



# Student Handbook

One of the greatest gifts a parent can give to their child is a quality education. Since 1982, Book of Life Academy has been producing incredible, academically sound, young Christian leaders. Along with strong academics, and a caring Christian environment, students will be equipped to face the adversity of the world. The purpose of this school is to couple strong academics with sound Christian principles to produce amazing, well-rounded students.

Mrs. Rebecca Lemus, Principal

## **General Information:**

Grades offered:	PreK2 – Grade 5
Address:	Book of Life Academy 913 Cedar Park Rd. Annapolis, MD 21401
Phone:	(410) 263-2600
Fax:	(410) 263-5685
Website:	Bookoflifeacademy.com
Office hours:	8:00AM – 3:15PM Monday – Friday

## **Administrative staff:**

Principal: Mrs. Rebecca Lemus	Email: <a href="mailto:MrsRlemus@gmail.com">MrsRlemus@gmail.com</a>
Assistant Principal: Mrs. Donna Wallace	Email: <a href="mailto:Bookoflifeacademy913@gmail.com">Bookoflifeacademy913@gmail.com</a>
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## Book of Life Academy 2024-2025 School Year

AUGUST 2024							
Sun	Mo	Tue	We	Thu	Fri	Sat	
				1	2	3	August 09- Last Day of Summer Camp
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	August 20 -23- Teacher Training
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	August 26- Parent/Student Orientation Day (MANDATORY)
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	August 27- First Day for ALL STUDENTS
25	26	27	28	29	30	31	
SEPTEMBER 2024							
Sun	Mo	Tue	We	Thu	Fri	Sat	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	September 2 - Labor Day (School is Closed)
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	
29	30						
OCTOBER 2024							
Sun	Mo	Tue	We	Thu	Fri	Sat	
		1	2	3	4	5	October 14 - Parent Teacher Conferences (School is Closed)
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	October 15 - Spanish Heritage Month Celebration
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	October 21 - Picture Day - UNIFORMS ARE REQUIRED FOR ALL STUDENTS
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	October 31 - End of 1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter (46 days)
27	28	29	30	31			
NOVEMBER 2024							
Sun	Mo	Tue	We	Thu	Fri	Sat	
					1	2	November 1 - School Closed for Professional development.
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	November 4 - Beginning of 2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	November 22 - Thanksgiving celebration @ School
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	November 25 - 29 Thanksgiving Break (School is Closed)
24	25	26	27	28	29	30	
DECEMBER 2024							
Sun	Mo	Tue	We	Thu	Fri	Sat	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	December 20 - Christmas Program Noon Dismissal
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	December 23 - January 1 - Christmas/New Year break - School Closed.
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	
29	30	31					
JANUARY 2025							
Sun	Mo	Tue	We	Thu	Fri	Sat	
			1	2	3	4	January 1- School Closed Christmas/New Year's break
5	6	7	8	9	10	11	January 2 - Return from Christmas break.
12	13	14	15	16	17	18	January 10 - ELEMENTARY PREVIEW
19	20	21	22	23	24	25	January 20 - Martin Luther King Birthday - School Closed
26	27	28	29	30	31		January 22 - End of 2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter (44 days)
							January 23 - Beginning of 3 <sup>rd</sup> Quarter
							January 24 - School Closed for Professional development.

FEBRUARY 2025						
Sun	Mo	Tue	We	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	
MARCH 2025						
Sun	Mo	Tue	We	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					
APRIL 2025						
Sun	Mo	Tue	We	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			
MAY 2025						
Sun	Mo	Tue	We	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
JUNE 2025						
Sun	Mo	Tue	We	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

February 6– 100 Days Celebration. Students may dress up as elderly people. Everyone else MUST wear a uniform.

February 17– President’s Day (School is Closed)

February 24 – Black History Celebration

March 7 –Parent Teacher Conferences (School is Closed)

March 31– End of 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter (45 days)

April 1 – Beginning of 4<sup>th</sup> quarter

April 4 – School closed for Professional Development

April 17 – April 21 – Easter Break (School is Closed)

May 5 – 9 – Teacher Appreciation week

May 12 - 16 – Silly Week

May 19 – Asian Heritage Celebration Day

May 23 - Naval Academy graduation (School is Closed)

May 26 – Memorial Day (School is Closed)

June 6–End of 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter (43 days)

June 9 – Last day for all students.

June 10 - K5 and 5<sup>th</sup> Grade graduation

June 11 – 13 School Closed

June 16 – First day of Summer Camp

**\*\*Important dates for BOOK OF LIFE ACADEMY      \*\*School CLOSED**

### Calendar Notes:

- This calendar has 3 snow/emergency days built into the school year for emergency closings, making the school year 178 student days. Students are required to have 175 days of school at Book of Life Academy.
- If additional emergency closings are needed, you will be promptly notified.
- Inclement weather and other emergencies may alter the school calendar and if this happens we will extend the school year if necessary.
- This calendar is subject to change without notice by the Book of Life Academy administration, during the course of the school year.

- Please check your child's folder DAILY for updates and changes.

## **Book of Life Academy School Profile**

### **Vision:**

Book of Life Academy is a beacon in the Annapolis community. We build well rounded students on a foundation rooted in Christ. Complete with strong academics, traditional character training and unique developmental programs, our students greatly impact both their families and their community.

### **Mission:**

Book of Life Academy strives to educate, empower, and equip students spiritually, academically, and socially by instilling strong Christian character and values. Partnering with parents and the community, the Academy seeks to develop each child's individual abilities, embracing their individualism and preparing them to learn, grow and succeed in all environments.

### **Philosophy of Book of Life Academy**

Book of Life Academy's philosophy is firmly rooted in the Bible. We recognize the Trinity: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. God created man and has supreme authority in all moral matters. The primary objective and purpose of the school is to train the student in the Christian way of life, and to give the student an excellent academic foundation to excel in all arenas according to the Word of God.

