



# K-6 HANDBOOK

## 2025-2026

First Academy  
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“And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.” Colossians 3:17

## 1. MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is pursuing academic excellence while growing in the grace of God's Word so that we may engage our community with the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.

## 2. STATEMENT OF FAITH

The educational philosophy of First Academy is based on the God-centered view that all truth is based on God's Word, the Bible. The Bible is the inspired and only infallible, authoritative Word of God which is the foundation for all truth. The purpose of Christian education is a vehicle for bringing the student into a relationship with God and developing that student spiritually, intellectually, emotionally, physically, and socially. First Academy is an extension of the parent and home to assist in biblical, Christian education. The outline of our basic beliefs guides our church and school by helping to align us with instructions in God's Word, the Bible. A more in-depth explanation of our beliefs along with the Bible references for each statement are provided below:

**ABOUT MAN:** Man is made in the spiritual image of God, to be like Him in character. He is the supreme object of God's creation. Although man has tremendous potential for good, he is marred by an attitude of disobedience toward God called "sin." This attitude separates man from God. (Genesis 1:27; Psalm 8:3-6; Isaiah 53:6a; Romans 3:23; Isaiah 59:1,2)

**ABOUT ETERNITY:** Man was created to exist forever. He will either exist eternally separated from God by sin, or in union with God through forgiveness and salvation. To be eternally separated from God is hell. To be eternally in union with Him is eternal life. Heaven and hell are places of eternal existence. (John 3:16; John 2:25; John 5:11-13; Romans 6:23; Revelation 20:15; 1 John 5:11-12; Matthew 25:31-46)

**ABOUT JESUS CHRIST:** Jesus Christ is the Son of God. He is co-equal with the Father. Jesus lived a sinless human life and offered Himself as the perfect sacrifice for the sins of all men by dying on a cross. He arose from the dead after three days to demonstrate His power over sin and death. He ascended to heaven's glory and will return again to earth to reign as King of kings and Lord of lords. (Matthew 1:22,23; Isaiah 9:6; John 1:1-5, 14:10-30; Hebrews 4:14,15; 1 Corinthians 15:3,4; Romans 1:3,4; Acts 1:9-11; 1 Timothy 6:14,15; Titus 2:13)

**ABOUT SALVATION:** Salvation is a gift from God to man. Man can never make up for his sin by self-improvement or good works. Only by trusting in Jesus Christ as God's offer of forgiveness can man be saved from sin's penalty. Eternal life begins the moment one receives Jesus Christ into his life by faith. (Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2:8,9; John 14:6; 1:12; Titus 3:5; Galatians 3:26; Romans 5:1)

**ABOUT ETERNAL SECURITY:** Because God gives man eternal life through Jesus Christ, the believer is secure in salvation for eternity. Salvation is maintained by the grace and power of God, not by the self-effort of the Christian. It is the grace and keeping power of God that gives this security. (John 10:29; 2 Timothy 1:12; Hebrews 7:25; 10:10, 14; 1 Peter 1:3-5)

**ABOUT THE HOLY SPIRIT:** The Holy Spirit is equal with the Father and the Son as God. He is present in the world to make men aware of their need for Jesus Christ. He also lives in every Christian from the moment of salvation. He provides the Christian with power for living, understanding of spiritual truth, and guidance in doing what is right. The Christian seeks to live under His control daily. (2 Corinthians 3:17; John 16:7-13, 14:16, 17; Acts 1:8; 1 Corinthians 2:12, 3:16; Ephesians 1:13; Galatians 5:25; Ephesians 5:1)

**ABOUT THE BIBLE:** The Bible is God's Word to all men. It was written by human authors, under the supernatural guidance of the Holy Spirit. It is the supreme source of truth for Christian beliefs and living. Because it is inspired by God, it is truth without any mixture of error. (2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20, 21; 2 Timothy 1:13; Psalm 119:105, 160, 12:6; Proverbs 30:5)

### **3. PHILOSOPHY AND VISION**

First Academy is an established and highly reputable preschool and an academic K-5 school which provides Christian education for children of the church and community members. The teaching and training of children through Christ centered curriculum will provide a foundation that strengthens the child, family and community.

#### **DIVERSITY:**

First Academy values and cherishes the differences of every student, family, and faculty member. Diversity in our student body, families, and faculty develops thinking that values alternative viewpoints and is sensitive to ethnic backgrounds, feelings, individual physical characteristics of others, as well as God-given talents and abilities.

First Academy admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs.

Embracing and capitalizing on the differences God has created in all of us enhances our school and church community at First Academy. Diversity is God's gift and tool given to people that they might know Him better and experience life as He designed it. We look to His Word for the

basis and context of the meaning of diversity to define the different parameters of gender, race, age, culture and economic status.

Regarding gender and race, we are ALL created in the image of God and are created individually as “male and female.” Genesis 1: 27 “And God created man in his own image... male and female he created them.”

Regarding age, we are created for HIS purpose and glory. Psalm 139:13-14 “For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother’s womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made.”

Regarding one’s culture, God shows no partiality. Galatians 3:28 “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.” Acts 17:26-27 “And he made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place, that they should seek God, in the hope that they might feel their way toward him and find him. Yet he is actually not far from each one of us.”

Regarding economic status, Mark 12:41-44 refers to the stewardship responsibility associated with the material wealth and possessions that He provides to each person. God owns it all!

Regarding marriage, we align with the Bible’s teaching that marriage is between a man and a woman. Genesis 2:24 “This is why a man leaves his father and mother and bonds with his wife, and they become one flesh.”

#### **4. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

The educational goals of the school are to provide a strong Christ centered academic program, as well as the care and development of each child’s spiritual, mental, physical, emotional, and social training within a loving, Christian environment. The goals and standards include mastery and enrichment of the curriculum concepts. The specific objectives for all students will be communicated to parents at the beginning of each school year at the Parent Orientation and through newsletters, calendars, report cards and conferences.

#### **5. ADMINISTRATION AND STAFF**

Administrators, teachers and support staff must be Christians, regular church attendees and have and display a genuine love for children. The staff members will be qualified to perform the position they hold as defined in the job description of their position.

