum, to offer secondary level coursework.

Enrollment has grown from 16 students the first year of Advance Learning Center's program to a current enrollment at ACA of approximately 140 students. Other growth measures include a facilities move from one with approximately 1,500 square feet to 5,000 square feet at the 1700 N. Main Street location. For 2007-2008, another 1,000 square feet were leased to accommodate a growing enrollment and the addition of an extended care program. In August 2012, the school moved to a newly remodeled property at 1220 N. Grady, and as of August 2014, exterior renovations to the building were completed. With approximately 15,000 square feet of renovated space, the new location helps position the school for future growth.

#### Expected student outcomes

Expected outcomes that will occur in the lives of the students we serve include producing graduates with a Christian worldview who...

1. are well prepared in all academic disciplines.
2. appreciate literature, the arts and media and understand how these express and shape their beliefs and values.
3. have a critical appreciation of languages and cultures of other peoples in order to effectively carry out the Great Commission.
4. know how to utilize resources including technology to find, analyze, and evaluate information and to keep it in biblical perspective.
5. have the skills to question, solve problems, and make wise decisions.
6. understand the worth of every human being as created in the image of God.
7. can articulate and defend their Christian worldview while having a basic understanding of opposing worldviews.
8. understand and commit to a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.
9. know, understand, and apply God's Word in daily life.
10. treat their bodies as the temple of the Holy Spirit.
11. understand, value, and engage in age-appropriate service to the community.
12. enjoy and value life-long learning.
13. respect and relate appropriately to other people.
14. have an appreciation for the natural environment and practice responsible stewardship of God's creation.
15. are good stewards of their finances, time (including discretionary time), and all other resources.
16. understand that work has dignity as an expression of the nature of God.



### School Affiliations

Altus Christian Academy is independent of any particular church and is non-denominational. It is a member of the following associations:

Association of Christian Schools International  
Nonprofit Management Center of Wichita Falls  
Altus Chamber of Commerce

### School Accreditation

ACA is accredited by the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI) and is registered with the Oklahoma Private School Accreditation Commission. Accreditation by ACSI is recognized by the Oklahoma State Department of Education.

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# **STUDENT/FAMILY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

## **Admissions Policies**

Admission to Altus Christian Academy is open to any student who desires a Christian elementary school education and who demonstrates the potential for academic success. Families must agree to abide by the policies of ACA.

Altus Christian Academy does not discriminate on the basis of age, race, gender, color, or national or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship or other school-administered programs.

Altus Christian Academy reserves the right to select students on the basis of academic performance, religious commitment, lifestyle choices, and personal qualifications including a willingness to cooperate with ACA's administration and staff and to abide by its policies.

### **Admission Requirements**

- Pre-kindergarten students should turn the appropriate age by September 1 of the upcoming academic year to enroll in a particular class. Three-year-olds must be toilet- trained to be admitted to the program. Kindergarteners should turn 5 by September 1. Entrance into grades higher than kindergarten will require successful completion of the previous grade.
- Parents must sign an acknowledgement of ACA's statement of faith and an agreement to abide by ACA's policies and procedures.
- Entrance tests may be given to new students. A team consisting of the school administrator and two teachers will make this determination. Previous assessments will be considered. ACA faculty, administration, and the parents will work together to determine appropriate placement. The admissions team will make the final determination.
- ACA may accept a student with special needs if the school's program can sufficiently meet those needs. The admissions team makes this determination.
- Students must be up-to-date on immunizations and will be required to have a current immunization record on file. If exempt for medical or religious reasons, the student must have the appropriate form on file. Students not current on immunizations must be brought up-to-date as soon as possible and within the first 9 weeks of the school term. Students not in compliance may be asked to stay home from school until properly immunized.
- Each student must have a copy of his or her birth certificate on file.
- Transfer students must provide a copy of his or her most recent report card and a student information form completed by the current or most recent classroom teacher. ACA's admissions committee may request all student records as part of the admissions process.
- Students must have a record of acceptable and appropriate behavior at previous schools.
- The admissions committee may request an interview with parents prior to admission.

- Extenuating or special circumstances that would require an exception to these policies must be brought before the board of directors for approval. Bona fide evidence of the need for exception must be presented and would be considered in light of the school's ability and responsibility to meet the needs of the student.
- As per the Military Interstate Children's Compact, parents of military dependent children may hand carry records to Altus Christian Academy. If a student meets school admissions requirements, ACA will place the student in the grade in which the child was enrolled in his or her previous school, regardless of age, pending receipt of official records. ACA reserves the right to do subsequent testing to ensure appropriate placement. Any missing immunizations should be made up within 30 calendar days of enrollment, or for a series, the initial immunization should be received within 30 calendar days. Special power of attorney or a relative with guardianship may enroll the child at ACA.

### **Admission Process**

Pre-kindergarten:

Submit the following:

- Student application form
- Pre-k screening form
- Photocopy of the student's immunization record
- Photocopy of the student's birth certificate

Kindergarten through Sixth grades:

Submit the following:

- Student application form
- Photocopy of the student's most recent report card
- Photocopy of the student's immunization record
- Photocopy of the student's birth certificate
- Student information form to be completed by the student's current or most recent teacher and returned to ACA by that teacher. This form will be supplied by ACA.

### **Enrollment and Acceptance Policy**

Test scores, grades, and teacher information from a student's previous school will be among the variables that may be considered during the application process. For home schooled students, test scores, grades, and parent information will be considered. A committee consisting of the school administrator and two teachers will determine whether the student records demonstrate the potential for academic success. If any question remains, the committee may require further testing before a student is admitted. Once a student is admitted grades and test scores will be accepted from the sending school, or in the case of home schooled students, from the parent. Promotions from the sending school or the parent will be accepted pending the admissions committee recommendation on grade placement.

