



# **TIDEWATER ADVENTIST ACADEMY**

Excellence In Education | Training For Eternity  
EST.1966

## **School Handbook**

## **Tidewater Adventist Academy**

A Christian Pre-Kindergarten and Elementary School  
Owned and Operated by the Seventh-Day Adventist Church

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[www.tidewateracademy.com](http://www.tidewateracademy.com)

Accredited by:

Adventist Accrediting Association

and

National Council for Private School Accreditation

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Appendices (see [www.tidewateracademy.com](http://www.tidewateracademy.com) for all appendices)

- Appendix A: Tuition & Fees
- Appendix B: Curriculum Overview
- Appendix C: Extended Care Program
- Appendix D: Dress Code



## History of Adventist Education

Since as early as 1918, Adventist education has long established itself as a building block to academic achievement in Christian education. TAA offers academic instruction with an emphasis on excellence in general studies, character education and Christian service. Although most students are members of the Seventh-Day Adventist faith, all students who meet basic admission requirements are enrolled without regard to religion, gender or race. A diverse school body, TAA is comprised of individuals from multiple cultural backgrounds. The atmosphere at TAA is one of unity and acceptance.

*The mission of Tidewater Adventist Academy is to develop Christian characteristics in students that promote lifelong service and learning.*

## Philosophy & Goals

The staff of Tidewater Adventist Academy adheres to the philosophy that “true education means more than the pursuit of a certain course of study. It means more than a preparation for the life that now is. It has to do with the whole being and with the whole period of existence possible to man. It is the harmonious development of the physical, the mental and the spiritual powers. It prepares the student for the joy of service in this world and for the higher joy of wider service in the world to come.” *E.G. White, Education, p.13*

We at Tidewater Adventist Academy are committed to helping each student:

- ✓ Understand and accept the good news of the Gospel – God’s acceptance and forgiveness of all His children.
- ✓ Understand how to begin and maintain a relationship with God through daily spiritual activities.
- ✓ Understand and adopt principles such as truth, obedience, service, self-discipline, and Christian love, which affect happiness and success both now and in the future.
- ✓ Achieve excellence in academic, physical and communication skills.
- ✓ Be “a thinker and not merely a reflector of other men’s thoughts.”  
*Education, p. 17*
- ✓ Develop habits of punctuality, accuracy, neatness, discernment and sound judgement in decision making.
- ✓ Develop habits of healthful living and physical fitness.
- ✓ Develop well-rounded personalities and social relationships based on a high esteem for self and others.
- ✓ Develop loyalty to his or her country and respect for authority.



From the Desk of . . .

Our Teaching Principal

Dear Students & Families,

Welcome to Tidewater Adventist Academy. We are glad you have chosen to be a part of our school family. As we journey together, our prayer is that we all grow in our relationship with our Heavenly Father.

Each day, we live our mission in developing Christian characteristics in students that promote lifelong service and learning. We accomplish this by providing daily opportunities for cognitive, physical, social, emotional, and most importantly, spiritual growth. Creating strong partnerships with families, local churches and the community provides students with additional avenues of service and learning.

We take our ministry of education seriously and appreciate the gift each family provides in sharing their child(ren) with us each day. We want to ensure that as students and families look back on their time at TAA, they can rest assured that they met Jesus here.

In His Service,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Loretta Čák'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent 'L' and 'Č'.

Loretta Čák  
Teaching Principal

## Admissions & Academics

### Admission

Admission to Tidewater Adventist Academy is open to all students of any race, color, nationality, or ethnic origin who have a keen desire to grow spiritually, academically, physically, and socially. All students gaining admission will commit to cheerfully following all requirements as outlined in this handbook. Parents/Guardians will pledge themselves to be in harmony with the philosophy and goals of the school and will commit to assist in every way possible in supporting the school's mission and its program.

Tidewater Adventist Academy's application and enrollment paperwork has been streamlined into a simple online enrollment process. Acceptance to Tidewater Adventist Academy is granted based on successful completion/submission and review of the following criteria, with final approval given by the School Board:

- Online Application
- Registration Fee (Annual)
- Transfer of Student Records Form
- Student Records (including transcripts and standardized test scores)
- Medical Consent Form (Annual)
- Financial Aid Verification
- Rate Agreement
- Textbook Contract
- Technology Use Agreement
- Birth Certificate
  - Kindergarteners must be 5 years of age by September 30.
  - 1<sup>st</sup> graders must be 6 years of age by September 30.
- Immunization Record (new enrollment and 6<sup>th</sup> grade)
- Virginia School Entrance Form (new enrollment and 6<sup>th</sup> grade)
- Church Membership Verification



## **Special Needs**

While desirous to serve all students, Tidewater Adventist Academy does not have the necessary equipment, nor staff, to meet the needs of students with serious academic or physical handicaps and/or social maladjustment issues. Therefore, students with special needs will be considered for admission on an individual basis. When a student with behavior challenges or special academic needs applies for admission, the School Board may choose to grant admission on a probationary/contract basis. Under this special admission, a contract will be drawn up between the school, student, and parents/guardians. It will outline specific expectations for performance and the results for failure to follow contract guidelines. The probationary contract status will be for a specific length of time and will be reviewed by the teacher, parents/guardians and school administration on a regular basis. Should it become necessary to make other education arrangements, the school administration will assist the parents/guardians in transferring the student to a school or program where appropriate assistance is available.

