

Surprise Scholé Academy

Classical Community

2023-2024

This handbook contains the guidelines to help our community thrive. It will answer the most common questions and be a helpful resource throughout the year. Keep it handy and refer to it often!

SURPRISE SCHOLÉ

Mission:

To come alongside local homeschooling families as they raise up children who passionately seek virtue and wisdom. Our desire is to renew the classical methods in a restful way from a biblical worldview. Through weekly meetings, families will delight in fellowship, accountability, and an environment which cultivates virtue and produces enjoyable and permanent learning.

VISION:

Our vision is to empower parents with a viable option to reclaim their children's hearts and minds throughout their grammar, dialectic and rhetoric years.

WE ARE A HOMESCHOOL CO-OP

We are a Christian homeschool co-op which meets one full day per week for thirty weeks. We offer classes for grammar, dialectic & rhetoric aged students (K-12).



This is what the LORD says: "Stand at the crossroads and look; ask for the ancient paths, ask where the good way is, and walk in it, and you will find rest for your souls."

Jeremiah 6:16



WE ARE VIRTUE FOCUSED

Virtue is not easily taught, instead it must be modeled and cultivated.

At Surprise Scholé Academy we seek to cultivate student virtue through liturgical learning. Liturgical learning is the use of habitual patterns aimed at shaping the student.

It is very important that students begin to hunger for these virtues themselves, and cry out to God for them. This seems to be the point of Proverbs 2, if a student won't cry aloud for wisdom and seek it as a hidden treasure, he won't ever gain it.

Therefore (among other things we do), we must exhort our students to ask God for virtue and wisdom, a prayer He delights to answer (James 1). Some of these virtues include love, humility, patience, constancy, courage, and perseverance.

WE ARE RESTFUL

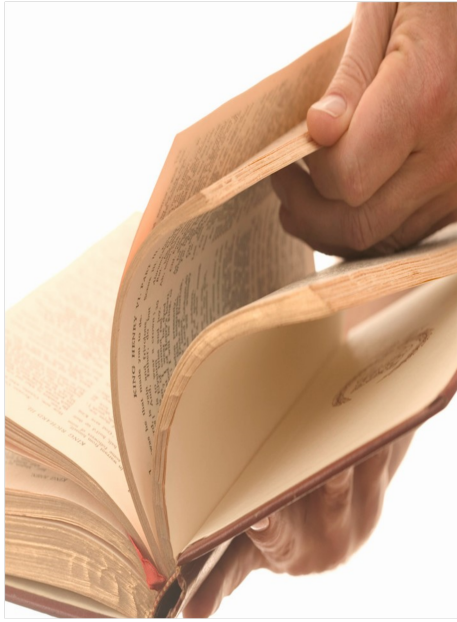
Scholé Groups are united by their pursuit of restfulness in learning, or *scholé*. The word *scholé* (skoh-LAY) comes from a Greek word that means “restful learning,” with the connotation of contemplation, conversation, and reflection. Surprise Scholé Academy seeks deep engagement that results in enjoyable, permanent learning that is free from anxiety. The concept of *scholé* cuts across the grain of modern education and therefore takes a principled commitment to the ideal in order to be implemented and realized.

WE ARE CLASSICAL:

As content, a classical curriculum can be summarized as the study of truth, goodness, and beauty (the proverbial “transcendental ideals” first cited by Plato). At the highest level, our curriculum should therefore present the wisdom of the ages, the best that has been thought and said, the “Great Conversation” to our students for study and contemplation. This content and these ideals are presented over time in the context of a community, modeled by loving teachers and contemplated by students.

The curriculum of the classical tradition has also been commonly summarized as the trivium and quadrivium arts. The trivium arts are the verbal or linguistic arts that enable the mastery of language, thought, writing, and speech. They are grammar, logic, and rhetoric and are called the *trivium* because they are the “threefold way” of mastering language. The quadrivium arts are the mathematical or scientific arts that enable the mastery of number, extension, magnitude, and motion. The quadrivium arts are arithmetic, geometry, music, and astronomy (as bodies in motion, astronomy also corresponds to modern physics). Together the trivium and quadrivium arts are called the seven liberal arts (or *septem artes liberales* in Latin).