## **Antiharassment/Bullying Policy**

The policy of Altus Christian Academy is to provide an environment that is free from harassment—whether based on sex (gender), race, color, national or ethnic origin, age, or disability—an environment that is free from all forms of intimidation, exploitation, and harassment (including sexual harassment), where all individuals treat each other with dignity and respect. The school includes bullying in its definition of harassment. The school is prepared to take action to prevent and correct any violations of this policy. The policy applies to the actions of administration, teachers, staff, parents, volunteers, and students. The school does not tolerate harassment of students, nor does it tolerate reprisals against any student who makes a harassment complaint. Anyone who violates this policy will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination or expulsion. Students or parents should report immediately any act of harassment or bullying to a teacher or the administrator. These reports are to be taken seriously and thoroughly investigated. If a satisfactory resolution is not reached, the parent or student should report the incident(s) to the next higher level of authority, with the Board of Directors being the highest level of authority within the school setting.

## **Attendance/Tardy**

**Regular attendance is vital to academic success.**

Parents should notify the school for any and all absences. Make-up work should be completed as quickly as possible. The amount of time for make-up work is the number of days absent plus one.

Absences due to non-emergency matters are discouraged. Students who miss more than 10 days in one semester may be required to repeat the grade. Families with extenuating circumstances may petition the board for an exception to this policy. Military-dependent students may be granted additional deployment-related absences at the discretion of the administrator.

The number of times a student is absent and/or tardy will be noted on the student's report card. Five tardies in a nine-week period equals one absence.

If necessitated by a move or other extreme circumstance, students may withdraw from school one week prior to the last day of the school year and receive a final grade for purposes of promotion. Students withdrawing earlier than one week before the last day of school for the year will receive transfer grades, but not final grades.

Students are considered tardy if not present in their classroom by 8:00 am.

Students will be counted absent for a full day if they miss more than

- a. 3 hours of a part-day pre-kindergarten class

- b. 5 hours of any full-day class

Students will be counted absent for a half-day if they miss

- a. Between 2 and 3 hours of a part-day pre-k class
- b. Between 3 and 5 hours of any full-day class

Absences less than a half-day will be recorded and treated like tardies—five in a nine-week period will equal one absence.

For students to be considered for a perfect attendance award at the end of the school year, they must have no absences and no more than 3 tardies.

## **Classroom Interruptions**

Altus Christian Academy recognizes the importance of maximizing time on task within the classroom to promote learning. To ensure uninterrupted class time, ACA establishes the following policy:

1. School staff, faculty, administrators, parents, and visitors to the school are requested to schedule appointments with classroom teachers so they may conference/communicate during after-school hours or during non-instructional times.
2. Parents are requested to schedule appointments for their children after school hours or on school holidays if at all possible. If it is necessary to pick their child up during school hours, parents should send notice to the teachers or school secretary as soon as possible and preferably at least 24 hours ahead of time.
3. Except for emergencies or very urgent matters, school personnel should deliver messages and communicate with classroom teachers during times the teacher has posted outside his/her door. These might be during snack time, recess, lunch, etc.
4. For birthdays and other special occasions, balloon bouquets and other deliveries must be left in the office with the school secretary. The student may pick these up at the end of the school day.
5. Students will not be released early, even by just a few minutes, unless for a bona fide reason such as a doctor's appointment. Early pickups create a distraction for the rest of the class and disrupt end-of-day routines.

## **Communication Binders**

Each student will have a communication binder that keeps teachers and students (and parents) organized. Parents should find all needed items and information in the binder. It includes teacher contact information, a plastic sleeve for notes, parent-teacher communication log, homework/assignment log, homework folder, data notebook, and a clear pouch for money and permission slips. Specific items contained in the binders may vary by age group.

Data notebooks are kept for 2<sup>nd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> grade students. The purpose of this notebook is to record issues with responsibility and to track progress in math facts and various subject areas. Absences, tardies, missing homework, coming to class unprepared, etc. are all recorded on a calendar in the

notebook. This provides valuable information that underlies a student's performance. While its overall purpose is not as a reward system, students who end a month with a "clean calendar" are given small incentives such as a PAW PASS.

## **Confidentiality of Student Records**

ACA follows the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) guidelines regarding confidentiality of student records. The provisions are as follows:

Parents of ACA students have the right to inspect and review the student's education records maintained by the school. Parents may schedule a time with the administrator to inspect their student's records. This appointment must be scheduled within 10 days of the parent's request. ACA may provide copies of the records when it is impossible (for reasons such as great distance) for the parent to be physically present to review the records. ACA may charge a fee for copies. Parents have the right to request that ACA correct records which they believe to be inaccurate or misleading. If the school decides not to amend the record, the parent then has the right to a hearing with the Board of Directors. After the hearing, if the Board of Directors still decides not to amend the record the parent has the right to place a statement with the record setting forth his or her view about the contested information.

Generally, ACA must have written permission from a student's parent in order to release any information from a student's education record. However, ACA may disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions:

- School officials with legitimate educational interest;
- Other schools to which a student is transferring;
- Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes;
- Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student;
- Accrediting organizations;
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena;
- Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies; and
- State and local authorities, within a juvenile system, pursuant to specific state law.

In addition to confidentiality of student records, teachers have an obligation to protect and uphold the reputation of students by keeping confidential student classroom performance, behavior problems, family issues revealed by students, and other similar matters. Teachers should examine their motivation for discussing student issues even with other teachers and should only do so when asking for advice or trying to solve a problem.

Students often confide in teachers and staff members regarding issues of a sensitive or confidential nature. When this occurs, the teacher or staff member must determine whether a need exists for safety, moral, or legal reasons to share this information with administration or parents.



## **Conflict Resolution**

Even in the most agreeable of settings, inevitably there will be disagreements and different perspectives; therefore, we must be equipped to resolve issues in a Christ-like manner. Applying the model of Matthew 18:15-17 to the school setting results in the following steps:

1. Go directly to the person involved and with a humble heart and a desire for peace, discuss and pray about the matter.
2. If resolution is not reached, put the issue in writing and go to the next higher authority and meet with all parties involved. For example, if the matter involves a teacher, go to the teacher first, then to the administrator.
3. If resolution is still not reached, put information and decisions in writing and go to the Board President. The Board President may choose to meet with all parties involved and try to resolve the issue.
4. If the issue is not resolved with the Board President, the matter may be appealed to the full Board of Directors. The situation will be presented in writing, including all previous recommendations and decisions. The Board may choose to meet with all parties involved. Any decision of the Board of Directors will be final.