## **Probation**

All new students who are accepted are placed on probation for one grading period (9 weeks). During this period, the student's academic progress, behavior, and positive contribution to the school will be reviewed. If it is determined that Tidewater Adventist Academy is unable to meet the student's needs, or if the student does not seem to be making a positive contribution to the school program, a conference will be held with the parents/guardians to discuss the advisability of removing the student from the TAA program.

## **Tuition & Fees**

During the enrollment process, each family will complete a Financial Agreement which outlines any tuition and fees due, as well as financial aid benefits. For up-to-date information regarding tuition and fees, please see Appendix A.

As per the signed Financial Agreement, tuition will be collected electronically via the FACTS Tuition Management System on the 10<sup>th</sup> day of each month,

August through May. Families who opt to pay for the whole year in advance will receive a 7.5% discount on tuition which will be processed on the first day of school. Families who opt to pay for tuition expenses in two installments will receive a 5% discount on tuition, processed on the first day of school in each semester.

A \$30.00 fee will be added to your account for insufficient funds.

Tuition discounts are given when more than one student in a family is enrolled at Tidewater Adventist Academy. The oldest child is billed at the full tuition rate. Additional children from the same family receive a 5% discount for the second child, 7.5% for each additional child.

Tidewater Adventist Academy is committed to providing Christian education to all students. However, if an account becomes 30 days past due, the family must meet with the Principal to create a payment plan. Should an account become more than 30 days past due and no payment plan has been put in place, the student(s) will be unable to attend school until the account is paid in full or a payment plan has been established. Students are responsible for any work they may miss during this absence.

All invoices will be e-mailed. Therefore, it is imperative to keep your e-mail address up-to-date with the school office.

Unsettled accounts with other schools need to be cleared before a student will be accepted at Tidewater Adventist Academy.

Students must receive financial clearance before attending their 8<sup>th</sup> grade class trip. Report cards, diplomas, admission or transfer request (transcripts) will not be given/processed until the family account is paid in full.

## **Financial Aid**

Those seeking financial assistance are required to contact their local church first. The church, or anyone offering assistance toward your student(s) tuition will need to complete a Donor Pledge Form. In the event the pledge is not fulfilled, parents/guardians will be responsible for the difference. Tidewater

Adventist Academy has a limited amount of financial aid and scholarships available. If you would like to apply for assistance, bring the Donor Pledge Form from your church indicating what they are able to pledge and complete a financial aid application through Facts Tuition Management; Grant and Aid, for evaluation. For re-enrolling students, the deadline to be considered for scholarship/financial aid is July 31. The financial aid process may be completed online at [www.factstuitionaid.com](http://www.factstuitionaid.com).

## **Textbooks**

Textbooks are loaned to the students by the school for use during the school year. All textbooks must be returned to the school at the close of the school year. If a textbook assigned to a student is lost or becomes damaged beyond normal wear and tear, the replacement cost will be billed to the student's account.

## **Academics**

Tidewater Adventist Academy provides curriculum instruction that meets Virginia state requirements and follows the curriculum recommended by the Columbia Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. In addition to the state requirements, Bible instruction is provided to all grades.

## **Academic Year**

The school year is divided into four (4) quarters of approximately nine weeks each. The academic school year typically begins in August and ends in May.

## **Parent-Teacher Communication**

The school's administrative communication system is RenWeb. It is a web-based program that allows parents access to information about their child's academic progress and attendance. Students may also access this information with parent permission. When a student enrolls, the family will receive the school's district code and family pass code to gain access to RenWeb.

Communication between the parent/guardian and teacher is vital to the academic achievement of the student. Two formal parent-teacher conference days are scheduled: one at the end of the first marking period and a second at the end of the third marking period. Additional parent-teacher conference times may be scheduled, as needed, by contacting the child's teacher. If a problem is addressed during a parent-teacher conference, ample time following the conference should be allowed for the problem to be resolved. If further discussion is needed, it is appropriate to set up an appointment with the teacher and principal. Appointments with teachers are not available during school hours.

Additional communication tools, such as text messaging, e-mail and SeeSaw, may be utilized by the school administration and teachers to communicate with the student body as a whole or with individual students and families.