Our academic program is developed to provide students with the best possible program of studies. There is emphasis on the mastery of the fundamental blocks of material necessary for satisfactory achievement in these areas. Along with the acquisition of facts and concepts in the areas studied, stress is placed upon the development and exercise of the powers of reasoning. Methods of teaching proven to be effective are utilized. We realize the differences in innate ability; we encourage and expect each student to do his/her best. We believe the traditional system of education educates the mind, builds character, encourages competition, and teaches the value of living.

Character training is an important element at Book of Life Academy. We believe that the heart of character training is obedience, which will eventually cultivate an inner self-discipline and is essential to the emotional, physical, social, and spiritual well-being of the student.

The teacher is the authority in the classroom, and administers discipline firmly, but lovingly and fairly. To obey, to do right, and to love God and our neighbors, are attitudes we strive to instill in each student, thus equipping him for his role in God's plan for his life and for his proper place in society.

Children are a gift from God and Christian education recognizes that they are a unity of spiritual, mental, physical, and social beings. Parents have a more serious responsibility to train the "whole child" and we believe, with the help of God and dedicated teachers, we can be instrumental in helping the parents implement this training.

### **Statement of Faith**

- ❖ We believe that God's revelation of Himself is our cornerstone.
- ❖ We believe the Bible is our guiding authority.
- ❖ We believe we are stewards of His world.
- ❖ We believe we are fallen.
- ❖ We believe Christ is the Redeemer and Lord of Creation.
- ❖ We believe in the work of the Holy Spirit.
- ❖ We believe we are agents of His reconciliation in the world.
- ❖ We believe we are joint heirs with Christ.
- ❖ We believe in eternal life and condemnation.
- ❖ 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 (Genesis 2:18-25)
- ❖ We believe that God wonderfully foreordained and immutably created each person as either male or female in conformity with their biological sex.
- ❖ We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity.

### **Affiliation and Accreditation Information**

Book of Life Academy is registered with the Maryland Department of Education as a church exempt school. Book of Life Academy is a quality rated program with Maryland Excels. We are currently looking for accreditation with the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI). The school administration, pastor and church board of directors are in the process of satisfying all the requirements mandated by the State of Maryland to operate as a Christian independent non-public school.

### **Confidentiality**

At Book of life Academy, we will maintain confidentiality and respect all families' the right to privacy by refraining from all disclosure of confidential information. Children's records are locked in a secure location in the building and only the administration, teaching staff and state licensing authorities have access to these records. Unless we believe the welfare of the child is at risk, you will be notified and given opportunity to consent to access these files.

### **Changes to school policy**

Book of Life Academy reserves the right to make changes to all publications, calendars, bulletin boards at any time, in its sole discretion.

## **Inclusion Policy**

Book of Life Academy opens their doors to all children who apply. Families with children with developmental differences are afforded the same opportunities as their counterparts of the same age. All students are different and need various learning opportunities and Book of Life Academy, with the support of each family and other outside professionals, intends to provide each student it serves with the proper tools to be successful.

Preschool Teachers at Book of Life Academy follow a specific schedule each day, full of developmentally appropriate activities. Teachers and assistants will make any modifications to the lesson, environment and/or method of teaching to serve their unique group of students. No schedule or routine is set in stone; teachers can modify or make accommodations for any individual student. In such cases, staff will work closely with the administration and families to further support the child.

### ***In cases where outside staff or therapists are involved:***

Book of Life Academy allows for helpers or specialized therapists to assist with children in the classroom. Those personnel must be sought out by the parents and may come to the school at any time during the day. That personnel must check in to the front office and receive a visitor's pass. They may either assist the child in the classroom during normal activities or take the student to a different area to work on skills specific to them. Book of Life Teachers and administrators intend to work closely with therapists to assure the success of each student.

Staff and teachers at Book of Life Academy will take classes and seminars to support students with special needs. These classes may be on their own or as a part of a staff development program at the Academy.

## **Nondiscrimination policy**

Book of Life Academy has a non-discriminatory policy and admits students of any race, nationality, and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded to or made available to students at the school. Book of Life Academy does not discriminate based on race, sex, color, handicap, or national or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admission policies, or school administration of programs.

## SCHOOL WIDE POLICY AND PROCEDURES

### Admissions/ Reenrollment

Book of Life Academy accepts applicants for admission on a year around basis. Students in the preschool K2-K4 are accepted if their birthday falls prior to August 31<sup>st</sup> of the current year. Elementary students grade K5 – 5<sup>th</sup> must be the appropriate age by August 31st.

Admission at Book of Life Academy is based upon a satisfactory academic record, a possible personal interview with the school administrator and acceptance by the Admissions Committee. Admission spots are on a first come first serve basis yet priority is given to current students during reenrollment in the Spring.

### Financial Outlook

Book of Life Academy operations are supported entirely by student tuition and fees. There are no agencies that underwrite any shortfall for our operations, although those avenues are actively being pursued. The Church, Iglesia Hispana Emmanuel, and their board of directors support our endeavors and assist the school. Yet we are afloat mainly because of dedicated parents and supporters like you.

Therefore, by initialing and signing the tuition policy form in the admissions packet you are agreeing to pay **ALL** tuition due for your student(s) according to the payment schedule you arranged with Book of Life Academy. **In the event collection is necessary you will be responsible for any attorney fees and collection expenses for your account.**

### Tuition

Student tuition is paid on a monthly or yearly basis through FACTS financial management.

### Communications

You may contact your teacher by:

- Calling the school and leaving a message with the office staff
- Communicating directly with your child's teacher through Brightwheel
- Writing a note to be called and placing it in your students folder
- Please refrain from talking with the teacher during class time or when they must supervise the children
- Parents are able to visit their child's class whenever they want to. They must come to the office and sign in, receive a visitor's pass and be escorted to the classroom. Parents must be courteous of the classroom teacher or they will be asked to leave.