You will note that we have named the levels of Surprise Scholé Academy after the trivium arts (grammar, logic, and rhetoric). Dorothy Sayers, in her essay “The Lost Tools of Learning,” suggested that these designations (grammar, logic, rhetoric) could also be used to designate stages of learning: younger students are well-suited to study grammar, early adolescents to study logic, and older students to study rhetoric. We have made use of this convention (as have numerous classical schools), but hold them lightly, as we do not wish to imply that the quadrivium subjects are of lesser importance, as they are not.



What is a Scholé Group?

Scholé Groups are homeschooling co-ops that employ the content of a classical curriculum and pursue restfulness (Scholé) in learning. The Scholé Groups Network offers each Scholé Group a wealth of resources and benefits to help them pursue these ideas.

WE ARE COOPERATIVE

Surprise Scholé Academy is truly a cooperative group. We operate under a volunteer governing board. The leadership roles are clearly defined and all leaders work together with equal voice and accountability. A leader should be a person of character and competence who influences the community to achieve a God-given calling through the power of Christ. Surprise Scholé Academy leaders will pursue that goal prayerfully and faithfully.

Because we are cooperative, we require that a parent or other guardian remain on campus for the full day (half-day attendance is not permitted) and faithfully serve in a specific role(s). Each family is required to participate in the Service Credit System, ensuring that there is shared responsibility and balance in the co-op. At SSA, all families participate in Academic Mentoring. For more information on the Service Credit System please see the SSA website.

Supervision of Students At SSA:

- ⇒ Parents are responsible for their children.
- ⇒ Please monitor your child's whereabouts, behavior, and participation at all times.
- ⇒ Parent helpers will monitor their classes' students during restroom breaks.

Parents on Campus

Parents must remain on campus at all times. A note assigning responsibility for your child(ren) to another parent will be needed in order for you to leave campus briefly, in case of emergency only. Please honor that our Academic Mentors work hard to equip parents, and parents are expected to be an example to their students. Surprise Scholé Academy is not a drop off program.

Parents in the Classroom

Academic Mentors must have a minimum of one parent helper with them at all times. This is for the protection of our mentors and students. Parents are required to actively participate in the classroom. We all love to connect with our community, but please honor and respect the Academic Mentor and the students and save conversation and fellowship for times when class is not in session.

One Body, Many Gifts

Surprise Scholé Academy is a parent-run organization. We believe that all homeschool parents have been equipped by Christ for the good work of homeschooling and because of this each parent is also equipped to provide Academic Mentorship within Surprise Scholé Academy. All parents serve as Academic Mentors in the community which allows Surprise Scholé Academy to operate at a lower cost than other co-ops.

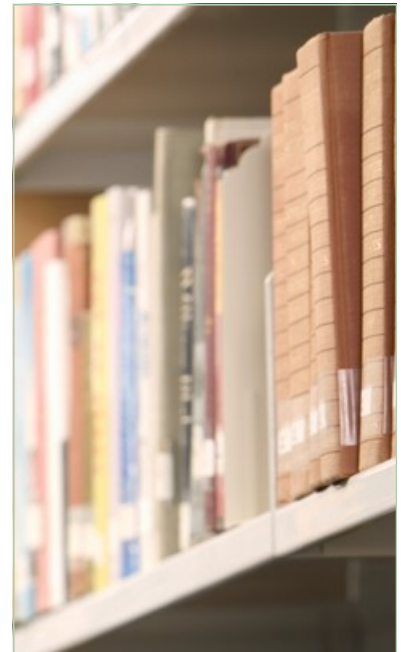
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WHAT IS THE ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PARENT?

- Parents remain the primary educators of their children.
- Parents must remain on campus and with their children for the full day, half-days are not permitted.
- Because we are a volunteer-based cooperative homeschool group, we require all parents to faithfully teach and serve in some capacity. Families are required to meet the minimum service credit hours as outlined in the service credit system description (see appendix).
- Parents should read and be familiar with the Surprise Scholé Academy handbook.
- Parents must communicate well with their Academic Mentors and leadership team. This includes discussing expectations, special needs, when students will be absent, and questions regarding assignments.
- Parents should inspire and encourage their students in their work and in their character development (virtue formation)