Each staff member must pass a background check and receive annual training and professional development in multiple areas of child development, safety, learning, and more.

## 6. ADMISSION AND ENROLLMENT

Admission to First Academy is a privilege. Admission and enrollment to our school is a partnership forming between family, school, and church. First Academy faculty and staff take this privilege and partnership very seriously and strive to see all students and families grow spiritually and academically. As admission and enrollment is a privilege, the steps and guidelines for admission and enrollment are detailed below. If at any time, a student or family fails to meet the required steps or fails to meet minimum admission requirements, the student(s) will not be eligible to enroll. Students entering kindergarten **must be 5 by August 1st** of each school year. Students with birthdates after August 1st and before September 1st will only be admitted to the FA kindergarten program with written administrator approval.

- 1) **Campus Visit:** Families and students are encouraged to visit our school and tour the facility as well as meet the principal and other faculty. Contact the school office to schedule one.
- 2) **Apply Online:** Interested families should apply online using Renweb. A completed application is not considered accepted enrollment into the school.
- 3) **Student Shadow (Optional):** Interested students in 1st through 6th grade may choose to “shadow” a class for a full or part of a day. Arrangements must be made at least one week in advance through the school office.
- 4) **Academic Screening:** Students entering Kindergarten through 6th grade must complete a math and/or literacy screening to evaluate academic readiness. Please schedule this through the office.
- 5) **Academic & Behavior Review:** Students entering Kindergarten through 6th must have all pertinent academic and behavior records reviewed by school administration prior to approval for enrollment. This includes but is not limited to report card grades, testing results, psychological exams, behavioral reports, special education records including 504s and IEPs. Students exhibiting learning or behavior challenges may not be admitted due to the limited resources First Academy currently has available. Records, observations, and references all may be used to determine a student’s fit. School administration will work with potential families and students to identify whether a successful plan can be created and maintained to support the students’ needs. Students should be in good standing with their prior school to attend FA.
- 6) **Meet with School Administration:** Potential families and students should expect to meet with the school administration as part of the admissions process. This could be done as part of the campus visit step.
- 7) **Decision from School:** Once potential families have been to campus and met the school administration and completed applications, screenings, and records review, they will officially receive notification from the school on admittance and then be asked to complete official enrollment online through Renweb.

Students in kindergarten through 6th grade must complete all forms and steps in online enrollment via Renweb, complete a payment plan, pay the enrollment fee, and provide a copy of the student's birth certificate and immunization record.

First Academy may not be the best fit for every student. We reserve the right to determine whether or not a student is a good fit for admissions, continued enrollment, or re-enrollment. Students must be able to operate and learn within a standard classroom setting. Academic support can be provided in a limited capacity through the school's Learning Lab and under the direction of the school administration. We are not set up to offer one-on-one instruction or to provide an aide for individual students.

**Nondiscriminatory Policy:** First Academy is committed to providing equal educational opportunities for students without regard to race, color, national or ethnic origin. It does not unlawfully discriminate in the administration of educational policies, admissions policies, and other school-administered programs. As a private religious institution, however, FA reserves the right to deny admission to any applicant whose academic preparation, character or personal conduct is determined to be inconsistent with the purposes, objectives, and values of the school.

## **7. PHILOSOPHY OF DISCIPLINE AND DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES**

First Academy strives to be an academic and spiritual based program guided by the Lordship of Jesus Christ through the study and application of Biblical principles and certain prudent rules which we believe are beneficial in establishing an atmosphere conducive to Christian growth and order. Members of our school's community are expected to live according to the Word of God, responding to one another in love. Those who join this community are asked to accept the responsibilities of membership by respecting and supporting its Christian distinctive and its standards of conduct.

### **Discipline Policy Overview**

Discipline at a Christian school aims to guide students toward Christ-like maturity, good citizenship, and self-discipline under the Holy Spirit. The school partners with families to foster habits like obedience, respect, honesty, and responsibility while actively building godly character through instruction and example. Parents are encouraged to communicate with the school directly about disciplinary matters rather than addressing other students or parents.

### **Code of Conduct**

In order to best fulfill the goals of the discipline process, First Academy has established a code of conduct that defines expected student behavior and establishes the procedure and process for addressing disciplinary matters. Please be aware that student conduct and behavior outside of the walls of the school (i.e., school field trips) can affect a student's standing at First

Academy as well as the reputation of our school. Below is a list of expectations for how students should conduct themselves at all times:

1. Dress appropriately according to the dress code.
2. Speak and act respectfully towards adults and each other.
3. Obey teachers and staff the first time.
4. Be respectful of others' property and the building.
5. Follow expectations for food and drink.
6. Be honest at all times.
7. Use all electronic devices appropriately.

### **Disciplinary Process**

The first line of discipline lies with the classroom teacher. Students are to follow the leadership and directives of teachers and staff at all times. Teachers will establish a set of classroom rules and expectations that follow the school set of expectations, and those will be reinforced daily.

Minor classroom issues will be handled in this order:

- 1) teacher redirection/student warning
- 2) teacher-student conference and additional consequence
- 3) teacher-parent communication concerning issue(s) and additional consequence
- 4) office visit.

Minor classroom issues include, but are not limited to:

- Failure to follow directions
- Disrupting class
- Being out of seat
- Disrespectful attitude or tone
- Inappropriate language or behavior (depending on severity)
- Talking out of turn
- Lying
- Running in the hallway
- Misuse of technology or electronic devices, including cell phones, watches, etc

If a student repeatedly fails to adhere to a teacher's expectations, exhausting the allowable number of disruptions or offenses, he or she may be referred to the administration for additional consequences.

Parents will be notified of the office visit, and a referral will be emailed including consequences. An "office visit" is defined as an administrator addressing disruptive, insubordinate, and repeated student behavior after classroom consequences have been applied. Repeated or habitual offenses may result in the continuum presented below. Major issues will be addressed based on the severity of the issue, including possible suspension (in-school or at home).