## **Testing**

Standardized achievement tests are administered during the school year to determine the level of academic learning. These tests are taken by students in grades three (3) through eight (8) and used to evaluate and improve current instructional practices.

## **Grading System**

The grading system for Kindergarten is as follows:

I = Independent

P = Progressing

NT = Need More Time

The grading system for grades 1-2 is as follows:

E = Excellent

S = Satisfactory

N = Needs Improvement

The grading system for grades 3 – 8 is as follows:

(A) = 93 – 100 %

(B-) = 80 -82 %

(D+) = 67 – 69 %

(A-) = 90 -92 %

(C+) = 77 – 79 %

(D) = 63 – 66 %

(B+) = 87 – 89 %

(C) = 73 – 76 %

(D-) = 60 – 62 %

(B) = 83 – 86 %

(C-) = 70 – 72 %

(F) = 0 – 59 %

An incomplete (I) may be given if the student experienced circumstances which prevented completion of the course. Students/families must take the initiative in making the arrangements with the teacher and completing all incomplete work. Deadline for completion of class work is two weeks after grades are issued.



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### Elementary Curriculum – Grades K – 8

#### Pre-Kindergarten & Kindergarten

Pre-K and Kindergarten is often the first direct contact with school that many students experience. Tidewater Adventist Academy wants this initial contact to be a positive, happy experience. Students begin school at varying levels of developmental growth. To meet the needs of each student individually, Tidewater Adventist Academy utilizes both Creative Curriculum and Kindergarten Stepping Stones. Creative Curriculum provides the framework for creating an engaging learning environment. Kindergarten Stepping Stones is a comprehensive curriculum which covers all academic areas of study, including Bible. Students at both Pre-K and Kindergarten learning levels actively engage and gain developmentally appropriate skills. The foundation for future learning is built at this level. Areas of study may include, but are not limited to:

Bible	Language Arts	Math
Science	Social Studies	Music
Creative Expression	Physical Education	. . . and more

Following Kindergarten, Grade 1 placement is determined by testing and teacher evaluation.

## Elementary

Elementary instructional course work provides the necessary foundation for academic achievement, following completion of elementary and middle school. Key areas, such as reading, mathematics, Bible and writing, are emphasized throughout the elementary years. Additional coursework, such as science and social studies, is provided to broaden a student's view of the world. Elementary studies cover the following areas:

Bible	Language Arts	Math
Science	Social Studies	Music
Creative Expression	Physical Education	Health
Technology	. . . and more	

## Middle Grades

Middle grades instruction builds upon the strong foundation which has been built throughout elementary instruction. As students prepare for high school, they are challenged to become responsible members of their community. Opportunities for leadership are available through the Student Council and National Junior Honor Society. Additional coursework, such as Pre-Algebra and Algebra may be offered to students in 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades. Middle grades studies cover the following areas:

Bible	Language Arts	Math
Science	Social Studies	Music
Creative Expression	Physical Education	Health
Technology	(Pre)Algebra	. . . and more

An overview of curricula is available in Appendix B.

## Graduation Requirements (Kindergarten & 8<sup>th</sup> Grade)

Students are not automatically granted the privilege of participating in the graduation exercises. A student will forfeit participation in graduation exercises by exhibiting the following behaviors:

- Failing to meet scholastic requirements

- Exhibiting behavior that reflects poorly on the student, parents, or school

Completion of requirements for eighth grade are awarded according to the following criteria:

- Diploma – a diploma is given to students who have completed eighth grade scholastic requirements and have achieved passing grades in all subject areas.
- Certificate of Completion – A Certificate of Completion is given to students who have been diagnosed as educationally challenged. A certificate of completion shows that the student has completed an individually prescribed course of study.
- Certificate of Attendance – a student who receives failing grades will be given a Certificate of Attendance, which verifies that the student has been in school but has not met the scholastic requirements.

#### Graduation Cords

- Gold – Principal's List, GPA 3.75 and above
- Silver – Honors, GPA 3.5 – 3.74
- White – Eight consecutive years at Tidewater Adventist Academy

### **Elementary & Junior National Honors Society**

The Tidewater Adventist Academy Chapter of the National Honor Societies, under the sponsorship of the National Association of Secondary School Principals bestows commendation upon students who excel in scholarship, character, leadership, and community service. Members are selected based on the merits of their social development as well as their academic achievement.

### **Extra Curricular Eligibility**

Any students participating in school sponsored extra curricular activities (such as sports) may not have a grade lower than a C-. A student who drops below this standard will be placed on academic probation and will not be able to participate in extracurricular activities until s/he is no longer on academic probation.