## **Discipline**

Jesus said “No student is above his teacher” (Luke 6:40). Jesus, the great teacher, also set the example of service by washing his students’ (the disciples’) feet (John 13:4-17). We seek this balance as we serve students and families and do so in an atmosphere of respect. Our goal is to love our students as Christ loves us and to treat students with dignity. We also expect our students to show respect for authority whether a classroom teacher or other staff member. We also expect our students to show respect for other students, for visitors at our school and for physical property.

Faculty and staff at ACA believe that discipline involves encouraging good behavior and not simply punishing negative behavior. Our first approach to behavior and character training is positive and seeks to instill knowledge of Christ-like traits. ACA utilizes the Honorable Character® classroom management program as a tool for teaching these traits. Students are “caught in the act” of doing good and recognized. Teachers keep a record of traits exhibited during the week and send home a form each week so parents can celebrate the good behavior.

Realistically, we know that misbehavior is to be expected, and we note infractions by character trait on the same form. In this way parents are kept informed and involved in teaching Christ-honoring behavior to their children.

Early education classroom management involves quality classroom procedures and well-planned activities. Redirection, reflective listening, and positive reinforcement are gently, firmly, and consistently utilized. For continued misbehavior, students are given a time to reflect on behavior. Parents will also be called regarding patterns of disruptive or disobedient behavior. Physical or emotional punishments are not allowed.

For severe behavior problems, students will be sent to the administrator. The administrator will use his or her discretion and may use a variety of measures including student-administrator conference, parent-administrator conference, loss of play time, loss of class privileges, and in extreme cases, suspension or expulsion. Communication between the school and home is essential. If behavior problems escalate or become a pattern, parents will be notified promptly. Parents, teachers and appropriate professionals should work together to determine any underlying factors in the student's continued misbehavior. A behavior improvement plan will be developed and implemented by the teacher(s), parent(s), student, and administrator. ACA reserves the right to dismiss a student from the school if his or her behavior causes physical or emotional harm to another child or if the behavior detracts from the quality of education.

## **Dress Code/Uniforms**

Students will be asked to adhere to a dress code. This dress code is designed to promote school spirit, positive discipline, and comfortable activity. It is intended to help both students and teachers see as God sees—to look at the heart rather than outward appearance (I Sam. 16:7). Requirements are as follows:

Red, navy, light blue, light pink or white polo shirts (collared), short- or long-sleeved, with the ACA logo.

Any button-up, collared, dress shirt in any of the five approved colors (examples: Peter Pan style, Oxford style, etc.), with the ACA logo (Our staff may require a certain shirt be worn on field trip days). No t-shirts on Monday through Thursday, even with the logo.

Turtleneck tops may be worn in any of the five approved colors only under polo shirts or the jumpers for girls (Jumpers must have the ACA logo.)

The ACA logo is not required on any bottom layer shirt worn where the logo wouldn't normally show.

Navy or khaki pants or shorts for the boys (not athletic type shorts.)

Navy or khaki pants, shorts, jumpers, capri pants, and skirts/skorts for the girls.

Pants may be casual designs such as cargo pants or khaki denim.

Tennis shoes are required for PE. For simplicity's sake, we recommend students wear tennis shoes to school.

All students may wear jeans on Fridays with the regular school uniform shirt or an Altus Christian Academy school t-shirt. Three-year-old students who attend 2 days per week may wear jeans and uniform or school t-shirts on Thursdays.

Shorts must be worn under skirts. Shorts and skirts/skorts should meet the "fingertip rule." That is the bottom of the shorts or skirt/skort should be at or below the fingertips when the child's arms are at the child's sides.

Outer layers worn for warmth in the classroom should be solid and in the five approved colors, do not require the logo, and when worn, the collar of the logoed shirt must be visible at all times. No hoodies except on jeans/t-shirt days.

PAW PASSES allow students to wear clothing of their choosing on Fridays. Students may receive these passes for perfect monthly attendance or parent attendance at the PTF meetings. Clothing must be modest and appropriate for a Christian setting. Clothing is subject to administrator approval.

## **Drop Off/Pick Up Procedure**

\*\*Important\*\*--Please do not let your child out of your vehicle before reaching the appropriate drop off point. A teacher will help your child out or, if age-appropriate, will simply direct your child to exit the vehicle. Do not pass other vehicles unless given specific direction by a teacher.

All drop off and pick up will take place on the east side of the building. Drop off time is 7:45 – 8:00 am for all students. Three- and four-year-olds drop off and pick up at the north door; kindergarten through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students at the middle door; and 4<sup>th</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup> grade students at the dumpsters (and they will walk to the south door) or under the portico. In case of inclement weather, all students will drop off and pick up at the south door (under the portico).

Cars should enter the property from Spurgeon Street between ACA and the Goodwill building, forming one line. All vehicles will turn north and travel under the portico and continue to the appropriate door for drop off or pick up. All students in a car may exit the vehicle at the same time (usually at the door for the youngest student), and a staff member will supervise as students walk to the appropriate door. For drop off, students should be unbuckled from their seatbelts or car seats, have their backpacks and other belongings gathered, and be ready to get out of the car promptly. Exit the ACA property onto Bradford Street.

Part-day students will be dismissed from the pre-k door (northmost door on the east side of the building). Cars should follow the same procedure for entering the property and line up along the east side of the building. Teachers will bring your child to you and help them into the car. Parents may then pull into the back parking lot to buckle their children into car seats. Full-day students will be dismissed from the south door on the east side of the building (under the portico). Teachers will be in place along the sidewalk to supervise students. Pull as far forward as possible, and your child will be directed to your car. Younger students will be helped into the vehicles by teachers, and parents may pull into the back parking lot to buckle their children into car seats.