## Drop off and Pick up Policy

### Morning Drop off procedures:

- ***For Morning care children (7am – 800am):*** Park in a parking space and walk your child to the school door, a staff member will then escort and direct your child to where they need to go.
- ***For Normal School hours:*** Drop off begins at 8:00 am and ends at 8:25 am.

### Afternoon Pick up procedures:

- ***For Regular school hours:*** Office staff will walk children to their designated cars at the end of the day beginning at 2:45 pm with K2 – K5 and 3:00 pm with 1<sup>st</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> grades. Form a single car line in the front of the school by 2:40 and each child will be walked to the car. You are responsible for the child entering the car and putting them in a car seat if applicable.
  - Please do not enter the car line until your designated time to pick up your child.
  - Please have appropriate car seat when picking up your student or they will not be released to you.
  - **No child will be released prior between 2:15 and 2:45pm unless a note is received in the morning regarding early dismissal. (It is a very busy time of day and early dismissal for your convenience is not a valid excuse).**
  - The final time to pick up your students from school before assessing a late fee is **3:15pm**.
- ***For Aftercare hours:*** Please Park in a parking space, ring the bell, and sign your student out.

### In case of parent tardiness, the following drop in format will be used:

- Morning care drop in: \$15.00/day flat fee includes breakfast.
- Aftercare drop in: \$15.00 every 15 minutes starting @3:15 PM  
According to this schedule:

Time	Price
3:15 – 3:30	\$15.00
3:31 – 3:45	\$30.00
4:00 – 4:15	\$45.00
4:16 – 4:30	\$60.00
4:31 – 4:45	\$75.00
5:01 – 5:15	\$90.00
5:16 – 5:30	\$105.00

5:31 – 5:45	\$120.00
5:46 – 6:00	\$135.00
6:00	+\$25.00

- If you pick up after 6:00pm you will be assessed aftercare charge of \$25.00 and an additional \$1.00/minute.

#### Authorized pick up and drop off

Please keep your student pick up and drop off list current. In the event a person not on your list must pick up your child; you must call the office as soon as possible. We must know the persons first and last name, relation and a description. We will need their driver's license to verify identity and they must park in a space and enter the building in order to pick up the child.

#### Late pick up:

If you know you will be late picking up your child, you must call the office as soon as possible. All charges will still be assessed and satisfied on the same day.

### **Emergency Procedures**

#### Book of Life Academy Safety Policy

Book of Life Academy staff and administration will do everything in its power to ensure the safety of each child in their care. In order to assure this, the following procedures will be followed:

- Students will participate in fire drills, hurricane/tornado drill and intruder or lock down drill each year. Students and staff will follow procedures outlined in the Emergency Operations Plan.
- Students may be picked up **ONLY** by persons who are on their emergency form; a picture ID is required for all those picked up for the first time if unknown to the staff member who is releasing the child. There are **NO** exceptions.
- To assist in keeping your child safe at school, all doors are locked during the school day. Please ring the bell **ONCE** for entry into the Academy. One of the administrative staff will open the door for you and escort you to the office. Teachers and assistants **DO NOT** open the door for anyone while they are with students; they will seek the appropriate person to assist you.
- Security cameras are all motion detected and are in every common area including the chapel, cafeteria, outside perimeter and all hallways.

#### In case of Emergency at school:

- If the school is on lock down because of an outside threat; proper authorities will be notified and the teacher will contact the parent or guardian.
- If the school is on lock down because of an inside threat; proper authorities will be notified and contact will be made with the parent or guardian when safe.
- In case of actual fire and/or the school building must be evacuated: students will be walked to the Naval Academy Stadium grounds for safety

- In case we must vacate the immediate area, students will be walked or driven in vans to **the Michael E Busch Annapolis Library** to meet with their parents/guardians
- During emergencies the parent/guardian will be obligated to pick up their children.

### **Inclement weather conditions**

In case of inclement weather conditions please follow Book of Life Academy procedures; we will NOT always follow suit with Anne Arundel County Public Schools.

- If inclement weather conditions are forecasted, please do the following in order to check for school closings and delays:
  - Check Brightwheel
  - Check the following channel: WBAL-TV Channel 11 News for listings under Book of Life Academy
- In the event that poor weather conditions cause the school to open 2 hours late, **morning care will be cancelled**, the school will begin drop off at 10:00am.
- In the event that poor weather conditions cause schools to close early, early pick up will begin immediately and teachers will be contacting parents through Brightwheel or by phone.

PLEASE NOTE: **Please give accurate work, cell, home and emergency numbers and update them regularly to assist us in case of weather related emergencies or dismissals.**

**FYI: In making decisions about weather related delays and closings, we must consider many variables. Some include, if we can safely enter the parking lot; if the teachers and staff can make it safely as they all do not live in Annapolis; does the building have heat or electricity, and many more. We do our best to accommodate our parents, students and staff. We add additional days to the end of the school year for make-up snow days. If we must go above the few days we have already on our calendar, we will do so. If you have any questions about this policy, please contact the office for further explanation.**

## Health and Safety

### Lunches

Parents can order lunch through various vendors including Pizza Bolis and Chick Fil A. Otherwise, parents are expected to provide lunch daily. We allow parents to bring lunch, but you must have it to the school no later than 11:30AM and noon. Please send a notice to your teacher if you are bringing your student lunch. A student testimony is not enough.

### Penalties

If you will be bringing your child lunch during the day, you must drop off lunch 30 minutes before lunch begins. If you are late dropping off or forget to bring your child's lunch the following steps will be followed.

- Warning
- \$5.00 charge for serving your child lunch (even if you come late with lunch)

### Snack

Each morning all grades have a snack.