1 <sup>st</sup> Office Visit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Renweb Referral or Parent Contact</li> <li>• Student Conference focusing on restoration</li> <li>• Additional consequences/warning</li> </ul>
2 <sup>nd</sup> Office Visit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Renweb Referral and Parent Contact</li> <li>• Student Conference focusing on restoration</li> <li>• Additional consequences</li> </ul>
3 <sup>rd</sup> Office Visit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Renweb Referral and Parent Contact</li> <li>• Possible Parent Conference</li> <li>• Student Conference focusing on restoration</li> <li>• Additional Consequences</li> </ul>
4 <sup>th</sup> Office Visit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Renweb Referral and Parent Contact/Conference</li> <li>• Student Conference focusing on restoration</li> <li>• ISS or OSS</li> </ul>
5 <sup>th</sup> Office Visit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Renweb Referral and Parent Contact</li> <li>• Parent Conference</li> <li>• ISS or OSS</li> </ul>
6 <sup>th</sup> Office Visit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Renweb referral</li> <li>• Parent Conference</li> <li>• ISS, OSS, or possible Expulsion/Separation</li> </ul>

### **Consequences for Minor or Repeated Offenses**

Failure to meet student expectations set forth in the code of conduct can include, but are not limited to:

- Loss of some, or all, of recess (including walking laps or sitting out)
- Writing apologies or reflections
- Removal from special classes, such as art, PE, music, etc.
- Silent lunch, lunch detention
- Loss of privileges, position, or participation in events, teams, parties, field trips, etc
- Additional duties or responsibilities such as cleaning, assisting others, etc

### **Dress Code Violations**

If a student is found in violation of the school dress code, the following *could* occur based on the number of offenses and severity or how inappropriate it is. Severe violations could result in immediate referral and parent bringing a change of clothing. See dress code policy for guidelines.

- 1<sup>st</sup> offense – warning and parent notification
- 2<sup>nd</sup> offense – warning and parent notification
- 3<sup>rd</sup> offense – referral and parent provide change of clothing
- 4<sup>th</sup> offense – referral and parent provide change of clothing

## **Major Offenses**

The following are major offenses requiring severe and immediate discipline. This is not an exhaustive list.

1. Fighting or aggressive behavior with the goal to hurt someone else
2. Using profane or vulgar language whether written, spoken, or gestured
3. Possession of obscene material or drawings
4. Major insubordination or defiance of school staff members
5. Possession of alcohol, tobacco (any form), or any type of illegal drugs
6. Possession of knives, firearms, or other weapons
7. Written or verbal threats towards another that creates clear belief of danger/harm
8. Theft
9. Bullying in any form, as defined by our written policy

## **In-School Detention**

Student will be assigned to serve a detention period, and it will be a time where the student will provide a written reflection response to an assigned topic by the classroom teacher or principal followed by a discussion with the principal and classroom teacher about correcting future behaviors.

## **In-School Suspension and At-Home Suspension**

At times, students may be suspended from school for significant disciplinary infractions. For example, students in upper grades (2-5) will be sent to the office immediately on a first offense and suspended for any acts of intentional, physical aggression or foul language. Depending on the situation however, students in all grade levels are subject to suspension.

This time of in-school suspension will be spent in the office of the principal under close supervision where the student will complete all daily work assigned by the classroom teacher. If work isn't completed during the time spent in the office, the student will be responsible for the work completion upon returning to school the following day. Students cannot receive more than 3 instances of ISS before be subject to At-Home Suspension.

This time of at-home suspension will be spent outside of school, where the student will complete all daily work assigned by the classroom teacher. The student will be responsible for the work completion upon returning to school at the end of the suspension. Number of days will be determined at the discretion of the principal.

The first at-home suspension is usually for one day, but can be more. A second offense resulting in at-home suspension will be at least 3 days in length and the student will be referred to the School Board for review. Upon review, the child may be removed from school. Each major offense and consequence involving ISS or At-Home suspension will include parent communication/conferences with the school administration.

## **Separation**

There are special times and situations that may result in a student and First Academy separating, meaning the student is no longer able to attend school at FA. Separation could be due to 1) academic gaps or issues including students being too far behind academically or needing accommodations FA cannot meet reasonably; 2) behavior issues such as multiple suspension or major offense(s); or 3) medical or developmental issues FA cannot meet or address well enough to meet student needs.

## **Bullying**

First Academy considers bullying to be a grievous violation of God's command for man to "love one's neighbor as we love ourselves." (Matthew 22:39) It is an overt or omitted act intended to harm others that counters the nature of Christian character. In simple terms, bullying is a sin that hurts our deeply relational God. Further, it violates our First Academy principle of showing "Proper Respect." In this regard, it is important that we consider student behaviors carefully to determine whether bullying has occurred.

The definition of bullying we use as a guideline is as follows: *"a person is being bullied when he or she is exposed, repeatedly over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more other persons. Such negative action is typically characterized by a real or perceived imbalance of power between the individuals."*

A one-time incident is unkind and will be dealt with appropriately. Bullying is absolutely not tolerated. If you believe your child is being targeted by a certain individual, please notify the school principal. All other concerns you may have pertaining to disciplinary situations should be addressed by your child's teacher first.

If a student is found to be bullying, specific measures will be put into effect to ensure the safety of the students and to correct the behavior of the student who is the bully. Measures will include time spent with the principal which will include a referral for the student for ministerial or professional counseling. It is the desire to use measures which will help the student to identify those strong behaviors and channel them with appropriate guidance and discipline. It is our desire to grow leaders. If change does not occur in the student's heart and behavior, the relationship with the school will result in severance.

## **STUDENT/PARENT COMPLAINS AND GRIEVANCES**

The primary purpose of this policy is to provide for prompt and equitable resolution of students/parents complaints and grievances.

**LEVEL ONE:** The resolution of a complaint through free and informal communications as close as possible to the point of origin is encouraged. A student/parent with a complaint shall first

take it to the immediate teacher or principal depending on the point of origin. In the event the complaint cannot be resolved through free and informal communication a Formal Grievance may be filed by the student/parent.

The following steps shall be followed when filing a Formal Grievance.

**LEVEL TWO:** The student/parent filing the grievance shall contact the principal through a phone call or email. The principal shall conduct an investigation in a timely manner. The principal's decision shall be reduced to a phone call or a written email and presented to the student/parent. In no event, shall an appeal to Level Two be allowed without the involvement of the principal. The principal shall document his/her involvement with the problem.

