

Zion Christian Academy

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Psalm 125:1

KINDERGARTEN – 8TH GRADE FAMILY HANDBOOK

2026-2027

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Table of Contents

<p>INTRODUCTION pg. 2 Vision Statement, Mission Statement, Statement of Faith pg. 3</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Philosophy of Christian Education pg. 4 2. Nondiscrimination Policy pg. 8 3. Admission Policies pg. 8 4. Financial Arrangements pg. 9 <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4.1. Tuition 4.2. Fees 4.3. Supply Lists 4.4. Withdrawal From Program 5. Educational Program pg. 10 6. Academic Testing & Learning Support Policy pg. 10 7. Student Spiritual Formation Goals pg. 11 8. Nutrition pg. 11 <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8.1. Special Lunches 9. Health and Safety pg. 12 <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 9.1. Emergency Protocol 9.2. Reporting Child Abuse & Neglect 10. Medication pg. 13 11. Authorization to Pick Up Child pg. 13 12. Drop-off & Pick-up pg. 13 13. Attendance pg. 13 <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 13.1. Tardies & Absences 13.2. Chronic Absenteeism Policy 13.3. Make-up Work for Excused Absences 13.4. Educational Absence 13.5. One Day Absences 13.6. Holidays & Days Off 13.7. Inclement Weather 13.8. Doctor Appointments 14. Aftercare pg. 16 15. Communication pg. 17 16. Homework pg. 17 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 17. Reporting Student Progress & Grading pg. 17 <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 17.1. Report Cards 17.2. Parent-Teacher Conferences 17.3. Grading Scale 17.4. Other Grading Policies 18. Promotion pg. 18 19. Dress Code pg. 18 <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 19.1. Appropriate Attire 19.2. Inappropriate Attire 19.3. Spirit & Dress-up Days 19.4. Picture Days 20. Honor Code pg. 21 <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 20.1. Philosophy of Discipline 20.2. Honor Code 21. Discipline pg. 22 <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 21.1. Honor Code Violations 21.2. Grades K-4 21.3. Grades 5-8 21.4. Behavior Policy 21.5. PDA Policy 21.6. Immediate Dismissal Violations 21.7. Cell Phone & Electronic Devices Policy 22. Student Responsibility pg. 25 <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 22.1. Classroom Expectations 22.2. Assignments 22.3. Phone Calls 22.4. Clothes 23. Recess pg. 25 24. Playground Rules pg. 26 25. Volunteers pg. 26 26. Field Trips pg. 26 27. Birthdays pg. 26 28. Fundraisers pg. 26 29. Back to School - Open House pg. 27 30. Observing Classes pg. 27 31. Animals and Pets pg. 27 32. Emergency Procedures & Drills pg. 27 33. Rationale & Protocol for Conflict Resolution pg. 27 34. Governance Structure pg. 28
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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this handbook is to acquaint you with the philosophy, policies, and procedures of Zion Christian Academy. We believe parents hold the primary right and serious obligation to educate their children. Thus, we realize that parents delegate the sacred trust of educating their children according to Christian principles to the teachers at ZCA, who willingly assume this role of educator. We use a curriculum that promotes a Biblical worldview in all classrooms and subjects (Abeka, BJUPress, and Summitt).

Parents/guardians must have a clear understanding of what is expected during the hours when children are under the school's care. With that in mind, please read this handbook carefully, making note of the changes.

Vision Statement

Provide excellence in a Christ-centered, whole-person education, preparing students to honor God in this culture and to have a transformative impact on the world.

Mission Statement

“Preparing the Next Generation to Become World Changers”

Statement of Faith

1. The Bible is the inspired, inerrant Word of God; it is the ultimate source of truth and authority. (II Tim. 3:16; II Pet. 1:20-21; Heb. 4:12)
2. One of the divine mysteries that we receive by faith is that God is triune, three distinct persons, yet one God. (Matt. 28:18,19; Matt. 3:16,17)
3. Jesus, who is true God and true man, is the only way of salvation. He has made full and complete payment for all the sins of all people when He died on the cross at Calvary, and His resurrection is proof that the Father accepted this payment. (I John 4:2 & 15; John 3:16; I John 1:7)
4. The Holy Spirit initially brings believers to faith in Jesus, keeps them in the faith day by day, and constantly works to produce spiritual maturity. Believers are to submit to the Holy Spirit and cooperate with Him as He develops spiritual fruit in each life. (I Cor. 12:3; I Cor. 6:11; Gal. 5:22-24).
5. It is both a privilege and a duty to share the good news of salvation through the atoning blood of Jesus Christ with all people because all are sinful by birth and by personal act. All will perish in the eternal lake of fire unless they receive Jesus as their personal Lord and Savior. (Matt. 28:18-20; Acts 1:8; Luke 24:46,47)
6. The gifts of the Holy Spirit are available today. Therefore, we believe these gifts include healing miracles, supernatural wisdom and knowledge, and God speaking through prophetic utterances. ZCA teaches that the baptism of the Holy Spirit is available to all born-again believers as God’s gift of power to witness and to live a victorious Christian life. (Rom. 11:29; Num. 11:22; I Cor. 12:1-11; I Cor. 14; Mark 1:8; Matt. 3:11)
7. Parents have the God-given responsibility to bring their children up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. (Eph. 6:4; Deut. 6:4-9; Prov. 22:6)
8. Prayer is a vital part of every Christian’s life. To praise God, seek His guidance, intercede for the needs of others, and offer personal petitions. God has bound Himself to answer the prayer offering - retaining for Himself the right to determine “how” and “when.” (I Thessalonians 5:16-22; James 1:5-8; James 5:13-18; I Tim. 2:1-4)
9. Those who are in the right relationship with Jesus will be active and regularly in attendance at a church or Christian fellowship. (Act 2:42,46,47; Acts 1:14)
10. God has not rejected Israel. Therefore, for the sake of God, we offer friendship and support to Jewish people throughout the world. (2 Chronicles 9:8; Psalms 98:3; Isaiah 44:21; Ezekiel 37:28; Romans 11:25; Jeremiah 31:2).
11. We believe marriage has only one meaning: the uniting of one biological man and one biological woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture. We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only within the confines of marriage. (Gen. 1:26-28; 2:24, Matt. 19:1-10, Eph. 5:22-33, Heb. 13:4)
12. We believe that children are a blessing from the Lord. Thus, all human life is sacred and worthy of protection from the moment of conception. (Psalms 127; 139:13-16)

1. PHILOSOPHY OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

The following is Zion Christian Academy's (ZCA) "Philosophy of Christian Education."

