



# DESTINY

*Leadership Academy*

## PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK

2024-2025

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# INTRODUCTION SECTION



## **Letter from School Principal**

What a privilege we have at Destiny Leadership Academy to serve the Lord, Jesus Christ, through being part of Christian education. I believe the opportunity to be part of offering a quality education to children based upon a Biblical foundation within a Christian environment is the most rewarding ministry I could possibly be associated with today. I want to thank you for allowing our staff to be an important part of your child's life.

I believe the parent and school together, as a Christ-centered team, can accomplish great things for our children that will impact His kingdom here on earth. Together, as partners, we can lead our children in a growth process that will help them stand firm upon God's Word throughout their life while achieving academic excellence. As the children grow, their decisions will reflect what God wants and not what the world would have them do.

My prayer is that our children will see the teachers, administration and parents working in unity focused on God's commandments and values as we impress those upon their hearts. As a spiritually maturing, well-qualified staff striving to give the best possible education to our children, we will always be seeking His will and direction to develop DLA into being the best that we can be for the Lord.

For DLA to be successful we will need much volunteer assistance. We will need all parents coming along side and using their talents to assist the school. Parents can set a great example for their children by using their time and talent in service to God. We hope and pray that all children will, in turn, use their Spirit given gifts to honor Jesus just as they have seen the adults in their life doing.

Working cooperatively, as we start this Spirit-led adventure of educating your child in a Christian school setting, we covet your daily prayers for your child, his/her teacher, administration, support staff, and school board. Without the power of prayer reaching up to the Almighty God of the universe, we cannot make a God-sized difference, but with prayer and by the grace of God, we can deliver a Christian education that will impact you, your child, and the world for Jesus.

In Christian Service,  
DLA Leadership Team

## **School Leadership Roster**

### **Destiny Leadership Academy Board as of August 2018**

President: *Lillie Tuggerson*  
Vice President: *Bernard Tuggerson*  
Secretary: *Elvira Surmons*  
Treasurer:  
Board Members:



## **Administrative Team**

School Administrator/Principal: Mrs. Tamika Singleton  
Administrator/Assistant to the Principal: Mrs. Verna Tillman

## **Faculty**

Mrs. Yolande Beard  
Mrs. Terry Wheaton

## **Support Staff**

IT Department	Mr. E. Surmons
Transportation	Mr. V. Wingo

# **IDENTIFICATION SECTION**

## ***Statement of Purpose***

The educational philosophy of Destiny Leadership Academy is based on the Bible for evaluating truth, for determining practices and as the basis of our faith. The purpose of Christian education is to glorify God by teaching children about God, His laws and His love. Our goal is to teach a Biblical Worldview and to train children for a life of service within a school environment of academic excellence.

The Holy Spirit uses the Word through the entire educational process to cultivate the student's fellowship with God, to develop a Christian mind within each student, and to instruct the student in godly living. The faculty, teachers, and staff, as born-again believers, must model the life of Christ as revealed in the Bible and develop personal relationships with their students. Students must be taught God's Word in order to fully know Him, thereby recognizing Him as the only source of truth. As a result of this teaching, the student will be able to interpret and integrate biblical foundations and truth, honorably applying his or her own God-given abilities and personality. Students will be taught the value of citizenship by understanding biblical concepts of freedom, human dignity, and authority. These skills will better equip the student to live and work with others at home, school, church, and in a changing society, thus becoming a committed servant and **leader** within the body of Christ.

## ***Mission Statement***

Destiny Leadership Academy exists to "provide a strong, Biblical foundation and academic excellence within a Christian environment that will prepare students to impact the world for Christ."

## ***Philosophy of Education***

### **Destiny Leadership Academy Educational Philosophy**

The educational philosophy of Destiny Leadership Academy is an extension of our Mission Statement and Statement of Faith.



We believe that the foundation of Christian education is the Bible. “All scripture is God breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work”.(2 Timothy 3:16-17)

Every child is “a heritage...a gift from the Lord” (Psalm 127:3). We believe that the primary responsibility for education and character development lies with the parents. The school will partner with the home to impress God’s commandments and values upon children’s hearts. Deut. 6:5-7 states, “And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. And these words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart; and you shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up.”

Our teachers are the embodiment of our school’s beliefs and values. They are spiritually mature, well-qualified people who focus on **academic excellence**. They seek to enhance the development of each student spiritually, intellectually, socially and physically as it says in Luke 2:52. Our teachers live their lives as full time role models to students and their families. According to Colossians 1:10 they strive to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God.”

Our curriculum is academically excellent and honors our Christian heritage. It helps prepare students for higher learning and to impact the world for Christ, as we embrace the commandment to: “Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.” (Matthew 28:19,20)

We believe that God’s promises are true as Proverbs 22:6 says, “Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not depart from it.”

### **Statement of Faith**

Our statement of faith is based on the Fourteen Historical Beliefs of the Christian Faith. The following is a brief description of our Statement of Faith.

