

# OUACHITA HILLS ACADEMY

## *Staff Handbook*

### ***Philosophy***

Realizing that we live in the last days of earth's history and that there are many influences that make it difficult for a young person who is striving to follow Christ, we desire to make *Ouachita Hills Academy* a place of refuge where our youth might live in harmony with the principles of the Word of God. *Ouachita Hills Academy* was founded with the belief that the guidelines set forth in the Bible and the writings of Ellen G. White are to be followed.

We are told, "True education means more than pursuing a certain course of study. It means more than a preparation for the life that now is. It has to do with the whole being and the whole period of existence possible to man. It is the harmonious development of the physical, the mental, and the spiritual powers. It prepares the students of the joys of service now, and the world to come." *Ed 13*

We purpose to develop youth who are thinkers, not mere reflectors of other men's thoughts; youth who learn the practical as well as the theory; youth who develop into loving, sharing Christians.

In order to provide the type of environment needed to give this type of education, staff members are needed who are fully committed Christians, and who are willing to work as a team member with others to lead young people in the way that God's Word directs. People cannot lead someone unless they have walked the path before. Staff hired by *Ouachita Hills Academy* should be adhering to a vegetarian diet and careful in dress, music, and deportment. Considering the recent problems in the dairy industries, our cafeteria is total vegetarian, and we encourage our staff to be also.

Staff who have academy aged children have the opportunity to be involved with their children's lives, friends, and character development during the teen years. The program is a busy one and it is important for potential staff to realize that the students will be very busy with homework and activities. Time at home and as a family will be very different than it was prior to joining staff and this is especially so if you have been homeschooling.

*Homework:* Homework should be given. However, before giving homework, a teacher should analyze it to see that it furthers the educational objectives of the class, and is not just something to fill time. Whenever possible, homework should be assigned in advance, on a study sheet, so that students may plan ahead and schedule their time.

*Grading:* The process of grading is one that has often been criticized. At *Ouachita Hills Academy* grading is to be of such a nature as to inform the students how they are doing compared to a set of standards (not as a means of competing against each other). Grade information is kept confidential between the teacher and the individual student. Teachers do not give information as to "class standing" or "top" or "bottom" score. It is not possible to use one set of grading standards for every class, but whatever method used, should be able to be explained and defended to the principal, parents, and students. Students should know in advance how they will be evaluated.

The most common grade scale used is:

98 - 100 A+

93 - 97 A  
90 - 92 A-  
88 - 89 B+  
83 - 87 B  
80 - 82 B-  
and so forth under 60 being an F.

Later assignments are generally docked at least 10% per day unless the student had an excused absence. Students who are receiving D's or F's in a class are informed every 4 1/2 weeks. Special assistance needs to be directed to students who are failing classes, not submitting homework, etc.

*Individualized Study:* Classes that allow for individual differences in the students are encouraged. Classes that have completely individualized study and/or variable credit allowances must be approved by the administration.

*Attendance Policy:* It is expected that teachers will be at their classes on time unless they have made previous arrangements with the administration.

*Outreach Work:* Whenever there is a special activity that requires the students to miss either classes or their free time, all teaching staff are expected to be present unless they have made prior arrangements. Since we are trying to teach the dignity of work, staff should set an example by not taking the easiest jobs available. Any student, including staff children, desiring to be excused from a work day for reasons other than illness must receive permission from the principal.

*Deans:* Deans are responsible for the students during the time they are not in class or at work. They are responsible for keeping the dorms clean and orderly, and reporting damage promptly to the office. The following are some of the dean's responsibilities:

- Encouraging students to have personal devotions.
- Evaluating how the students are dressed as they leave for worship, work, recreational activities, etc.
- Making their presence felt in the dorms.
- Conducting a worship ten to fifteen minutes in length each evening.
- Monitoring heating system usage and temperatures.
- Personally beginning study hall.
- Being present for the end of study hall until things are quiet.
- Making sure lights are out, and doors locked.
- Checking rooms at random times during the night, especially at the first of the year so you will get a reputation for being watchful.
- Working with the administration to detect small problems before they become big.

*Assistant Deans:* They are totally responsible during the times on duty. They should follow as closely as possible the same policies as the dean. When they are off duty, they are not to give permission to the students.