I. Authority

- A. We believe that God is the center of the universe. Man and creation do not exist apart from God. All of creation exists in Him and is under His control. God makes Himself known throughout it and in the events of mankind (John 1:1-4; Colossians 1:16-17).
- B. We believe God is an eternal being of absolute knowledge, power, and goodness. He is the source of all truth. He is a unity who expresses Himself in the Trinity (Romans 11:36; I John 5:6-7).
- C. We believe in the deity of Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, who has fulfilled the Father's redemptive plan with His sacrificial death upon the cross. The only hope for man is to believe in Jesus Christ, who was resurrected from the dead, and who will return to the earth in power and glory (John 3:16; I Timothy 2:5-6; Acts 4:12; Acts 1:11).
- D. We believe that the Holy Spirit is the third person of the Godhead who indwells every believer. He is our teacher and will lead us into all truth (John 16:13-14; I John 2:27; I John 4:13).
- E. We believe that man was created in the image of God. Man's image has been marred by his disobedience, and so he has fallen from God's original plan. Because of God's love for us, He provided a plan for our redemption through faith in Jesus Christ (Genesis 1:26-27; Romans 3:23-24; II Corinthians 5:17).
- F. We believe that education has a two-fold responsibility: to nurture and to lead out. This emulates the pattern of Jesus Christ, who taught His disciples the secrets of truth before He sent them out. It is our purpose as educators to continue the process of bringing students into the image of God. Our intent is for students to acquire the wisdom and knowledge of God in order to affect the world. Christian education requires the instructing, disciplining, enlightening, correcting, and forming of the child according to Christ and His word (Deuteronomy 6:1-2; 5-7).
- G. We believe that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge. Although the world may have tremendous knowledge and a great capacity for understanding that knowledge, true wisdom comes only from God and is given to those who ask. That which the world would consider "wisdom" is not considered such by God (James 1:5; Proverbs 1:7; I Corinthians 3:19).
- H. We believe that all truth is God's truth. Although there usually exists a dualistic concept of sacred and secular truths (theistic and humanistic), we assert that all truth is from the hand of God and is intended for man's use. Education without God is limited to sense knowledge. Christian education reveals that reality originates with God, not man, and is spiritual and eternal, not material and temporal (II Corinthians 4:18; John 8:32; John 14:6).
- I. We believe that the Bible in its entirety is divinely inspired and without error. We believe it is the Word of God, and it must be integrated into every aspect of the Christian school (John 17:17; II Timothy 3:16-17).

- J.** We believe that the school is an extension of the home and never a replacement for it. Christian education begins in the home and is the primary responsibility of the parents, as mandated by God. Therefore, the Christian school exists by the permission of the parents to assist them in the important task of parenting their children in today's society (Deuteronomy 11:18-19; Ephesians 6:4; Proverbs 22:6).

II. Curriculum

- A.** Personnel. We believe that the curriculum includes all activities and experiences which are initiated by the school for the accomplishment of the aims of education. The basic foundation upon which a Christ-centered curriculum is built is the school board, the administrator, the faculty, and the staff. These individuals, whatever their function in the school, must consider themselves a "living curriculum" portraying the image of Jesus Christ. We believe that each student will be influenced more greatly by those individuals than by any activity or written material (Philippians 4:9).
- B.** Instructional Material. We believe God wants His children to have the very best possible learning experiences to help them grow and mature. Instructional materials of all kinds need to be carefully evaluated and implemented. They must fulfill a vital link in the total process of education while meeting the individual needs of students. They must glorify God and lead students into a new awareness of Him and the universe He created (Psalm 32:8; Proverbs 19:20; Proverbs 24:32).
- C.** Service. We believe that everyone in a Christian school needs to be a servant of others. Thus, the services the school renders must come from a servant's heart. In providing services, we must avoid waste and luxury while providing adequate means for meeting students' needs (II Corinthians 8:21).
- D.** Facilities. We believe that facilities must glorify God and should present an image that is neither extravagant nor destitute of value. The facility should be conducive to enjoyable and profitable learning experiences. It should always be well-maintained and kept in a manner reflecting the blessings and benefits of God (Proverbs 24:3-4).

III. The Student

We believe God loves each student and longs for fellowship with each precious one. Through a God-centered and Bible-based curriculum, the Holy Spirit will be at work developing within each student a renewed mind. This leads to a life that is moving closer to God's full purpose for each life. We believe that each student should be educated as an individual who possesses unique abilities, talents, and personality. Each student should be trained to know how to live and work with others in the home, the church, and society. The student is enabled to do this by the Holy Spirit as he is taught by parent and teacher models who are born-again and have a Godly perspective of life (Matthew 19:14; I Corinthians 12:11).

IV. The Family

Statement on Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality:

- A.** We believe God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God (Gen. 1:26-27). Rejection of one's biological sex is a rejection of the image of God within that person.
- B.** We believe that the term "marriage" has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture (Gen. 2:18-25).
- C.** We believe God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other (I Cor. 6:18; 7:2-5; Heb. 13:4).
- D.** We believe God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman.
- E.** We believe any form of sexual immorality (including adultery, fornication, homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, and use of pornography) is sinful and offensive to God (Matt. 15:18-20; I Cor. 6:9-10).
- F.** We believe in order to preserve the function and integrity of Zion Christian Academy as the local body of Christ and to provide a biblical role model to the Zion Christian Academy members and the community, it is imperative that all persons employed by Zion Christian Academy in any capacity, or who serve as volunteers, agree to and abide by this Statement on Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality (Matt. 5:16; Phil. 2:14-16; I Thess. 5:22).
- G.** We believe God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ (Acts 3:19-21; Rom. 10:9-10; I Cor. 6:9-11).
- H.** We believe every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity (Mark 12:28-31; Luke 6:31). Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture nor the doctrines of Zion Christian Academy.

Statement on the Sanctity of Human Life:

We believe all human life is sacred and created by God in His image. Human life is of inestimable worth in all its dimensions, including preborn babies, the aged, the physically or mentally challenged, and every other stage or condition from conception through natural death. We are, therefore, called to defend, protect, and value all human life (Psalm 139).

Statement on Final Authority for Matters of Belief and Conduct:

The statement of faith does not exhaust the extent of our beliefs. The Bible itself, as the inspired and infallible Word of God that speaks with final authority concerning truth, morality, and the proper conduct of mankind, is the sole and final source of all that we believe. For purposes of Zion Christian Academy's faith, doctrine, practice, policy, and discipline, our school board is Zion Christian Academy's final interpretive authority on the Bible's meaning and application.