1. We believe the Bible is the Holy Word of God. (2 Timothy 3:15-17; 1 Thessalonians 2:13)
2. We believe in the omnipotent, omniscient and eternal God of creation, existing in three persons. (John 1:1-14, Colossians 2:8-9)
3. We believe that Jesus Christ is God's Only Son. (John 3:16; Colossians 1:17; Isaiah 7:14)
4. We believe in the Holy Spirit. (John 14:16-26; 16 7-11)
5. We believe that all people are sinners (Isaiah 53:6; Romans 3:23; Ephesians 2:1-4)
6. We believe that salvation is available to all through Jesus Christ alone. (Ephesians 2:8-9; Romans 10:9-10)
7. We believe in the reality of Heaven. (Revelation 21:10-17; Hebrews 12:22-24)
8. We believe in the reality of Hell. (Revelation 20:11-15; Matthew 25:41; Mark 9:43)
9. We believe in the reality of Satan. (2 Corinthians 11:14; Isaiah 14:12-17)



10. We believe that Christians have the Holy Spirit living in them, empowering and enabling them to be what God wants them to be. (Galatians 2:20; Ephesians 5:18; Acts 1:8)
11. We believe in the local Church. (Acts 2:41-47; Matthew 16:18; Hebrews 10:25)
12. We believe that Baptism and Communion are Church ordinances but are not required for salvation. (Romans 6:1-5; 1 Corinthians 11:23-24)
13. We believe in giving back to the Lord. (Luke 6:38; Malachi 3:10; Leviticus 27:30)
14. We believe in local and world evangelism. (Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16; Acts 1:8)

### ***Parent/Student Handbook Review and Revision***

The DLA Board of Education and/or administrator/principal will review the parent/student handbook on a minimum of one time per year at which time there may be revisions made. Also, the parent/student handbook may be reviewed and revised at any time during the school year by the DLA Board of Education and/or administrator/principal. We reserve the right to change policy at any time at our discretion.

### ***Admission Philosophy and Guidelines***

There are many different types of Christian schools. For example, there are college-prep, university-model schools, Christian reform, parochial, discipleship and evangelistic schools. The desire of all of these is to see God glorified through providing children with a Christian education and strengthening the family, church and community. However, each type has unique objectives and areas in which they work.

DLA is designed to be a primarily discipleship Christian school with the emphasis being leadership and training students to change their world for Jesus Christ. We believe this type of school offers the greatest opportunity for teaching spiritual truths to individual students and seeing growth as believers. Students who wholeheartedly apply themselves and “study to show [themselves] approved by God” (2 Timothy 2:15) will offer the highest potential of testimony to the community and the highest potential for evangelism on the part of the students and the school.

Therefore, we hire only Christian faculty and staff, combined with the use of Christian curriculum which uses the Bible as the sole authority in evaluating truth, determining practices, and as the basis of our faith.

Guidelines:

1. At least one or both parents/guardians must fully agree with and strive to live by DLA Statement of Faith. In addition, all custodial parents and/or guardians must be in agreement with our Statement of Cooperation.
2. Admittance into DLA is determined by the Admissions Committee consisting of the following: DLA Administrator/Principal, DLA Classroom Teacher (rotating position), and DLA Board Member (rotating position).
3. After admittance, the student will be screened for academic strengths and weaknesses.



4. It must be understood that attendance at DLA is a privilege and not a right. This privilege may be forfeited by any student and/or parent who does not conform to the school's standard of conduct and/or who is unwilling to adjust to the environment.
5. DLA admits students of any race, national, or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school and, DLA is non-discriminatory in its policies and practices.
6. DLA reserves the right to select students based on religious commitment, academic performance or readiness, lifestyle choices, volunteer capabilities, and a willingness to cooperate with DLA administration and policies.

To educate students in accordance to biblical truths, it is necessary, as part of the admission process, for parents to sign a **Statement of Cooperation** (Amos 3:3). Cooperation between the parents and school is so important that DLA reserves the right to remove a child based on the parent(s) conduct and action. Following is the **Statement of Cooperation**:

1. I have read and understand the school's philosophy of Christian education and its statement of faith and am in agreement with both as written in the
2. Destiny Leadership Academy Handbook.
2. I will support the school by involvement in parent/teacher conferences, parent meetings and other school-sponsored meetings and activities.
3. I agree to actively participate in the Volunteer Program of Destiny Leadership Academy as stated in the Parent/Student Handbook.
4. I give my permission for my child to take part in all school activities including school-sponsored trips away from the school premises. I absolve the school from liability to me or my child because of any injury to my child at school or during any school activity, with the understanding that, as parent, I will maintain insurance on my child during the school year.
5. I understand the standards of Destiny Leadership Academy in that they will not tolerate profanity, obscenity in word or action, dishonor to the Word of God, or disrespect to the personnel, students or property of the school.
6. I herewith agree to authorize this school to employ such discipline as it deems wise and expedient for my child; I both understand and agree with their policies in this area. (Proverbs 13:24, Proverbs 22:6; Proverbs 22:15) No corporal punishment will be administered.