**LEVEL THREE:** In the event the problem is not resolved at Level One, the student/parent may file an appeal in writing with the school board by completing a Grievance Report (attached). Such appeal shall be presented within ten (10) days of the Level One decision. The school board shall request a conference with the aggrieved or render a written decision within ten (10) days from the receipt of the grievance.

The aggrieved person may select a representative to accompany him/her, may state the facts in written form, and may request a written decision.

For the discussion and consideration of a grievance, time and place will be selected which will not interfere with regular scheduled classes or school related activities. The faculty and administration shall make an honest effort to resolve student/parent grievances as quickly as possible at the most immediate level of supervision

In the event that a resolution cannot be reached between all parties, the school board can determine the dismissal of a student from the school.

**Grievance Report: Name of Student, Names of Parents/Guardians, Nature of Grievance: (Include policy violated, if known) Action Sought: Pertinent Information: Additional Explanation: (If Needed), Signature, Date**

## **8. SCHOOL DRESS CODE**

### **SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY**

We believe in balancing student comfort, freedom to express one's individual taste, and neat, modest appearances that honor God. Overall, students are expected to dress modestly and neatly each day. Our dress and appearance should not:

- Be offensive to one another or towards God
- Result in others to envy or stumble

- Attract undue attention from others

We ask for the full cooperation of students, parents, and staff in adherence to our dress code guidelines. Students and parents should ensure that students comply with the guidelines each day while on campus. If students are in violation of the stated guidelines, disciplinary policies will be enforced. Discipline policies for failure to adhere to our dress code expectations are found in the discipline section of the handbook. Our dress code is subject to change as circumstances arise, and First Academy administration will make sure to communicate changes in a timely manner to parents, students, and staff.

**All dress should be neat, clean, modest, cover well, and loose fitting. All messaging, graphics, and content should be honoring of others and God. Inappropriate language, pictures, or references will not be acceptable.**

### **Shirts and Tops**

Students' shirts and tops should appropriately cover a student's shoulders, chest, and midriff. Spaghetti straps, muscle shirts, or see-through/transparent tops are not allowed without another piece of clothing atop. Tops should be long enough to cover a student's midriff when arms are raised in a normal manner. Tops should be modest and loose fitting, not revealing.

### **Shorts, Pants, and Bottoms**

Students' bottoms – dresses, skirts, skorts, and shorts – should AT LEAST be fingertip length or longer at the highest point of the shorts, skirt, or dress. This means that slits and potential upward cut styles of bottoms must also be fingertip length at minimum. Boys' and girls' athletic shorts, and girls' dresses/skirts may violate this requirement, so please be aware. Holes or rips occurring above the fingertip area of bottoms are prohibited. Bottoms should come to a student's waist at minimum where no boxers or underwear are visible above the waist of the clothing. Bottoms should be loose fitting; therefore, spandex-type bottoms may ONLY be worn UNDERNEATH clothing such as dresses or skirts that are of appropriate length as mentioned above.

### **Headwear**

Hats, hoods, caps, bandanas, sunglasses, and other types of headwear are not allowed while in doors.

### **Shoes**

Students should wear comfortable, durable shoes, especially on days where physical activity is expected. Shoes should be closed-toed with a back on the heel. Flip flops and house shoes are not allowed to be worn during a normal school day.

## **Pajamas and Spirit Wear Days**

Pajamas are not allowed to be worn except on school spirit wear days. During school-approved spirit wear dress days, students should still adhere to the expectation of modest, neat, and loose-fitting clothing. Tops and bottoms should still be of appropriate length, content, and coverage.

## **Chapel Dress**

Students should wear a school shirt on Tuesdays for our weekly chapel service.

## **9. PROGRAM INFORMATION**

### **CLASS SIZE:**

Maximum of 16 students in Kindergarten per class

Maximum of 18 1<sup>ST</sup> – 5<sup>TH</sup> grade students per class.

### **ELEMENTARY STUDENTS' DROP-OFF/PICK-UP:**



Morning drop off will be at the school office and main FBC Rogers entrance off of Bellview Road. Drop-off for elementary students is between 7:30 and 7:55 a.m. Students go to class at 7:55 a.m., and school begins at 8:00 a.m. Late arrivers will need to come through the office and be signed in. Dismissal car line is at 3:15 p.m. at the main entrance also. For pickup after 3:30 p.m., the student will be sent to

after school care, and one day of after school care will be charged.

### **EARLY CHECKOUT:**

If a student needs to be checked out early for an appointment or other need, the parent must sign out the student at school office, and the receptionist or personnel in the administration office will get the student from class.

**CARLINE SAFETY:** For safety, DO NOT pass other cars in the car line. Also, by law we are required to remind you that NO cell phone usage is allowed in the car line or in the parking lot. Parents must ensure that children are within safety restraints before leaving the car line.

**ACCREDITATION:** First Academy is an associate member school of the Arkansas Nonpublic School Accrediting Association (ANSAA).

## **10. ATTENDANCE**

Daily attendance is vital to a student's success academically, socially, and spiritually. Therefore, our attendance policy supports the importance of daily attendance. School instructional time is

8:00 AM to 3:15 PM daily. Students not picked up by 3:30 will be placed in after school care and parents required to pay for the drop in rate. All attendance records go in the student's permanent file by law.

Parents should contact the school office by phone or email to inform staff of a student absence by 10 AM on the day of the absence. This helps in record keeping, understanding and managing any potential issues from illness, and ensuring student classwork is prepared.

State law requires every parent, guardian, or other person residing within the State of Arkansas having custody of or charge of any child age five (5) through seventeen (17) years on or before AUGUST 1 of that year shall enroll and send the child to a public, private, or parochial school, or provide a home school for the child, as described in 6-15-501 et.seq. Established in Act 292 of 1991 and amended by the General Assembly during the 1999 Regular Session.

### **Absences**

More than 10 absences in a semester is considered excessive. Students who miss more than 10 days in a semester may fail the grade. School-related activities such as field trips, or court/legal appointments, do not count as an absence. When a student reaches 6 absences in a semester, parents will be sent an email from Renweb/Facts alerting them of the number of absences. For each subsequent absence, an email will be sent.