V. The Teaching-Learning Process

We believe in the teaching and learning process, the truth of the Word of God must be effectively taught, not only in the sense that the person is able to grasp or understand it, but also with an emphasis on the practical application or outworking of this in terms of our daily Christian walk. The written Word must be presented to the individual so that it might become the living Word in the individual's life. The Bible stresses that learning begins with truths of God and produces an increased knowledge of God, with the primary purpose being to produce godliness in the lives of the students. Additionally, the Bible indicates that true learning is for living (Colossians 1:9-10).

VI. Organizational Patterns

We believe the structure of the Christian school should be based upon the principles of organization found within the New Testament. These principles embody the concepts of servanthood, mutual submissiveness (or Christian self-government), and close interpersonal relationships based upon the Biblical principle of love as expressed in I Corinthians 13. Each segment of the school organization —the school board, the administrator, the faculty, staff, and parents —must be willing to facilitate the task of Christian education, which is the total development of the whole child (II Timothy 2:2).

VII. Ministry Objectives

We believe that in order to be most effective, the Christian school must define its ministry objectives for these reasons:

- A.** Objectives clarify the goals toward which the school is aiming.
- B.** A clear perspective gives direction and impetus to the daily work of the school.
- C.** Objectives provide standards against which a school can judge its present status and its rate of progress.
- D.** Objectives are necessary for an effective relationship between a Christian school and the community (I Timothy 1:5).

VIII. Integration

We believe the method of presenting God's truth in all areas and the nurturing of students to see all truth as God's truth requires two important conditions. First, the Bible must be taught at each grade level in a manner that is conducive to their age and ability. Secondly, Biblical truth pertaining to the subject matter must be integrated as part of each subject. This process involves discovering principles and facts which are found in the Bible and integrating them into the subject matter where they are relevant. We believe that in order for this process to be effective, every teacher and student must be actively involved in the study of the Bible in order to apply it daily to the process of education (John 17:17; I Timothy 4:16).

PROCEDURES

1. The basis of all programs (i.e., spiritual, academic, extracurricular, and support) is ZCA's Philosophy of Christian Education.
2. The foundation of ZCA's Philosophy of Christian Education is the Bible, as evidenced by the scriptural support for each of the eight POLICY paragraphs.
3. The Philosophy of Christian Education is included in publications (e.g., handbooks, brochures, pamphlets) available to ZCA's general population, prospective teachers and staff, and prospective students and their parents.

2. NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY

In the spirit of Christian unity and the love that Christ shows for all mankind, Zion Christian Academy does not discriminate based on race, sex, national origin, or physical disability. However, the school reserves the right to deny admission to any individual who cannot benefit from the experience based on past academic achievement or whose personal lifestyle is not in harmony with the stated philosophy and purpose of ZCA. Zion Christian Academy reserves the right to use appropriate selection criteria in fulfillment of its stated goals and objectives.

3. ADMISSION POLICIES

The criteria for a student's acceptance to Zion Christian Academy include former records, a placement test (at the discretion of the principal), and an interview. Students will be reviewed annually and be allowed to enroll based on academic progress, testimony, and discipline records.

Registration of a student will be finalized when the following items have been satisfactorily completed:

- Application/registration form completed and signed by parents or guardians.
- Application/registration fee paid.
- Student's health and other record forms completed.
- Student questionnaire completed. (Grades 5-8)
- Code of Conduct agreement statement signed.
- Acceptance implies you have read and agree with ZCA's policies and procedures stated in the K-8th family Handbook located under school resources at zionchristianacademy.com.
- Entrance/placement test satisfactorily completed. (at the discretion of the principal)
- A personal interview of parents and prospective students with the school administration.
- Notification of student's acceptance for K-8th. Receiving enrollment instructions implies acceptance into ZCA.

Please note:

- Zion Christian Academy complies with Kentucky State Law concerning **age requirements** for **Kindergarten**.
- Zion Christian Academy is **limited** in the acceptance of **hyperactive** or **hyperkinetic** children.
- ZCA does not offer support services via a school counselor, psychologist, or special education teacher for **social, emotional, or behavioral** issues leading to conduct that will interfere with learning in a regular classroom environment or for IEPs other than speech and language services.

4. FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS**TUITION**

Tuition fees are payable online through the FACTS Family Portal and Financial Management System. Payment schedules are selected by the parent/guardian when you sign up online. Please visit the “Current Parents” tab on our website for a link to the FACTS Family Portal and Financial Management System. You will need the following District Code: ZCA-KY.

NON-PAYMENT:

- All tuition must be paid according to the agreed payment plan set up at the time of enrollment.
- There will be an initial \$25 charge for past-due tuition, and an additional \$25 charge every 20 days thereafter until the past-due amount is paid.
- Repeated and consecutive nonpayment of tuition will be grounds for dismissal.
- A remaining tuition balance constitutes a forfeiture of attending the following year.

REGISTRATION FEES

A registration fee is payable for each child enrolled for each school year. (Maximum Registration Fee of \$500 per family)

BOOK FEES

Book fees are payable to each student. These fees are due by July 15th. Book fees do include some of the required materials for each grade.

SUPPLY LISTS

Each grade has a designated list of supplies that students are required to provide on the first day of school. These lists are posted via our website, zionchristianacademy.com, prior to the start of the school year and are subject to change as the year progresses for special subjects.

WITHDRAWAL FROM PROGRAM

Should you decide to withdraw your child from the program, a two-week notice is required. If, for whatever reason, a notice is not given, a tuition fee for the next month may be charged.

5. EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

The educational program at Zion Christian Academy, for the purposes of providing a sound academic education, primarily uses the ABEKA and BJU curricula in the upper grades. Instruction is provided in the following areas: religious instruction; language; reading; spelling; penmanship; mathematics; social studies; science; health; history; physical education; music; and art.

6. ACADEMIC TESTING & LEARNING SUPPORT POLICY

At ZCA, we are committed to helping every student grow academically, spiritually, and personally. We recognize that students learn in different ways and at different rates.

When a student consistently performs significantly below academic benchmarks, grade-level expectations, or standardized testing norms, the school may recommend further educational or psychological evaluation by a licensed professional.

Please note:

ZCA does not employ special education teachers, intervention specialists, or school psychologists qualified to diagnose learning disabilities or medical/neurological conditions.

