



The Family Life Community
School Parent/Student
Handbook

2023-2024 School Year

Revised April 2023

**FAMILY LIFE COMMUNITY SCHOOL
PARENT/TEACHER HANDBOOK
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**THE DISTINCTIVES OF
FAMILY LIFE COMMUNITY SCHOOL**

Our vision is to provide a school for Christian families who are committed to pursuing academic excellence & biblical values in the moral training of their children, while encouraging them to reflect the character of God in the world.

OUR MISSION

A School Based on Biblical Truth

We believe the precepts of God's Word set the absolute standard to which we are to train our children. The community of families in our school share common convictions based on biblical principles that relate to the moral and academic training of their children. Biblical truth will be the foundation of every subject. We desire to avoid legalism by remaining committed to God's truth, not our own traditions and ideals.

See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the elemental spiritual forces of this world rather than on Christ. (Colossians 2:8, NIV)

A School of Like-Minded Families

Like-mindedness is achieved through the mutual participation of parents in *Growing Kids God's Way, Parenting from the Tree of life, or, Age of Opportunity* classes that allow us to share similar philosophies and goals. The at-home and at-school application of the moral precepts presented in the classes is vital to the continuing God-centered culture at Family Life Community School. There are several excellent resources available on the subject of biblical parenting which FLCS suggests, and participating in these curricula provides an excellent means for communication. This allows the teachers and parents to "speak the same language."

...bring them [children] up in the training and instruction of the Lord. (Ephesians 6:4b, NIV)

A School of Academic Excellence

We intend to provide an education of value for each student which exceeds the requirements of local, state and federal agencies. Our teachers are professional Christian educators who are qualified to teach both their subjects and grade levels. We believe academic excellence is achievable in our school through an education based on a biblical worldview and a low student-to-teacher ratio. This allows for a more personal and in-depth assessment of each student's strengths and weaknesses.

A School of Moral Excellence

While it is understood that moral character training is a fundamental responsibility of parents, we believe it is our duty as a school to support and enhance this parental training. Students will experience the biblical concept of "iron sharpening iron," rather than "bad morals corrupting good values."

We believe the school should strive to protect the **moral innocence** of the students. When we speak of innocence, we refer to a worldly *naïveté*, a lack of experience with that which is unholy (the world), or a lack of exposure to defilement. We believe children should be allowed to remain children as long as they can. The school will therefore **not** introduce concepts that are inappropriate for children, such as drug awareness, sex education, AIDS awareness, etc. It is the responsibility of the parents to teach their children to be masters of their passions and to evaluate their child's readiness for introducing such concepts. We further believe that children, who **have been** introduced to these concepts at home, **even from a biblical perspective**, are to show discretion by not introducing

these concepts to other children. We hold that the character of the school reflects the collective character of the families of the school. Additionally, when families of a school are too diverse in the views of biblically and morally questionable issues, the school's character is weakened.

...be wise about what is good, and innocent about what is evil. (Romans 16:19b, NIV)

...Bad company corrupts good character. (1 Corinthians 15:33, NIV)

A School with Mentors as Teachers

We intend for our teachers to serve as mentors who exemplify character and demonstrate excellence in their subject areas and grade levels. Family Life Community School will have distinctive trust relationships between the school teachers and parents. We, as parents, will trust that the teachers will continue to hold our children to the same biblically-based standards that we are teaching at home. The teachers will trust that we will promptly address at home any behavioral concerns that occur within the classroom.

A School that Blends Classroom and Parent-Guided School Days

Parents at FLCS are dedicated to taking responsibility for the moral and academic training of the children and are committed to a high level of involvement in their educational instruction. We achieve this by being co-instructors with the teachers as well as volunteering our time regularly in the classroom and for other school-related tasks.

A School that is Other-Oriented

We believe that an orientation towards loving and serving others is not only a command of Scripture (*love your neighbor as yourself*), but an overflow of salvation (*he who is forgiven much, loves much*). Therefore, the school will reinforce the preciousness of those outside of self and enhance a sense of unity among the community (*How good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity*). FLCS will provide children with opportunities to put others' needs before their own, cultivating a lifestyle that reflects Christ in them.

...in humility value others above yourselves. (Philippians 2:3b, NIV)

STATEMENT OF FAITH

1. We believe the Bible to be the authoritative Word of God, inerrant, verbally inspired (literally God-breathed), and infallible in its original state. It has been divinely preserved in reliability throughout the ages in all essential doctrines, declarations, quotations, and intentions.
2. We believe there is one true God, manifested eternally in three distinct Persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
3. We believe in the deity of Jesus Christ, the second person of the Trinity, Who possesses all the divine attributes and is coequal, coexistent, co-eternal, and one in nature with the Father. We believe in Christ's virgin birth and that He was God incarnate (both God and man) for the purpose of revealing the Father, redeeming men, and ruling over God's kingdom. Jesus accomplished mankind's redemption by the vicarious and atoning death through His shed blood and sacrificial death on the cross. By His literal, physical resurrection from the dead and His ascension to the right hand of the Father, the sinner is justified. We believe Jesus to be the mediator between God and man Who will return in glory to judge all mankind.
4. We believe the Holy Spirit is the third member of Trinity, possessing all the divine attributes with the Father and the Son. The Holy Spirit is the supernatural and sovereign agent in regeneration, baptizing all believers into the

body of Christ at the moment of conversion. The Holy Spirit also indwells, sanctifies, instructs, and empowers all believers for spiritual service.