- Snack is to be provided by the parent. Please send healthy, energy boosting snacks. Sugary snacks will slow your child down. A list of healthy snacks will be provided at orientation.
- Teachers will NOT provide a snack for your child if you do not, so please adhere to the policy.

### Food Allergies

Please remind your student to refrain from sharing food. If your student has food allergies, you must notify the administration, office staff, teacher and assistance to ensure his/her overall safety.

### Student emergencies and injury

In case of an emergency 911 will be notified immediately and teacher or administrative staff will notify the parent. A staff member will stay with your student until a parent or guardian arrives.

### Medication

Students needing medication of any kind must have a note from the child's doctor stating the directions and the ability for the administrator to administer the medication to the child. A medical administration form can be provided upon request from the school office.

\*An EpiPen or inhaler must be provided for students with severe allergies\*

### Child Abuse Reporting

If the teacher or administration suspects child abuse they must immediately contact social services and the Annapolis Police department. No exceptions will be made.

### **Illness and communicable diseases**

The Academy wishes to keep a healthy school and in order to maintain that environment we have designed a set of guidelines to prevent an outbreak of communicable diseases. The principal has the final say on whether a child must be removed because of suspicion of disease. If an illness occurs at school, a parent will be notified, and the child must be removed from the school. If a child is sick, the parent should keep him home until he is well. If a doctor must be notified, a note explaining the child may return to school is needed before the child may resume class.

- Child must be picked up if symptoms include vomiting; diarrhea; fever; rash; lice; suspected ring worm or yellow/green colored phlegm (which indicates some sort of infection)
- Students who leave with a fever may not return until the fever is gone for 24 hours. This means fever free WITHOUT medication. Students presenting with a fever will be sent home immediately.
- In other cases, the Academy will provide basic first aid and safety in case of accident. A daily log will be kept with this information.
- In case of emergency 911 will be called for assistance
- Common school wide communicable diseases include common cold, flu, pink eye, stomach virus, viral infections, bacterial infections, ringworm, poison ivy or oak, chicken pox and whooping cough, and hand foot and mouth disease.

There are many ways to combat disease. Some very helpful reminders in order to help communicable diseases to a minimum are to teach children not to touch other children's faces, to wash their hands often, and to cover their mouths with their arm to sneeze.

### **COVID-19**

We will continue to follow the CDC guidelines whenever a COVID related cases arises. If a child test positive for COVID-19, the parents of the classroom will be notified of the positive case and how to proceed.

We also invite parents to share their child's COVID-19 vaccination status, they may do so by submitting a copy of their vaccination card to the office. This will assist the administration in determining quarantine guidelines in the future.

## ACADEMIC INFORMATION AND PROCEDURES (A, B, C's)

### Absences:

Students are to attend school regularly and on time. Students in grades K4 – 5<sup>th</sup> will have grades and promotion withheld if they miss more than 14 days of school.

- ❖ When a child has been absent, **he/she will bring a letter of excuse** when he comes to school. If he has been sick, he must return with a note from the doctor ensuring the school he is well enough to return.
  - Letter of excuse must include:
    - Student's name, the date, his/her grade, the dates absent and reason for absence or tardy
- ❖ In grades K5 – 5<sup>th</sup>, excused absences included:
  - Illness, death of immediate family, Doctor, dentist, or other health appointments, court, state emergency, suspension, inclement weather, Take Your Child to Work Day.
- ❖ Unexcused absences included but are not limited to:
  - Improper clothing (i.e. uniforms dirty), shopping, for “family convenience”, oversleeping, or daily traffic patterns
- ❖ Excessive unexcused absences incur no return of funds and may result in automatic withdrawal of the student or recommendation to repeat the current grade.
- ❖ If a child leaves school before the end of the day, the parent will sign the child out in the office before he/she can leave the classroom.
- ❖ Make up work in case of extended illness or an emergency, will be requested by parent, and arranged to pick up the next day.

### Attendance

- ❖ According to Maryland law, students aged 5 to 16 are required to attend school for the legally required number of days each year.
  - Chronic absenteeism will be addressed by the principal.
  - Students can be held back due to lack of attendance.
- ❖ Regular Academy hours are 8:00 AM – 2:45 PM for K2 – K5 students, and 8:00 AM – 3:15 PM for 1<sup>st</sup> -5<sup>th</sup> grade students. Students must attend classes promptly and on a regular basis.

### Biblical reinforcement and Chapel

- ❖ Bible time at Book of Life is a required subject whose importance supersedes all other subjects. The Bible is important to educate a child. Parents should encourage your students to study the Word of God. The Bible teaches good character, moral values, spirituality, life changing experiences to be a successful student and person.
- ❖ Chapel is a school wide bible teaching opportunity held the 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday of every month at 9AM. Chapel is open to all. Sanctuary doors open at 9AM. Parents and guardians MAY NOT sit with their child(ren) but may sit in the empty seats in the back of the sanctuary.

- ❖ Book of Life Academy asks families to be committed to a personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and to a Christian world and life view. In teaching your children, reinforcement is the key to success.
- ❖ Book of Life suggests you assist your children in being successful by reading your Bible, going to church and participating in ministry activities.