Therefore, ZCA is unable to independently evaluate or formally diagnose conditions such as:

- ADHD
- Dyslexia
- Dysgraphia
- Dyscalculia
- Processing disorders
- Autism Spectrum Disorders
- Other learning or attention-related challenges

If testing concerns persist, families may be required to obtain a comprehensive evaluation from a licensed psychologist, educational diagnostician, physician, or other qualified professional in order to better understand the student's academic needs.

While ZCA does not provide formal special education services, we desire to partner with families to support student success. Based on classroom observations and available documentation, reasonable classroom accommodations or modifications may be implemented when appropriate. Examples may include:

- Extended time on assignments or tests
- Modified workload
- Preferential seating
- Organizational assistance
- Small-group support when available

The purpose of outside testing is not punitive but to identify potential barriers to learning and provide families and teachers with strategies that best support the student's educational progress.

ZCA reserves the right to determine whether the school can appropriately meet each student's academic and educational needs within the scope of services the school can provide.

7. STUDENT SPIRITUAL FORMATION GOALS

1. **Powerful in prayer** - students understand the importance of daily conversations with God.
2. **Responsive in worship** - Students understand that how we live our lives is an expression of worship to God. Moments of musical expression allow for collective praise to rise to heaven.
3. **Spirit-empowered** - Students should have a solid Biblical understanding of the Holy Spirit and a confidence that He will empower their daily life.
4. **Biblically-fluent** - students are able to read the Bible with sufficient understanding for life, have the knowledge of how to engage the text, and gather its meaning. Students are Biblically-literate and exhibit actions consistent with being fluent in the Word of God.
5. **Actively serving** - students are encouraged to serve actively in their home, church, and community.
6. **Bold in faith** - students are encouraged to live out the Great Commission by sharing their faith with others.
7. **Giving selflessly** - students will use what has been entrusted to them by God to give to others in need.
8. **Living like Christ** - when students choose to grow in their relationship with God by worshipping, praying, reading the Word, and fellowshiping with other believers, they will desire to obey His instruction and begin to look more like Him.

8. NUTRITION

Lunch is held between 10:45 a.m. and 12:35 p.m. for K-8th grade. Students should bring a well-balanced packed lunch each day of school. To support healthy habits and minimize sugar during the school day, sodas are **not** permitted in packed lunches.

Please be mindful that we cannot refrigerate or heat items, so plan accordingly.

Please note:

- 1) If your student forgets to bring their lunch, someone will need to bring them a lunch.
- 2) If no one can get to the school, a supplemental lunch can be provided for **\$10** and will be billed through FACTS.

SPECIAL LUNCHESES

Parents are welcome to bring their student a special lunch on occasion; however, we ask that soda, milkshakes, and ice cream not be included. Thank you for helping us maintain a positive and focused learning environment for all students.

9. HEALTH & SAFETY

Your child's health is a matter of major importance to all of us. Upon enrollment, we require a Preventative Health form signed by a physician, as well as proof of up-to-date immunizations on the approved KY form, OR a notarized Immunization Declination Form.

Your child may be sent home if any symptoms of an illness appear during the day. In such cases, your child will be immediately isolated from the others, and you will be contacted.

Keep your child home if they exhibit any of the following symptoms:

- *Fever or have had one during the previous 24-hour period.*
- *Heavy nasal discharge*
- *Constant cough*
- *Abnormally irritable*
- *Abnormally tired (Rest at such times may prevent the development of serious illness)*
- *Possible communicable disease symptoms (i.e., sniffles, reddened eyes, sore throat, headache, abdominal pain, fever).*

Please notify the school immediately if the child has a communicable disease.

*****If your child is sent home from school sick, please do not send them the next day without approval from the office. Please call the school the following morning to discuss the symptoms, and a decision will be made on whether they are able to return.*****

Your child may come to school if:

- *A cold is over, but a minor nasal drip remains*
- *The school has been notified of exposure to a communicable disease and the approved incubation period is over*

EMERGENCY PROTOCOL

In case of accidental injury or emergency, ZCA will attempt to contact the child's designated emergency contacts. If necessary, an ambulance or paramedic will be contacted as well. Until a parent, ambulance, or paramedic arrives, the Principal or an Assistant will personally oversee the child's care. The legal guardian will be expected to assume responsibility for any resultant expense not covered by ZCA insurance, as agreed to per the signed consent form. It is to each child's benefit that parents/guardians keep the school up to date on all emergency contact information and any other pertinent information regarding child health and safety.

REPORTING CHILD ABUSE & NEGLECT

In accordance with KRS 620.030, ZCA will report any suspected child abuse and neglect to the DCBS or police.

10. MEDICATION

If a student has a medical prescription that must be taken during the school day, the medication must be handed directly to the front office for placement in a locked cabinet. No child is permitted to keep medication in his/her possession. A medication permission form must be filled out and signed by the parent. You may pick up the form in the office.

11. AUTHORIZATION TO PICK UP CHILD

No child will be released to leave the ZCA premises with any individual who has not been authorized by a legal guardian to do so. We must have written or verbal authorization from a legal guardian regarding any changes.

12. DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP

Grade	Drop off Time	Pick up Time
5th-8th	7:50-8 AM	2:50-3 PM
1st-4th	8-8:10 AM	3-3:10 PM
K	8:15-8:25 AM	2:30-2:40 PM

**If before-care is needed, an additional fee will apply (see rate sheet for details).*

***If a child is picked up later than 3:10 p.m., the after-care fee will apply (see rate sheet for details)*

****Students with siblings in other grades may be dropped off at the time the older sibling is due to arrive and will not receive a before-care charge.*

*****Older students may stay and wait for the dismissal of younger students with no after-care charge.*

PLEASE NOTE

- Drop-Off: Follow the appropriate flow drop-off signage.
- For health and safety reasons, Parents will **drop off** students outside the main door.
- Students who are **tardy must be signed in** at the school office by a parent/guardian. If you are tardy, please park and walk your student into the office. Please provide a valid parent note if you wish for the tardy to be marked excused.

13. ATTENDANCE

We are required to follow the State of Kentucky's Attendance Guidelines:

- **The parents must call or email the office by 9:00 AM; a voicemail may be left.**
- If the school is not notified, the absence/tardy will be **unexcused**.
- A signed excuse note or doctor's note must be provided to the school within **three days** of the student's return.
- The excuse must state the child's name, dates of absence(s), **and reason for the absence(s).**
- A student is entitled to **8 Parent Notes** per school year.
- A Parent Note is only **valid for 1 day** of absence/tardy

It is crucial for your child to attend school every day. If your child accumulates more than **six** unexcused absences during the school year, we will be required to report this to the state. Additionally, please note that **three** unexcused tardies will be counted as **one absence**.