5. We believe that everything in the created universe is a revelation of God's infinity, diversity and individuality. God created distinct individuals and, while maintaining the identity and purpose of each person, He relates all into one purposeful whole. God created man in the image of Himself, and He has a distinctive purpose both for each individual and for His kingdom as a whole.
6. We believe in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit who administers spiritual gifts to each believer for the purpose of equipping the saints and building up the body of Christ.
7. We believe in the bodily resurrection of both the saved and the lost; the saved to eternal life, the lost to everlasting punishment.
8. We believe that all who put their faith in Jesus Christ are placed by the Holy Spirit into the spiritual body of believers known as "the church," with Christ as the established head. The purpose of the church is to glorify God by the teaching and instruction of the Scripture, by providing fellowship, and by fulfilling the great commission to reach the world for Jesus Christ.
9. We believe that man, in his natural state, is a sinner and that the penalty for sin is eternal separation from the Father. We believe that eternal life is a free gift of grace bestowed upon each repentant sinner who responds in faith to the provision of salvation from Jesus Christ. Regeneration is instantaneous and is accomplished solely by the power of the Holy Spirit. Genuine regeneration will be demonstrated by righteous attitudes, edifying conduct, and good works in direct correlation to the extent that each believer submits himself to the control of the Holy Spirit.

Please Note: The parents and staff of Family Life Community School avoid highly debatable topics that tend to divide evangelical believers. Such topics include mode of baptism, communion, gifts of the Holy Spirit, and the end times. Students are referred to their parents if a debatable topic of a theological nature arises on school campus days.

COMMUNITY AND MENTORING

Family Life Community School maintains two essential elements necessary for excellence in education:

1. The *mentoring* relationship between teacher and student.
2. The essential role of a like-minded *community* in the educational process (as previously discussed).

THE CONCEPT OF COMMUNITY

We are a fellowship of Christians who share a common purpose and belief system regarding the biblical mandates governing marriage and the training of our children. **Community is the environment in which we seek the goal (i.e. soil in the garden).**

Community Declaration

Regarding Marriage as the Basis for the Family

- We believe marriage is ordained by God (Genesis 2:18-24).
- We believe marriage is a spiritual and physical union of which God Himself is the author (Mark 10:9).
- We believe marriage is sacred (Matthew 19:4-6).
- We believe marriage is honorable (Hebrews 13:4).
- We believe marriage is a gift from God (1 Corinthians 7).

Regarding Parenthood

- We believe parents are responsible to their children for the ministry of reconciliation to God (2 Corinthians 5:18-20).
- We believe parents are responsible to bring up their children in the *nurture and admonition of the Lord* (Proverbs 22:6, Ephesians 6:4, Deuteronomy 6:7-9).
- We believe the duty, hope and goal of Christian parents is to raise a morally responsible child who comes to salvation in Jesus Christ, is governed by the precepts of Christ, and reflects the love of Christ (Proverbs 1:1-7, 8:33, 9:9; Micah 6:8; John 13:34-35).

Common ground – Word of God, 2 Timothy 3:16-17, Colossians 3:16

Oneness of mind – Mind of Christ, Philippians 2:5-8

Mutual respect, Ephesians 4:29-32

Mentoring, Philippians 3:17

Uniqueness, 1 Peter 2:9-12

Nurturing, 1 Corinthians 15:58

Identity, Romans 8:35-39, Colossians 3:10

Truth, Proverbs 3:5-6

Yield, Matthew 13:8

THE CONCEPT OF MENTORING

Defining the Mentor

The dictionary defines *mentor* as “a wise and trusted teacher.” The role of teacher as mentor is derived from the desire to place teachers in a position to model biblical character and influence the minds of our children for Christ. Godly character is taught, encouraged, exhorted, and exemplified by the teacher, administration, and community. The character of Christ, in His people, stands firm on principle in any circumstance and is faithful, steadfast, diligent, cheerful, loving, and caring. Holy Spirit-governed character is the spiritual container for achievement in any calling.

Walk with the wise and become wise... (Proverbs 13:20a, NIV)

Practical Applications

In the classroom, we strive to maintain a low student/teacher ratio. The smaller class size enables our teachers to develop long-term relationships with, and impressions on, our students. This also allows for a more personal assessment of each student’s strengths and weaknesses. Furthermore, it gives the children increased exposure to the teacher’s influence in their lives.

PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

A true Christian education is the pursuit of wisdom, not merely knowledge and facts. Noah Webster’s 1828 dictionary of the English language expresses this idea superbly:

The bringing up, as of a child; instruction; formations of matters. Education comprehends all that series of instruction and discipline which is intended to enlighten the understanding, correct the temper, and form the

manners and habits of youth, and fit them for usefulness in their future station. To give children a good education in manners, art and science is important; to give them a religious education is indispensable; and an immense responsibility rests on parents and guardians who neglect these duties.

At Family Life Community School, our cornerstone of education is the firm conviction that the God of the Bible is the Author and Source of all knowledge, wisdom, and understanding. We believe that the goal of education is more than merely the impartation of information or specific skills. We seek to advance the whole child, helping him to *increase in wisdom stature and favor with all men* (Luke 2:52), as Jesus did.

FLCS integrates a variety of methods and material for teaching our children according to biblical principles. All of our subjects are taught from a biblical worldview.

Our teaching reflects an approach similar to that of the Traditional as well as the Classical style, with attention given to the developmental progression of optimum learning stages. During the early years, drill and review are primary tools for teaching, and much is accomplished through rhyme, chanting and song. Art, music, movement and hands-on experiential learning provide the counterbalance for the disciplines of memorization and drill. Once basic academic skills are mastered, students are taught how to research and collect information, integrating what they have learned through the rigors of logic and reason. With this foundation, upper level students are able to logically present and defend their ideas, continue the systematic construction of a biblical worldview, and deepen their understanding of integrated academic disciplines.

We assert that an excellent literary curriculum will move students toward cultural literacy and provide the foundation for a broader understanding of history. At the primary level, we recognize the importance of a strong phonics-based approach to reading that complements a consistent exposure to quality children’s literature.

The students will be reading Christian literature, as well as some that is not explicitly “Christian.” The material that is selected will be quality literature that represents a broad historical perspective or a wide range of human experience in order to expose moral and spiritual dilemmas, or perhaps powerfully describe the struggle of a fallen world with the redemptive act of grace, and so on. We want to engage our students, **at age-appropriate stages**, in intellectual discussions that provoke high-level thinking and expose them to deep questions of the faith. We also believe that God’s Word is as relevant today as it has been throughout history, and we will always direct the student toward answers that reflect God’s truth as found in Scripture. The ESV translation of the Bible will be used for Bible memorization and reading at school.