7. Realizing that my attitude toward the teachers and policies of Destiny Leadership Academy affects the emotional and academic stability of my child, I will support and uphold the ideals of the school in every way and will abide by the discipline and regulations of this administration. (1 Thessalonians 5:13)
8. At no time will I participate in destructive criticism of the staff or the school to my child or others, but instead, if a problem arises, regarding our child, I agree that I will adhere to the policy of 1) discussing the issue with the child's teacher, 2) if not resolved, discussing the issue with the administrator/principal and teacher, and 3) if the issue remains unresolved, to contact the President of the Board to set up a private meeting to discuss the issue with the School Board as indicated in Matthew 18:15. I understand that in certain circumstances, depending on the nature of the parental concern, it may be appropriate to omit the first and second steps. These steps will be addressed privately and confidentially.
9. In making application for my child, I fully understand that Destiny Leadership Academy does not accept children on a month-to-month basis, nor on a one-semester basis. Upon enrolling my child, I affirm that I am morally and financially obligated to maintain enrollment for the complete school year. It is my understanding that the school's policy is to make no refund on registration fees or tuition, unless there is no slot available for my child. (2 Corinthians 8:21)
10. I pledge to pay tuition and fees in a timely manner. I understand that In the case of unexpected financial hardship, it is my responsibility to contact the school office to arrange a meeting with the Administrator/ Principal.
11. A spot for the upcoming year will not be held for a student if any tuition or fees are past due by 30 days or more. A student may not begin school in the fall until all amounts due for the prior year are paid in full by June 30.
12. I understand that there will be no reduction in tuition for time missed by our child due to illness or other reasons.
13. I understand that if our child is dismissed or withdrawn during or at the end of the school year, student records **will not** be released to anyone until the school account is **paid in full**.

Signature of Father: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Mother: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



# PROCEDURES SECTION

## **Admissions**

Destiny Leadership Academy accepts students entering Kindergarten through fifth grade upon completion of registration requirements and availability based upon student numbers. These requirements may include readiness and/or achievement tests, a review of the student's previous records, and providing evidence that the parents/guardians share in the goals of the school based upon its philosophy and purpose.

**Registration**—A child is not officially enrolled until all of the following requirements have been met:

1. The following forms must be completed and received by the school office:
  - Student Application with the non-refundable \$100 registration fee – If the full amount cannot be made at this time please make arrangements with Administrator/Principal.
  - Parent State Issued Photo ID
  - Court-Ordered Guardianship Papers (if applicable)
  - Signed Statement of Cooperation
  - Signed Student's Health Forms
  - Student Records from Previous School (if applicable)
  - State/County issued Birth Certificate
  - Immunization Records
  - Copy of student's IEP or 504 Plan (if applicable)
  - Parent Interview with the Admissions Committee and/or attend Mandatory Enrollment
  - Financial Aid Award Letter (if applicable)

2. Meet the following admission requirements:

On entering our Kindergarten program, the child must be five years old by September 1<sup>st</sup> of the current school year.

All students entering the first grade must be six years old by September 1<sup>st</sup>. The student's kindergarten records will be reviewed to determine first grade readiness, at which time an achievement test and/or screening administered by DLA staff may be used to assist in determining final grade placement. All final grade placements will be made by the administrator/principal.

Students entering all other grades must provide recent standardized test scores, previous records and/or take an achievement test, which will be administered by DLA staff at the time of interview. All final grade placements will be made by the administrator/principal.

## **Tuition and Fees Per Child**

- K –5th Grade - \$7,500

-Non-refundable application fee all grades - \$100—due at the time of enrollment **(If the full amount cannot be made at this time please make arrangements with Administrator/Principal)**. \$300.00 – due at the time of **re-enrollment**



## **Referral Program**

DLA Board is also offering to assist parents with tuition cost with a **referral program**. For each child (this does not include siblings) you refer to DLA that officially enrolls and attends DLA this fall, you will be given a \$200 discount toward your child's tuition. You must complete a referral card or **make sure that when a family you have referred to DLA enrolls, that they share your name at the time of enrolling their child**. The \$200 for each officially enrolled and attending child referred will be subtracted from your monthly tuition payments in the [spring /fall /month arranged by parent and administration].

## **Academics**

### **Core Curriculum\***

ABEKA (which incorporates state standards)

\*Curriculum may be supplemented with additional material to meet the student's need and curriculum goals.

DLA will provide an education that gives students a biblical worldview. Students spend time each day in prayer, study, and the memorization of Scripture. Curriculum published by ABEKA will be used as the foundation for Bible class. Students will participate in chapel each week.

Students must demonstrate an appropriate degree of success in the classroom in order to be given opportunities to participate in other aspects of school life. Academic issues will be regulated as indicated in each area below:

### **Academic Probation and Dismissal**

A student may be placed on academic probation for the following reasons:

- two D's or an F in any grading period

Students on academic probation and their parents will be required to meet with administration to discuss the student performance and to devise a plan for improving their performance. Faculty members may be invited to this meeting to help in devising the plan. During this conference the following areas will be discussed:

- factors that are negatively impacting the student's academic performance, e.g., extra-curricular activities, learning problems
- steps (outlined) for dealing with each of the factors identified
- goals (established) to measure the student's progress

As a result of this discussion, an academic contract will be written, which the student/parent/guardian will sign. If a student does not receive two D's or an F in the following grade period, he or she will be removed from academic probation. If they do receive two D's or an F, but fulfill the goals in their academic contract, they will remain on academic probation and another conference will be held to evaluate the academic contract and to set new goals. If a student remains on academic



probation for more than two consecutive semesters, he or she may be dismissed from DLA or held back a grade. Individuals will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

### **Student Retention**

The administrator/principal and teacher may consider retention when a student does not meet the stated academic requirements for grade promotion.

Requirements include student level of reading, regular attendance, satisfactory social, emotional, spiritual, and physical development.

### **Activity Eligibility**

All students participating in school sponsored activities who have below average grades in two or more subjects will be placed on the ineligibility list and will have his/her grades checked on a weekly basis and may be reinstated for eligibility when all of his/her grades have improved to at least a "C" (70% or above).