TARDIES & ABSENCES

Students who arrive late to school **need to report to the office with a parent/guardian to be signed in** before going to their classroom. Children more than 2 hours late will be marked ½ day absent. If a child is removed from class before the end of the school day for any reason, a note must be provided, and the student will be marked either tardy or ½ day absent, depending on the time removed. All absences/tardies are marked unexcused without a valid parent or doctor note due upon the student's return.

The following are examples; there may be additional tardy/ absence reasons not listed. All Tardies are at the discretion of Zion Christian Academy, whether they are counted as excused or unexcused.

REASON	ATTENDANCE CODE	NOTE
Overslept (Signed into School at 10 AM)	Half Day Excused	Parent Note (Counts as 1 of 8 Parent Notes)
Dentist Appointment (Left school at 2 PM)	Tardy Excused	Parent Note (Counts as 1 of 8) Excused OR Dr. Note
Planned Vacation (Missed 3 Days)	Absent Excused	Parent gave <u>2 weeks' notice</u> and provided a note with dates and reason (Counts as 3 of 8)
Flu (Missed 4 Consecutive Days)	Absent Excused	Dr. Note Required
Traffic	Tardy Unexcused	Parent did not contact the school
Missed school	Absent Unexcused	Parent Note Provided, but <u>missing reason</u> for absence

In the event a student is removed from school for **vacation**, the teacher must be **notified at least two weeks in advance**. Students on vacation are marked absent and are responsible for all work missed. Please follow the policy for excused absences.

CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM POLICY

Chronic absenteeism means missing too much school—for any reason—excused or unexcused. ZCA defines chronic absenteeism as missing 10% of the school year (about 18 days). Any student with 10% or more absences in a school year **will be considered “under review” for chronic absenteeism. The parents must address the school board for consideration of continuing at ZCA or being promoted to the next grade.**

MAKE-UP WORK FOR EXCUSED ABSENCES

Students who are absent due to illness or personal vacation will be required to complete make-up work. If the assigned work is not submitted on time, the grade for the missing work will be recorded as a zero.

RESPONSIBILITY:

It is the student’s and/or parents’ responsibility to obtain all missed assignments and complete the work after an excused absence.

TIME ALLOWED TO MAKE UP WORK:

Students have one (1) day to make up work for each day of school missed, up to a maximum of five (5) days.

EXAMPLE:

- If a student misses three (3) days, they have three (3) days to complete all make-up work.
- If a student misses seven (7) days, they have five (5) days to complete all make-up work.

In exceptional circumstances, a teacher may grant additional time if:

- The parent requests the extension due to an exceptional circumstance or,
- The reason for the request is justified, ie. Doctor’s specific note

Tests Missed During an Excused Absence:

- If no new material was taught during the absence, students will generally have one (1) day to make up the missed test.
- If new material was taught during the absence, the test make-up will follow the guidelines outlined above for the days missed. *Students may also choose to take the test on their first day back.

EDUCATIONAL ABSENCES

Students may be granted an excused absence for up to ten (10) school days to participate in an educational enhancement opportunity approved by the Principal. Eligible opportunities must provide significant educational value and may include instructional, experiential, or performance-based programs in the areas of language, science, mathematics, history, or Bible.

To request an Educational Absence:

- Parents/guardians must submit a written request at least two (2) weeks prior to the planned absence.
- Approval must be granted by the Principal before the absence occurs.
- Upon approval, the student will receive an Educational Event Form to take to the event/program.
- The form must be fully completed and signed by the instructor or program leader and returned to the school upon the student's return.
- Failure to submit the completed form will result in the absence being marked unexcused.

Students are responsible for completing all missed assignments during an Educational Absence. Please refer to the "Make-Up Work for Excused Absences" section above for additional expectations and guidelines.

ONE DAY ABSENCES

If a student misses only one day and that day includes a previously announced test or due date, **the student is expected to take the test or submit the assignment on their first day back**, since they were informed of it in advance.

HOLIDAYS AND DAYS OFF

You will receive a school calendar at the beginning of the year listing all holidays and off-days. In the event of excessive snow days, we will utilize "at-home instruction" to fulfill the required number of school days.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

In the event school is delayed or closes due to inclement weather, you will be notified via FACTS text alerts.

DOCTOR APPOINTMENTS

Doctor and dental appointments should be made before or after school hours if possible. However, if a school-time appointment is necessary, the teacher and office must be informed of when the child will be leaving. For such appointments, the child will be marked tardy to indicate incomplete attendance for the day and will be required to complete any missed classwork. A doctor's note is required to excuse the missed time.

14. AFTERCARE

Aftercare is primarily for those who have registered for specific days upon enrollment. Due to staffing limitations, if you have not been registered for aftercare, you must call ahead to check availability. Aftercare is available only to students in grades K-5. **We do not offer aftercare for students in 6th-8th Grades.** Students are expected to abide by the ZCA school behavior policies, and failure to do so will result in loss of after-care privileges.

15. COMMUNICATIONS

ZCA is committed to helping children and their families as it pertains to school adjustment, growth, and development. Please feel free to discuss your child's needs or concerns with their teacher. If more than a few minutes are needed with a teacher, please schedule a time before or after class. We encourage your input and hope you will communicate with us as needed. We will make every effort to collaborate with you regarding your child's needs.

You may contact teachers directly through email. Phone calls from teachers will ordinarily be made during the teacher's planning period or after school hours. If parents and teachers are partners in the education and training process, communication is a must. The following are ways that we strive to communicate with the home:

1. **Daily Folders (K-2nd)** are sent home every day with important information*.
2. **Friday Folders (3rd & 4th)** are sent home every Friday with important information.
3. **Student Agenda (3rd-8th)** encourages daily correspondence between teachers & parents. Parents, please look at your child's agenda daily.
4. **FACTS Text Alerts** are sent out with important news and information.
5. **Phone calls or Emails:** 859.371.9008 or zionlions@zcaky.com
6. **A teacher may call or email** when an improper attitude, behavior problem, or academic problem is displayed.
7. **Parent-teacher conferences** will be scheduled after the 1st grading period and can also be scheduled before or after school upon request. Please contact the teacher for availability when needed.
8. **The Family Handbook** is a great resource to look back on as a refresher of our school rules and guidelines.
9. **Report cards** are issued every six (K-3rd) and nine (4th-8th) weeks.
10. **Social Media:** Parents can stay current on all school events, fundraisers, activities, special events, and important information through our Facebook page. Please like our Facebook page and follow us on Instagram: "Zion Christian Academy." Please email the school if you do not want your child to be included in ZCA's social media posts.