## **Academic Probation**

When grades show a student has failing grades at the 4 ½ week period, the student will not be allowed to participate in extracurricular activities until the next 9-week report cards are issued. Students who continue to have failing grades for two consecutive 4 ½ weeks reporting periods will be placed on academic probation for the next 9 week grading period.

## **General Information**

### **School Hours**

School hours are 8:00am – 2:45pm, Monday – Thursday, and 8:00am-1:30pm on Friday.

In the morning, students are welcomed to the gym between 7:45am – 8:00am. Students must remain in the gymnasium until 8:00am. Students arriving after 8:00am, must report to the office to receive a tardy slip. Tardy slips are submitted to the homeroom teacher for record-keeping purposes.

Students not picked up within 15 minutes of dismissal (Monday – Thursday @ 3:00pm, and 1:45pm on Friday) or the concluding time of any extracurricular activities will be dropped off by the supervising teacher in the After Care Program. Program details, including structure, hours and fees, are available in Appendix C.

### **Attendance**

Tidewater Adventist Academy is bound by state law to maintain accurate attendance records, but, more importantly students need to learn the importance of punctuality and regular attendance. Students who enter the classroom late, disrupt the educational process and may miss worship, important announcements, and specific directions for school work and assignments. Students who are absent or tardy put an added burden on themselves, classmates and the teacher.



## **Absences**

Written excuse slips for all absences should be submitted to the homeroom teacher. The note must contain the student's name, the date of the absence, the reason for the absence, and the parent's signature. Class work missed must be satisfactorily made up per classroom policy. Excused absences will be granted under the following conditions:

- Medical and legal appointments involving the student.
- Personal illness/injury.
- Death of the immediate family member.
- Individual situations that are declared by the administration to be of an emergency nature.

The integrity of the school year is very important. Please observe carefully the dates and times listed in the school calendar for the beginning and ending of vacation periods. Should parents/guardians plan to take their child out of school for a trip or any other unexcused absence, all assignments will be given upon student's return. The student will have two (2) weeks from the date of their return to submit all assignments.

Excessive absenteeism may result in student retention.

## **Tardiness**

Students are expected to be in the gymnasium promptly at 8:00am. When students enter the classroom late, the morning routine is interrupted and valuable instruction is compromised for all students in the class. Punctuality is a life long habit that will carry through to their adulthood.

There are, occasionally, unavoidable reasons for a tardy arrival. Excused tardies will be issued in the case of heavy traffic due to accident or severe weather. To receive an excused tardy, the parent/guardian must accompany the student into the office and explain the situation.

Students who receive three (3) unexcused tardies will receive a letter from the office asking families to acknowledge and correct tardy arrivals. After six (6)

tardies (excused or unexcused), a conference between the family and administrator will be held.

## **Emergency Closings**

Tidewater Adventist Academy follows the Chesapeake School System delays and closings due to inclement weather. Closings are posted on WAVY TV 10, as well as our Facebook page. Families will also receive text messages via our emergency alert system.

## **Internet Use**

Internet access is provided at Tidewater Adventist Academy. However, this service does not include access to all Internet sites. Internet browsing is restricted through the use of software. Every student must have a Computer Use Agreement signed by both parent/guardian and student on file at the school. Violation of the Computer Use Agreement may result in loss of Internet privileges. Students who lose their Internet privileges are still responsible for classroom computer assignments.

## **Photography & Videography**

Students enrolled at Tidewater Adventist Academy may be photographed or digitally recorded for the purpose of documentation of skills and development. Photos and videos may be used for promotional purposes, including but not limited to: printed materials, audio-visual materials and social media. Enrollment constitutes an acknowledgement and release for all photos and videos.

## **Home School Connection**

Home School Connection is designed to foster cooperation between Seventh-day Adventist families who choose to home school their children and Tidewater Adventist Academy. It also provides an environment for home schooled students to become familiar and more comfortable with a structured school setting.

Activities available to home schooled students may include, but are not limited to: field trips, outings, educational fairs, Weeks of Prayer, chapel programs, special programs, physical education, athletic activities, art and music programs. Home schooled students will be expected to follow all rules and regulations that pertain to TAA students while on campus.

## **Closed Campus**

The school is responsible for all students during school hours. Students may only leave school grounds with individuals who are authorized, in writing, by the parent/guardian. For the safety of our students, when parents/guardians find it necessary to take their children off campus during the day, they are required to sign their child out at the school office.

Guests who wish to visit on campus during regular school hours must first sign in at the school office.

## **Meals & Snacks**

Parents/Guardians are responsible for providing a nutritious lunch. Lunches should be ready to serve. Cool foods should be kept cool with ice packs. Hot foods should be kept hot in a thermos. While microwaves are available for heating, all food should be precooked and need no more than one (1) minute in the microwave.