Students checking in after 10:00 AM or checking out before 1:00 PM are marked absent for one-half day.

Please review medical procedures and policies for information regarding when a student should remain home due to illness.

### **Tardies**

School begins at 8:00 AM. Students who sign in after 8:05 AM are considered tardy. Five (5) tardies result in a half day absence. Our attendance policy for excessive absences will apply.

### **Make Up Work**

Missed work deemed required by the teacher(s) due to an absence must be made up in a timely manner. It is the duty of the student and parent(s) to acquire and complete make up work. Students will receive the numbers of days missed plus an additional day to complete all make up work. For example, if the student is absent for two days, he has three days to complete the make-up work after he returns to school. Day one begins on the student's first day back in class. If a student is absent on the day a special project or assignment is due, he should turn it in as soon as he returns to class. Not completing classwork, assignments, tests,

projects, etc., according to school policy can be subject to reduced points, a zero, or additional consequences.

Make up work will be available in the office by **3:00 PM** for parents to pick on the day of the absence.

### **Prearranged Absences**

We value attendance and encourage families to schedule vacations during school breaks. However, we understand that occasional absences for family trips or activities may arise. To ensure students stay on track, please follow the guidelines below. (This policy does not apply to sickness or emergencies.)

1. Parents must notify the homeroom teacher and school administration and submit a prearranged absence form (found in office) at least one week in advance for absences 3 days or longer.
2. Students have one day per day missed (plus one) to turn in missed assignments, with a one week maximum timeline to complete all assignments. Work not submitted on time will receive a zero. Teachers will schedule missed tests at their discretion, aiming to schedule no more than 2 per day.

## **11. FIELD TRIPS AND TRANSPORTATION**

Field trips may be scheduled for elementary students. Parents will be notified of trips at least one month in advance, and a permission slip will be required of any child participating in the outing. Parents are generally welcome to attend field trips, but must adhere to all school and facility policies where students visit. There may be specific trips where parent attendance is limited or prohibited due to the size, capacity, or nature of the trip or setting students are visiting. Church vehicles will generally be used for field trips. If parent vehicles are needed to assist in transporting students to the destination, the school will communicate specific needs.

Students with more than 2 office visits due to disciplinary issues in a semester will not be permitted to go on the field trip.

**Only students enrolled and attending the grades/classes planned for the field trip may attend. Therefore, if parents have other (possibly younger) children, or students in another grade, that student should not attend the field trip.**

## **12. STUDENT DEVICES**

### **Cell Phones and Other Electronic Devices**

Students are not permitted to use cell phones (or any device that can be connected to the internet/cellular service including smart watches or similar) anytime during the school day. Teachers may collect all devices daily between 8:00 and 3:15 if a student is found using the device without permission. The device will then be held in the office and can be picked up the parent at the end of the day. If a student needs to contact a parent during the day, office phones may be used.

## **13. TECHNOLOGY ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY**

Policies and expectations regarding technology at First Academy can be found here. Parents and guardians must affirm via signature and date this policy through FACTS/Renweb during enrollment each year. Without a signed form, students cannot use school technology. Laptops and chargers will be assigned to each student for inventory tracking and to accurately assist students when the device is not in the classroom. Before a laptop can be utilized during the school year, this agreement must be signed and dated by both the student and a parent/legal guardian.

### **Student Code of Conduct**

1. Electronic files sent, received, viewed or stored anywhere in the computer system are available for review by any authorized First Academy staff for any purpose.
2. Modifying or changing device settings and/or internal or external configurations without appropriate permission is prohibited.
3. Personal information such as, but not limited to, last name, home address, phone numbers, email addresses, or birthdates must not be placed on device or shared online.
4. Using obscene, threatening or disrespectful language in any electronic communication tool is prohibited.
5. Disclaimer: While First Academy uses technology protection measures to limit access to material considered harmful or inappropriate to students, it will not be possible for the school to absolutely prevent such access. Despite our best efforts and beyond the limits of filtering technology, a student may run across some material that is objectionable. First Academy has layers to protect students when students are using the internet. The device is automatically routed through FBC Rogers' filter for appropriate content which provides the first layer. The second layer is the monitoring of an adult, and the third layer is where the student should use their digital responsibility skills when using a device.

## **Responsible Use and Care**

1. The device is to be treated as a valuable object. It should not be thrown, purposely dropped or abused. It will never be placed on the roof or hood of a car, on the sidewalk or street, or imperiled in any way that may cause it to be crushed or thrown to the ground.
2. Bark for Schools software will be utilized on the laptops for inside and outside school monitoring.
3. No security labels or tags will be removed from my device.
4. I will never loan out my device to others, and I will know where my device is at all times.
5. The device will never be left unattended at a public place away from home.
6. The device will not be used in or near proximity of water, household chemicals, or other liquids that could damage its electrical components.
7. The device will be protected from the environment to prevent rain, snow, ice, excessive heat, and/or cold.
8. Pencils, styluses, pen tips, and other pointed objects will never be used on the screen.
9. I will charge my device each night so that it is charged and ready to go the next use.
10. The device and charger will be kept away from siblings and pets at all times.
11. I understand that my device is ONLY for education use.
12. Parents and students agree to return the device and all components to the school in the same condition the device was issued to the student (cords, etc.)

## **14. FINANCIAL INFORMATION**

### **Registration & Application Fees**

<b>Fee</b>	<b>Early Amt</b>	<b>Late Amt</b>
Enrollment Fee	\$250	\$350
Application Fee	\$20	

All applications must be accompanied by the registration fee to be fully registered. EARLY REGISTRATION FEE DEADLINE ENDS ON MAY 1 FOR REENROLLING FAMILIES. All registration fees are non-refundable. Registration fees are paid online through FACTS application & enrollment.