### **Conferences**

Parent/teacher conferences will be held at the request of the parent or teacher and will take place at the earliest time each schedule permits.

### **Grading Scale**

A reporting key for Kindergarten will be as follows, E-Excellent, S-Satisfactory, N-Needs Improvement, and U-Area of Concern (Unsatisfactory) for the following subjects: Bible, reading, language, spelling, math, social studies, science, art, music, chapel, technology, social skills, and work habits.

The following grading scale will be used for report cards and on each student's permanent academic record starting in the first grade. In addition, the 4 point rating scale used for Kindergarten will also be used in grades 1-5 in the areas of conduct: good attitude, follows direction, displays good manners, works quietly, respect for authority, attentive in class, responsibility, and effort.

100-90%	A	Excellent
89-80%	B	Superior
79-70%	C	Satisfactory
69-60%	D	Improvement Needed
59-0%	F	Unsatisfactory

### **Report Cards and Progress Reports**

Report cards will be issued quarterly, approximately one week after the end of each quarter. Mid-term progress reports will be sent home each quarter. Report cards and mid-term reports need to be signed by a parent and returned to the teacher.



### **Homework**

Teachers may assign homework to aid students in the progress of their studies. It is useful to reinforce daily lessons, to build good study habits, and to provide opportunity for parent involvement in student learning. Therefore, we encourage parents to provide a suitable environment for the completion of daily homework. Parents are urged to monitor their child's work daily. The parent should help the child to become responsible in returning the homework completed and on time. Parents should make a point to find time each day to discuss what their child has learned at school.

### **Attendance**

Regular attendance is a critical component for success in school. Parents are requested to schedule family vacations during school vacation periods. A student is expected to be in attendance except when ill or when unable to attend because of emergency circumstances or a death in the family. When students are absent from school, it is critical that proper arrangements are made for the absence and that responsibility is taken for appropriate reentry into school. Absences in the following categories will be handled as indicated:

#### **Excused Absences**

In order for an absence to be excused for any reason, the parent must notify the school. A telephone call the day of the absence is preferred, but a written note the first day back in class is acceptable as long as the note includes the date returning, child's name, dates absent, and the reason for the absence. School work that is missed will be allowed to be made up for excused absences (see makeup work). When a student is absent, it will be considered an excused absence for the following reasons (assuming the school office has received parental notification):

- Student illness – in an event of an extended illness or frequent absences due to illness, a doctor's note may be required.
- Doctor or dentist appointments – occasional, unavoidable medical appointments.
- School-sponsored activities
- Death in the immediate family and/or close family friends.
- Unavoidable mechanical failure of automobile or accident
- Unavoidable traffic delays – this refers to unanticipated delays such as an accident blocking traffic or road blockage due to inclement weather.
- Other approved absences – approval for other absences may be requested from the school office, and if approved makeup work will be allowed.

Please note that an absence is not automatically excused because a parent gives written or oral permission for the student to be gone from school. Parents may respectfully disagree regarding the legitimacy of an absence when weighed against the benefits of attendance; however, the final decision as to whether an absence is considered excused or unexcused rests with the school administrator/principal.



## **Unexcused Absences**

Any absence for which the school does not receive appropriate notification will be unexcused. There will be no allowances made for missed work if an absence is unexcused. Examples of unexcused absences include, but are not limited to:

- Lack of parental notification
- Oversleeping – either intentional or unintentional
- Running late –daily schedules need to be adjusted to ensure that the student arrives on time.
- Birthdays – student birthdays are special events; however, absence from school will not be excused
- Absences due to family vacations or extended weekends that have not been pre-approved by the school office – prior notification and approval are required for absences due to family vacations to be excused. Parents are encouraged if at all possible to avoid taking family vacations during times when school is in session.
- Student skips school – any absence when a student simply chooses to skip school for any reason. Skipping school will result in disciplinary action as well.

**No student is to leave the school premises without first obtaining permission from the DLA office. It is essential that the school be aware of a student's location at all times.**

## **Excessive Absences**

Any student who misses more than 10 days in a semester or 20 days per school year will be reviewed for retention in the current grade level the following school year and/or removal from the school. The school reserves the right, should a student exceed these limits, to require the parents to submit, in writing, an explanation detailing the absences and the justification of each absence.

## **Prearranged Absences**

The parents will need to notify the school office, in writing, of any prearranged absences. Arrangements will need to be made with the child's teacher for school work that will be missed.

## **Makeup Work**

For scheduled absences, arrangements for makeup work must be made in advance with at least an equal number of days advance notice as the number of days of planned absence. This allows the teachers to prepare. The work will be due the first day the student returns to school. For other absences of less than two (2) days the makeup work will be available to the student on the day of their return to school. If a student is absent two (2) days or longer the parent should contact the school office as per the Attendance Policy, then the work will be collected and available at the end of the day, if possible. Students will have one day to complete missed work for each day they are absent, excluding scheduled absences.



## **Tardiness**

Students arriving after 8:30 a.m. will be considered tardy. When a student arrives after 8:30 a.m. the parent must come into the office to sign their child in. **If a student is tardy (unexcused) three times during a quarter, disciplinary action will be taken. If a student is habitually tardy, additional disciplinary measures may be taken.**

## **Student Activities**

### **Opportunities for Student Involvement**

Statistics show that overall student success in school is closely related to the student's involvement in school activities. The administration and teachers, using recommendations from students and their parents, will offer various extra activities during each school year. Listed below are some suggestions.