We encourage parents to use the drop off and pick up lines for their children as it provides a smoother start and finish to the school day. However, if there are extenuating circumstances, and you would like to walk your child into the building, please park on the south and west sides of the building. Please enter from Grady Street, park and walk to the front door (west side of building). Follow this same procedure for pick-up of part-day students.

For full-day students, you may park on the south side of the building and walk up to the door under the portico on the east side of the building. Your child will be called and brought to you. Please do not enter the building at pick up time as the hallways are crowded with students and backpacks.

It will be necessary to charge a fee of \$5 for each 5 minutes late for pick up. Parents/care givers are not considered late until the end of the pick-up time for the child's class. If you have extenuating circumstances, please call your child's teacher.

Pick up time is 12:30 – 12:40 pm for part-day pre-k students.

Pick up time is 3:15 – 3:30 pm for full day pre-k and kindergarten – 6<sup>th</sup> grades.

Pick up time for Extended Care is according to the time parents have scheduled, and no later than 5:15 pm. When picking up from Extended Care, go to the front door and ring the doorbell.

## **Financial Aid**

ACA utilizes a service offered by Financial Aid for School Tuition (FAST). This service analyzes the parents' financial information and sends ACA a report on what a family could reasonably be expected to pay based on their income and expenses. This is a well-researched, objective means of determining financial need and greatly helps the board in awarding tuition waivers. Families can complete their financial information online through a link on ACA's website. FAST charges a fee for this service. The reports sent to ACA from FAST are for informational purposes only and are not binding. Financial aid awards are made on the assumption that the family is making the maximum financial commitment possible to the child's education expenses.

Application for financial aid must be made each year. Changes in family financial status could result in an increase or decrease in funding in subsequent years. In the case of parents who are divorced, the school expects each natural parent and their spouses, if any, to complete the financial information. If there are extenuating circumstances, these should be explained.

To maintain financial aid eligibility, students must have passing grades and follow school policies and procedures. All accounts must be in good standing as well.

**Deadline for receipt of the report from FAST is May 1.** It is the applicant's responsibility to be sure that ACA has received the report from FAST.

Scholarship information may be obtained from the school administrator or secretary.

## **Financial Policies for Families**

Families may pay tuition in 3 different ways.

1. Payment may be made monthly over 10 months (from August through May).
2. Payment may be made monthly over 12 months (July through June) to lower monthly costs.
3. Payment may be made by semester with the first payment due August 1 and the second payment due the first class session in January.

Monthly payments are due at the first class session of each month with the exception of June, July, and/or August in which payments are due by the first day of the month. Full tuition is due each month/semester regardless of student absences or holidays.

Payments more than 10 days past due will be subject to a \$20 late fee. For accounts not kept up to date, students may be suspended until accounts are caught up. They will not be allowed to enroll in subsequent school years unless all fees have been paid. Transcripts and permanent records will not be released until all accounts are in good standing.

Should it become necessary to withdraw a student from the school or extended care, parents will need to give a one-month notice with payment due for that month. Any amount prepaid beyond that one-month period will be refunded.

Materials fees are required before a child will be added to a class. These fees are non-refundable.

### **Multiple-Child Discount**

If a family has more than 1 child enrolled in the school, they will receive a discount of 10% off the tuition for each child after the oldest.

### **Tuition and Materials Fees 2015-2016**

<u>Age or Grade</u>	<u>Class Days</u>	<u>Material Fees</u>	<u>Monthly tuition</u>
3-year-olds	Tues/Thurs 8:00 am – 12:30 pm	\$75	\$155
3-year-olds	Mon/Wed/Fri 8:00 am – 12:30 pm	\$85	\$200
3-year-olds	Mon thru Fri 8:00 am – 12:30 pm	\$105	\$315
3-year-olds	Mon thru Fri 8:00 am – 3:15 pm	\$135	\$425
4-year-olds	Mon thru Fri 8:00 am – 12:30 pm	\$120	\$315
4-year-olds	Mon thru Fri 8:00 am – 3:15 pm	\$150	\$425
Kindergarten- 6 <sup>th</sup> grade	Mon thru Fri 8:00 am – 3:15 pm	\$300	\$425

## **Health and Safety**

Each child must have a medical release on file at the school. If a child sustains a serious injury or becomes seriously ill and we cannot reach the parents, we want to know we can quickly get them the help they need. Any concerns or special instructions should be noted on the child's medical release form.

Anyone picking up a child in pre-k must have a placard issued by the school. For all grades, only authorized persons may pick up a student. If parents need to make changes to their list of authorized persons, they should do so in advance. In case of emergency, parents should call the school and give the secretary the name of the person who will be picking up their child and the person's ID will be checked before releasing the student. Parents are responsible for keeping this list up-to-date.

### **Ill or Injured Child**

A child should not be sent to school (or will be sent home from school) if the following are present (combined information from Oklahoma Department of Health, [healthline.com](http://healthline.com), [wedmd.com](http://wedmd.com)):

1. Fever of 100.4 degrees or higher
2. Diarrhea
3. Vomiting
4. Undiagnosed body rash
5. Sore throat with a fever and swollen glands
6. Eye discharge, defined as thick mucus or pus draining from the eye, matted eyelids after sleep and eye pain, along with pink or red in the whites of the eyes
7. Mouth sores with drooling
8. Severe cough, where a child gets red or blue in the face or makes a high-pitched whooping sound after coughing
9. Abdominal pain that continues for more than two hours or intermittent pain associated with fever or other signs or symptoms
10. Signs or symptoms of possible illness such as lethargy, irritability, persistent crying or any other unusual signs until a medical evaluation allows inclusion.

If a child becomes ill at school, faculty and staff will make sure he or she is comfortable and will call a parent as soon as possible. The child will be isolated in the administrator's office until the parent arrives.

When to return to school:

1. The child's fever has been controlled for over 24 hours without medication (as long as other symptoms have dissipated as well)
2. After taking prescribed medication for a minimum of 24 hours (as long as they don't have fever or other serious symptoms)
3. The child looks and acts like he or she is feeling much better or is starting to act restless at home

#### 4. Nasal drainage is clear and cough is mild

ACA reserves the right to request a doctor's note before allowing a student to return to school if they have a rash, pink eye or other contagious disease/condition.