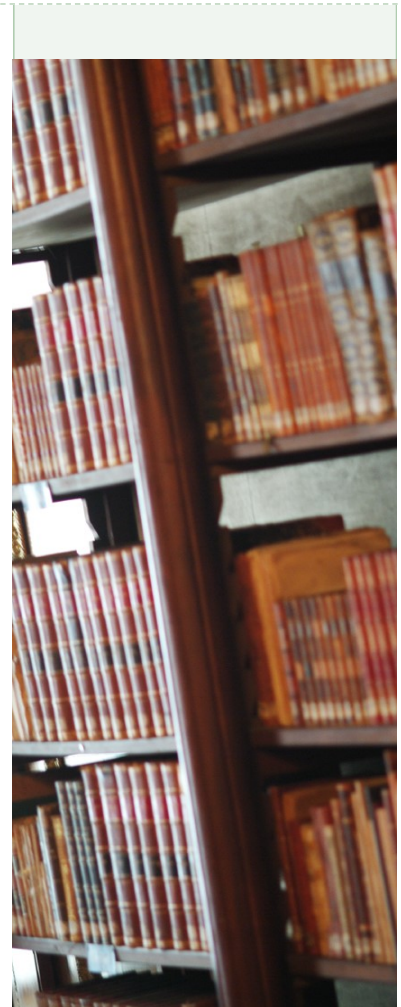
WHAT IS THE ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY OF THE STUDENT?

- Students are expected to be obedient and respectful to his or her Academic Mentors.
- Students are expected to interact with fellow students with kindness and respect.
- Students are not permitted to run in the church building.
- Students should speak with reverence (quiet voices) while in the church building.
- Students should arrive on time, in dress code, and ready to fully participate.
- Students are expected to clean up after themselves.



WHAT IS THE ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY OF THE ACADEMIC MENTOR?

- Academic Mentors will seek to create an atmosphere of restful learning by modeling peace, tranquility, and love of the subject.
- Class time will be unrushed with meaningful and deep engagement of fewer books and concepts (comparatively speaking), so that learning becomes memorable, enjoyable, and permanent.
- Academic Mentors are students of the Bible, the classical course of study, and restful learning. As students themselves, Academic Mentors will engage in ongoing education in these areas.
- Academic Mentors will treat all parents and students with dignity, kindness and respect.
- Academic Mentors will communicate well with parents. This includes communicating expectations, assignments, and general class information.
- Academic Mentors will be dependable by preparing for each class, submitting block lesson plans ahead of each academic block, and faithfully attending community days. Academic Mentor absences are a loss for students and the community. (Excessive absences (<5 per year) may result in removal from the community.)



ETIQUETTE

- ⇒ **ARRIVE on-time, every time.**
- ⇒ **SUPERVISE your children AT ALL TIMES**
- ⇒ **RESERVE cell phone use for emergencies only**
- ⇒ **PARTICIPATE in community and class activities**
- ⇒ **HELP with clean-up**
- ⇒ **LEND a hand to your mentor**
- ⇒ **HONOR God in words and deeds**
- ⇒ **RESPECT the church grounds and property.**

DISPUTE RESOLUTION

Please uphold the Matthew 18 principle for resolving all conflict. “If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his faults, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses.”

If there is a conflict, first bring the issue directly to the other person. If the issue remains unresolved, then bring a Surprise Scholé Academy leader into the conversation. If the issue still remains unresolved, we will seek the assistance of our host church.

It is important to remember that we are all sinners, and as a result there will be times of conflict and unintentional hurt feelings. As scripture teaches, it is important to believe and speak the best of each person involved, to speak graciously and listen well.



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THE CHURCH FACILITY:

It is a blessing to be able to use this facility. In order to be good stewards we need to treat the church with reverence.

This includes not running or yelling inside, picking up after ourselves, and generally leaving the church cleaner than we find it each week.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

It is expected that each student will conduct himself/herself in a manner that brings glory and honor to Christ. This includes, but is not limited to, honoring authority, showing preference for others, respecting the church facility, participating appropriately in class, and completing all work to the best of his/her ability.

The Bible tells us that God disciplines those that he loves so that He might draw them back into fellowship with Himself. He also institutes authority on earth to govern His people. In the event that a behavioral problem arises the Academic Mentor will work closely with the parent(s) to reconcile the situation. It is our goal for each student to learn self-control and obedience out of a desire to please the Lord.

DRESS CODE

Our dress code is a navy collared polo shirt and khaki pants or shorts for boys and khaki pants, skirt, navy or khaki uniform dress with a navy blue polo for girls. Closed-toe shoes are required.