#### **Service**

Classes may sponsor a needy family at Christmas, run a recycle program to benefit Habitat for Humanity, or make collections for local food banks. Students will be encouraged to look for ways to help others.

#### **Leadership**

Older students may be paired with kindergarteners for reading time or serve as safety patrol for drop off and pick up of students.

#### **Music**

Choir programs might present music at nursing homes, for sick and shut-ins, for chapel time, and other occasions

#### **Drama**

Students may present a school play utilizing a broad range of talents for drama, music, artistic backdrops, lighting, sound, and direction. Students may do mini-drama presentations during chapel.

#### **Athletics**

The school may sponsor teams for various sports through the local YMCA and other sporting venues.

#### **Robotics/Technology**

The school may sponsor teams to compete in robotic and technology competitions.

### **Eligibility and Tryouts**

In order for students to participate in extra activities they must be academically eligible and in some cases go through a tryout process. Details of each area are outlined below:



## **Eligibility**

All students participating in school sponsored activities who have below average grade in two or more subjects will be placed on the ineligibility list and will have his/her grades checked on a weekly basis and may be reinstated for eligibility when all of his/her grades have improved to at least a "C" (70% or above).

## **Tryouts**

Tryout qualifications and schedules will be determined for each activity.

## ***Lifestyle Expectations***

### **Student Conduct**

Students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that is honoring to God, themselves, their parents, and the school. This expectation applies to all student conduct regardless of whether the students are in school or at school activities as well as the time they are away from school. Students and parents understand that the school reserves the right to impose discipline including expulsion, based upon conduct which occurs outside of the school. Expectations for general conduct that have been adopted are the following:

1. Students will refrain from using inappropriate language. Obscene language, excessive grumbling and complaining will not be tolerated.
2. Students will exercise courtesy and kindness when dealing with others, as well as not harass, abuse, bully, tease, threaten, torment, humiliate, or intimidate other students either physically, mentally, or emotionally.
3. Sexual harassment of employees, students, visitors, or others will not be tolerated.
4. Students will show respect for their own bodies, the temple of the Holy Spirit, by neither possessing nor using tobacco, alcohol, other controlled substances, visible tattoos, or engaging in biblically impure conduct.
5. Students will respect the authority of the faculty and staff of DLA.
6. Students will show respect for the school facilities by keeping hands and marking utensils away from the walls, tables, floors, and windows. Unnecessary waste or damage to school property or facilities will not be tolerated.
7. Students will show respect for others by not taking things that do not belong to them.
8. Students will exercise the commandment of honesty at all times.
9. Students will show reverence toward God's Word during chapel time.
10. Students will be representatives of their school in the community in which they live and will observe this conduct code at all times.
11. Students will not participate in or view inappropriate websites.





12. Students will not participate in any other conduct that, in the school's discretion, significantly impairs the student's testimony or brings discredit to the school and community.

Disregard for, or violation of, these standards will be dealt with according to the Student Discipline Policy of DLA.

### **Student Discipline Policy**

The disciplinary goal of DLA is for all students to achieve the ability to govern themselves from within, based on the example and model of Jesus Christ. As the students; ability to govern themselves in this way increases, there is less need for imposing rules and regulations upon them. The following scriptures, Galatians 5:22-23, Ephesians 4:22-32, and Philippians 4:8-9 help us achieve and maintain an attitude of self-control that is pleasing to Christ and to others. We believe students should show respect for both parents and teachers. Staff and parents working together to teach and train our children to do what is right according to God's word, will result in exceptional young leaders, ready to impact the world for Christ.

Each student will be disciplined as needed in firm Christian love, according to individual needs. A student must learn to submit to authority. If a student learns to submit to teachers, parents, and others in authority, then he will learn to submit to God's authority in his own life.

Each teacher is given the responsibility of enforcing classroom and school rules. The teacher will maintain order in the classroom by speaking to children about the policy violation and deciding what consequences are appropriate for the child and circumstance in accordance to the discipline policy. The principal will be available to assist as needed.

At all times, DLA reserves the right to administer any discipline it deems necessary in its sole discretion based upon the facts and circumstances of each situation. Factors to consider will include, but not necessarily be limited to, the seriousness of the offense, student's age, frequency of misconduct, student's attitude, and repentance.

Discipline and order are attained through a proper balance of positive and negative consequences. Teachers will use a variety of methods to promote good behavior and aid in character training. The teacher will use positive responses for appropriate behavior.

Inappropriate behavior includes but is not necessarily limited to:

- Unexcused tardiness to school and/or class
- failure to complete assignments
- **classroom and hallway disruptions**
- **unnecessary talking in class**
- **disobedience to teacher directives**
- public displays of affection – inappropriate touching
- stealing



- selling items at school
- possession or use of tobacco, alcohol or other controlled substances\*
- fighting
- possession of knives, guns or other weapons\*
- misbehavior in the restroom or playground
- **disrespect and/or defiance toward staff**
- using obscenities or the Lord's name in vain
- any form of harassment or intimidation
- lying
- leaving school without permission from the office
- abuse or willful destruction of school property
- **mistreatment of other students**
- conduct outside of the DLA which would have an adverse effect on the testimony of the student or school
- critical or derogatory remarks
- possession of nuisance items, such as radios, CD players, games, personal toys, skateboards, pets, etc.
- violation of biblical standards of purity and morality

Discipline actions that may be used include, but are not limited to:

1. Warning: Teacher will talk to pupil and explain his/her offense
2. Time-out – in or out of classroom
3. Missing part or all of recess
4. Work details
5. Call parents
6. After school detention
7. Student conference with the principal
8. Conference with the principal and parents
9. Probation
10. Suspension – in and/or out of school
11. Expulsion

NOTE: The school reserves the right, based upon the particular facts and circumstances, to render any punishment it deems necessary. By listing these possible disciplinary actions, the school, in no way, implies that some or all of these will be utilized in a specific situation or prior to suspension and/or expulsion.