FAMILY LIFE COMMUNITY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CURRICULUM GOALS

Reading – We seek to:

- A. Use phonics as the primary building blocks for teaching students how to read.
- B. Encourage the students to read correctly as soon as possible (normally in kindergarten or first grade).
- C. Introduce the students to quality children’s literature as soon as possible.
- D. Carefully monitor the students’ reading abilities to ensure they are at a reasonable level, can comprehend adequately, and can read fluently, both orally and silently. This includes the proper use of word-attack skills.
- E. Foster a life-long love of reading and quality literature after being taught to discern the characteristics of such literature.

English – We seek to:

- A. Equip every student with the skills necessary for good writing, including spelling, grammar, style, clarity, etc.
- B. Put a major emphasis on good writing by requiring the students to write often and correctly in each subject area.
- C. Encourage critical thinking by requiring comprehensive writing.
- D. Introduce the students to many styles of writing using the Bible and other quality literature.

History/Geography – We seek to:

- A. Teach the students that God is in control of history and that He will determine its ultimate outcome.
- B. Enable the students to see God’s hand in the history of the world and the United States.
- C. Enliven history and geography by using many forms of information and research, (e.g. biographies, illustrations, field trips, guest speakers, music, art, foods, etc.).

Science – We seek to:

- A. Teach that the biblical account of creation is true and that the theory of evolution is false.
- B. Teach the students the basic elements of both accounts and that belief in these systems is based on either sound or unsound faith.
- C. Demonstrate that, because God made the universe, it has inherent order, which makes it possible to hypothesize and experiment (scientific method). Guided inquiry will reveal to the students the intrinsic laws, systems and truths that God has embedded in His creation.
- D. Treat the study of science as a “means to an end,” not an end in itself. More specifically, curiosity, experimentation, demonstration and research should be emphasized as the appropriate scientific process, as opposed to the study of facts. Facts should be attained as the result of research and discovery, rather than lecture. By the time the students enter secondary-level science, they should be extremely familiar with the scientific method through repeated practice.
- E. Use many forms of instruction to teach scientific concepts and methods (e.g., a large variety of experiments, demonstrations, research projects, illustrations, field trips, guest speakers, etc.).

Mathematics – We seek to:

- A. Ensure that the students have a thorough mastery of basic mathematical functions and tables.
- B. Put an emphasis on a conceptual, as well as a practical, understanding of math through the frequent use of story problems.
- C. Illustrate God’s unchanging character through the timeless, logical mathematical systems that He gave to man through His gift of reason.

Character Training – We seek to:

- A. Teach our students about the various character traits exemplified by Christ.
- B. Memorize Scripture so that students will “hide God’s Word in their hearts that they might not sin against Him.” The ESV translation of the Bible will be used for Bible memorization and reading at school.

Electives

FLCS believes strongly in balancing academic subjects with electives. These classes are taught throughout the school week.

Student Service

Students at FLCS are encouraged to help maintain our school campus. These tasks may include flag salute, lunch room set-up and clean-up, bathroom and classroom clean-up, monitoring playground equipment, or emptying trash. We believe this practice provides students with the opportunity to take ownership of the school and develop a positive work ethic.

Worldview and Perspectives

Each curriculum selected for use at FLCS is taught from a decidedly evangelical Christian perspective, even if it is not an explicitly “Christian curriculum.” We agree that “all truth is God’s truth,” and we are committed to teaching a sound biblical worldview throughout all academic disciplines.

We also seek to establish a global perspective on social, environmental, political and humanitarian issues that help prepare students to become world citizens with a broad view of the Great Commission and a proper response to the Lord’s command for world-wide ministry.

Starting in elementary school, students are also taught how to defend their faith. Throughout the teaching of science and history, apologetics is presented as a natural and necessary part of living in a post-Christian era. We want to develop in our students (as the writers of the Sonlight curriculum so aptly suggest) “a healthy, scholarly skepticism” toward the things they will encounter throughout life. This is designed to motivate them to seek, find and defend the truth.

We firmly believe and support by our educational philosophy that parents are first and foremost responsible for their children’s education. The partnership between parent and Christian educator, a hallmark of FLCS, is a trust relationship based on a mutual desire to honor the Lord Jesus Christ in all that is taught to our children. May He be lifted up and glorified by every aspect of our educational program.

Additional Academic Information

Report Cards

Report cards will be issued four times per year.

Grading Scale

90-100	A- through A+
80-89	B- through B+
70-79	C- through C+
60-69	D- through D+
Below 60	

ADMISSIONS

Family Life Community School is open to families who are pursuing moral excellence for their children. An attitude of mediocrity, or indifference to moral values, conflicts with the purpose behind the “community” concept. Our administrators serve as advocates for our existing school families and strongly desire to protect those families’ interests. We believe moral *naïveté* to be more valuable than worldly wisdom. We desire our children to be wise

to the world, but not worldly-wise. A child's knowledge of the world should not be greater than that of the existing student body.

New Families

A pre-enrollment requirement for Family Life Community School is that both parents are born-again Christians and that they agree and support the general parenting principles to which the school adheres. In addition, both parents must be willing to participate in the *Growing Kids God's Way* or *Parenting from the Tree of Life* parenting curriculum for grades PreK through fifth grade. We also require that families with sixth grade through 8th grade students take the course *Age of Opportunity*, by Paul Tripp. If your family has students in both age groups, then the required course is *Growing Kids God's Way* or *Parenting from the Tree of Life*. Furthermore, parents must consistently apply the principles taught in these classes. This requirement provides the basis for like-mindedness within the school and is non-negotiable. Also, parents are required to take the *Growing Kids God's Way*, *Parenting from the Tree of Life*, or *Age of Opportunity* class at least every five years in order to encourage them as they continue to consistently apply these principles.