Leggings or tights worn with skirts must be navy blue. Sweaters or well-fitted zip-up jackets must be navy blue. Hoodies are not permitted. No other additions to the uniform are permitted. Coats, jackets, hats, and all other clothing items should be left in the Parish Hall upon arrival and may not be worn until departing the building for home following community clean up.

Little Learners are not required to adhere to the dress code, but they must wear closed-toe shoes at any time they are outside of the Little Learners room.

We believe there is direct relationship between a student's appearance and their behavior. Uniforms help to create a sense of belonging, limit distractions, produce modesty, help facilitate a high standard for our educational environment and lastly, uniforms help to create rest by knowing each week what the student is going to wear.



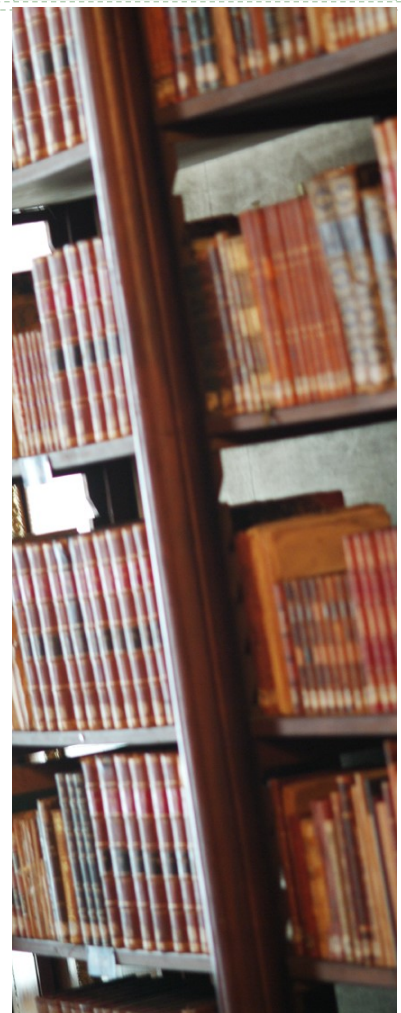
CODE OF CONDUCT

1. LOVE: We strive to honor God in our actions and interactions. We are patient and kind to one another. We love and honor and respect one another, adults and children alike. We give encouragement to each other. We do not point out the shortcomings of others to build ourselves up. We do not spread rumors or gossip. We avoid cliques, clubs, or games that exclude others. When others offend us, we forgive them. When others are sad, we comfort them. We look for opportunities to serve others.

2. INTEGRITY & RESPONSIBILITY: We tell the truth. We bring our work to class on time. We complete our work with our best effort. We will not make excuses for our actions, but instead admit when we are wrong. If we make a mess, we clean it up.

3. AUTHORITY & RESPECT:

We cheerfully and promptly obey the authority under which we are placed. We arrive for class on time and prepared to teach/learn. When we have work to do, we do it without complaining. We may appeal respectfully and courteously. We do not argue or negotiate. We do not disrespect the classroom or Academic Mentor by interrupting.



PEACE

If a student is disruptive:

1. Student is asked to stop the behavior by the parent helper or Academic Mentor.
2. Student is re-seated next to parent helper in the classroom.
3. Student is sent by the Academic Mentor with the parent helper to sit with his/her parent.
4. After class, the Academic Mentor, Board Member, parent and student will discuss options to correct the behavior.

Best Left at Home

Students must leave all* personal items not required for class at home or in the car.

This includes, but is not limited to:

- Wheels, to include wheelie shoes, scooters, hoverboards, skates, etc.
- Weapons, to include knives, pocket knives, guns, ninja stars, etc.
- Animals (live & stuffed!)
- Tablets, laptops, phones, smartwatches, and other

electronic devices

- Sports equipment
- Toys
- Pride, Ego and Bad Attitudes
- *Students **MAY** bring board games to play during the lunch break.



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Illness

**Please see the Sick Policy in the Members Area of the SSA website.*

By helping to observe good health standards, you will be protecting your child, yourself and others in Surprise Scholé Academy. Please inform a Board Member if your child has an infectious disease and other children may have been exposed, so that we may confidentially and discreetly notify families of possible exposure. Also remember that there are no facilities to contain sick children. If your child should become ill while participating in Surprise Scholé Academy Community day, your prompt attention is appreciated.