**\*POSSESSION OR USE OF DRUGS, ALCOHOL, TOBACCO OR WEAPONS MAY RESULT IN EXPULSION FROM SCHOOL.**

Responsibilities – We believe God has given parents the responsibility for the discipline of their children. The staff at DLA feels that our role is to assist you as parents. We do believe in corporal punishment as the Bible teaches, but we have chosen to rely on the parents to administer it in a loving manner. Thus, no DLA employee will use corporal punishment.

If, at any time, parents have questions or disagreements regarding disciplinary actions, it is their responsibility to immediately discuss these questions or



differences with the teacher or staff member involved, in accordance to the Matthew 18 principles, and not to bring their grievances to other parents, faculty or students. If the matter is not resolved with the teacher, the parents would then discuss it with the principal..

### **Probation Policy**

Probation gives the student an opportunity to correct a serious problem. If he/she does not improve to a satisfactory level, the consequences will be suspension – forced absence from the school for a number of days to be determined by the school principal, then expulsion – forced withdrawal from the school.

A review date will be set at the time the discipline is administered. Specific improvements to be made should be established. The principal will determine the length of the probation. At the end of the probation period, if the student has corrected the problem areas outlined by the principal, he/she will then be taken off probation and be held as a student in good standing.

### **Student Dress and Grooming**

The purpose of Destiny Leadership Academy's dress and appearance expectation is to enable the student to demonstrate traits of a discerning leader by making appropriate dress and appearance choices that reflect DLA's key values of wisdom, integrity, excellence, dignity, and unity. "Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God – this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is – His good, pleasing, and perfect will" (Romans 12:1-2).

DLA students will honor:

God – We honor God by making personal choices that glorify Him. You can honor God by choosing modesty for the sake of pleasing the Lord.

Others – As Christians we have a responsibility to our brothers and sisters.

Romans 14:12-13 says, "So then, each of us will give an account of himself to God... make up your mind not to put any stumbling block or obstacle in your brother's way."

Ourselves – In Romans 12:1 we are called to "...offer our bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God." 1 Corinthians reminds us that, ". You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body."

Cooperation between the home and school regarding the matter of dress guidelines will strengthen the school. To establish a dress code that will honor God and be most workable for the parent and school, DLA has adopted a **Mandatory Coordinated Dress Code**.



Explanation of Mandatory Coordinated Dress Code is as follows:

Mandatory - Must be worn in school according to school guidelines. This program has been chosen to represent your school and is an integral part of what makes our school a success.

Dress Code - Guidelines which will allow and enable each student to develop their individuality while honoring God with modest dress.

All clothing must be worn as the designed style was intended. Clothing that meets the standards of the Mandatory Coordinated Dress Code should be in good condition (without holes or tears), must be worn clean and properly hemmed. Students are expected to dress neatly with shirts and blouses tucked in. Pants should be worn at the waist with belts and not excessively tight. Pant hems should fall to the top of the foot.

Accessories:

Shoes: Shoes must have a wide, **low heel** so as not to impair movement during recess or P.E. activities. Athletic shoes are permissible. No flip-flops, backless sandals or boots.

Hats or visors may be worn only on the playground. Sunglasses are not needed at school unless prescribed for medical reasons.

Students are not allowed to wear any jewelry or body piercing, except girls may wear one small, post earring in each ear. Boys may not wear earrings.

Any form of dress, jewelry, make-up, hair style, hair coloring, or elements of personal appearance which is considered extreme, distractive, disruptive, or does not follow the intent of the dress code will not be permitted. The administration's ruling in these cases will be final.

**The DLA logo is optional on all items; however, at least one shirt must have logo for field trips and special occasions. Other words, emblems, or insignias are not permitted on any item of clothing.**

#### **Girl's Guidelines: K-5th grade**

Please adhere to the following Color Guidelines: **Bottoms Colors** include Khaki, Navy blue and Black. **Top Colors** include Navy, Light Blue and White **solid** color polo shirts. Shirts with stripes and prints are not permissible.

#### **Jumper**

Length should be no shorter than the top of the knee.

#### **Skirt**

Skirt length same as for jumper.

#### **Pants**

Capris will be allowed in the same color as pants. "Flare" bottoms are not allowed. A belt is required.

**Shorts**

Skorts are in the shorts category. Absolutely no cut-offs allowed. Tights may not be worn alone and are only to be worn under jumpers or skirts. A belt is required.

**Blouse**

Long, short, or three-quarter sleeves permissible.

**Polo Shirt**

Long or short sleeves. Plain white t-shirts may be worn under shirts.

**Sweater**

V-neck or crew styles may be worn.

**Sweater Vest**

V-neck or crew styles.