### **Tuition Information**

<b>Elementary</b>	<b>Annual Amount</b>	<b>EFA Annual Amount</b>	<b>Family Out-of-Pocket</b>
Kinder-6th	\$7250	\$6,864	Up to \$386 Annually

Educational Freedom Accounts (EFA) are available through an application process with the state of Arkansas. All students K-12 are eligible for these funds annually. Responsibility to apply and

maintain eligibility is the parents' not the schools'. Applications and renewals occur each spring. Families must make sure to submit invoices in a timely fashion each quarter for tuition to be remain on time and family accounts to avoid delinquency. Out of pocket expenses for tuition and fees may occur depending on discounts. Balances remaining after the EFA funding are parent responsibility and subject to all financial policies. For more information regarding the state of Arkansas's EFA program go to <https://dese.ade.arkansas.gov/offices/office-of-school-choice-and-parent-empowerment/education-freedom-accounts>.

## Discounts, Payment Plans, and Referrals

First Baptist Rogers members receive a 10% discount. Families with multiple children receive a 10% discount for the 2<sup>nd</sup> child and 15% for the third/subsequent children. Only one discount will be applied for each child.

Annual and semi-annual payment plans have a \$25 one-time fee. Other payment plans have a \$55 one-time fee.

Auto drafts will take place on the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month. Late and NSF fees apply.

New Referral Incentive: Enrolled families who refer another family to First Academy can receive a \$150 referral credit (applied to account in Sept.) for each family that enrolls and attends FA. There's no limit to how many referral credits can be earned. New families must include current family name in application under "How did you hear about First Academy?" in application.

### After School Care (All Grades & Ages)

# of Days	1	2	3	4	5	Daily Drop In
Monthly Total	\$60	\$100	\$140	\$180	\$220	\$20 (as available)

One-time registration fee of \$50 billed in August.

August ASC tuition is 50% of the regular rate.

10% discount for multiple children.

Late pickup fee is \$1 per minute late.

We accept annual, semester or monthly payments. Monthly tuition is due by the 15th of each month. All checks are to be made out to First Academy, and automatic draft payments are available. All fees are NONREFUNDABLE. Late fees apply. Drop in after school care charges will be added to the auto draft amount as incurred.

## Delinquent Accounts

Report cards and/or permanent records will not be released for students who have delinquent accounts until they are paid in full. An account is delinquent when any amount due is beyond 15 calendar days.

After an account is declared to be PAST DUE (30 calendar days after due), the family will be notified that they have 30 days to work out an acceptable payment plan with the administrative

staff or pay in full. After the 30 days, if a payment plan acceptable to administration or complete payment is not received, the student(s) MAY be dismissed from First Academy.

Any student whose registration fees for the upcoming school year are not paid in full by August 10 will not be permitted to attend school. Any student whose tuition fees for the fall semester that were paid at 50% or less will not be permitted to attend the spring semester.

### **Withdrawal**

If the decision is made to withdraw your child from school for any reason, please follow these guidelines:

1. Submit in writing a notice of withdrawal.
2. Give a minimum of two weeks' notice.

### **Tax Information**

If you claim a deduction for school tuition and expenses, the tax ID number is 71-0266956. Family accounts through Renweb can provide a yearly report for tax purposes.

## **15. GRADING SYSTEM**

Teachers will keep parents apprised of their child's progress through conferences, notes and phone calls. Kindergarten students will be graded in all areas of academic instruction, as well as character and work performance. The grading scale we will use is "E" for excellent, "S" for satisfactory, "N" for needs improvement, and "I" for is improving. Criteria for the grading system will be explained during the first quarter conferences.

First through seventh grade students will be graded as follows:

- A 90-100 Excellent Progress
- B 80-89 Above Average
- C 70-79 Average
- D 60-69 Below Average
- F Below 60 unsatisfactory progress

## **16. STANDARDIZED TESTING**

Student assessment for all grades will be done on a quarterly basis through Star Renaissance 360 in reading and math performance. Testing is utilized to provide diagnostic information for teaching staff so that student strengths and weaknesses are addressed throughout the school year. Testing is maintained in student permanent files.

## 17. LEARNING LAB

When deciding necessary accommodations and/or modifications for incoming and current students, we will take into consideration input from outside qualified sources. However, the final decision as to what accommodations and/or modifications are needed and how that will be carried out in the classroom will be left up to teachers and administration.

Incoming students that have an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or 504 plan will be required to enroll in FA's Learning Lab if they are not showing satisfactory grades at the conclusion of any grading quarter. Outside tutors will not be considered as a replacement for required enrollment in FA's Learning Lab. All costs associated with Learning Lab enrollment will be the responsibility of the family, not the school.

In order to determine the need for accommodations and Learning Lab enrollment, FA's staff will schedule a conference with the classroom teachers and parent(s) or guardian(s) of the student in consideration for services to review the process, levels of accommodations, and additional details of the program. Once the first conference has been held, the student may be evaluated through FA and local public school evaluation systems and assessments to further identify the learning needs of the student. Once the evaluation(s) have been completed, a review conference will be held with all necessary staff and parent(s) or guardian(s) to determine if accommodation(s) and/or Learning Lab is needed for the student. If accommodations and Learning Lab services are needed, the Learning Lab coordinating staff and classroom teacher will be provide updates to the parent(s) or guardian(s) on student progress. Each quarter, a review meeting will be held with school staff and parent(s) or guardian(s) to discuss student progress and if any changes need to be made to the student's learning plan and Learning Lab participation.

The Learning Lab will be available for students to receive one-on-one or small group assistance, an alternative learning environment for assessments and projects as needed, and for additional services as needed. This assistance will be scheduled in increments of 30 minutes per day up to 3 days per week. First Academy's curriculum coordinator facilitates all aspects of the learning lab.

## 18. HEALTH INFORMATION

**HEALTH AND IMMUNIZATION RECORDS:** Health and immunization records are required for all students prior to attending. The health record is included as part of the student enrollment packet. An updated immunization record must be submitted along with the packet.

**ALLERGIES:** Please note any allergies your child has on the enrollment packet.

**FOOD BROUGHT IN:** According to DHS requirements, "All food brought from outside sources shall come from Health Department approved kitchens and shall be transported as per Health Department requirements, or the food shall be in an individual, commercially pre-packaged container. (This does not include individual sack lunches brought from home.)"

**MEDICATION:** No medication will be given to children unless we have a signed parental permission statement that includes date, type, drug name, dosage and time, or permission to treat for specific medicines has been granted via Renweb enrollment. All medication must be in the prescribed container.