Additionally, we strongly recommend that parents complete the *Growing Families International* curricula *Preparation for Parenting* and *Preparation for the Toddler Years* prior to the start of school if they have children under the age of two. The assimilation of the concepts presented in these materials will further develop the mindset of biblical parenting that is such a key component of our school body. These classes are also a requirement if the child will be participating in the school nursery.

It is the desire of Family Life Community School that a prospective family would seek to enroll **all** of their school-age children in our school. The exceptions to this policy are as follows: if the family is homeschooling a child for financial or academic reasons, if FLCS does not offer the child's grade, if we cannot meet the child's educational needs, or if there is no space available in the child's grade. Further consideration of these issues may be discussed directly with the FLCS Board.

In order to be considered for acceptance into Family Life Community School, an applicant must complete the following steps:

- BOTH parents must have completed or be enrolled in a *Growing Kids God's Way*, *Parenting from the Tree of Life*, or *Age of Opportunity* class at the time of the interview.
- Attend the FLCS enrollment informational meeting, which is held periodically throughout the year. Attendance of a meeting is mandatory.
- Submit a completed application to the school, along with a non-refundable student application fee.
- Complete the three-phase evaluation procedure:
 - Phase I: The child takes part in an interview with a member of leadership or board member to determine moral readiness.
 - Phase II: The parents take part in a family interview with board members to determine moral readiness and alignment with school culture and beliefs.
 - Phase III: The child will be tested for developmental readiness and grade placement.

Upon review of the above by the FLCS Board, the family will receive notification regarding the status of their application. **All parents must undergo a background check. Background checks will be renewed annually.**

General Admissions

Re-enrollment in March will secure a place at FLCS for the fall, provided the family's tuition account is kept current and paid in full. Pre-school students in the VPK program must be **four years old** by **September 1** of the entering school year. Kindergarten children must be at least **five years old** by **September 1** of the entering year.

Each child must have a complete and current CUM report on file prior to the start of school. This file includes, but is not limited to, student birth certificate, transfer of previous school records, record of health examination by a licensed physician, Florida immunization records, pertinent student and family information, and a completed emergency authorization form.

All paperwork for the new school year must be completed and submitted by **assigned deadline**. **If all paperwork is not completed and turned in to the office by this date, your child's spot will not be held.**

In order for your student to start the school year, he/she MUST have the complete and correct books that are on his/her class book list.

Any family applying to FLCS who may have previously attended the school, but are not currently enrolled in the school, will be required to meet the same admissions criteria as new families. Additionally, once a family leaves the school, there is no guarantee that there will be space available for them should they decide to return. It is the responsibility of the family to pursue a spot at the school, not the school's responsibility to contact the family when space becomes available. There will be a 1 year probation period for all new families who enter the school. After the first year that the child is in the school, the child and family will be re-evaluated by the Board and Administrator. If any concerns exist regarding the child's status at the school, the family will be contacted to discuss the situation.

The school reserves the right to dismiss or refuse to re-enroll a child. In the unfortunate event of dismissal, the tuition charges of the dismissed student will be pro-rated according to the last day of attendance.

GRADE PLACEMENT

Grade placement in Family Life Community School is determined by an evaluation of the student's development in the following areas: academic, physical, moral (or spiritual), social, and emotional.

We evaluate the children entering kindergarten with a slightly different criterion than those entering first grade and above.

Kindergarten Placement

1. Student interview
2. Developmental evaluation

Family Life Community School typically will not consider a child who has not reached their fifth birthday by September 1 of the admitting year for entrance into kindergarten. In addition, it is our experience that children with spring and summer birthdays are often questionable in terms of their kindergarten readiness. A child who is

placed according to their development has a greater opportunity to process class instruction and respond in an appropriate and successful manner. We acknowledge that school is a stressful situation, even at the kindergarten level. We also acknowledge that not all stress should be avoided, but when measured and appropriated, will then produce the greatest amount of growth in a child. If the environment, however, is too stressful, the child will be unable to function successfully. The evidence of a child who began kindergarten too early may appear in the kindergarten year, but may also lay in wait for several years, affecting later grades levels.

Although many of the popular beliefs of today would assert that the social challenges that come from retaining a child are greater than the benefits, we have not found this to be true.

First- Seventh Grade Placement

1. Student interview
2. Academic evaluation (current FLCS classroom work or other method)
3. Informal developmental evaluation, CUM file evaluation, former report cards with grades and comments, SAT scores

Although we academically test the child, we use the CUM file information as a confirmation of appropriate developmental placement. Beyond the kindergarten year, determining placement becomes more complicated.

Although it is important to place a child according to his development, discernment needs to be exercised. If the child is truly experiencing developmental immaturity, it may be best to retain the child at their developmental level. However, it is also possible for a child's previous educational experiences to have produced an academic deficiency. We believe that when the child is developmentally ready, and moral disciplines are in place, it is possible to overcome some academic deficiencies. However, if the student has been previously over-placed, and the consequences produced by the over-placement cannot be overcome, then placement in the appropriate grade, as determined by developmental testing, is usually recommended for optimum success.

STANDARDS FOR STUDENT CONDUCT

The character of Christ in His people stands firm on principle in any circumstance and is faithful, steadfast, diligent, cheerful, loving, and caring. Holy Spirit-governed character is the spiritual container for achievement in any calling. The following principles and guidelines are a reminder of the basic aspects of Christian conduct which should govern every child and family of Family Life Community School. To clarify the principles, a few examples are addressed. Where no rules are mentioned, parent, teachers, and the administration are left to their own judgment to consider the context of the moment in order to make judgments on appropriate conduct and behavior.

Respect for Authority

In addition to the authority of the teachers and the administration, parents need to remind their children that other authorities exist at FLCS. They include, but are not limited to:

- Parents assistants
- Church pastor and/or church administration
- Board members
- Visiting adults and families

Respect for Parents

School can easily be perceived by the children as the child's own "turf." The parent is not always familiar with the boundaries, rules, and relationships which have been established. However, parents should not be afraid to guide

and restrain their children while on campus. Remember, the parent is responsible for their own child's actions and behavior.