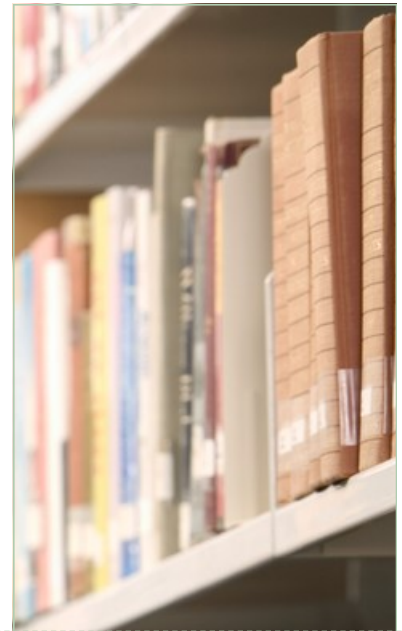
ATTENDANCE

Out of respect for your time, we will make every effort to keep to our published calendar. To preserve the quality of our program, please plan to arrive **no later than 8:15a.m.**

Things can happen though, so on the rare occasion that you may be late or miss that day, please let a Board Member know as soon as possible.

CLEAN UP

Each family in our community shares the responsibilities associated with gathering as a group. Everyone is expected to clean up after him/herself and to participate in the weekly end of the day tasks. It is a privilege that we have this facility available for us to use and we must treat it with the utmost respect and reverence.



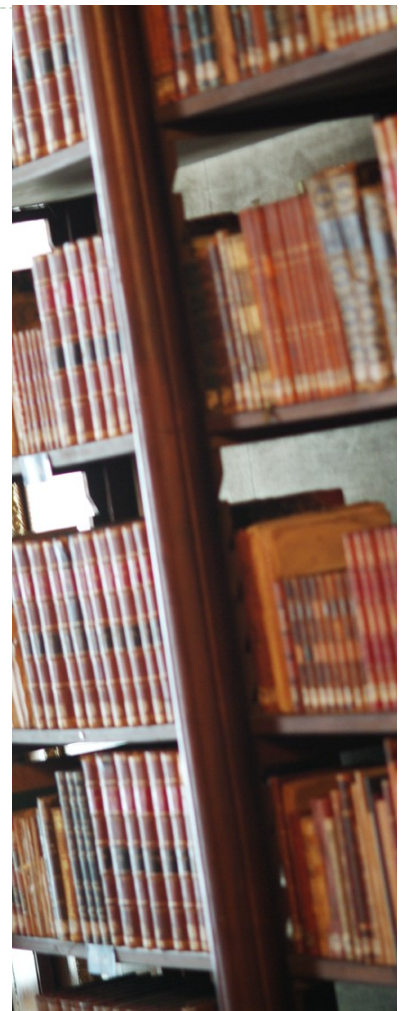
Kitchen: Please plan on bringing a cold sack lunch on community days. There will be no use of church supplies for personal use. That includes cups, utensils, etc., disposable or not. There will be a small supply of such with the coffee supplies, available as needed. The microwave is available for use, but please wipe down the inside after each use. Oven and stove use are not permitted. We want to promote fellowship time, so please minimize time in the kitchen and join the community for lunch.

LUNCH

Fellowshipping together strengthens our community and is an integral part of our time together each week. Lunchtime is a wonderful time of fellowship for parents and kids alike. Please pack a lunch for your family and participate in using this time to build relationships with our community.

Classes will dismiss for lunch at 11:30am. There is no scheduled or supervised recess time. If you would like your child to have time outside during the lunch period, you may take them to play on the patio but they must remain with you and may not be outside unattended. Playing in the rock gardens or landscaped areas on the patio is not permitted.

Lunchtime is observed in the Parish Hall. **No lunchtime food or drink may be consumed outside of the Parish Hall.**



ALL students must be supervised by an adult at all times.

Parents, please help ensure that all students adhere to this policy and help get them to where they need to be with supervision.

* Due to fewer adults with M/HS classes, Academic Mentors will allow Dialectic/Rhetoric students to go to the restroom using the buddy system in lieu of adult supervision. Students should be prompt in their absence, not using that time to socialize or go anywhere else in the church.

Electronic Devices

- Use of cell phones and other electronic devices by adults should be respectfully limited on campus.
- Cell phones should not be used in class, with the exception of the occasional use by the mentor for teaching purposes.
- If there is an emergency, parents, please step out of the classroom, to avoid being a distraction to those in class.
- Students are not permitted to bring cell phones or tablets to campus.
- Each Dialectic & Rhetoric mentor will use their discretion on whether or not to collect cell phones at the beginning of class, to be returned at the end of the day.