Some classrooms build time for a snack into their daily schedule. Snacks should be nutritious and ready to eat. Microwaves are not available for snack.

Occasionally a hot lunch is sold as a fund raiser. Families will be notified via an online ordering system. Orders must be placed at least 24 hours prior to the meal served. Charges for the meal will be processed via FACTS on the day of the meal.

Tidewater Adventist Academy is pleased to offer pizza to students on Friday. Pizza is sold by the slice and must be ordered in advance. Families are encouraged to purchase a Pizza Card (8 slices), rather than one slice at a time.

Families may send additional food to ensure a well balanced meal. Pizza may be purchased for the entire year when completing the Financial Agreement.

Should a student not have a meal on any given day, a meal can be purchased from the office. Meal will include a main dish, vegetable, fruit and drink. A \$5.00 charge will be processed via FACTS on the day of the meal. Prior to the charge, a family member will be notified. Students who take advantage of this service more than four (4) times within a school year will be charged \$7.00/meal after the 4<sup>th</sup> meal.

## **Morning Worship**

Teachers and students begin each day with prayer and a spiritual theme to help set a positive atmosphere at Tidewater Adventist Academy.

## **Chapel**

The student body meets each Friday for a corporate morning worship service. Faculty, pastors, invited guests and students work together to arrange and conduct enthusiastic Christ-centered services. Our chapel time encourages student participation and leadership. Families are welcome to join us during chapel.

## **Week of Prayer**

Two weeks are set aside each school year for special spiritual emphasis. These "Weeks of Prayer" feature guest speakers and student participants. Family members, homeschooled students and church members are welcome to attend these special programs.

## **Asbestos Notice**

Each year our school is required by law to submit an asbestos notice to all families. In accordance with the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act; we had our school inspected for asbestos containing building materials (ACBM). The inspector found ACBM materials and prepared an Operations and Management Plan to help us manage the materials in a manner that

ensures the safety of our students and employees. You may look at the O & M Plan in the office during school hours.

To the best of our knowledge, the asbestos in the school is fully contained (non-friable). The asbestos found in the building is 8" of pipe insulation above the ceiling tile in the hallway near the 1980 addition, and the old floor which is in the elementary wing of the school. This tile is found under carpets in the hallways, under the new tile in the Science Lab, and under the carpets in the elementary classrooms. The floor tile is not a health threat to anyone as long as it is not disturbed by abrasive materials. Essentially, by covering the floor tiles with carpet and new vinyl tile, the old tile is encapsulated. Unless we were to change the status of this tile in a significant way, there would be no known health threat to any individual.

## **Volunteers**

Tidewater Adventist Academy is delighted to welcome volunteers to our school. There are multiple opportunities for volunteers to become involved. All volunteers must complete a background check and training via Verified Volunteers. Those who have completed the training through their local Seventh-day Adventist Church must add Tidewater Adventist Academy to their verified locations.

Volunteer drivers for field trips and other school activities must have a valid driver's license, \$250,000/\$500,000 limits on their insurance policy, and complete a Chaperone/Driver Field Trip Form. A copy of the volunteer driver's insurance information and driver's license must be on file in the school office. Drivers are permitted to drive to and from field trip location only. Additional stops are not permitted. Drivers should ensure that they have plenty of gas prior to the field trip.

## **Student Work**

Since work is important for the building of character and helps students understand the importance of maintaining a clean and tidy school environment, students may be expected to work in and their school. Work may include, but is not limited to: dusting, vacuuming, sweeping, cleaning windows,

weeding, picking up or taking out trash, etc. The organization of work may vary from year to year.



# TIDEWATER ADVENTIST ACADEMY

EST.1966

## Policies & Procedures

### Safety

Each student is expected to observe proper safety precautions as reviewed in the classroom. All students are required to remain on campus and away from all drainage ditches.

### Communicable Diseases

Students may occasionally become ill at school. Should they display symptoms indicated on the Virginia Department of Health Communicable Disease Reference Chart for School Personnel, a parent/guardian will be contacted to come remove the student until symptoms have subsided for 24 hours without medication or a doctor clears the student, in writing, for return. A copy of this chart is available in the school office or may be viewed online:

[http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/content/uploads/sites/3/2016/03/Communicable\\_Disease\\_Chart-1.pdf](http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/content/uploads/sites/3/2016/03/Communicable_Disease_Chart-1.pdf)

A student who has a fever of 100 degrees (Fahrenheit) or higher (may or may not display additional symptoms) should not return to school until the temperature has returned to normal (98.6F) for 24 hours without the use of medication.

## Medication

It is the policy of the Potomac Conference Office of Education that no drug or medicinal preparation, either over-the-counter or prescription drug, will be administered to a student on any school premises by school personnel unless the student has a current valid doctor's prescription and instructions, and a written request from the child's parents. Prescription and non-prescription medication must be administered by designated school personnel.