16. HOMEWORK

The purpose of homework is to help each student thoroughly grasp and master the material already presented. Repetition and reflection will promote better understanding and retention. Parents can assist the student by providing a quiet place, regular study time each evening, and ensuring assignments are neat, complete, and accurate.

17. REPORTING STUDENT PROGRESS & GRADING

Zion Christian Academy uses a variety of methods to inform parents of their child's progress in school. It is our hope that the different communications will help both the parent and the teacher meet the child's needs.

REPORT CARDS

Report cards are emailed and available to view on FACTS Management. Report cards for grades K-3 will be sent at the end of each six-week term. Grades 4-8 will be sent every quarter. These reports will indicate progress, grades, and areas of needed improvement.

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled with the teacher after the 1st grading period and upon request.

GRADING SCALE

The grading scale for grades K through 8 is as follows:

A – Outstanding: 90-100%	D - Poor, needs improvement: 60-69%
B – Good: 80-89%	F - Failure, unsatisfactory: 59% & below
C – Satisfactory: 70-79%	

Within this framework, teachers may use their own grading guidelines to assign varying values to specific tasks.

OTHER GRADING POLICIES (GRADES 5-8)

Students receiving failing grades need to know the following:

- Why they are failing and what they must do to raise their grade.
- How the teacher can assist the student to raise the grade.
- How parents can assist their students at home.

18. PROMOTION

It is our desire that each student at ZCA achieve success in their academic endeavors. Ideally, students progress from one grade level to the next after one academic year. However, because of an individual's uniqueness, it may be necessary for a student to repeat a grade. After consulting with the student's parents, the teacher and director may require a student to be retained in a grade. The faculty and administration respect parents' right to enroll their child in another academic institution if they want their child to advance to the next grade level. **** Please see the Attendance Policy on page 15.**

19. DRESS CODE

Students at Zion Christian Academy are expected to comply with the following dress code: **If they arrive at school out of uniform, you will be required to bring them proper attire.**

Uniforms need to be purchased from the **Shaheen's link** located on the "Current Parents" page of the school website.

✓ The following is a list of **appropriate** uniform attire:

✓ Shirt	Uniform Polo WITH embroidered school logo. Approved colors available in our online store.	GIRLS: Peter Pan collared shirts are only for under jumpers. **Jumpers are only for K-4th grades.
✓ Pants	Khaki pants that are fitted at the waist	No ripped or torn pants No Jeans (exception below)
✓ Shorts	Khaki Bermuda shorts that are fitted at the waist. No shorter than 3" above the knee.	May be worn only from April 1st through November 1st, OR when temperatures are consistently 60 degrees or higher throughout the day.
✓ Skirts ✓ Skorts ✓ Jumpers	SOLID Khaki OR Plaid uniform-style skorts or skirts, jumpers WITH bike shorts underneath (unless shorts are built into the item) No shorter than 3" above the knee	May be worn only April 1st through November 1st, UNLESS Solid Color leggings are worn underneath. Leggings need to be Black **Jumpers are only for K-4th grades
✓ Sweaters ✓ Sweatshirts	A ZCA EMBROIDERED crew neck, ¼ zip pullover, full zip without hood or cardigan can be worn over a polo.	Spirit Wear crewnecks and hooded sweatshirts may ONLY be worn on Spirit Wear Days.
✓ Jewelry	GIRLS: no distracting jewelry (see below)	BOYS: no earrings or piercings of any kind
✓ Hair	Neat in appearance	BOYS: hair must be above the collar
✓ Shoes	Closed-toed shoes ONLY. Gym Shoes must be worn for PE.	Please check with your child's teacher about their PE days.

✗ The following is a list of **inappropriate** attire:

x Shirts/Sweaters/Sweatshirts:

- *Spirit-wear t-shirts* are **NOT** considered to be part of the uniform and may only be worn on School Spirit Days.
- Sweaters and jackets worn in the classroom may **NOT** include a hood **EXCEPT** for Spirit Wear which can only be worn on Spirit Wear Days.

X Pants/Shorts:

- *Wide legs, cut-offs, “zip-offs,” and frayed or holey pants* are **NOT** allowed
- Pants must be *fitted at the waist* with **NO** underwear showing
- Pants may **NOT** drag on the ground
- *Baggy or “puffy” cargo pants* are **NOT** permitted
- Jeans are **NOT** permitted EXCEPT on Spirit Wear Days
- Overalls are **NOT** permitted
- *Leggings, jeggings, or pants made of stretchy material* are **NOT** permitted (except worn under a dress, jumper, or skirt)
- Pants must **NOT** be *tight-fitting*

X Hair/Skin/Nails:

- Unnatural or distracting *hair dyes* are **NOT** permitted
- K-4th **NO MAKE-UP**. 5th- 8th **NO** distracting or unnatural makeup.
- *Headbands or hairpieces* (unicorn horns, cat ears, etc.) are **NOT** permitted
- **Artificial nails** are **NOT** permitted
- **Tattoos** are **NOT** permitted

X Jewelry:

- Please do **NOT** send your student with distracting jewelry (dangling earrings, oversized necklaces, excessive bracelets, etc.)

X Other:

- Any offensive decals on clothes, shoes, backpacks, etc. are **NOT** permitted. This includes ANYTHING that promotes violence or death, such as skulls and crossbones, violent movie/TV characters, etc.
- Crocs shoes are **NOT** permitted for PE.

SPIRIT & DRESS-UP DAYS

SCHOOL SPIRIT DAYS take place every Friday. Students are permitted to wear their school spirit wear (i.e., ZCA t-shirts, sweatshirts, hoodies, shorts, sweat pants, jerseys, etc.) in place of their uniform polo. Polos are not required to be worn under sweatshirts or hoodies these days. If your student does not yet have spirit wear, it can be purchased from Shaheen’s (link on the Current Parents page on our website) or they may wear their School Uniform. All other dress code rules still apply concerning bottoms and shoes, with the exception of jeans being allowed on these days.

SPECIAL DRESS-UP DAYS: ZCA also schedules different dress-up days to celebrate certain holidays or to promote student engagement (i.e., pajama day, crazy hair day, etc.). These days, students are not required to wear their uniforms unless they choose not to participate. Students are still required to be modest and appropriately dressed for school activities.

PICTURE DAYS

School pictures will be taken 1 to 2 times per school year. Picture days are Non-Uniform days, meaning students are not required to wear their school uniform shirts. Picture day instructions and ordering information will be sent home with students.