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Visitors

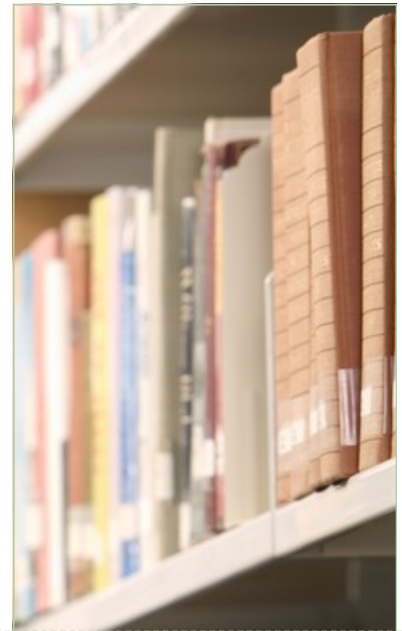
We welcome the participation of extended family on community day. Please notify a Board Member if anyone other than the registered student and parent will be on campus as they need to be accounted for, for insurance purposes. Adults who exceed 3 visits per year (not counting Symposium) must have a valid background check on file. (Please see the SSA Child Protection Policy for more details. Student visitors are limited to 5 visits per academic year (not counting symposium.) **Visitors, student or adult, are not permitted in the Little Learners classroom except on specific SSA visit days for prospective families.**

FIRST AID

Should the need arise, a First-Aid kit is available on the table outside of the Sanctuary. Please complete an incident report in the event of any injury. (Available on the table outside of the Sanctuary.)

MEMBERSHIP & FEES

Admission to Surprise Scholé Academy is a multi-step process (phone call, info meeting, visit day, board interview and application). The purpose of the application process is to ensure that families align with our mission and that a solid partnership is fostered. We are organized as a religious educational non-profit. Members must uphold the Statement of Faith to participate. Mentors must agree with and adhere to the Statement of Faith. All members must acknowledge and sign the SSA Waiver of Liability.

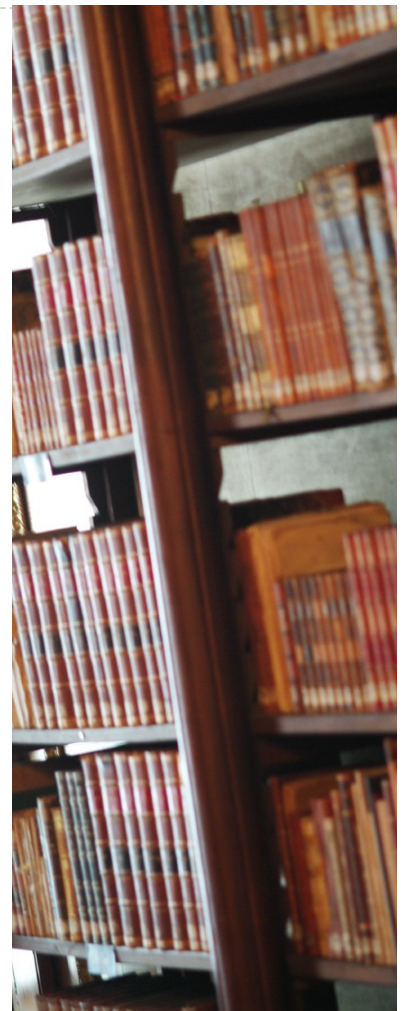


“Work willingly at whatever you do, as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people.”

Colossians 3:23

COMMUNICATION

Our primary method of community communication is via email and the SSA website, however, because sometimes short and timely communications are required we have opted to utilize **BAND** which can be accessed via an app on your phone or on desktop at <https://band.us/en>. You will find classroom groups for messages from Academic Mentors, and a general information thread which can only be accessed via direct link invitation to keep our groups private. ***Please do not use group text messaging for these types of communications.*** You will receive an invitation once your application has been approved. Join the **BAND** and adjust the settings for alerts so you can be in the loop!



**Surprise Scholé Academy
Cancellation Policies & Procedures**

Policies:

Surprise Scholé Academy seeks to provide weekly learning and fellowship opportunities for registered families according to the published schedule and SSA calendar. Occasionally, due to illness or other unforeseen events which affect the wider community, cancellation may be necessary.