**Sweatshirt**

Must be worn over a blouse, polo shirt, or turtleneck. *No hoods unless the sweatshirt is being used for an outer garment (coat).*

**Socks/Knee Socks/Tights/Leggings**

Tights can be worn **in solid academy colors only**.

**Boy's Guidelines: K-5th Grade**

Please adhere to the following Color Guidelines: **Bottoms Colors** include Khaki, Navy and Black. **Top Colors** include any **solid** color of Light Blue, Navy, or White.

**Shirt**

Shirts must have collar; long or short sleeves. Plain white t-shirts may be worn under shirts.

**Polo Shirt**

Can be long or short sleeves. Plain white t-shirts may be worn under polo shirts.

**Sweatshirt**

Must be worn over a shirt with collar, polo shirt, or turtleneck. *No hoods unless the sweatshirt is being used as an outer garment (coat).*

**Sweater**

V-neck or crew styles.

**Sweater Vest**

V-neck or crew styles.

**Blazer**

Can be worn.

**Pants**

Must be worn with a belt. "Flare" bottoms or sweat pants are not allowed.



### **Shorts**

Absolutely no cut-offs allowed. A belt is required.

*Please mark coats, sweaters, and other articles of clothing with your child's name.*

**Destiny Leadership Academy does reserve the right to advise and discipline any student about personal appearance that may be considered distracting or deemed inappropriate by the school administration.**

## **Opportunities for Parent Involvement**

Parent involvement is critical to Destiny Leadership Academy's overall effectiveness. Parents can get involved by:

### **Fund-Raising**

Each year DLA will have two major fund-raisers. The fundraisers currently consist of an annual walk-a-thon and banquet. Parent participation will help keep our tuition to a minimum.

### **Parent/Teacher Fellowship (PTF or PTO)**

To encourage and organize participation of parents/guardians in the life of DLA, the PTF will be formed to help with a variety of activities. There will be regular meetings scheduled for planning and coordinating of many different projects and events. Leaders will be chosen each year from among the active supporters. The many hours of help to students and teachers are an investment in the lives of our students.

### **Volunteering**

*"I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to strengthen you... that we may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith...(Romans 1:11-12)*

## **Volunteer Program**

Parent involvement is an essential part of your child's education at Destiny Leadership Academy.

In order to help build community and to help keep down the overall cost of operating the school, the Board and staff encourage participation in all school activities. You are vital to the success of our school!

Please prayerfully consider where God would have you serve. Since we are not always aware of the gifts and talents of our families, below you will find a suggested list of opportunities. In addition, we will notify you of opportunities throughout the year through the weekly newsletter.



Please sign in at the office when you arrive at school to volunteer. Thank you so much for your willingness to serve the Lord and DLA through your time and talent!

### ***Volunteer Opportunities***

#### Special Activities

- Fall Festival Coordinator & Workers (Fall Festival is in October during school hours)
- Christmas Parade Coordinator & Set-up Help (Parade is usually the 1st Sat. in Dec)
- Living Windows Coordinator (Living Windows is usually the 1st Fri. evening in Dec.)
- Teacher Appreciation Coordinator & Volunteers
- Pastor Breakfast (Fall, 2nd-5th grades)
- Chapel Participation

#### Fundraising

- Walk-A-Thon (Saturday in the fall)
- Banquet (spring)
- Grant Writing

#### Maintenance/Outdoor Work

- General school clean-up (includes scrubbing walls, door handles, etc.)
- Playground clean-up
- Painting
- School work days

#### Classroom Help

- General classroom assistance
- Recess Volunteers
- Field trip chaperone and/or driver
- Home room parent/party assistant
- Tutoring
- Art assistance
- Library assistance

#### Miscellaneous

- Uniform resale coordinator
- Mailing assistance
- Computer help
- Office volunteer
- Home projects volunteer (this is a great way for people who work during the day and have time at home to work on various projects in the evening)

*“Volunteers do not necessarily have the time, they just have the heart.” (Elizabeth Andrew)*



## **Health and Safety Issues**

It is of utmost importance that Destiny Leadership Academy provides a safe environment for our students. Because of this commitment, the following rules will apply:

### **Distribution and Consumption of Medication:**

Parents are requested, whenever possible, to schedule medication to be given at home. **If medication is needed to be given during school hours, parents must provide a written request from the child's physician, including the name of drug, time of dosage, route of administration, possible adverse effects, and emergency instructions that might be applicable.** Medications must be brought to school in a container appropriately labeled by the pharmacy or physician and is to include only that medication to be given during school hours.

### **Administering of Medication:**

A **signed permission slip** must be provided by the parent requesting that the school staff administer the medication. Forms are available from the school office. The school staff (teacher, principal or assistant) or school nurse, if one is assigned to the school, will be responsible for assisting the student in administering the medication. A log will be kept of all medication administered at school. It shall include the student's name, the date, dosage, time of administration, and initials of the staff member assisting the student with the medication. All prescription medications shall be kept in a locked cabinet or drawer.

Should your child need any non-prescription medication during school hours, parents must notify the school and provide these medications for their student. A signed permission slip will also be required for non-prescription medication.

Students are not to carry any medication (prescription or over-the-counter) on their person with the exception of prescribed inhalers for asthma. They must have a signed order from the doctor.