Respect for Age

The attitudes and actions toward those who are older are critical to school life and to those adults who work at or visit FLCS. **Children should be trained to demonstrate respect toward their older peers and adults.**

Respect for Peers

Children should be characterized as being other-centered. The fruits of the Spirit, which are love, joy peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control, should all be evident in the child's behavior and attitude.

Respect for Property

Respect for property includes respect for school and church property, as well as the property of others. Not only should children be trained not to damage property, but furthermore, they should be trained to use initiative in caring for and protecting the school property and the property of others.

Respect for Nature

The school has been blessed with beautiful grounds for everyone to enjoy. These grounds are not only used by the school; they are also used by those who lease to us and anyone who may be on our campus. Our children need to be reminded of the privilege and responsibility they have to care for the plants, trees, and other living things so that everyone might enjoy them.

Further Discussion of Student Conduct

Our teachers and staff recognize the great responsibility and privilege of training our students' young hearts toward the things of the Lord. We want to exhibit the fruit of the Spirit in our lives as we teach by example. In our warm and caring environment, we will help your student learn many things during the year, academically and spiritually. It is our desire that we will also be able to help him/her understand that working hard and doing right are the standard.

We know that God has created each child uniquely, and they possess different temperaments and personalities. This, however, does not mean that we are to lower God's standards with our children. Instead, we are to make them age-appropriate. We believe that our calling is to help our "little ones" rise to that standard while recognizing the uniqueness of each child.

Areas of character that we will be working on include: respect, preciousness of others, loving others, doing right, honesty, applying oneself, hard work, kindness, self-control, self-discipline.

Classroom Conduct

- Obey and respect authority. *Obey your earthly masters with respect and fear. (Eph. 6:5a, NIV)*
- Look to one another's needs and never hurt those around us. *Value others above yourselves. (Phil. 2:3b, NIV)*
- Always tell the truth. *He delights in people who are trustworthy. (Prov. 12:22b, NIV)*
- Respect other people's property and reputation. *You shall not steal. (Ex. 20:15, NIV)*
- Raise our hands before we speak. *...with minds that are alert and fully sober... (1 Pet. 1:13a, NIV)*

Good Conduct Code

Students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that is respectful of teachers and other students and reflects the biblical principle of considering the “preciousness of others.” A priority at FLCS is to provide an atmosphere in which both teachers and students practice affirmation of one another, both in language and in action. The basic guide for behavior is to demonstrate love and respect for one another.

Conduct Violations and Discipline Policy

The following is a list of actions that are considered violations of the *Good Conduct Code*. This list is not exhaustive. Conduct not specifically listed as a violation, but which is substantially the same as a conduct which is listed, will be treated in the same way as the violations they most closely resemble. Students violating this *Good Conduct Code* will be disciplined with age-appropriate disciplinary action. The context of the action and the character of the child will always be taken into consideration by the teacher and/or leadership when determining disciplinary action.

A color code, or similar method, is used as reminders for behavior. Below is an explanation of each. Each teacher will explain the details of how they institute this policy in their individual classroom on parent orientation night. You will also receive a printed copy of their discipline method that night.

Green – expected behavior (the standard)

Yellow – a warning sign that behavior should not be repeated

Red – characterization of inappropriate behavior/attitude or an immediate Level II offense

White – above and beyond the standard; evidence of a Christ-like heart-attitude

Level I – Violations relating to character and attitude

- Poor attitude exhibited by:
 - Arguing
 - Teasing
 - Lack of courtesy
 - Complaining
 - Sulking
- Poor self-control exhibited by:
 - Rowdy behavior
 - Handling another’s property without permission
 - Possession of distracting items not required for school work (cell phones, mp3 players, game systems, toys, etc.) **All cell phones must be turned in to the office before school begins and may be picked up from the office at dismissal.**
 - Gossiping
 - Irresponsibility manifested in:
 - Sloppy or careless work
 - Littering

Level II – Major violations

- Direct disobedience – refusing to comply with a direct order/instruction from school personnel
- Gross disrespect – responding to a teacher’s or administrator’s action with excessive or repeated discourtesy or belligerence
- Cursing, inappropriate gestures, lying, stealing, forgery (e.g., copying another student’s work)

Level III – Major violations warranting immediate action

- Cheating
- Vandalism
- Immoral conduct
- Violence toward self or another person
- We have a zero tolerance policy on weapons, or even the claim of a weapon, on the school campus. Violation of this policy will result in immediate suspension or expulsion at the discretion of the board.

COMPREHENSIVE GRIEVANCE POLICY

Objective: to establish biblical guidelines for the resolution of disputes and grievances in the operation of Family Life Community School.

Scope: These guidelines are to be followed whenever there is a dispute or grievance concerning any aspect of FLCS operations, between any two parties connected in a direct way to the school. This includes students, parents, staff, volunteers, administration, and board.

Definitions

Dispute: any disagreement which results in broken fellowship or trust between the parties, or which disrupts the lines of authority within the school, or which, in the judgment of either disputant, threatens the successful implementation of FLCS's objectives and goals.

Grievance: any concern about any decision made by one in authority, where the concern is large enough to appeal the decision beyond that authority to the next level.

Concerns: the substance and details of the dispute and/or grievance.

Guidelines: The principles in Matthew 18:15 should be followed by using the steps below.

Grievance Scenarios

Students/parents to teachers

1. All concerns about the classroom must first be presented to the teacher by the parents, or if the student is mature enough, by the student himself. If the student presents the concern, a respectful demeanor is required at all times.
2. If the problem is not resolved, the parents or student may bring the concern to the appropriate administrator. If the student brings the concern, he must have permission from his parents to do so.
3. If the problem is still not resolved, the parents should appeal the decision to the FLCS Board.

Parents/patrons to administrator

1. If the parents or patrons have a grievance or dispute about the general operation of the school (apart from the operation of the classrooms), they should bring their concerns to the appropriate administrator.
2. If the situation is not resolved, the parents or patrons should present their concerns to the FLCS Board.