20. HONOR CODE**PHILOSOPHY OF DISCIPLINE**

The intention of Zion Christian Academy is to motivate all students to develop a sense of accountability and discourage negative behavior. Any student who violates the standards of behavior to which all students are held accountable will receive disciplinary consequences or be dismissed from ZCA. **Admission to ZCA implies that students can adhere to all behavior policies and understand that we do not employ behavioral specialists.** Discipline will be handled in a manner according to the procedures listed in the next section.

HONOR CODE

Zion Christian Academy desires that each student honor Christ in all actions, words, and activities 24 hours/day, 7 days/week, 365 days/year. PARENTS AND STUDENTS are required to sign a copy of the Honor Code.

To ensure an appropriate Christian school environment and to reinforce the Christian values of the home, students and parents of ZCA support the following Honor Code:

- Students are always to exhibit respect towards teachers and faculty. Talking back, foul or abusive/disrespectful language* or gestures are not permitted. This includes verbal or written.
- No use of alcohol, illegal drugs, or tobacco, including vaping.
- Students are expected to recognize the dignity and importance of each person by respecting others' feelings, property, and rights. Hurting a friend is grounds for dismissal from ZCA.
- Pushing and shoving in line and unacceptable physical contact, such as fighting, scuffling, tripping, shoving, and unacceptable games, are not permitted.
- Stealing will not be tolerated.
- Cheating (including copying homework from other students) is unacceptable and will result in a "0".
- Students may not talk during a test or share information to aid another student during a test or quiz.
- Students are expected to properly care for all school property. Defacing school property is not permitted. Students and parents are financially accountable for the repair or replacement of any damaged property (including school tablets and computers).
- Students are to conduct themselves in a respectful manner in the school building, both before and after school, and while changing classes.

- Students are given a supervised lunch/recess period daily. This time is not only for rest and relaxation but for maintaining and developing proper table manners and acceptable social behavior in the lunchroom. Conversing quietly is acceptable.
- Rude behavior during lunch, such as shouting, food throwing, or destroying another's lunch, will not be tolerated. Disciplinary action will result.
- "Bullying" is inappropriate, aggressive, harassing, or abusive behavior. This includes verbal abuse, name-calling, and intentionally excluding someone from a group for an improper purpose. This includes verbal or written.
- "Cyberbullying" is any use of social media to engage in such behavior. Bullying, including cyberbullying, could include, without limitation, actions such as making threats, spreading rumors, and attacking someone physically or verbally (whether directly or indirectly).
- Creating false profiles or sites using the ZCA name, staff names, or other students' names may result in immediate dismissal.
- "Racist behavior" is actions or words, verbal or nonverbal, that demonstrate prejudice, discrimination, or antagonism based on race. This includes, without limitation, any racial slur, symbol, gesture, etc.
- All homework assignments are expected to be neat, satisfactory, and completed on time.
- Students are expected to take an active role in helping create a positive classroom experience for all. Students are called upon to assist teachers in establishing classroom rules and standards.
- Students are expected to adhere to the dress code as outlined in this handbook.
- Students are expected to comply with the cell phone and electronic device policies outlined in this handbook.
- Students are expected to conduct themselves as responsible Christian citizens. Each student is a personal representative of Zion Christian Academy and is expected to produce a positive image both at school and in public.

***Disrespectful language is described as: (verbal or written)**

- Talking about and/ or singing inappropriate things or using innuendos
- Swearing or Cursing
- Mature/immature discussion that is not typical of their age
- Using variations of inappropriate words or phrases

21. DISCIPLINE

Honor Code Violations

Zion Christian Academy encourages each student to strive to honor Christ in their actions, words, and activities at all times, whether in public or private life. Violations of the Zion Christian Academy Honor Code will result in specified consequences.

Consequences will be reviewed and differentiated based on the nature and impact of each individual offense. Throughout the disciplinary process, Zion Christian Academy's desire is to administer reconciliation and restoration to the extent possible.

Grades K-4

Students in grades **K-4** who violate the Zion Christian Academy Honor Code will receive appropriate consequences. Each teacher will communicate their specific classroom management and behavior policies at the beginning of the school year.

Grades 5-8

A **Demerit Policy** has been implemented for students in grades 5-8 who commit minor violations of the Zion Christian Academy Honor Code.

- Each demerit will result in a student losing all free time during the school day.
- Accumulation of eight (8) demerits in one quarter will result in in-school detention.
- In-school detention: Students will be given an in-school detention assignment. In-school detention does not take the place of a student's regular assignments, and he/she will still be responsible for completing his/her regular class assignments for that day.
- Persistent accumulation of demerits may result in further disciplinary actions, including loss of field trips and/or expulsion.

A **Behavior Policy** has been implemented in grades 5-8 for students who violate the Zion Christian Academy Honor Code.

For a violation pertaining to inappropriate behavior, the following actions will take place:

- A Behavior Violation form will be sent home with the student.
- Students will be required to call a parent from the school office to discuss inappropriate behavior.

PDA Policy

At our school, we are committed to fostering a Christ-centered environment that reflects respect, purity, and self-control (1 Timothy 4:12).

Expectations:

- Students are expected to keep all interactions appropriate and respectful while on campus, on field trips, or at any school events.
- Public displays of affection (PDA) are not permitted. This includes, but is not limited to: holding hands, hugging in a romantic manner, kissing, or any behavior that suggests a dating relationship.
- Friendships should reflect kindness, encouragement, and Christ-like behavior without physical affection.

Purpose:

- To promote an atmosphere focused on learning, spiritual growth, and honoring God with our actions.
- To encourage students to develop healthy, respectful relationships grounded in biblical principles.

Consequences:

- First offense: Verbal warning and redirection
- Second offense: Parent notification and leave school for the day.
- Repeated offenses: Administrative action for reasons for immediate dismissal.

We encourage students to “act in a way worthy of the calling” (Ephesians 4:1) and to honor God in both their words and actions.

The following violations (K-8) may result in **immediate dismissal**:

- Persistent disobedience or aggression
- Leaving school grounds during school hours without permission
- Fighting or striking school personnel or other students
- Using inappropriate language, including singing inappropriate songs, both verbal and written
- Vandalism of school or church property
- Tampering with the fire alarm
- Possession of weapons
- Watching or sharing inappropriate materials electronically
- Repeated PDA offenses

Cell Phone & Electronic Devices Policy

Electronic devices are not to be seen or heard on campus at any time (including before school, lunch, passing period, etc.). This includes but is not limited to, laptops, tablets, portable audio devices, head/earphones, hand-held video games, **smartwatches**, and **cell phones**. Exceptions will be made for necessary medical devices at the Principal’s discretion.