### **Bullying (adopted from Anne Arundel County Public Schools policy)**

- ❖ Bullying and harassment or bias behaviors doesn't reflect Christian character or respect for self and others. These types of behaviors as noted in the Discipline policy are unacceptable. Bullying is defined as intentional, repeated over time, intended to harm (emotional or physical), may or may not involve a power differential (bigger or more popular and the like), creates a hostile environment for another. Bullying is NOT unkind words amongst peers, rough-housing or "play fighting" that is not intended to hurt, competitive behavior, or mean behavior amongst peers that are all participating in on an equal basis.
- ❖ Bullying reports go directly to the principal. The principal will work both internally and with external counseling partners to be sure both parties feel safe and the issues are investigated thoroughly. A Safety action plan will be made and set in place with both the principal and outside professional services to ensure both parties are helped. We will NEVER disclose the information regarding actions taken about another child to the opposite party.
- ❖ If a parent suspects their student is being bullied or harassed at school, they should report it immediately to the principal to insure a prompt investigation.
- ❖ Students will receive as much internal support as we are capable of and we will seek external help with the assistance and permission of the parents, to ensure each child feels safe at school.
- ❖ Please see withdrawals, suspensions and dismissals on page 24 for more information

### **Cellphones and Devices:**

- ❖ Students cell phones or smart watches must be put away during school hours, and MAY NOT be used during the school day. The administration reserves the right to change this policy at any time if at any point in time, this policy is not followed.
- ❖ Teachers and administrators will confiscate cell phones or smart watches if a student is found using them during school hours.
- ❖ Using one's phone in an unsafe/illegal/immoral way – to bully, cheat, view immoral content, take/post pictures or videos without consent, or take/post inappropriate pictures or videos – will lead to major discipline that could include suspension, dismissal, and even expulsion. This is true whether the misuse of their phone occurs while on or off campuses and causes a disruption in school operations. Posts or reposts of inappropriate content or communication on social media that disrupts school operations will be treated as if the content or comments were made out loud in front of a class.

### **Conferences, concerns, parent separation and divorce**

#### **Parent Teacher Conferences**

- ❖ Conferences are scheduled throughout the year. These meetings assist parents in helping their children with homework and give them the

opportunity to see student work and discuss with the teacher their academic progress. Children are NOT to attend conferences unless suggested by the teacher.

- ❖ If you would like to schedule a conference with your teacher or principal please feel free to make an appointment with the office and they will schedule the meeting within the week for you.

#### Parent concerns or complaint procedures

- ❖ Although Book of Life will try to assist all parents in all areas, there are possibilities of falling short. In cases of parent dissatisfaction please take these steps in order to resolve the problem in a timely manner.
  - Please do NOT discuss your concern, complaint, or dissatisfaction with or around your child. Be sure to ask the child questions if he/she is involved but keep your opinions to yourself. This may compromise the authority of the teacher and/or school your child attends.
  - Please seek council with the party in question first. (Teacher, Office staff, Principal or Administrator)
  - All parties, including the teacher, principal, parent, student and other staff will meet to try and resolve a serious problem.
  - Be sure to issue your complaint in writing and the problem will be addressed within 72 hours.
  - If you feel the situation is not resolved, you may seek council with one of the Pastors of the church.

#### Parent Separation or divorce policy

When parents are living in separate households due to separation or divorce, our school policy is to send copies of all newsletters, progress reports and other school information to both households. The school's front office will make arrangements with teachers to send home materials. The school requests that parents attend conferences together. If students are to be picked up by only one parent regularly or on certain days, the school must receive a copy of the contract or court order stating who is permitted to pick up the student. The school encourages families to work out differences concerning the student and school outside the school arena. The school strives to treat all parties equally. The child's welfare is the most important concern to the school.

#### Discipline

- ❖ on school grounds
- ❖ at a school activity, function or event
- ❖ transporting to and from a school activity
- ❖ off school grounds but in the care of school authorities

#### Academy Discipline and intervention strategies

Discipline is the activity, exercise or regimen that develops or improves a skill training. Another definition is the ongoing process of helping a child to develop self-control for self-management while protecting the integrity of the child. Discipline, in our setting, has nothing to do with punishment.



- Teachers and staff will use positive guidance, redirection, and planning environmental and instructional supports to prevent problems.
- Teachers and staff will encourage appropriate behavior through the use of consistent clear rules and expectations, involving children in problem solving to foster the child's own ability to become self-disciplined and the use of positive behavior support strategies.
- Teachers and staff will encourage children to respect other people, to be fair, respect, property and learn to be responsible for their own actions.
- Teachers and staff will use discipline that is consistent, clear, developmentally appropriate and understandable to the child. They will help children learn to persist when frustrated, play corporately with other children, use language to communicate needs and learn turn taking.

*Staff will not engage in any inappropriate discipline including but not limited to: spanking, shaking, pinching or any other cruel, harsh, unusual, humiliating, or frightening methods of discipline. These include threats, or abusive language. Staff also shall not associate discipline with lunch, snack, rest, total playtime (Pre-K only) or toileting. All disciplinary actions and/or activities shall be documented.*

#### **Age Appropriate disciplinary consequences and intervention strategies:**

- Establish personal relationships with students
- Communicate using positive statements
- Get down to their eye level and talk in a calm manner redirecting them to the desired behavior
- Use positive reinforcement
- Be aware of student needs as they arise (be proactive not reactive)
- Have class meetings to discuss issues – problem solving (elementary age)
- Call parent or hold a parent conference
- Invite parents or parental enforcer to visit class
- Behavior chart (check for patterns)
- Draw a student action plan
- Loss of privileges such as: lunch detention, or recess detention.

#### **Grade: Elementary age (K5 – 5<sup>th</sup>)**

\*\*Positive reinforcement is established before disciplinary actions occur. (Reward sheet, class helpers and good behavior awards should be displayed and explained)

1. Warning
2. A firm, straight look along with a brief reminder of rules and consequences of disobedience
3. Have the child stand by their desk
4. Refusing privilege – Restrict the child from participation in a certain event or social activity as punishment.
5. Lunch, Recess or afterschool detention.
6. Send child to the principals office

7. Contact parent during the day for major offences (fighting, harming oneself or others, etc)

#### **Guidelines for Disciplinary action and possible suspension**

1. Constantly disrupting class or constant misconduct in class
2. Damaging property
3. Stealing items from school or other students
4. Threatening others, hitting, kicking, biting, bumping, pushing, pinching, hurting or use of disrespectful language to student or teacher
5. Bullying (further explained in Bullying Policy)
6. Fighting
7. Possess or use any weapons whether assembled or disassembled
8. Possess or use of any drugs or alcohol
9. Inappropriate exposure or touching of oneself and others, including private areas
10. Severe or repeated violations of school rules may result in parental conference and/or discipline review that may lead to suspension
11. Cheating offences
12. Forgery
13. Defiance, willful disobedience of authority
14. Unexcused lateness to school
15. Disobeying specific rules
16. Disrespect, insolence shown toward authority
17. Acts of rebellion against school norms (elementary age)