### ***Staff Policies***

*Criticizing:* No group will agree totally on how things should be done. There will always be reason for disagreement. If you disagree with something on campus, take it only to the

appropriate people. Make a pledge not to accept or give negative information about a fellow staff member. The Holy Spirit can work with us only as we put aside our differences and work unitedly for the salvation of our young people. Criticism destroys. Staff are happiest when they can accept the differences in other staff and focus on their strengths, not their weaknesses.

*Half-Day Off:* Each staff member is scheduled one half day off per week. Usually this is on Sunday.

*Staff Re-application:* A re-application form is give to each staff the around the middle of December. It is to be submitted as a final decision by the middle of January.

*Rent & Utilities:* Because *Ouachita Hills Academy* requires staff to live in school-owned housing on school property for the purpose of extended supervision, the house and utilities will be furnished at no cost. This is in accordance with the IRS regulations, and no taxes are withheld.

*Telephone:* Each staff home is required to have a telephone. The charges for the basic service are paid by the academy. The bill is listed in the staff member's name and represents a contract between the staff member and the telephone company.

*Stipend:* All staff serve as volunteers. They are provided with housing and utilities and a small stipend of \$650 a month. After three years they receive an additional \$89 month.

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|-------------------|--------------|---------|
| <i>Cafeteria:</i> | Meal charges | Regular |
|                   | Breakfast    | 2.00    |
|                   | Lunch        | 2.50    |
|                   | Supper       | 2.00    |

There is no charge for eating in the cafeteria when a staff member is on duty. Being "On Duty" in the cafeteria means you are supervising in the cafeteria during that meal. If the wife or husband is supervising the entire family is considered "On Duty." The above prices are for staff, not the general public. They represent a subsidized fee.

*Auto Insurance:* After one year of employment for each family we pay up to \$100.00 per year on automobile insurance. Payment will be made when premium is due and payable. A copy of your policy must be on file in the office. This is included in your gross salary. The following is the minimum coverage needed in order to obtain the \$100.00, and to carry students:

|                            |                 |              |
|----------------------------|-----------------|--------------|
| Bodily injury liability:   | Each person     | \$100,000.00 |
|                            | Each occurrence | 300,000.00   |
| Property damage liability: | Each occur      | 50,000.00    |
| Auto med payments:         | Each occur      | 5,000.00     |

*Vacations:* After 12 months of continuous employment - one week  
After 2 years of continuous employment - two weeks  
After 5 years of continuous employment - three weeks

Vacations will be scheduled according to the needs of the institution. Requests for specific dates will be honored as much as possible.

*School Breaks:* Staff have at least one week of Christmas vacation off. Part of the second week is used for reviewing the Lord's counsel for educational institutions and self-evaluation. Staff will be scheduled to be off two of the four additional breaks.

*Weekends Off:* The weekend off program was designed to allow a staff family to be able to do things together. It does not start until after your responsibilities are over on Friday, and your children are through with classes and work. If academy age children are involved, they should inform their work supervisor early in the week so arrangements can be made to cover their work on Sunday. Staff need to be back for Sunday evening responsibilities. Except for the weekend staff are off, they are expected to attend all church services (including prayer meeting) and to be available for assigned activities. Most months, staff will not be scheduled for duties for an additional Sabbath afternoon or Saturday night. Staff are still expected to attend church in Amity that Sabbath and participate in Sabbath morning responsibilities.

*Staff Homes:* One of the opportunities we have as staff is to share our homes with guests coming for the weekends. In this way we are to become better acquainted with the parents of our students. Some homes have guest rooms which are specifically reserved for those occasions. At other times, you may be asked if you have a room available for guests.

*Staff Education Policy:* It is the purpose of *Ouachita Hills Academy* to aid in the continuing development of staff. If you want to further your education, make a request to the administrative committee.

*Pets:* Pets are not allowed inside homes provided by the school for staff. Exceptions to this policy are birds and fish.

### ***Educational Policies***

*Elementary:* Tuition is free to all elementary children whose parents work for *Ouachita Hills Academy*. All children grades 5-8 work as follows:

During school - 5th & 6th grades - one hour per day

7th & 8th grades - 1 1/2 hours per day

Staff are responsible for the cost of the books. During the summer, the children are required to work four hours per day for 100 hours.

*Grade School Dress Code:* Same as academy.

*Academy:* Tuition is free to all academy age children whose parents work at *Ouachita Hills Academy*. Staff academy students are to work 200 hours for the school each summer and enter into the work-study program during the year. The summer before their senior year the students will work 240 hours, completing the agriculture requirement for graduation. Their vocational time during the year is reduced by one hour a day, during which they are expected to enter into the work of the home.