- In classrooms and under teachers' supervision, teachers may allow the use of devices such as tablets, earphones, and laptops.
- At any time, if a student needs to use their device, they may ask any staff member for permission. Staff members will work to accommodate all genuine requests (generally not during class/teaching but during a free period or passing period).
- Any parent/guardian needing to reach a student immediately should call the campus office. A message will be delivered right away, and/or the student will be brought out of class to contact their parent/guardian.
- Any student using a phone or other electronic device on campus (or any device that is seen or heard at any point at school) will have that device confiscated.

- Consequences – Grades K-8
 - 1st Confiscation: The device will be held overnight, or a parent may retrieve the device at the end of the school day.
 - 2nd Confiscation: The device will be held for a week.
 - Confiscations beyond two will result in additional disciplinary action and, if necessary, suspension from school.
- **Using any electronic device on campus to watch or share inappropriate content** (i.e., videos or other inappropriate materials, including pictures) **will result in immediate dismissal.**

22. **STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY** **CLASSROOM EXPECTATIONS**

Students are expected to:

- Listen carefully and follow directions right away
- Come to class prepared with all the needed materials before the bell rings
- Raise your hand and wait to be called on before speaking
- Keep your hands, feet, and personal items to yourself to help everyone feel safe
- Use respectful words and a positive attitude
- Show respect for yourself, classmates, teachers, and visitors at all times

ASSIGNMENTS

All homework assignments must be neat, satisfactory, and completed on time. If Homework is not completed on the due date, except for illness; a demerit (for middle school) or other consequences may be imposed depending on the teacher's policy set up beforehand.

PHONE CALLS

Students will be allowed to use the office telephone in the event of an emergency. To encourage personal responsibility, telephone calls to obtain forgotten assignments, books, etc., when the child has had previous knowledge that the item is needed, will be allowed at the discretion of the principal.

CLOTHES

Please label all clothes to prevent loss. Any clothes found without labels will be collected and donated if not claimed after one month.

23. **RECESS**

All children, K-4th, are expected to go outside for recess, weather permitting (please dress your children accordingly). If weather conditions do not permit outdoor recess, recess will be held indoors. Students in grades 5-8 will also go outside for PE and free time.

24. PLAYGROUND RULES

- Play should not be of such a nature that clothes are torn or ruined.
- No hard balls are allowed in the playground area.
- Tackle football, or any similar game, is prohibited.
- Rocks and ground materials may not be thrown.
- No pushing, climbing, or swinging on fencing.
- Playground equipment rules must be followed.
- Students may not leave the playground without permission.

25. VOLUNTEERS

ZCA welcomes volunteers! We would love voluntary assistance for field trips, programs, public relations activities, recruitment of future students, and other activities. All volunteers participating in class events are asked to complete a background check using the Kentucky Volunteer Registry Form. You may download a form from the “Current Parents” tab on our website.

26. FIELD TRIPS

Teachers are encouraged to take classes on field trips that will enhance an area of their education. To do so, parent volunteers may be needed to chaperone and/or assist with transporting children. Chaperones are necessary to maintain certain child-to-adult ratios, ensuring proper supervision and the safety of each student. Because of this, **siblings are not permitted to attend field trips**. If you are able to help, please let your child’s teacher know.

Permission slips from parents or guardians are required for field trips. Volunteers must complete a background check. If you're new to volunteering with Zion Christian Academy, visit our website under the “Current Parents” tab to print and fill out the “Volunteer Form.” Return it to the school office with a copy of your driver’s license.

In the absence of a Field Trip, make-up assignments or projects will be given to **non-attending students** to fulfill learning objectives.

27. BIRTHDAYS

If you would like to send a treat for your child’s birthday, we celebrate birthdays either in the classroom or at lunchtime. Please notify your child’s teacher at least two days in advance if you decide to do so, and ensure there is enough to share. **Please avoid foods that include common allergens.**

28. FUNDRAISERS

Several fundraisers will be held throughout the school year. The money raised will be part of the school budget to purchase equipment, materials, or support special projects. As always, fundraising participation is highly encouraged and greatly appreciated, but not required.

29. **BACK TO SCHOOL - OPEN HOUSE**

Zion Christian Academy holds an open house at the beginning of the school year for all incoming students. This is to provide parents and students with the opportunity to meet the child's teacher, learn the student expectations for each grade, and have any parent questions answered by the staff prior to the first day of school.

30. **OBSERVING CLASSES**

Any parent interested in observing a classroom must contact the school office to make arrangements with the teacher. No siblings should accompany the parent.

31. **ANIMALS AND PETS**

For safety and health reasons, pets and animals are not permitted in the school building.

32. **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES & DRILLS**

FIRE

1. When the alarm sounds, all students and faculty will evacuate from the nearest exit, closing classroom doors on the way out.
2. Students will walk quickly and quietly to their assigned assembly place.
3. Students will stand SILENTLY in line until told to return to the building.
4. When the signal is given, students will return to classes quietly.

TORNADO

1. Students & Faculty are to exit rooms immediately.
2. Students & Faculty will report to the assigned area.

EARTHQUAKE

Follow the appropriate procedure for each classroom.

33. **RATIONALE AND PROTOCOL FOR CONFLICT RESOLUTION**

It is vitally important that open communication be maintained between parents and staff members. General disciplinary action involving student behavior will be handled by the teachers. Situations in which student behavior becomes inappropriately chronic or flagrant will be referred to the school principal. Zion Christian Academy willingly receives constructive criticism or suggestions regarding ways the school might be improved or problems that may exist.

The Bible specifically directs that conflict be resolved in a very specific way (**Matthew 18:15-17**). In addition, we are to be quick to hear, slow to speak, and slow to anger (James 1:19). **Therefore, parents should direct problems, criticisms, or suggestions using the following line of communication: teacher, principal, and finally, Pastor Garrett Cuzick.**

34. GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE - Board of Directors/School Board

The Board of Directors at **Gathering Place Church** holds the primary responsibility for overseeing the governance of all ministries affiliated with the church.

The School Board of **Zion Christian Academy** is tasked with formulating policies and providing advisory support to the school administrator.

Members of both the **Board of Directors** and the **School Board** must demonstrate evidence of being born-again, fulfill all qualifications for church membership, and have publicly affirmed their alignment with the school's statement of faith.