#### **Suspension**

Suspension is denial of entry into school due to continuous or severe disciplinary violations. The principal has the final say about suspensions at school. There are times when suspension is necessary because of the severity of the action and others because of repetitive unsafe or harmful behavior. Suspensions can be prescribed for all students at the Academy. The principal will schedule a conference with the parents to discuss the situation and why we feel it best the student be removed from school. The parents, teacher and student will work together to try and correct this behavior. If further intervention must occur, we will seek outside resources for assistance and suggest possible intervention by counseling agents. This is non-negotiable. Please see withdrawals, suspensions and dismissals on page 24 for more details.

#### **Expulsion**

Expulsion will be considered the last result if behavior becomes consistent after repeated intervention by the teacher, parent, and administration. Students can be expelled from school for the following offenses:

1. Accumulation of school suspensions
2. Stealing
3. Destruction of personal and/or school property
4. Possessing, transmitting, displaying or using a weapon
5. Giving, selling, using or possessing a drug (including alcohol)

### **Extreme Aggressive Behavior (Pre K students)**

During acts of aggression and fighting, teaching staff will intervene immediately when a child becomes aggressive to protect all of the children and encourage acceptable behavior. Teachers will ALWAYS tend to the child in danger/victim in situations such as these and maintain safety of the aggressive child. Behaviors such as biting, scratching, kicking, hitting; staff will set appropriate expectations for children and guide them in solving problems. This positive guidance will be the usual technique for managing children with challenging behaviors rather than punishing them for having problems they have not yet learned to solve. In addition, staff may:

- (1) Separate the children involved
- (2) Immediately comfort the individual that was injured
- (3) Care for any injury suffered by the victim involved in the incident
- (4) Notify parents or legal guardians of children involved in the incident by writing an incident report.
- (5) review the adequacy of the teaching staff supervision, appropriateness of program activities, and administrative correction action if there is a recurrence; and finally
- (6) dismiss the child in question for excessive dangerous and/or aggressive behavior and recommend outside behavioral assistance.

### **Positive Behavioral Practices**

#### **Making Choices**

##### **A. During Play:**

- a. Students at the Academy have opportunities during inside and outside play to make choices as to the activity they want to participate in.
- b. If it is time for table top activities they may choose between, for example: Play dough, water color painting and puzzles.
- c. If it is time for outdoor play, students may choose to play on the playground equipment, play with balls, chalk or any other outside activity.
- d. If it is indoor play time, students may choose between dramatic play, blocks and other manipulatives and/or trucks and cars

##### **B. During Center Time:**

- a. Students have the opportunity to experience different activities during center time. Books, self guided games and activities are available to the students at all times.

If a student is behaving negatively, they may be redirected to another play area and/or directed to be separated from the group to a quiet play center in order to calm down.

### **Electives**

- ❖ Students at Book of Life Academy will participate in various elective activities throughout the course of the school year. These special programs include: Art, Chapel, and PE.

### Extended day program

- ❖ The extended day program exists to assist parents in childcare beyond the regular school hours. Both in the morning and the afternoon children are supervised from 7AM in Morning care through 6PM in afternoon care.
- ❖ Our program desires to provide a safe environment where students can learn, play, explore and socialize with their peers.
- ❖ In morning care, breakfast is provided as well as music, books and games to occupy the children before the start of school.

To receive extended daycare services, you must fill out a separate application. Extended day program accepts application on a rolling basis if there is still space available.

### Extended morning care procedures:

- Morning care begins at 7AM. When arriving, please walk your child to the door. From there, they will be escorted to put their things away and taken to the cafeteria.
- Breakfast will be provided, and a menu will be given to those enrolled in the program.

### Extended afternoon care procedures:

- Extended evening care begins at 3:15PM and lasts until 6:00 PM
- No extended day is available when there is early dismissal/delay opening or in cases of inclement weather.

### Emergency Extended day:

- If your child is not enrolled in the program but must use the services, parents will be charged \$15.00 every 15 minutes after 3:20 PM in extended day care. (Persons assumed abusing this service **will be** charged aftercare rates without prior notice.)

### Extended Day Late Parent Policy:

- If a parent will knowingly be late, he or she should contact the extended day program and/or attempt to make arrangements to have the child picked up by another person listed in the registration package. Children will not be released to persons not on the registration form so please list **ALL** possible individuals who may have to pick up your child.
- After 5 minutes, staff will attempt to contact the parent/guardian. If no answer, after 10 minutes staff will begin to contact persons in the order listed on the registration form. If other pick up arrangements are made by the staff, messages will be left on parent's phone and a note will be on the door with the child's name and who they were picked up by. (First name only)
- If thirty minutes pass and there has been no successful contact, staff will contact Annapolis City Police, and the child will be left in the custody of a social worker at the police department on Taylor Ave. A note will be left on the door saying your child's first name and the number to the department.

**\*\*YOU MUST SIGN YOUR CHILD OUT WHEN YOU PICK THEM UP!!!\*\***

**Field Trips**

Field trips are a regular part of your child's curriculum. All students will participate in one or more field trips per school year, whether with class or the entire school. All school rules and disciplinary measures are followed by staff, students, and parent field trip volunteers. A permission form must be signed by the parent or guardian and returned to school before a student is allowed to leave the school on a student trip. All field trips must have adequate supervision. **Parents who participate on field trips are subject to background checks and must ride on school provided transportation only.** All parents serving as chaperones will be briefed by their child's teacher on their duties while on the school trip. ALL STUDENTS participating with the school on field trips MUST ride on school provided transportation.