General

It is understood that if any disputes arise that are not covered by this policy, the Board will decide what procedures to follow, based on a parity of reasoning from those procedures established by this policy.

PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Financial

Parents are responsible for payment of annual registration, tuition, curriculum, and uniform fees for each student. Financial agreements must be reviewed and signed, annually, by the parent or guardian of each student. Tuition is due by the first day of each month, and a late fee of ten dollars per child will be assessed after the fifth day of each month. In the event of a financial crisis, a written agreement must be submitted by parents and approved by the FLCS Board, who will consider each family's situation separately and carefully. The Board will decide how to proceed with each individual situation.

As a convenience to parents, tuition may be paid either in full or in ten monthly installments, due and payable in advance by the first of each month, **beginning July 1.**

Due to the unique size of the FLCS student body, it is imperative that our families make consistent tuition payments each month, in order for the school to fulfill its financial operating expenses. Additionally, it is not possible for families to carry over any tuition balances from a previous year. The family's obligation after the first payment in July remains **for the entire school year.** Any alteration to this obligation is at the discretion of the FLCS Board and must be approved by a board majority. No one board member can forgive a tuition obligation by implication or direct statement. Families with extraordinary circumstances requiring a review of their financial obligation are encouraged to appeal to the FLCS Board directly and immediately.

If you choose to withdraw your child from FLCS prior to the end of the school year, you are still financially obligated to fulfill any outstanding tuition balance. However, the FLCS Board reserves the right to review situations of this nature on a case-by-case basis.

Book fees must be paid in full at the time specified. Book fees are nonrefundable.

Academic

Parents are responsible for co-teaching with the classroom teacher during parent-guided days and ensuring that all work is completed on time. It is very disruptive to the program for students to come to class unprepared. All lesson plans and school work done at home must be reviewed and signed by the parent. Communication with the teacher regarding any questions or misunderstandings concerning the course work or lesson plans must be initiated by the parent.

Parents should be the only ones who are teaching their child at home on a consistent basis. If a circumstance should arise wherein a parent is not able to teach their child for a designated length of time, approval needs to be given by the Board for another person to take this parent's place teaching.

If families will be going on vacation and their child will be missing school, parents need to come to the office and complete a request for student lessons. They will need to give the teacher at least one week notice, preferably two weeks, so that the teacher can gather lesson plans and assignments. All school work is due when the student

returns. If it is not complete when the student returns from vacation, teachers may deduct points from their schoolwork grades.

If a child is out sick, or there is a family emergency, the student will have two days for every day they were absent to complete missed work.

Parent Assistant Program

Parents are required to spend time at the school as parent assistants on a rotating basis with other parents in the school. Our parent assist program is absolutely essential to the success of our school. Because our teachers have such a limited time with the students during the week, parents' help in the classroom offers administrative and resource support that optimizes the teachers' effectiveness. Participating in the classroom also familiarizes parents with the teachers' methods and strategies and offers the opportunity to get to know their child's classmates.

Each family will be required to for assist a specific number of days at the school, depending on the number of students and the needs of the school. If a parent is unable to assist on their designated day because of an illness or emergency, as listed on the parent assistant schedule, they are responsible for contacting the on-call parent who is listed for that particular day to replace them. Please contact the on-call person as soon as possible to let them know you need them to work. **The on-call parent will need to be available for that day until 9am.** Since the parent assistant services of the school are very important, the on-call parent will be charged a \$50 fine and work a parent assist day for the person that covers for them, if they are not available for the day they have been designated.

When a parent does require using an on-call parent, it will be their responsibility to arrange a day that they can take over for that on-call parent, since they will need to make up for the day that they missed. The on-call parent is to cover in case of emergency or illness, not to cover a schedule conflict. If a parent is unable to work their parent assist day because of a schedule conflict, they are responsible to find coverage. Parents that do not fulfill their parent assistant (or on-call) responsibilities, or arrange for coverage prior to their assigned day, will be fined \$50 and exchange a parent assist day for the person that covers for them. Subsequent infractions will be a \$100 fine and a meeting with the board.

Parent Assistants for the day will need to report to the office by 8:30am to receive their job assignments for the day. Parents who will have children in the nursery need to arrive early enough to get the children situated in the nursery and be ready to begin at 8:30am.

If a parent has someone besides themselves filling in on their assigned day, we ask that they be a mature, committed Christian who is familiar with the parenting principles to which the school adheres. **This person must be approved by the school and have a background check prior to the assigned parent assist day.**

The nursery is available for the teachers as well as the parent assistants who are working on the assigned days. Due to the amount of children in the nursery already, **if it is not your assigned day to work, do not place your child in the nursery for any reason.** Parent Assistant children under the age of six months of age will be allowed in the nursery. Parents will have to find someone to watch their baby if they are assisting. **Any parent assistant who utilizes the nursery on their assigned days will be required to complete the *Preparation for Parenting* or**

Preparation for Toddler curriculum, either through a class or self-study, as well as pay the required daily nursery fee stated in the financial agreement.

Community Meetings

Parents are required to attend a monthly community meeting, held at the school. A schedule of monthly community meetings will be distributed at the beginning of each school year. If you are unable to attend a meeting, you must contact a member of leadership and have someone take notes for you.

Family Education Units

Part of the mission of FLCS is to educate, encourage and equip our families in the parenting and educating of their children. **Both parents** are required to earn a minimum of five Family Education Units per fiscal year (July 1-June 30). One FEU will be awarded for every hour spent in an approved seminar, workshop, class, lecture, conference, etc. You may seek approval for a class through the School Administrator. The teaching of any course or the taking of any of these courses more than one time will count toward FEU's. Any families taking the required *Growing Kids God's Way*, *Parenting from the Tree of Life*, or *Age of Opportunity* classes will meet their FEU requirement for that year. Failure to earn the minimum FEU's per year could result in the loss of "good standing" for your family and may affect your re-enrollment eligibility.