Cancellations will occur when illness or other unforeseen events (national or local emergencies, etc.) cause a staffing deficit and the community is unable to secure an adequate number of substitutes to lead all classes for the day. **Mentor/student absences that do not result in understaffing will not be cause for cancellation.**

No individual level of classes may be canceled (PG/Dialectic, etc.) unless ALL students in that level are absent.

Hourly scheduled classes may be canceled, but they must be canceled for the entire hour across ALL levels. (ie: **all** humanities classes may be canceled or all second or third period classes may be canceled.)

In no circumstance may a class operate with 1 adult and 1 student. In the event of reduced class sizes, the smaller classes with inadequate adult:student ratios should be relocated from any closed classroom area (ie: conference room) to an open area (ie: Narthex or Parish Hall).

STUDENT CONDUCT POLICY

All students of Surprise Scholé Academy must agree and commit to the following: I will be obedient and respectful to my academic mentors & all adults.

1. I will be obedient and respectful to my academic mentors & all adults.
2. I will interact with fellow students with kindness and respect.
3. I will not run in the church building.
4. I will speak with reverence (quiet voices) while in the church building.
5. I will arrive on time, in dress code, and ready to fully participate.
6. I will clean up after myself.

Student Relationship Policy

We recognize that decisions regarding opposite-sex student relationships lie with the individual families, however, if SSA students are dating, we should not be able to discern as much from their conduct while participating in any Surprise Scholé Academy events including, but not limited to meeting days, other events, field trips, or other activities. Physical contact, including but not limited to, hand-holding, hugging, kissing, walking, leaning, or sitting with arms around another, between young men and women is not appropriate or acceptable conduct.

Enforcement

The SSA Governing Board desires to respond to policy violations with grace and gentleness while being mindful of the impact violations have on both the engaged student(s) and other members of SSA. We recognize that we are born as sinful beings into a fallen world, and therefore recognize that students will not always act perfectly in accordance with SSA policies. The Governing Board also recognizes that policy violations can provide opportunity for student character growth and virtue formation and we approach infractions with this in mind. Our goal is to redeem the student to appropriate conduct by encouraging the student to listen and respond to the Holy Spirit. In order to limit distractions, safeguard our environment, church relationship and student engagement, these policies will be implemented in most circumstances as follows:

1. First Offense: Notification to student(s) and parent(s) of the violation.
2. Second Offense: Notification to student(s) and parent(s) of the violation; within one week of the violation the student(s) involved will submit a written document detailing their plan and resolve to refrain from the behavior and/or actions in question. This document must be signed by the student and the parent
3. Third offense: Notification to student(s) and parent(s) of the violation and meeting with the SSA Governing Board* to address the infraction and develop a plan to restore the student to fellowship with the community. The SSA Governing Board may impose suspension or dismissal of the student from this community.

**The SSA Governing Board reserves the right to apply discretion and forgo any policies as deemed appropriate in individual situations, which may result in immediate suspension/dismissal of a student or family.*

And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you
Ephesians 4:32

Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.
Galatians 6:2



SURRISE SCHOLE ACADEMY WEBSITE

The SSA website, surpriseschole.com, has been developed with parent use in mind. You can find announcements, class recaps, Academic Mentor training, and helpful information about classical education! In addition to class recaps, Academic Mentors are able to post links and attach important class documents for the students in their classes. Please log in weekly to find new information about happenings around the community and in your student's classrooms! Class access is restricted to members of SSA and can be accessed using your website username and password.

AN ACADEMIC CO-OP

Surprise Scholé Academy is an academic co-op. The classes within SSA are core academic classes designed to give parents and students a springboard from which to manage their homeschool week. The level and number of assignments increases with each academic level (pre-grammar-rhetoric) according to the age, ability, and expectations of students.

In the Pre-Grammar & Lower Grammar years, optional homework assignments are provided to parents to implement at home as they wish.

In the Upper Grammar years, assignments increase as students utilize their time in class to grow in understanding of the topics covered. Parents are able to encourage work on assignments based on their child's age and ability.

In Dialectic & Rhetoric levels, assignments and projects develop to be commensurate with the work required for high school credit.

Because SSA is an academic co-op, it is essential that Academic Mentors are prepared for classes and provide valuable content to the students of SSA. It is also essential that Academic Mentors and families make every effort to attend each meeting day for the benefit of all students and families in the co-op.

Governing Board

Kathy Shearer,
Melana Salisbury,
Megan Morgan,
Kelly Suckow,
Melanie Leander