**Grading**

Preschool ages 2-4 will not receive letter grades. They will receive a grade report 2 times during the school year (November and May). These reports will show different standards for their age group and come with a benchmark showing below average, age appropriate, or outstanding.

- ❖ The Kindergarten class will not receive letter grades until second quarter. The teacher will inform you of their progress through parent conferences.
- ❖ The elementary grades 1 – 5 will receive letter grades on the following grading scale:

100 – 99	A +	80 – 79	C+
98 – 94	A	78 – 74	C
93 – 91	A-	73 – 70	C-
90 – 89	B+	69 – 63	D
88 – 84	B	63 – below	F (not passing)
83 – 81	B-		

(A=excellent; B=good; C=Satisfactory; D=Unsatisfactory; F=Failing)

Other grades:

O = Outstanding	(above average)
S = Satisfactory	(average)
N = Needs Improvement	(below average)
U = Unsatisfactory	(not passing)

**\*\* Students will NOT receive honor roll for more than any N grade; also will not receive honor roll for any U grade\*\***

**Lost and Found**

All lost items in the classroom will be kept in the school office until the end of the month. Both at the end of the calendar year (December) and again in spring (May); items will be collected and given to the Lighthouse Homeless Shelter on Main St. in Annapolis, MD.

## **Parent Visitors**

Parents may visit their child during most school days. This may be to check in on your child's progress, have lunch with them or volunteer in the building. During these times you must follow these guidelines for the safety of our students:

- ❖ Parents visiting the classroom must NOT be disruptive and must abide by the rules set by the classroom teacher.
- ❖ Parents visiting may NOT use downstairs bathrooms at ANY TIME
- ❖ Parents visiting may NOT discipline a child AT ANY TIME
- ❖ Parents having lunch with their child must eat at a separate table with their student.

This list is not inclusive. Class teachers and administration have the authority to instruct parents on proper safety procedures while in the building.

## **Party Time**

Parties and celebrations are important to the students and staff at Book of Life Academy. Student Birthdays may be celebrated during at the end of the day (2:00 p.m.) for K2- K4 and during lunch time in K5 – 5<sup>th</sup> grades. If the parents provide cake or cupcakes for the class please be sure to check for allergies before bringing the class snacks. Also if decorations are included the parent must be present in order to set up, serve, and breakdown the party.

School wide parties or celebrations happen a few times a year including but not limited to Thanksgiving and Christmas. The teachers and parent volunteers are responsible for planning, set up, break down and serving during these events. Volunteers will sign up to participate BEFORE the day of the event. Some class time will be compromised on these days for the festivities. Room parents (assigned by the classroom teacher) will be responsible for in class parties during the school year. Such events may include: Valentines Day, President's Day, and Easter.

## **Pre School (K2 – K4) Habits and procedures**

### **Bathroom procedures:**

Students aged 2 – 4 have scheduled bathroom breaks throughout the day. They will be escorted to the bathroom by teacher or staff member who will help them with their clothes if needed. The staff member is responsible to be sure your student: flushes the toilet, redresses appropriately, washes their hands and disposes of the paper towel correctly. Students aged 3 and up can use the restroom one at a time unescorted. Students aged 2 who are potty training will be assisted in toilet training by staff and teachers.

### **Extra Clothing:**

Each child must have 1 pair of 'accident' clothes to keep in the classroom in case of a bathroom accident. Please replace soiled clothing the next day.

### **Hot Lunch:**

Students in the K2 class may bring food to heat up in the microwave for lunch. NO OTHER STUDENTS MAY BRING HEAT UPS! All other students must

bring lunch in a bag or thermos or order a hot lunch through our lunch program each month.

#### Habits:

Students in K2 – K5 learn habits to reinforce good, orderly behavior. Some habits include, walking in the hallway in a straight line, ‘prayer habits’, sitting in a chair at a table correctly and retrieving their school boxes in an orderly fashion. These habits are taught in the classroom by the classroom teacher and reinforced daily.

#### Programs

There will be two student programs each year. There will be a Christmas program and a K5 and 5<sup>th</sup> grade graduation. Assemblies will be scheduled throughout the school year. Volunteers are always needed; more information will be sent.

#### Summer Camp

Book of Life Academy offers an 8 – 10 week summer camp program during summer vacation. In summer camp children ages 3 – 12 engage in educational, fun filled activities according to the theme of the week. Bible, field trips, outdoor play, arts and crafts and drama are a regular part of the daily activities. Information about summer camp and sign up begins in March of each year.

#### Tardiness

Being tardy is an **unacceptable** behavior. Parents are encouraged to bring their children to school on time. Children learn the best early in the morning and a parent would serve a child an injustice for not bringing them to school on time. Also, interruptions are disruptive and many times counterproductive to the learning environment we create here at Book of Life Academy. Three late days result in one unexcused absence. Parents who are excessively tardy will be subject to the following:

- 1.) A reminder of our tardy policy.
- 2.) A note of warning.
- 3.) A lunch detention for the student.
- 4.) Meeting with the Principal.

#### Teacher – Parent Responsibilities

The teacher and parent must work together to ensure your students success in and out of school. Teachers teach the student new concepts in general subject areas, Bible and electives. Teachers also teach rules and regulations governing the school and the classroom. Parents are the governing body of the household and the child. Parents who support the teacher and reinforce student respect for the teacher tend to have less disciplinary issues with the student. Please pray for your child’s teacher, administration and school as the teachers pray for each student and their family. If the teacher and parent support each other the student will be wholly supported and eager to learn.

