

Enrollment Handbook

White Sands Academy

A ministry of Little Pine Chapel

Administrator: Stephanie Whaley
Phone: (251) 213-5858
Website: whitesandsacademy.com
Email: info@whitesandsacademy.com
Mailing Address: PO Box 245
Robertsdale, AL 36567

PURPOSE:

- Provide a legal covering for those who choose to home educate in the state of Alabama regardless of race, economic standing, teaching methods, or religious beliefs.
- Offer support to those who have chosen to home educate.
- Provide resources to aid families in their home education journey.

White Sands Academy OFFERS:

- Legal Church School covering
- Year-round enrollment (no proration of fees available)
- Digital Student & Teacher I.D. included.
- Official transcript for graduating seniors (fees apply)
- Official diploma for graduating seniors (fees apply)
- Graduation Ceremony (fees apply)
- White Sands Academy Facebook Members only group

White Sands Academy is here to support you in your right to home educate your child(ren); however, it is the responsibility of the parent to arrange for all curriculum, education, and child care. White Sands Academy is not responsible for choosing or purchasing your curriculum.

White Sands Academy does NOT require:

- Monthly fees
- Statement of Faith
- Interview Process
- Mandatory parent meetings
- Curriculum and lesson plan approval
- Standardized testing
- Exit exams to graduation
- Detailed record keeping
- Membership in HSLDA

Please remember that we are here to support you in your decision to home school your child(ren). It is the responsibility of you, the parent, to acquire your entire curriculum, educational materials and child care.

White Sands Academy Field Trip Participation Policy:

- Please check your email and / or WSA FB group the morning of any field trip for last minute cancellations or instructions, especially during inclement weather.
- Please show up if you sign up (especially for limited or FREE trips - It reflects badly on homeschoolers when we have 100 people sign up and 10 people show up)
- Please DO NOT show up if you have not signed up.
- Please arrive on time.
- Each child MUST be accompanied by a responsible adult. "Drop offs" are not allowed.
- Children should be supervised always.
- Please make sure that field trips are age appropriate for your children.
- Make sure to follow any rules/policies set forth by the establishment we are visiting.
- Children are expected to behave. Disruptive families will be asked to leave the event.
- There is a zero-tolerance rule for any acts of violence, abusive behavior, profanity, or illegal activities.
- We take lots of pictures which may appear in the White Sands Academy website and/or Facebook page (no names listed without permission)
- White Sands Academy is not responsible for any injuries, theft, or loss of personal property at any events. All participants take full responsibility for their children and attend events "at your own risk".

Participation Restrictions

Participation restrictions will be enforced for any families who do not follow the White Sands Academy Participation Policy:

- Warning 1 - Written notification of complaint with Participation Policy will be sent via email.
- Warning 4 - Written notification of complaint, Participation Policy, and remainder of the school year restriction from activities will be sent via email.

Please note that the above plan is only a generality and that participation restrictions will be set in proportion to the level of the severity of the behavior. White Sands Academy reserves the right to restrict any family from all field trips/activities.

Disclaimer: With all field trips, White Sands Academy suggests that you research the subject matter to determine if each field trip is appropriate for your family. All field trips are offered on an optional basis and not required. Field trips are offered as an educational outlet only and does not constitute endorsement of the organization or beliefs.

ATTENDANCE REPORTS/PROGRESS REPORTS

White Sands Academy strives in every way to hold to the Alabama State Law requirements for church schoolers. WSA does require an attendance record be turned in at the end of each school year (May). This record is not your exact attendance but a summary. Example: Jane Smith schooled for 140 days during the 2019-2020 school year. WSA has a full 365 days a year to learn, there should be no unexcused absences. WSA does require all families to educate their children at least 140 days per school year.

ACCREDITATION

Are we accredited? No, as is the case with most church schools. Accreditation is defined as follows: *The act of accrediting or the state of being accredited, especially the granting of approval to an institution of learning by an official review board after the school has met specific requirements.* These requirements include but are not limited to class size, subjects taught by certain experts, number of fire exits, and a lot of things home educators do not encounter since we are not in a classroom setting. Furthermore, the Code of Alabama 1975, §16-28-24 states: There is no statutory authority authorizing or requiring any state or local authority to regulate church schools, which may conduct classes in any manner they see fit. There is no requirement that church school teachers be certified or that a church school be accredited by the state or any private agency. No state or governmental agency has the authority to regulate a church school. Does this affect your child's ability to attend college? No, colleges are interested in a graduate's ACT or SAT scores along with transcripts. Most Alabama colleges require the ACT test. We have heard that Faulkner University requires that a homeschooler pass the G.E.D. exam to attend their college. You will want to check with the college of your choice to find out their specific requirements.

FEES

First year enrollment per family - \$100.00

Annual Enrollment per family per year - \$90.00

Effective April 1, 2019

Please see a full fee schedule under the Enrollment with White Sands Academy section.

Enrollment with White Sands Academy

Please make sure to read this completely and follow instructions. White Sands Academy will not process paperwork that is not complete.

- Sign and date all areas and mail to White Sands Academy within one week of signature. Please pay special attention to the Church School Enrollment Form - there are two places to sign.
- Double check your paperwork. WSA will not process incomplete paperwork. Each completed packet of paperwork should include the following:
 - **Per family:**
 - 1 Family Information Form (not one per child)
 - 1 Payment
 - 1 Waiver of Liability from
 - **Per child:**
 - 3 full Church School Enrollment Forms.
 - Optional: Request for Past School Records. (Please fill one out for each school from which you are requesting records. Do not put multiple schools on one form. These are for your records only and completely optional.)
- Send the **complete** packet to White Sands Academy. At this point in the process **DO NOT** send any forms to the Board of Education. They will not accept the forms without a signature from WSA.