If a student requires special medication or equipment, such as inhalers or EpiPens, it must remain on campus at all times in case of an emergency during school hours. Parents are responsible for providing these items and should not send them home daily or weekly. A doctor's form must be present with the medical equipment.

**SUNSCREEN:** Written permission is required for application of sunscreen at school.

**ACCIDENTS AND INCIDENTS:** Accidents and incidents, and any injuries, will be reported to the parents. All will be communicated to the parents in writing by way of an 'Accident/Incident Report' form. All parents must sign the "Consent for Emergency Medical Treatment" statement contained on the student application form. Every attempt will be made to contact parents and/or their emergency person in the event of illness or injury.

**ILLNESS:** Keeping children healthy is a partnership between parents, childcare providers, the children themselves and the medical provider. All decisions made are done so to protect children and staff and ensure a safe, healthy environment. If the child is experiencing symptoms such as fever, diarrhea, vomiting, or other symptoms, the parents will be notified to pick up the child. Fever is defined as 100.0 degrees Fahrenheit or higher. Students must remain home for at least 24 hours fever free without medication and until symptoms have subsided. Students needing to make up work due to absence will be allowed an additional day plus the number of days missed to turn in all assignments.

## **19. STUDENT SAFETY AND SECURITY**

### **LEAVING AND CALLING FOR A CHILD**

Parents or a designee must leave and call for a child. Your child will be sent home only with a person known by the staff to be authorized to call for this child, unless you give direct written permission for someone else to do this. When picking up a child (other than regular dismissal), you must sign your student out at the receptionist's desk.

### **INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY**

In case of inclement weather, First Academy will typically follow Rogers Public Schools when deciding to close our campus for student and staff safety. Designated days will be considered "snow days" due to additional instructional scheduled this school year. Once "snow days" are utilized, assignments will be sent home. First Academy will communicate a closed campus via social media, text message, and email.

### **DISASTER PREPAREDNESS**

In the event of a major disaster, staff will remain on campus to care for your child. We participate in emergency drills for a variety of situations (tornado, fire, and intruders) to help understand procedures and how to evacuate or locate a secure location quickly, safely and calmly.

### **TORNADO AND FIRE DRILLS**

Each month, students participate in both fire and tornado drills in case of emergency. Under direct threat of a tornado, students move to the designated tornado safe area, move into a “duck and cover” position until the threat is over. In case of fire, emergency sirens and lights sound throughout the building, and students and staff immediately move to their safe areas outside of the building using the closest emergency exits. Faculty and staff communicate in order to make sure all students are accounted for. Strict behavior management is used during drills for preparation of a real emergency event.

### **CUSTODIAL/NON-CUSTODIAL PARENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES:**

First Academy presumes that the person who enrolls a student in school is the student's custodial parent. It is the responsibility of the parent to provide any documentation regarding the restrictions of a non-custodial parent. Unless otherwise informed, we assume that there are no restrictions regarding the non-custodial parent's right to be kept informed of the student's school progress and activities. If restrictions exist to the above rights, the custodial parent is requested to submit a certified copy of the court order which curtails these specific rights. The custodial parent who has lost custody of the child during the school year must sign his or her rights over to the new custodial parent.

Unless there are specific court-imposed restrictions, the non-custodial parent, upon request, will be given access to all of the student's educational records, including but not limited to, the student's cumulative file, records kept by the teacher, and the student's special education file (when applicable). Upon written request the non-custodial parent may conference with the student's teachers or meet briefly with the student. Under no circumstances will the student be permitted to visit with or be released to anyone, including the non-custodial parent without the approval of the custodial parent.

## **20. ITEMS ON FILE**

Procedures for suspected child abuse and child product safety are on file in the school office and are available to all parents. This is in compliance with Arkansas state law. All staff are by law mandated reporters if abuse is suspected for any child.

## **21. AFTER-SCHOOL CARE GUIDELINES AND POLICIES**

### **Admission Requirements**

Reservations for after school care must be made for the intended day/days of stay in advance by registration. A \$40 registration fee is required along with a completed registration form. Reservations may not be cancelled and applied to other days. Days that are not attended but are registered for will be billed. One full month's fee for after school care will be charged September – May, and one-half of a month's fee will be charged in August. Students will only be accepted on days previously enrolled for unless a drop-in reservation has been made in advance.

Please dress your child appropriately for active indoor and outdoor play. Layers are encouraged, especially during cooler weather. Please keep in mind that your child will have the opportunity to work with paints, clay, glue, etc. Mark all your children's belongings clearly with your child's first and last name (i.e. lunch bags, back packs, all clothing, books, notebooks). Please DO NOT send toys, electronic games or devices, dolls, special sports equipment, etc., to be used in after school child care. If your child is bringing one of the afore mentioned items to school, the item must remain in the child's backpack during after school child care. The after-school program is not responsible for lost or stolen property.

After school care for elementary students is over at 5:30 p.m. Students must be picked up by this time or will be charged \$1/minute late fees.

**Students must bring a snack for our after-school care. Snacks will not be provided.**

### **Confidentiality**

All information collected from children and parents will not be disclosed for any reason except for purposes legally permissible or directly related to the administrative function of the early childhood or after school child care program. If this information is requested for other purposes, the school principal will request written consent from the parent(s).

### **Dress and Personal Belongings**

Please dress your child appropriately for active indoor and outdoor play. Layers are encouraged, especially during cooler weather and for elementary students who stay until 5:30 p.m. Please keep in mind that your child may have the opportunity to work with paints, clay, glue, etc. Mark all your children's belongings clearly with your child's first and last name (i.e. lunch bags, back packs, all clothing, books, notebooks). Please DO NOT send toys, electronic games or devices, dolls, special sports equipment, etc., to be used in after school child-care. If your child is bringing one of the afore mentioned items to school, the item must remain in the child's backpack during after school child-care. The after-school program is not responsible for lost or stolen property.

### **Unscheduled Days**

Any additional or unscheduled days are considered “drop-in” days. These must be approved by a verbal phone call to the office for the day in need. Drop-ins will be permitted based on space availability and staff. The fee will be applied to the student’s account.