It is require that each family retake *Growing Kids God's Way*, *Parenting from the Tree of Life*, or *Age of Opportunity* class every five years. If you have a child entering middle school, you are required to take the *Age of Opportunity* class.

Parent Conferences

Formal Parent Teacher Conferences will be scheduled throughout the school year. These scheduled conferences provide an opportunity for both the teacher and parent to discuss the child's progress. **Both parents are encouraged to attend this meeting. It is required that at least one parent attend.** Missed conferences must be re-scheduled by the parents at the earliest possible time, not to exceed thirty days from the originally scheduled conference.

Additional Service Requirements

FLCS is organized in such a fashion that families will be required to serve as parent assistants during school days. However, this minimum requirement will not meet the yearly school and classroom needs. Therefore, additional committee participation and school work days are required to ensure that other needs are addressed.

Additional service descriptions will be issued as needed.

FAMILY INFRACTION POLICY

The Infraction Policy provides a way to address chronic and uncorrected problems associated with a family's apparent low commitment level. It is not the intention of FLCS to be rigid or legalistic, and we continue to manage our business according to context. However, because the success of the community school experience depends on a continued strong commitment on the part of the parents, we have adopted the following protocol to encourage accountability in this area.

Families may receive infractions for chronic uncompleted schoolwork, excessive tardiness or absences, poor attendance at community meetings, or excessive dress code violations. An accumulation of three infractions may result in a meeting with the family and members of the FLCs Board to discuss the roots of the problem, develop strategies for improvement (if appropriate), and/or continued enrollment.

Schoolwork

Schoolwork Alerts will be sent by each teacher to the parent when assignments are past due. A record of these alerts will be kept on file in the office as well. Three Schoolwork Alerts in any consecutive three-week period, or five in a semester, constitute an infraction. When a family has reached this number of Schoolwork Alerts, they will receive an infraction notice.

Tardies and Absences

Three tardies per family in the morning will equal one infraction. Written excuses for anticipated absences should be submitted in advance in order to coordinate educational needs (see academic responsibilities).

Community Meeting Attendance

There are some exemptions from compulsory attendance granted to specific families, at the leadership's discretion, for special circumstances. These families, with prior approval from a Leadership Team member (not a teacher), will not be penalized for absences. However, they will be responsible for obtaining information covered at the meetings. Otherwise, a missed meeting will result in an infraction.

Dress Code

Three violations of the dress code, per family, will result in an infraction.

Parent Assist Days

Not fulfilling the responsibility of working your parent assist day, or finding coverage, will result in an infraction.

ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance of the classroom days at the campus is critical due to the limited time our teachers have to share new academic concepts with the students. Therefore, we strongly encourage parents to not schedule medical, dental, or orthodontic appointments during these days. This would also apply to family vacations. If an absence is absolutely necessary, please notify the school office and teacher as early as possible.

Family Life Community School is required by the State of Florida to keep records of each student's attendance. These records are retained in the student's permanent CUM file in the school office.

A student may only leave the campus during the school day with a parent or **specifically designated** guardian, relative, or other school family member. Please notify the school office to make arrangements of this nature.

We ask that you please refrain from sending your child to campus on school days when they are ill. Generally speaking, if a child has not had a fever for twenty-four hours, it is appropriate to send him back to school. If your child becomes ill during a campus school day, you will be contacted to come pick him/her up. If you cannot be reached, we will notify the person listed as your child's emergency contact.

Tardiness

It is important that your child be at school on time and be picked up on time as well. **Tardiness occurs when a student is not in the classroom at 8:45 am and when a child is not picked up by 3:20pm.** A child who is not in line, or is entering the classroom late, disrupts the scheduled flow of activities and ultimately shows disrespect for others. Repeated tardiness will be noted by our staff and discussed with the parents of the child in accordance with the school tardiness and infraction policy. If a child arrives at school late, the parent must walk them to their classroom.

When a parent is not at the school by 3:20pm to pick up the child, the child will be brought into the building to sit in the hallway. Parents will need to come into the building to pick up the child. There will be a fine for anyone picking up their children late (please remember that your tardiness affects those working at school: teachers, nursery workers, etc.). If you have to come inside to get your child, please note the time on the clock and put your fine in the designated container in the school office. If you cannot pay it then, you will receive a bill for your tardiness at the end of the month.

The fines are as follows:

3:20-3:30: \$5

3:30-3:45: \$10

Past 3:45: \$50

We understand that extenuating circumstances sometimes occur, such as family emergencies and traffic conditions, so please call us if these should occur, and your tardiness will be excused.

SCHOOL OPERATIONS

School Day Schedule

FLCS is unique because it is designed to be both a classroom and home setting. The student's school schedule is as follows:

Monday and Thursday

Student is at home where the parent supervises and teaches lesson plans prepared by the teacher.

Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday

Student attends class conducted by a teacher at the FLCS campus. Elective classes are also taught on the school campus days. These classes are taught by skilled teachers who have professional training and/or a demonstrated skill in a specific area. We use the term *elective* to distinguish between formal courses from those that may be considered necessary, but subordinate or ancillary.

School Campus Day Mornings

School begins at 8:45am and ends at 3:15pm. All children are to go to the chapel area if they arrive before 8:45. A parent assistant will be there to monitor children until it is time for school to begin. **Children may not be dropped off before 8:30am.** From 8:30 to 8:45, students will have an opportunity to participate in morning worship time, in

which someone will lead them in praise and worship to start their day. The students then proceed with school pledges and dismissal to classes.

The following pledges will be recited by all students each morning:

Pledge to the American Flag:

I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the republic for which it stands: one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

Pledge to the Christian Flag:

I pledge allegiance to the Christian flag, and to the Savior for whose kingdom it stands. One Savior, crucified, risen, and coming again, with life and liberty for all who believe.

Pledge to the Bible:

I pledge allegiance to the Bible, God's Holy Word. I will make it a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path. I will hide its words in my heart that I might not sin against God.