If a student sustains a serious injury at school, including dental injuries, his/her parents will be notified to come pick the student up. If the parents cannot be reached, the emergency contact listed on the student's enrollment form will be notified. If the injury warrants emergency treatment, an ambulance will be called and the child will be transported to Jackson County Memorial Hospital. Parents (or emergency contact, if necessary) will be notified to meet the ambulance at the hospital. If neither parents nor emergency contacts can be reached, the administrator (or other member of crisis management team) will meet the ambulance at JCMH and assist with paperwork, etc., until the parents arrive, being sure to take the student's medical release. In case of dental emergency and neither parents nor emergency contact can be reached, the administrator (or other member of the crisis management team) will transport the student to the dentist designated on the student's enrollment form and assist with paperwork etc., until parents arrive. The parents assume responsibility for all costs. An accident/incident report is to be completed by the teacher within 24 hours, with a copy placed in the student's file and a copy given to the parents.

#### **Medication**

Medications, including over-the-counter, may be administered at school only with a medication permission form on file for all medicines. Medicine must be relinquished to the teacher upon arrival at school. If it needs to be refrigerated, this should be noted on the medication form. All medicines must be in a child-proof container with original labeling from the pharmacy and the child's full name. Rescue medications such as Epi-Pens and inhalers are kept in the classroom out of the reach of children and readily accessible to staff.

Parents are required to disclose to staff members any medications a child is taking.

If parents give standing permission for staff to give their child acetaminophen or ibuprofen or other over-the-counter medications for minor complaints, they should receive a note or e-mail indicating the time and reason for which the medicine was given.

#### **Recess Guidelines**

Recess should be a time of play and movement, and as such it plays a vital role in physical fitness and health. However, safety is an important issue and some activities that are allowed at home might not be appropriate at school. Following are guidelines for appropriate play at recess:

1. No tackling, tripping, or throwing rocks, sand or other such objects. Excessively rough play will be stopped by a teacher.
2. Students must stay in the area designated by teachers.
3. Kindness is the rule. There will be no taunting or bullying.
4. Students will only be allowed to stay inside during recess by parent request, and only for a bona fide medical reason.
5. A guide for acceptable temperatures for outdoor play is posted in the teachers' workroom.

### **Snacks**

Though ACA does not provide meals or snacks, it is the intention of ACA to support parents in their efforts to develop healthy eating habits of children in order to optimize scholastic potential as well as for overall good health. A nutritious diet reduces the incidence of obesity, diabetes, tooth decay, etc. and helps children focus their attention and retain information. Specifically, ACA will promote snack time as an opportunity for children to develop the habit of enjoying and preferring nutritious foods and to try new foods (especially fruits and vegetables). Sweets and other low nutrient foods should be reserved for special occasions. All snack foods should be ready to eat. This includes washing and prepping fruits and vegetables for easy consumption.

- Refrigeration is available for pre-k snacks only.
- Before bringing nuts or nut products, parents should check with the teacher.
- Juices should be brought in a jug, not individual servings.
- Parents should avoid bringing items such as candy, chips, donuts, iced cookies, iced cupcakes, fruit drinks, gummy items, fruit rollups and the like for regular snacks.
- Parents should get approval for birthday items from his/her child's teacher.
- Please send small cups and napkins or other appropriate utensils with your snack.

### **Special Health Concerns**

For children with special health concerns, e.g. allergies, asthma, diabetes, ADHD, staff members are to be fully informed about the condition and treatments required by the child. The parents are to provide necessary medications and equipment as well as training on proper administration of medication and use of equipment. ACA reserves the right to deny admission to a student whose medical condition is beyond the scope of what ACA staff can reasonably accommodate.



## **Staff Training**

There is to always be at least one person in the building who is CPR/First aid trained. All pre-k teachers are to have CPR/First Aid training. Teachers are to be trained in standard/universal precautions.

## **Supervision**

Pre-k children are supervised by sight at all times, and the transition of children from one teacher to another or from one area to another is accounted for to ensure the supervision and whereabouts of children at all times. Students in kindergarten and up are to be supervised at all times in the classroom and outside. They may go to the restroom alone, but they are to take the appropriate restroom tag to ensure at most one boy and one girl are in the restroom area at any given time.

## **Lunch**

Teachers and teacher assistants are responsible for helping students with their snack time and lunch. Microwaves will be provided where students eat lunch. Until age-appropriate for students to heat their own lunches, teachers should help them. Heatables should be assembled and ready to heat in the microwave. Items that take longer than 1 – 2 minutes to heat are discouraged because of time constraints. With administrative approval, teachers may impose further restrictions such as allowing heatables only on certain days. Teachers should also ensure that students clear their place after finishing lunch and wipe down tables/desks.

## **Lunch Delivery**

Students may order lunches to be delivered as follows:

Mondays:	Papa John's cheese pizza
Fridays:	McDonald's chicken nuggets and apple dippers

Parents will be provided a chart of costs. Student should bring from home a drink as well as any additional food items such as fruit, chips, etc. Meals are to be selected and paid in advance a month at a time.

## **Parent Teacher Fellowship**

ACA's Parent Teacher Fellowship (PTF) was established to support the mission and vision of the Altus Christian Academy by fostering a godly fellowship among the organization's parents, faculty and staff. PTF provides a forum for communication and Christian fellowship and provides a channel for fundraising to help meet the needs of the school. Membership is open to

any parent or grandparent of children currently enrolled at ACA as well as faculty and staff of the school. Annual membership is free. A few examples of PTF sponsored activities are

- Fellowship dinners
- Family fun nights
- Spring Fling

## **RenWeb**

ACA utilizes RenWeb school management software. This program is designed to enhance parent-school communication as well as records management for the school. Parents may access student grades, attendance, records, and behavior reports as well as a family and staff directory. These services are available by going online to [www.renweb.com](http://www.renweb.com), selecting “LOGINS” from upper right screen, and then selecting “ParentsWeb Login”. On the left side of the next screen, click on the link “Create New ParentsWeb Account.” ACA’s district code is ALT-OK. Enter the email address you gave the school on your child’s enrollment form and select “Create Account.” Follow the remaining directions. If you experience any difficulties, please call the school office.