Guidelines for the policy:

- A. A "Written Medication Consent Form" must be signed by the parent/guardian. The prescriber's signature is also required for long-term medication, or when dosage directions state "consult a physician". A separate form is required for each medication. This form will include:
  - i. Authorization for medication to be given
  - ii. Student's name, date of birth and allergies
  - iii. Medication
  - iv. Dosage
  - v. Time to be given, including recommended interval
  - vi. Purpose of the medication
  - vii. Physician's name and phone number
- B. All medications will be in the original container. The label will include the child's name, current date, name of the drug, dosage and time to be given. Drugs will not be combined in a single container.
- C. The above criteria are also used if a student presents a prescription medication at school for a short-term illness.
- D. Parents/Guardians shall be responsible for transporting medication to and from school for student(s) unless other arrangements are made with school personnel. At the end of the school year, parents/guardians must pick up any unused medication on or before the last day of school. All unclaimed medication will be destroyed in the presence of a witness unless prior arrangements have been made with school personnel.
- E. Inhalers may be self-administered if the physical completes a health care plan. The physician and the parent/guardian must sign the Annual Contract for Self-Administration of Inhaled Medication for Asthma, and the student must demonstrate management to designated personnel.

## **School Uniform**

Students are expected to dress in harmony with the basic principles of health, modesty, appropriateness, and attractiveness. The dress code attempts to create an atmosphere most conducive to sound educational practices and mature grooming. Students who come to school dressed improperly will be sent to the office to call home and wait for proper attire to be brought to them. When a matter of appropriateness or modesty of a student's appearance is in question, the faculty interpretation will be the determining factor. The Dress Code is available in Appendix D.

## **Standard of Conduct**

The standards of conduct at Tidewater Adventist Academy are based upon respecting ones-self, the rights of others, state laws, insurance regulations, property of others, and Church standards.

Consequently, the following practices will not be accepted:

1. Substance abuse, including using, furnishing, possessing or handling illegal drugs, tobacco, or alcoholic beverages either on or off campus of TAA.
2. Improper sexual relationships including inappropriate public display of affection.
3. Using any dishonest practice such as lying, stealing, cheating, or plagiarism.
4. Insubordination, disrespect, or insolence.
5. Undermining the religious ideals of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.
6. Tampering with alarms or safety equipment.
7. Destroying or defacing school property.
8. Gambling.
9. Using profane language.
10. Displaying or possessing pornographic or obscene magazines, books, pictures or music.
11. Hazing or bullying of any kind, including acts or words that degrade, disgrace, or cause injury to another person.
12. Making, possessing, or handling firearms, firecrackers, explosives, lighters, matches, or similar devices.



13. Leaving the campus of Tidewater Adventist Academy without permission.
14. Classroom behavior that prevents other students from learning.
15. Being in classrooms/spaces unsupervised and without permission.
16. Fighting.
17. Bringing knives, guns, martial arts weapons, self-defense sprays, or other objects that the administration might consider as weapons, whether toys or real, to school.
18. Bringing or possessing any electronic entertainment devices during school hours, without permission.
19. Using a cell phone while on campus, unless permission has been granted.
20. Disrespecting others by one's speech or by not keeping hands, feet, and objects to one's self.
21. Failure to follow the dress code.
22. Gum chewing.
23. Breaking "Acceptable Use Agreement for Technology."

In addition, there will be various classroom rules and regulations outlined by each teacher or the administration. Announced policies will hold the same weight as written policies.

Tidewater Adventist Academy is a Christ-centered learning community that welcomes all whose behavior and lifestyle are consistent with the teachings of Scripture as understood by the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Students can remain in good standing provided they conduct themselves consistently with the teachings of the Seventh-day Adventist Church on sexual conduct, sexual orientation, and gender expression as set forth below.

Tidewater Adventist Academy upholds Biblical principles which include, but are not limited to, behaviors related to sexual matters. Human sexuality is a gift from God, and it is to be respected within the confines of a marital union between a man and a woman. Sexual conduct outside of this union is not acceptable. The local school administration and board will uphold these Biblical principles. Students' gender expression is expected to align with their biological gender at birth. Tidewater Adventist Academy will only accept and retain students whose gender expression aligns with their biological gender at birth.