Dismissal

When you arrive to pick up your child, please pull your car up to the front of the school and wait until a teacher dismisses your child to go to your car. **Please do not park your car and get out while in the pick-up line, thereby delaying other parents.** If you need to talk to a faculty member or parent, please park in the parking lot and come to get your child. We also ask that you do not let your child run around in front of the school, since this is a safety hazard. Once you are at the school with your child, it is your responsibility to know where they are and to ensure that they follow the school rules at all times.

Field Trips

Educational trips are periodically taken throughout the year at the discretion of the teacher and/or school staff. Trips will be limited to a particular grade and may occur on a school day. Parents are notified in advance of the date and location of each trip. Parental involvement in such activities is imperative in order for the activity to occur. At the beginning of the school year, parents will be given a *Permission for Medical Treatment, Photography, Video Notice, and Release and Indemnity* form which must be signed by the parent, notarized, and returned to the school office. Students may not attend field trips until this is on file in the school office.

Final Assembly

A final assembly is held on the last day of school to close the academic year and acknowledge special student achievements. Parents, grandparents and siblings are encouraged to attend this event.

Special Celebrations

Special celebrations are traditionally held by our staff and the students during the Christmas season and at other times throughout the school year. Parents are highly encouraged to participate in all student/parent activities.

Lost Items

Please label your child's clothing, backpacks, and lunch boxes. The school cannot be responsible for lost or misplaced items. Please contact the school office to find out if a lost item has been turned in to the office.

Student Health and Safety

Please notify school office, by letter, of any allergies, limitations in activities, or health conditions of your child. In the case of unusual health problems, the school must have a letter releasing the school of responsibility.

Incoming students must obtain a physical examination and forward the appropriate medical records to the school.

All FLCS students must comply with the State of Florida's requirements for immunizations. Records of each student's immunizations are maintained in the school office.

The school cannot be responsible for the administration of medicines to your child during the school day. We would ask that you please make other arrangements.

Disaster Preparedness: Fire/Fire Drill

- Students will quickly and quietly walk out of the classroom in the order predetermined by the teacher. Students are to remain silent the entire time.
- Students will walk to their designated safe area and form an orderly line facing the school buildings.
- Teachers are to have a class attendance list and call roll.
- Students will wait for the all-clear signal and then return quietly to their room. A teacher will announce the all-clear signal.
- Fire extinguishers are located in a number of areas throughout the campus. Knowledge of the locations and the use of extinguishers are necessary for all adults on campus.

DRESS CODE

Uniforms

Important Note: All navy jumpers, skorts, skirts, shorts, and pants should be a cotton-polyester blend with a majority of polyester. Please do not purchase any 100% cotton fabrics, as we have found they dramatically fade and wrinkle. B

Boys

- Navy uniform pants or shorts (minimum 5" inseam)
- FLCS logo polo-style knit shirts, in red or white (short- or long-sleeved)
- FLCS logo sweatshirts, plain or hooded. Also allowed is any solid navy, white or red sweater or jacket, free of any logos or pictures. **Any other type of outerwear is not permitted within the school building.**
- Shirts must be tucked in; belts are required (no belts required for Pre-K)

Girls

- Designated plaid skorts, shorts, or jumpers (no higher than 3” above the knee); or navy shorts, pants, skorts, jumpers, or capris.
- White blouses (Peter Pan collars) or FLCS polo-style knit shirts, in red or white
- Navy or black bike shorts must be worn under skirts or jumpers to ensure modesty.
- Plain white or navy tights or long leggings under skirts or jumpers. These must be solid colors, with no prints, ruffles or lace. Bike shorts must be worn over tights.
- Shirts must be tucked in, while belts must be worn if there are belt loops (no belts required for Pre-K).
- FLCS logo sweatshirts, plain or hooded. Also allowed is any solid navy, white or red sweater or jacket, free of any logos or pictures. **Any other type of outerwear is not permitted within the school building.**

Middle School

Any of the above is acceptable with the additional option of khaki pants shorts, skorts, or capris. For girls, skirts should not be higher than 3” above the knee. **Middle school students may wear any color polo shirt with the FLCS logo.**

Shoes

Students may wear any sturdy, comfortable, closed-toed shoes with socks. Sandals and flip-flops are NOT permitted for safety reasons.

Field Trips

Students may wear denim shorts or jeans on field trips. Jeans must be in good condition without holes, tears or stains. We also ask that students wear their FLCS orange t-shirts for field trips so that all students will be wearing the same color/style shirt.

Cold Weather

Students may wear any style or color of jacket or coat while **outside**, such as on the playground or when they are arriving at school. Inside the school, they must wear plain sweaters, jackets, or FLCS sweatshirts as described above. Long-sleeved shirts may be worn under polo shirts, as long as they are solid navy, red or white.

Parent Assistants

Please remember that our students will be looking to you as an example in many ways, including how you dress. We ask that you dress appropriately for the activities that you may be required of you (e.g. bending, stooping, etc.). We appreciate our parent assistants, and our only “requirement” is that your appearance is neat and sets a good example for our students.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Organizational Structure

FLCS is incorporated in the State of Florida as a non-profit corporation. We have established 501(c) status with the IRS, making us a tax-exempt organization. We are registered with the State of Florida as a private school. The FLCS Board oversees the business affairs and votes on operational and academic policies.

Non-discrimination Policy

Family Life Community School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, or national and ethnic origin in its admissions policies, academic programs, or any other function of the school.

***Praise God
for teaching His people
these marvelous biblical principles of government
to achieve His purposes which are, to us, blessings.
Galatians 5:22, 23; Proverbs 16:32***

FAMILY LIFE COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Handbook Acknowledgement

Our signatures below acknowledge that we have read the Family Life Community School Parent/Student School Handbook and agree to abide by its policies.

Father's Signature

Date

Mother's Signature

Date

After reading the school handbook, please sign and return this page to the school office.

The School Board reserves the right to change any policy or procedure at any time at its sole discretion after reasonable notice is given.