RenWeb provides the faculty and staff a very convenient way to communicate with parents both individually and as a group. If a parent does not regularly use email, he or she should let the teacher know and request alternate methods of communication.

ACA also utilizes a service through RenWeb called Parent Alert. It allows the school to send urgent messages through email, voice, or text messages. This service will be used in case of emergency, school closing, or very short-notice cancellation of events.

RenWeb has an app available for Android and iPhone users called RenWeb Home that allows access to many of the program’s features. The app itself is free and requires an annual subscription fee of \$5 to access the database.

## **School Closing**

If the school must close because of bad weather conditions or other extreme circumstances, KWHW (1450 am) radio station and KRKZ (93.5 FM) are the stations selected as the primary information outlets. If electric, internet, and/or phone service is available, other outlets include voicemail greeting, email, RenWeb Parent Alert, KSWO TV (Channel 7, Lawton), and the school’s Facebook page.

## **Social Media Policy for Students**

The minimum age for a student to legitimately have a Facebook account is 13 years of age, making most ACA students ineligible for an account. Because some students and their families choose not to follow Facebook and other social media site guidelines, some students have social media accounts. We also have a few older grade students who have turned 13. If either of these are the case, it is important for students to remember they represent not only themselves, their families, and their school, but they represent Christ as well. Students are prohibited from using social networking while at school. Because posts are public, students will be held accountable for inappropriate use of social media regardless of when posts are made. Inappropriate use includes, but is not limited to, the use of profanity, vulgarity, sexually explicit images or language, gossip, slander, or threats to the safety or welfare of other people. Violation of these policies will be grounds for disciplinary procedures, even up to expulsion.

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# **INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

## **Classroom**

### **Grading and Grade Reports**

Teachers are responsible for recording student performance through the use of skills and behavior checklists for pre-kindergarten and kindergarten, and the use of grades and behavior checklists for 1<sup>st</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> grades. Individual grades are to be recorded in RenWeb on a weekly basis. This program automatically averages each student's grades and creates grade reports.

ACA's grading scale for 1<sup>st</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> grades is as follows:

A	92 – 100
B	83 – 91
C	74 – 82
D	65 – 73
F	64 and below

Grade reports will be sent home on the first Wednesday following the end of a 9-weeks grading period. Parents should sign these and return them as soon as possible.

Progress reports will be sent home at mid-term of each 9-weeks grading period.

Students in 1<sup>st</sup> grade and up are eligible to be listed on the school honor roll. Students making all A's each nine weeks will be listed on the Honor Roll with Distinction. Students who have at least one B, but no grade lower than B, will be listed on the Honor Roll.

Students with average to above average grades and developmentally appropriate classroom behavior will promote automatically to the next grade. Parents of students with below average academic performance will be asked to hold a conference with the teacher, and a plan should be developed to uncover and address the reason for the low performance. Retention will be used when parents and teacher agree and have evidence this is the best option. If school personnel and/or parents determine that ACA is not the best program to address a student's needs, parents may be asked to consider other academic options for their child.

### **Homework**

Homework is a valuable learning tool, both for content and for responsibility and accountability. It should be utilized with discretion and should consist of meaningful activities. It should not dominate a family's entire evening. The amount of homework given should be reflective of the age and ability of the student. If a student is spending significantly more time on homework than is typical for his/her age and developmental stage, this should be considered a "red flag" and should be thoroughly investigated.

Teachers should avoid giving homework on Wednesdays to promote student attendance at mid-week church activities.

### **Honorable Character (see Discipline, pg. 14)**

Each student should receive at least one positive Honorable Character mark each day.

For the first infraction on a given day, a student will have his/her name written on the board along with the number (circled) of the appropriate Honorable Character trait. This is a warning and is to be erased each day.

If another negative mark is earned on a given day, this is to be recorded on the Defining Character side of the Honorable Character card.

All marks, other than warnings, should be recorded on an Honorable Character card and sent home the last day of each week.

For students who develop a pattern of getting a warning every day, teachers should note this on the Defining Character side of the Honorable Character card and/or set up a conference with the child's parents.

For 1<sup>st</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> grades:

Students receiving multiple marks in a day may be required to do a rule writing page (see Honorable Character forms) or other appropriate consequence.

### **Identifying At-Risk or Special Need Learners**

Classroom teachers have the primary responsibility for identifying students who are experiencing academic, behavioral, emotional, or social difficulties in the classroom beyond the scope of the normal fluctuations in student performance. The teacher should promptly notify the school administrator and schedule a conference with the student's parents to apprise them of the concerns and to involve them in developing a plan to address the issue(s). This plan is called Response to Intervention, and the teacher is encouraged to conference with other teachers as well as the special education coordinator for the local public school district. The teacher should request the school administrator contact the special education coordinator of the local public school district and notify him/her of this plan. If performance does not improve within six weeks, the administrator should contact the special education coordinator of the local district to refer that student for formal testing. The special education coordinator will guide ACA and the student's parents through the testing process. Officials from the local school system in coordination with the child's teacher and parents should use the results to develop an Individual Service Plan (ISP), if needed, or even to determine whether ACA has the resources needed to successfully address the student's needs. The student's classroom teacher is responsible for following the ISP and should maintain contact with the student's parents and other professionals involved at least once per quarter to monitor progress.

An alternative for younger students or for quicker results, is a referral to a developmental pediatrician, the OU Child Study Center, or other provider. This is a private pay/insurance option for parents. The results should be used to develop an ISP or to determine appropriate placement.

As allowed by the mission and resources of the school, ACA will make modifications to its program or facilities as appropriate to meet the special needs of an identified student. Through No Child Left Behind, the public school system is obligated to provide testing free of charge and, if a special need is identified, to provide equitable services. This could include the provision of services or equipment or the training of ACA teachers to perform needed interventions.