**References:**

Biblical references - Gen 1:27; Gen 2:22-24; Gen 3:6-19; Jer 17:9; Rom 3:9; 7:14-23; 8:20-23; Gal 5:17; Rom 12:2; Prov 14:12; Prov 16:25; 2 Tim 3:16; Gen 2:7; Jer 13:17; 52:28-30; Ezek 18:4; Acts 2:41; 1 Cor 15:45; Eph 5:28; Rom 12:1-2; Rev 18:13; 1 Pet 1:24; 2 Tim 4:22; 1 John 4:1-3; 1 Tim 6:14-16; 1 Cor 15:51-54; Gen 1:27; 5:1-2; Ps 139:13-14; Mark 10:6; Matt 5:28, 31-32; 1 Tim 1:8-11; Heb 13:4; Rom 1:21-28; 1 Cor 6:9-10; Mark 12:31; Matt 12:20; 1 Cor 6:9-11; 1 Cor 6:19

The Seventh-day Adventist Church's official statement on transgenderism (<https://www.adventist.org/official-statements/statement-on-transgenderism/>).

The Seventh-day Adventist Church's website on human sexuality: [humansexuality.org](http://humansexuality.org).

## Discipline

The purpose of discipline at Tidewater Adventist Academy is, first and foremost, to teach self-discipline. It is not intended to be punitive or controlling, but redemptive in nature. In addition, we want to provide a safe, orderly learning environment for all students in attendance. Each teacher has a set of classroom rules and will handle minor infractions of classroom rules. Repeated minor infractions will be referred to the Principal. Students who do not follow the "Standards of Conduct" will receive a written Opportunity for Growth. Opportunities for Growth are cumulative.

Our discipline plan is based upon Lee Canter's Assertive Discipline Model. This plan's premise is that the teacher has the right to teach and every student has the right to learn; anyone interfering with these rights shall receive consequences for their behavior. This plan emphasizes self-control and responsibility for one's actions as well as maximizing instructional time and minimizing disciplinary issues.

Consequences for misbehavior within the classroom are determined by the classroom teachers and will be communicated at the beginning of the year. Consequences may include, but are not limited to: warning (verbal/written), time away (remain in classroom, but separated from group), loss of privilege, etc. Students who choose to consistently violate the Standard of Conduct may be removed from the classroom. The student will be brought back into the learning environment as quickly as is appropriate. Depending on the grade level, students will be given several chances to correct their behavior. The parents/guardians will be notified in writing when a student must be removed from the classroom. Severe behavior, such as bullying, dishonesty/theft, sexual inappropriateness, profanity, possession or use of weapons, tobacco, alcohol or illegal drugs, or physical violence/threats, will not follow the consequence sequence but will be dealt with individually, as each case warrants. Students

must understand that consequences for such serious behaviors will occur regardless of whether the behaviors take place on or off campus.

## **Suspension**

The discipline approach will vary depending on the circumstances of the misconduct, the individual student, and the school community. The first desire of the school is for discipline to be an opportunity for growth.

If a student's behavior seems to warrant extended removal from the classroom, suspension may be recommended. Suspension is the removal of the student from school as soon as practical while awaiting further clarification of the student's status.

The student will be given the opportunity to explain the facts about the behavior before a decision to suspend is made.

### Opportunities for Growth

When a student has exceeded their chances in the classroom to correct unsatisfactory behavior, or committed a major infraction, the student will be sent to the office and a written Opportunity for Growth will be issued.

Breaking the "Standards of Conduct" will be handled in the following manner:

- First Opportunity for Growth
  - Principal meets with student to discuss
  - Opportunity for Growth developed and communicated to family
  - Parents/Guardians must return signed Opportunity for Growth
- Second Opportunity for Growth
  - Principal meets with student and parents/guardians to discuss
  - Opportunity for Growth reviewed and Behavior Contract developed
  - Behavior Contract signed by parents/guardians, student, and principal before student returns to TAA
  - Level 1 Suspension at principal's discretion (1-3 days at home)
- Third Opportunity for Growth
  - Principal meets with student and parents/guardians to discuss
  - Opportunity for Growth and Behavior Contract reviewed

- Discipline Committee meets to make a recommendation to the School Board
- Recommendation communicated to family in writing
- Level 1 Suspension at principal's discretion (1-3 days at home) or Level 2 Suspension (3-10 days at home)
- Fourth Opportunity for Growth
  - Principal meets with student and parents/guardians to discuss
  - Opportunity for Growth, Behavior Contract and Discipline Committee recommendation reviewed
  - Discipline Committee meets to make a recommendation to the School Board
  - Level 3 Suspension (until School Board meets)
  - Recommendation to School Board is voted upon and communicated to family

### Suspension Levels Defined

- Level 1
  - 1 – 3 days at home suspension
  - Student will be expected to keep up their daily school work
  - There may be additional requirements for re-admittance to class
  - An Opportunity for Growth between the administrator, family, and student will be signed before student returns to class
  - Parents/Guardians are to take the initiative to contact teachers for receiving and returning school work
- Level 2
  - 3 – 10 days out of school
  - Class work may be unexcused
  - There may be additional requirements for re-admittance to class
  - A behavioral Contract between the administrator, family, and student will be signed.
- Level 3
  - Automatic suspension until the School Board meets
  - Discipline Committee makes a recommendation to the School Board
  - Class work may be unexcused
  - Student may be asked to withdraw

Notes:

- Severe violations may result in a student being moved to a higher level of discipline.
- Opportunities for Growth will accumulate throughout the year and may result in academic probation the following school year.