Families, please agree to:

- Pray for the school, the faculty, and the staff

- Cooperate with all policies enclosed, administration and the Board of Directors
- Pay all financial obligations to the school on or before the due date.
- Volunteer and attend school functions
- Participate cheerfully in your child's education i.e., book reports, plays and homework

### **Textbooks**

Most textbooks and learning materials are distributed by Abeka Book. The one-time book fee will cover all textbook and workbook orders. If a child is enrolled late, parent or guardian will be responsible to pay for expedited shipping.

### **Uniform Policy**

*Uniform: Monday – Thursday only*

- *PreK2: No uniform is necessary*
- *PreK3 – 5<sup>th</sup> grade*
  - *Navy Blue pants, skirt, shorts, skort or jumper*  
*\*GIRLS ONLY: skirts, skorts or dresses must be at knee length.*
  - *White, yellow or navy blue blouse or collared shirt (polo style is fine)*
  - *White, navy or black socks or tights*
  - *Tennis shoes (any color)*
  - *Navy or white sweater*
- *Students must wear uniform on field trips (No exceptions)*
- *Friday is dress down day (Please send sneakers on Friday for gym classes)*

Students are to be well-groomed and all clothing must be neat and clean; no holes or dirty clothing. Oversized or tight clothing is not appropriate. Book of Life Academy makes known the sanctions that will be rendered upon those students who refuse to conform to this policy requiring uniforms. The sanctions are as follows:

- 1st Offense – A note will be sent home regarding our uniform requirements.
- 2nd Offense – A note will be sent home informing the parent/guardian of the second offense along with a \$5.00 penalty fee.
- 3rd Offense – Meeting with administration regarding the uniform policy and its requirements must be had before returning to school. No refunds for lunch, field trips or any other applicable fees during this time off.

### **Casual Day Policy**

Casual days are scheduled for every Friday of each week. Blue jeans, khakis, and casual pants may be worn along with casual shirts, sweaters, or sweatshirts, and tennis shoes. GIRLS MAY NOT wear mid drifts showing their stomach. Clothing must not have holes or tears or bear any offensive messages or pictures and must fit properly according to these guidelines. Shorts and skirts must be at knee length, NO SHORT SHORTS, BIKE SHORTS OR MINI SKIRTS. No tight leggings or body suits. Casual day is a privilege; please treat it that way. Student who are non-compliant will lose this privilege. All students MUST WEAR athletic shoes for gym on Fridays NO CROCS, BUBBLE SLIDES, BOOTS, DRESS SHOES, SANDALS, OR FLIP FLOPS.



### **Withdrawals, suspensions and dismissals**

- ❖ In order to withdrawal your student, you must request a meeting with the principal and Administrator. You will be required to pay an early withdrawal fee equivalent to a month worth of tuition. Same rules apply for those who are suspended or dismissed by the Administration
- ❖ Suspensions are short term 2 – 5 days. No tuition will be remitted for such a time. A meeting with the parent, teacher, and administration will be scheduled to make a plan for the suspended child.
- ❖ Dismissals are permanent for the current school year. Reapplication depends on meeting with Administration for the following school year.

### **Liability, Arbitration, and Conflict Resolution**

By enrolling their children at Book of Life Academy, parents are acknowledging that the school and its agents shall be considered harmless for any liability to any child or any guardian or parent thereof because of any claims on behalf of the child against the school or any agent thereof because of injury or alleged injury to the child. Any controversy or claim arising out of or related to this agreement, or the breach thereof, which cannot be resolved privately to the satisfaction the parties shall be settled by mediation or arbitration in accordance to scripture.

The parties to this agreement are assumed Christians and believe that the Bible commands them to make every effort to live at peace and resolve disputes with each other private or within the Christian community in conformity with the Biblical injunctions of 1 Corinthians 6:1-8, Matthew 5:23-24, and Matthew 18:15-20. Therefore, the parties agree that any claim of dispute arising out of, or related to, this agreement or to any aspect of the school-child-parent relationship, including statutory claims, shall be settled by Biblically based mediation.

If resolution of the dispute and reconciliation do not result from such efforts, the matter shall then be submitted to a panel of the three arbitrators for binding arbitration. Each party to the agreement shall have the right to select one arbitrator. The two arbitrators selected by the parties shall jointly select the neutral, third arbitrator.

If there is an impasse in the selection of the third arbitrator, the Institute for Christian Conciliation, Billings, MT, (844) 447 – 2671 shall be asked to provide the name of a qualified person that will serve that capacity.

The arbitration shall be conducted in accordance with the Rules of Procedure for Christian Conciliation of the Institute for Christian Conciliation as printed in the Christian Conciliation Handbook.

The parties agree that these methods shall be the sole remedy for any controversy or claim arising out of the employment relationship or this agreement and expressly waive their right to file a lawsuit against one another in any civil court for such disputes, except to enforce legally binding arbitration decision.

Each party regardless of the outcome of the matter agrees to bear cost of his/her/its own arbitrator and on half of the fees and cost of the neutral arbitrator and any other arbitration expenses.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name

**Statement of Cooperation:**

By signing this agreement, I give permission for my child to participate in all Book of Life Academy school activities. By signing this statement of cooperation, the parent agrees to hold the school and its officers, employees, volunteers and agents harmless for any liability to their child or any guardian or parent thereof because of any claim on behalf of their child against the school or any agent thereof because of any injury or alleged injury to their child. Should legal actions, for any reason, be taken against Book of Life Academy or any officer, employee, volunteer and agents not be found at fault, the parent agrees to pay any attorney fees, court fees, damages, and/or any other cost that the School or its officers, employees, volunteers, and agents should incur to defend itself against such action.

I have fully read and understand all aspects of the school Handbook by BOOK OF LIFE ACADEMY. I understand that if I have a complaint, I will consult my Handbook before seeking resolution with the administration, teachers, or staff at Book of Life Academy. In signing, I agree to all terms and conditions stated in this Handbook.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Full Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Student and grade

*\*Please return Arbitration and liability and statement of cooperation to the office before sending your child to school\**