## **JAM**

JAM stands for Jesus and Me and serves as ACA's chapel time. The purpose of JAM is to provide students a focused time for worship and to provide an opportunity for further spiritual development.

Three- and four-year-old pre-k students participate in JAM each Monday through Thursday morning beginning at 8:30 am. Students in pre-k through 6<sup>th</sup> grade come together on Friday mornings beginning at 8:15 am and ending by 9:15 am. JAM is held in the multi-purpose room. Lessons are presented by teachers and community pastors and leaders, and occasionally a Bible-based video is shown. Three- and four-year-old pre-k students join Friday JAM for memory verses, prayer, and a few songs with the older group. They leave before the lesson. Older students have a lesson and more worship time.

## **Movies/Videos/Other Media**

Movies may be utilized rarely, primarily on party days or at the end of a semester and should be approved through the administrator and parents notified before a movie is shown. Movies and educational videos must be previewed for inappropriate content. No movie may be shown beyond a G rating without prior approval by the administrator, and parents must be notified. Any type of media presentation that could be controversial in nature must be approved by the school administrator, and parents must be notified.

Passive media (television, DVDs, videos), when used, should meet the following requirements:

- Are appropriate to the age and attention span
- Enhance the effectiveness and values of the program
- Are previewed by the staff for overall content and age appropriateness
- Serve as an occasional supplement to daily activities rather than a significant part
- Include appropriate teacher involvement in introducing and following up the viewing with questions and activities that elicit children's active involvement



## **Missions/Community Service**

Each classroom, including 3-year-olds and 4-year-olds, will have the opportunity to participate in a school-wide service learning project. The project will focus on a specific need in the community and incorporate core subject areas. The purpose is to involve students in meaningful service to others and to show them how biblical knowledge and values pervade every area of life.

## **Testing**

Altus Christian Academy shall engage at least annually in an academic achievement testing program. The purpose of this program is two-fold.

1. Determine strengths and weaknesses in the academic achievement of individual students.
2. Find overall strengths and weaknesses in the academic program of the school. Teachers and administrators are to use the results to plan an academic program for individual students and to make recommendations for overall program improvement. The test used by ACA for kindergarten through sixth grade shall be the Terra Nova, as offered by ACSI. The three-year-old program will use a checklist of research-based developmental indicators, and the four-year-old program will use Literacy First and Fox Letters and Numbers. Testing for the early education program will commence in March. Terra Nova testing will take place during the testing window in April.

Students with an Individual Service Plan or 504 Plan or a diagnosis such as ADHD from an appropriate medical professional may have alternate testing methods such as individual testing, more time, frequent breaks, and/or a scribe for recording answers. The special education liaison from the local school system will help make those determinations. For students with an Individual Service Plan or a 504 Plan, the administrator may exercise the option of removing their test scores from overall grade level scores.

Classroom teachers administer the Terra Nova, and testing rooms should have a monitor who does not have a student in that particular class. Students testing individually should also have a monitor in addition to the test administrator. Early education teachers may administer assessments without a monitor.

Students transferring to another school should contact that system to discuss and schedule any entrance tests.

## **General**

### **Asbestos Inspection**

There is no asbestos present in the Altus Christian Academy facility. Inspection was conducted by accredited and state licensed AHERA inspectors. A letter certifying this is available for public review in the secretary's office.

### **Emergency Procedures**

The school has an emergency procedures manual referred to as a crisis management plan. Teachers are responsible for reviewing this document annually during in-service or more often if procedures are changed during the school year.

Tornado procedures should be practiced once during the fall semester (September) and once during the spring semester (March).

Fire drills should be conducted once during the fall semester and once during the spring semester (within 15 days of the start of each semester).

Lockdown drills should be conducted once during the fall semester and once during the spring semester.

Intruder drills should be conducted once during the fall semester and once during the spring semester (within 15 days of the start of each semester).

Two additional drills chosen from the crisis management procedures are to be conducted during the school year.

Written record of drills is to be maintained for three years. Teachers, school secretary, and school principal should keep a copy of the procedures in a readily accessible place. Teachers should also keep with the procedures a class roster, parent phone numbers, and medical releases.

### **Exempt Status for Early Education**

Altus Christian Academy's early education (pre-school) program is exempt from state licensing requirements for child care facilities. However, ACA voluntarily meets those requirements and is committed to ongoing self-monitoring.

### **Extended Care**

- Extended Care is offered for ACA students on the days they attend school.
- Hours of operation (only on days ACA is in session):

- Before care: 7:00 am – 7:45 am
- After care: 3:15 pm – 5:15 pm
- Part-day pre-k students may have the option of using extended care from 12:30 pm – 3:15 pm if space is available in the full-day 3-year-old classroom.
- *Extended Care will not be offered on the last day of school.*
- Fees: \$3.00 for before care, and \$3.00 per hour for after care.
- Parents are charged for the hours for which they have signed up their children. Fees are prepaid for the month and the full amount is due regardless of student absences. (No refunds are given for days missed).
- Payment is due the first session of each month and may be paid in the same check as tuition.
- Though a regular schedule is preferred, ACA Extended Care will also accept “drop-ins”. In this case payment is due at the end of the month.
- For “drop-in” care, 24-hours notice is required and availability will be determined.
- Part-day pre-k students in Extended Care will have a rest period each day. Parents should send a mat, blanket, or sleeping bag and a small pillow (optional). This will be kept at the school and sent home weekly to be laundered.
- Pre-k and up will have a snack around 3:30 pm daily. Parents should include an extra snack in the child’s lunch box if they will be in Extended Care at that time.
- Extended Care will close at 5:15 pm daily. Children must be picked up by this time. Parents will be charged a late fee of \$5 for every 5 minutes late.
- Any staff who has reason to believe that a child has been abused is required to promptly contact the statewide toll-free Child Abuse Hot Line, 1-800-522-3511. Staff members are required to cooperate fully in the investigation of any allegation.
- At least two adults are to be in the building at all times during Extended Care operation.