## **Expulsion**

Only the School Board has the authority to expel a student. The Board shall use the following procedures when expelling a student from school.

At least three days prior the meeting to expel, the board chairperson or principal shall give written notice to the parents/guardians informing them of the Discipline Committee's recommendation for expulsion. The notice shall outline the reasons for expulsion and inform the family of their right to meet with the board.

The notice of hearing shall precede the student's expulsion. If the student's presence poses a continuing danger to person/property or threatens the integrity of the educational process, the principal may suspend the student until the action is approved.

Should parents/guardians wish, they may voluntarily withdraw their child prior to the hearing.

If a single parent wishes to have someone attend as a support person, s/he shall let the board chairperson know in advance of the meeting.

The Principal shall notify the Superintendent of Education about the meeting to expel at least 48 hours prior to the meeting.

## **Personal Electronic Devices**

Personal electronic devices are not permitted during school hours. Personal electronic devices include, but are not limited to: cellular and smart phones, personal handheld electronics, video gaming units, tablets, e-readers, smart watches, etc. These items must be stored in cubbies or lockers during school

hours. Students who choose to violate this policy be asked to store these devices in the office during school hours. Teachers may elect to allow students access to their personal electronic devices for short periods of time during the day for the purpose of increasing productivity (use of calendar, journal, etc).

## **Weapons Policy**

Tidewater Adventist Academy actively promotes a safe and healthy school environment. Therefore, except in the rare case of a historical artifact that has received prior approval, no weapons or dangerous instruments of any type will be allowed at school. This also includes realistic toys designed to approximate the appearance and threat of a weapon. If a student chooses to disregard this policy, the item will be confiscated and the student will be subject to disciplinary action as outlined in the Columbia Union Conference Education Code:

Adventist schools must be havens of safety for students and staff. All weapons are banned from schools and school activities. Students possessing these articles will be immediately suspended with expulsion recommended in line with the school's disciplinary procedures. Applicable state and federal laws or guidelines will be followed.  
*Columbia Union Code #3510*

Definition of a weapon:

A "weapon" is defined as any gun, stun-gun, firearm, bomb, smoke bomb, explosive or incendiary device, poison gas, Mace, pepper spray, or knife. "Weapon" also includes any device that is either designed by its manufacturer or redesigned and/or altered by any other for use as a weapon. "Weapon" also includes any device in a student's possession while at school, on school property, or at a school-sponsored function that the student intends to use as a weapon for the infliction of permanent or temporary bodily harm or harm to property. *Columbia Union Code#3510*

## **Bullying and Sexual Harassment**

It is important that Tidewater Adventist Academy maintain a Christ-centered school environment characterized by human dignity, Christian courtesy and

individual respect. Sexual harassment should never be part of that environment. Violation of the policy will result in immediate action by the discipline committee and/or the School Board.

It should also be noted that sexual harassment constitutes illegal education discrimination under Federal and State statutes, the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment of the US Constitution, and Title IX of the Education Reform Act Amendment of 1972.

## Definitions

A person is bullied when s/he is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more persons, and s/he has difficulty defending him/herself. This definition includes three important components:

- Bullying is aggressive behavior that involves unwanted, negative actions
- Bullying involves a pattern of behavior repeated over time.
- Bullying involves an imbalance of power or strength.

Bullying may be in the following forms: verbal bullying (including derogatory comments and bad names), social exclusion/isolation, physical (hitting, kicking, shoving, spitting), lies/false rumors, stealing, threats, being forced to do things, racial bullying, sexual bullying, and cyber bullying. (*Violence Prevention Works, Olweus Bullying Prevention Program*)

Sexual Harassment constitutes unwelcome sexual advances, sexual comments of any kind, or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Examples:

- Making threats of a sexual nature
- Touching in a sexual manner
- Sexual advances, gestures, contact, comments, or jokes.
- Displaying sexual pictures, photograph cartoons, or graffiti
- Making suggestive comments about a person's anatomy

## Reporting

Persons who believe they are being bullied/sexually harassed should:

- Tell the bully/harasser to stop in clear language
- Report the incident(s) to the teacher or principal immediately
- Report additional incidents if they occur.

**The Administration and School Board reserves the right to formulate and implement policies, rules, and regulations throughout the school year in order to assure the safe and appropriate operation of the school. The new policies will be immediately communicated to parents or guardians and will carry equal force to the other information contained in the Handbook.**