PAYMENT:

Make all payments payable to White Sands Academy. We accept personal check, money order, Cashier's Check, Paypal or you can pay directly on our website. If a check is returned there will be a \$35 fee for returned checks. Checks will no longer be accepted from a family if one is returned.

ANNUAL ENROLLMENT

Each year your family must fill out the attendance form (on our website and can be emailed upon request) BEFORE August 1, including the fee for the upcoming school year. Annual Enrollment fees not received by August 1st will result in a late fee of \$25. Please inform WSA if you plan to enroll somewhere else as we are required by Alabama Law to send an official letter stating that you are no longer enrolled in White Sands Academy.

WITHDRAWAL

It is up to each parent to research requirements and regulations of other schools including public schools, private schools, church schools, and colleges when considering enrollment in these institutions.

- All records held by White Sands Academy belong to the parent/guardian of the student and will be sent to the parents on request.
- If a child transfers from White Sands Academy before graduation official transcripts will be made and sent to the parent along with all previous records. Fees are applicable and completion of Transcript Request Forms is required.
- All fees must be paid before a transcript is sent to the parent.
- If a Transcript Request Form is not filled out, report of "Incompletion" will be forwarded to the requesting school.

GRADUATION

- It is up to each parent to research requirements and regulations of your colleges of choice when considering enrollment in these institutions.
- Upon graduation, there is a graduation fee which includes a diploma, padded folder, cap and gown.
- Official graduating transcripts will be sent to whomever the parent requests (colleges, the military, or employers). There is a fee for official transcripts.
- Student must be registered with White Sands Academy for at least six weeks to graduate from White Sands Academy.
- Graduation ceremony is open to any local homeschool family. This way every homeschool child has the opportunity to walk across the stage on graduation day.

DISMISSAL from White Sands Academy

White Sands Academy reserves the right to dismiss any family for any reason without explanation or prior notice including any behavior deemed to be inappropriate by White Sands Academy including but not limited to: poor conduct and/or illegal activities, endangering the safety of a child, failure to make payment, policy noncompliance, and/or dishonesty in matters that could affect White Sands Academy. We also reserve this right with any family not enrolled in White Sands Academy but participating in a White Sands Academy sponsored group or activity.

TRANSCRIPTS

A transcript is an official form that lists courses, grades and grade point average (GPA). This form is needed at the time of enrolling in a new school or at the time of graduation to aid in the college application process. All transcripts, including graduation transcript, must be requested using a Request for Transcript Form and must be accompanied by a three-week notice. Any transcript needed without a three-week notice will incur a \$80 rush fee. Please see the fee schedule for all other transcripts. All transcripts other than the Official Graduation transcripts will be sent to the parent and not to the transferring school. Official Graduating transcripts will be sent to either the parent or the college of choice.

FEE SCHEDULE

- **Enrollment Fee** – \$100 per family due at the time of enrollment. There are no pro-rated fees and all fees are nonrefundable.
- **Enrollment Addition** - Adding a child during the middle of the year or after initial enrollment \$50 per child.
- **School Records** - The school records sent to White Sands Academy from your last attended school are the property of the parent/guardian of the child. We will send them to you at your written request at no charge as part of your initial enrollment. Please fill out the Request for School Records Form.
- **Student I.D. & Teacher I.D.** – FREE to download and print. These can be used for different discounts in a variety of stores and venues.
- **Annual Enrollment Fee** – \$90 per family due by July 31st each year.
- **Transcript Fee**- \$45 for three original transcripts. Transcript Request Form required.
- **Graduation Fee** - Contact us for details regarding graduation ceremony fees.

General Guidelines to Home Education

- Read, familiarize yourself and understand Alabama State Law regarding church schooling.
- Research church schools and make an educated choice depending both upon what is offered to and required of the enrollees.
- Find or form a support group.
- Find or form a play group.
- Research different teaching and learning methods.
- Be flexible.
- Play and learn with your children.
- Try to avoid grade-level thinking.
- Talk to your children about what and how they would like to learn.
- Visit your local library.
- Read! Read! Read!
- Have fun, laugh, sing, dance, and learn!!!

Legal Issues

Please remember that enrolling in a Church School such as White Sands Academy is a perfectly legal schooling option under Alabama State Law. The local schools, including all teachers, counselors and principals are NOT legally entitled to a copy of the CSEF. Please be respectful to school officials but remember that they cannot require you to give them any

paperwork other than the Request for School Records Form. Remember that any school policy is their policy, not WSA, and since you are enrolling elsewhere, you are not under their policies anymore.

If a truant or attendance officer comes to your door asking about your child's enrollment:

1. Inquire if they have checked with the Board of Education as this is where the law requires you to file your CSEF.
2. If persistent, show them a copy of your CSEF. There is no law allowing them to ask for anything other than the CSEF. Demand all other requests be sent to you in writing with a copy to us.
3. Always ask for name, ID, and a business card. Make sure you have read the law and are familiar with what is legally required of you. If the BOE has lost your copy, offer to mail or fax a new copy to them.

Please keep your CSEF in a safe place.



White Sands
Academy