### **Field Trips**

Field trips provide for a great learning experience. Pre-kindergarten students are allowed to take local field trips. K and up may take both local and out of town field trips. Students are expected to behave responsibly and respectfully at all times. ACA does not provide transportation and does not take responsibility for volunteer drivers. As a courtesy for parents, the school facilitates the copying and filing of each parent/volunteer’s driver’s license and vehicle/liability insurance verification. Vehicles should travel together and drivers should have cell phone numbers of the teacher as well as other drivers. Any driver carrying students other than their own must travel as a group. Traffic laws must be followed and child safety seats must be used in accordance with Oklahoma law.

Teachers will assign children to vehicles, and this assignment applies for all travel times. Children must be in the presence of a responsible adult at all times. Roll and head counts should be taken at each arrival and departure. Any difficulties should be reported immediately to the teacher. A certain uniform shirt may be required.

In case of accident, the driver or other responsible adult should call 911 and wait for authorities to arrive. This person should contact the school immediately with detailed

information so other parents can be informed. The administrator will take appropriate steps to contact parents and plan for the return of students to the school. The teacher must submit a written report to the administrator within 24 hours.

### **Length of School Day/Year**

The length of the school day and year, as well as the number of instructional hours/days, shall comply with state law. Altus Christian Academy operates for a minimum of 1,080 hours per school year, excluding a daily 30-minute lunch time. The school schedules 175 instructional days and 5 professional days. ACA's part-day three-year-old and part-day four-year-old program operate from 8 am – 12:30 pm, and full-day classes meet from 8 am – 3:15 pm. Once per month students will be dismissed at 12:30 pm so that teachers may have professional development and planning time. Six hours may be used each semester for student-parent-teacher conferences. Days missed for bad weather will be made up unless there are extreme circumstances preventing this. A good faith effort must be made to make up missed days. Any bad weather days not made up must be approved by the Board of Directors.

### **Maximum Student to Classroom Teacher Ratios:**

3-year olds	10:1
4-year-olds	12:1
Kindergarten	12:1
1 <sup>st</sup> – 6 <sup>th</sup> grades	14:1

Altus Christian Academy may add up to two additional students in Kindergarten – 6<sup>th</sup> grades, if needed to accommodate siblings or other unusual circumstances. Additions are to be approved by the administrator. Upon surpassing the maximum number of students per teacher, ACA will add a teacher assistant.

### **Parent-Teacher-Student Conferences**

Parent-teacher-student conferences for Pre-K – 6<sup>th</sup> grade will be held after the first 4 ½ weeks of the first and second semesters. These are typically scheduled on a Thursday from 3:30 – 6:00 pm and then on that Friday from 9 am – 12:30 pm. Students are dismissed on the Friday. Teachers are responsible for notifying parents and scheduling times with each parent. Teachers are also responsible for staying on schedule so as not to inconvenience parents and other teachers. Students in first grade and up should be present at least for the beginning of the conference and, as appropriate, should be involved in evaluating their classroom performance. Additional, individually-scheduled conferences should be held with parents upon receiving standardized testing results, and these conferences should be completed by the end of the second semester.

## **Promotion and Retention**

Students with average to above average grades and developmentally appropriate classroom behavior will promote automatically to the next grade. Parents of a student with below average academic performance will be asked to hold a conference with the teacher. When a student struggles in school, it is vitally important to find out why. See the information below regarding at-risk learners.

Retention will be used when parents and teachers agree and have evidence that it is the best option. If school personnel and/or parents determine that ACA is not the best program to address a student's needs, parents may be asked to consider other academic options for their child.

The ultimate goal is to do what is in the best interest of the student and what will enable his or her long-term success.

## **Reporting Child Abuse**

Any staff member who has reason to believe that a child has been abused is required to promptly contact the statewide toll-free Child Abuse Hot Line, 1-800-522-3511. Staff members are required to cooperate fully in the investigation of any allegation. By law, a person making a report, in good faith, is immune from civil or criminal liability.

## **Tobacco Free Policy**

### **Rationale:**

Altus Christian Academy wants to provide a healthy environment for our students, staff, and families, and set the proper example for our students.

### **24/7 Tobacco Policy:**

The Board of Directors for Altus Christian Academy hereby prohibits the use of all tobacco products (including but not limited to cigarettes, cigars, pipes, snuff, e-cigarettes and other smokeless tobacco) by students, staff, visitors or guests in ACA's school building and on the grounds. This regulation also applies to facilities of other organizations when ACA is using them for performances, meetings, or any other kind of gathering. Tobacco products are also prohibited in any vehicle used to transport students to field trips, practices, or any other kinds of school-sponsored activity. This regulation further applies to any group or organization who might be utilizing ACA's building and grounds.

It is specifically directed that this ban on the use of tobacco products will be in effect 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and will also apply to everyone providing service to the school.

**Enforcement:**

Students in violation of this policy will face disciplinary action as follows:

First offense: Confiscation of products and parent notification

Subsequent offenses: Confiscation of products, parent notification and out of school suspension per the circumstances.

Staff in violation of this policy will face disciplinary action in conjunction with the school's plan of improvement procedures.

School visitors, guests, parents, or others will be reminded of the school's policy and asked to refrain from the use of tobacco products. If the person refuses to comply, they may be asked to leave the school site or the site of the school function. If the person refuses to leave, they may be referred to the local authorities.

**Volunteers**

Teachers are encouraged to utilize parent and other volunteers because it builds relationships between parents/volunteers and the school, and it provides for teachers the help they greatly need. Suggestions for volunteer activities include helping in the classroom, chaperoning field trips, fundraising, reading with students, helping with office work, and organizing and helping with class parties. Teachers should communicate classroom needs to the volunteer coordinator and are responsible for communicating clearly with volunteers their expectations. Teachers should notify administration of any problems. Only teachers and staff employed by the school and volunteers with a background check may escort students to the restroom or be alone with students. Volunteers will be required to obtain a background check and sign a statement of support for the mission of the school. Those exempt from a background check include parents only helping with class parties and field trips or college students observing or reading to students or working for service hours. Persons without a background check are not to be alone with students or accompany them to the restroom. They must be continuously supervised by a staff member of the school.