### **Sign In/Out Procedures**

When your child is enrolled in the after-school program, parents and guardians must provide First Academy with a pre-authorized list of individuals approved to pick up their child. All individuals on the pre-authorized list must be over 18 to pick up a child and will be required to show photo identification and sign the attendance sheet with full signature. In an emergency, the early childhood/after school programs director, or designee, may authorize someone under 18 to sign out a student upon receiving written authorization from the child’s custodial parent(s) or legal guardian. Minors are not allowed to sign out themselves, or their siblings, from the after-school program. Only an authorized adult will be able to sign out your child. If a parent calls, requesting release to someone not on the pre-authorized release list, and staff can confirm the parent’s identity by voice or other means, the child may be released to that person (with photo identification).

Thank you for choosing to partner with First Academy in caring for your child. We consider it a great privilege to serve you and your child.

## **22. Educational Freedom Account (LEARNS Act) Enrollment**

Families who have enrolled and are receiving tuition and fees paid via the newly created Educational Freedom Account (EFA) as a part of the larger LEARNS Act through the Arkansas Department of Education agree to the policies of the school contained within this handbook, as well as the specific guidelines stipulated below. As the EFA process is new, First Academy retains the right to alter this agreement as needed within the LEARNS Act rules and our school values.

### **Admissions Information**

All families seeking to enroll in First Academy through the EFA must comply with all present admissions policies in this handbook. Students in grades K through 5th grade must have transfer records, including academic and behavioral data, reviewed and approved by the administration before they are officially approved and enrolled. Students seeking enrollment must also be screened by completing a math and reading assessment through the STAR testing program currently used by the school. Based on reviews of records and assessment results, students will be approved or denied enrollment into the school.

Students seeking to enroll in First Academy in grades 1-5 using EFA funding and the special needs/learning disability qualification must provide all documentation and be approved by the administration and/or his or her designated committee before enrollment can be official. As First Academy has limited resources for students who have academic struggles, not all students can be admitted. It is the school's desire and core value to be fair and honest in the admissions process with all families, and denial of admission due to its limited resources based on the needs of a student is possible.

First Academy will continue to comply with current admissions policies and missional values and beliefs specified in the admissions and enrollment areas of the current handbook, in addition to these specified here. Admission to First Academy can be denied if families and students do not comply, agree, or have shown evidence contradicting our core values and beliefs.

For the 2023-2024 school year, participating students must be eligible to enroll in public elementary or secondary school in Arkansas, have at least one parent who is a resident of Arkansas, and meet one of the following criteria:

- First time kindergartener
- Students who in the previous year were enrolled in an "F" rated school or "Level-5" district
- Students who in the previous year were enrolled in the Succeed Scholarship Program
- Students with a disability
- Students experiencing homelessness
- Current or former foster care students
- Children of active-duty military personnel

### **Students with Special Educational Needs and Learning Disabilities**

As an independent, private, Christian school and ministry of First Baptist Rogers, FA strives to meet the needs of families and its students. Our school seeks to provide support for students in the regular classroom. We provide limited accommodations for qualifying students, but do not follow public school IEPs/504 plans. We generate our own plans and services based on our available resources and faculty and staff approval.

First Academy works with Rogers Public Schools and the Northwest Arkansas Educational Service Cooperative in order to assess and monitor students for possible learning challenges and needs. FA may also work with a family physician, counselor, or other professionals as it deems appropriate to determine a student's possible learning challenges and needs.

Currently, special services provided include a limited set of academic accommodations and speech language therapy services served through Rogers Public Schools. Faculty and staff must agree to the accommodations needed and provided before the school will officially offer and provide them.

Parents must acknowledge our available resources and plans, if necessary, and agree to them as a stipulation of their child's enrollment into First Academy. If First Academy cannot provide specific resources a student needs to succeed, the family and school partnership may not be best. By acknowledging and agreeing to the school's written academic plan for students with documented needs, parents waive their right to procedural obligations and rights under IDEA.

### **Financial Information and Responsibility**

While qualification and enrollment in EFA under the Learns Act should meet the financial needs of a student and family enrolled at First Academy, it is the family's sole responsibility to make sure they continue to meet all requirements of the program and ensure the school's tuition is paid in accordance with the program's quarterly schedule. If at any time a student and/ or family fail to comply with program requirements and therefore lose funding, the enrolled family assumes all financial responsibility for tuition and additional fees that accompany enrollment and attendance at First Academy. If a family's financial account becomes delinquent, he or she is subject to the same rules and consequences of other families and students enrolled at First Academy specified in the financial policies in this handbook.

Due to possible and ongoing legal challenges to the LEARNS Act and Educational Freedom Accounts, if the program is challenged legally and financial support is halted, paused, or discontinued, affected families – i.e. those enrolled and utilizing the available EFA funds – will be required to remain in good standing according to the financial policies in this handbook or subject to the rules and consequences specified in the financial policies of this handbook.

The school accepts responsibility to maintain its eligibility in the EFA program and verify student progress and attendance through the platforms the Arkansas Department of Education currently stipulates through the EFA program rules.

If funding does not pay for all fees and required financial commitments of the school, the enrolled family must ensure that outstanding fees are paid. If those outstanding fees outside the scope or financial restrictions of the EFA program (expected to be near \$6,600 for tuition and limited additional fees), the enrolled family's financial standing will become delinquent after a set time specified in the financial section of this handbook, and therefore, the enrolled family is subject to all conditions and consequences of financial delinquency up to and including dismissal of the student from the school and the hold of all academic records and transcripts until payment or payment plan is agreed to by school administration.

Tuition and specific fee payments are to be made quarterly through the ClassWallet system, the vendor approved by the Arkansas Department of Education for the 2023-2024 school year.

### **Expectations and Discipline**

All enrolled students and families are expected to follow and abide by school policies regarding behavior and rapport with staff, property, and peers as spelled out in this handbook. Failure to meet expectations could result in the separation of school and family where the student will attend another school. Students enrolled through the EFA program agree to comply with First Academy's core values and expectations, and the school will likewise follow all required policies and procedures described in this handbook. The expectations and consequences for failure to meet expectations are provided the same for all students.