***DLA will not administer the first dose of any medication.***

**Student Illness:** (procedures designed to preserve the health of each child and each class.)

If a child has been ill during the night or became ill upon awakening, please do not send the child to school. Students with low-grade fever, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, or other acute symptoms will be sent home. If your child has been ill at home with any of these symptoms, please keep him/her home until these symptoms have subsided for 24 hours. If a child becomes ill after coming to school, the parent will be contacted. If a child has a fever of at least 100 degrees of temperature or has vomited, the student will be sent home.

If the parents cannot be reached by phone, the emergency contact person(s) listed in the student file will be called to pick up the child. **Please maintain accurate and current information for the emergency file. Any addition or deletion for emergency contact person(s) should be given immediately to the school office.**





If signs of contagious conditions are recognized, the exclusion of pupils from school will be done on the basis of the following symptoms (there may be additional symptoms not included in this list):

- 100 degrees of temperature or above
- Unrelieved headache
- Diarrhea
- Abdominal pain
- Unidentified rash
- Head lice (DLA has a nit free policy)
- Listlessness
- Extreme sleepiness
- Persistent cough
- Excessive sore throat
- Nausea and/or vomiting
- Excessive sneezing, running nose, or tearing
- Red, inflamed eyes with thick mucous discharge

#### **Responsibilities of DLA staff:**

The teacher will be the initial judge of the health condition of a child. The principal, school nurse or office manager may assist with health issues, as needed.

No school staff will be held responsible or liable for medications of any kind.

DLA reserves the right to refuse the attendance of any ill child.

**A note should be sent from the parent or physician if playground or any other activities should be restricted.**

#### **Immunizations/Medical Examination**

***Current immunization records must be on file at DLA for every student by the first day of the school year. If not, the child will not be allowed to attend.***

#### **Outside Play**

**Elementary parents need to be aware of weather conditions to insure that their child (ren) are dressed appropriately.** Hats, coats, and gloves need to be sent with your children during cold weather to be used during recess times.

**If your child is unable to participate in outside recess, please send a note. We would like to keep this at a minimum.**

#### **Emergency Drills**

**Fire** – In case of fire, it is imperative that the building be emptied quickly and calmly. Fire drills will be held periodically during the school year to practice clearing the school quickly, and teachers will instruct students on proper procedures during a fire.

**Tornado** – When a tornado warning is given, the classroom teacher will lead students to a designated area within the building. Teacher will be well versed regarding proper emergency procedures and will dismiss students from the designated area only when an “all clear” signal is given. Tornado warning drills will be conducted periodically.



**Lockdown** – May be implemented in situations involving intruders. All parents/guardians will be notified as soon as possible.

## **General and Miscellaneous Information**

### **Awards/Recognition**

**Christian Character Award** – this award is presented to a student who displays the most Christ-like qualities. One student from each classroom will receive this award weekly.

**Principal's Wow Board** - when students demonstrate outstanding behavior, academic progress or make great improvement in the area of behavior or academics a teacher may give that student a Principal's proud badge. The student will take the badge to the office for recognition from the principal and have their picture placed on the Principal's Proud Board for one week.

**Citizenship Award** – this award is presented to a student who has been extremely cooperative in class and school, and outstanding in helping others. One boy and girl from each class will receive this award each quarter.

**Attendance Award** – this award is presented to anyone who has maintained perfect attendance for the semester or throughout the entire year. This means no absences or tardies in the record book.

**Achievement Award** – this award is presented to a student who has excelled academically. One student per classroom will receive this award each quarter.

**Other** – teachers are permitted and encouraged to present additional awards throughout the year.

### **School Hours**

School begins at 8:30 a.m. and dismisses at 2:30 p.m. Students should not be in the school before 8:15 a.m. Students should be picked up no later than 2:45 p.m. If an emergency arises and you need to make special arrangements, please call the school office.

### **School Business Office Hours**

All school business should be conducted during the regular business hours of 8:00 a.m. and 2:45 p.m.

### **Campus Visitors**

DLA welcomes parents/guardians to visit our school. For safety, all visitors, including parents and guardians, are required to report to the office upon arrival and departure. A "Visitor" badge will be given to each guest, which is to be worn at all times within the building.

*Students not enrolled in DLA are not permitted to visit unless accompanied by an adult.*



### ***Change of Address***

When families move during the course of a school year, it is critical that they notify the school office of this change so the school can maintain necessary and appropriate contact with the family. If you move during the course of the year, please submit all pertinent information to the school office prior to the move.

### ***Conference Scheduling***

The staff is always happy to discuss a student's progress or address any questions during plan time or during a scheduled before or after school conference time. Also, parent-teacher conferences will be scheduled at the end of first and third quarters for all students.

### ***Delivery and Pickup of Students***

In order for the dropping off and picking up of students to run as smoothly and efficiently as possible, it is imperative that every driver follow the guidelines that govern the parking lot. An explanation and guidelines will be shared during parent orientation.

### ***Field Trips***

During the school year, teachers may schedule educational or service/ministry-based field trips. Trips will be announced in writing in advance by the teacher or school office. A permission slip must be signed and returned to the school in order for the student to attend the field trip. The permission form will provide details of the trip (destination, times, transportation, and cost) and a way for the parent to sign up to chaperone. **Parent chaperones on a field trip are not to bring other children on the trip.**

### ***Lost and Found Items***

Items that are lost or found can be turned in or looked for at the office. Students are reminded to check the lost and found for any missing items. Students should report all lost items to the office immediately.

### ***Lunch Program***

Due to facility constraints, DLA will not provide a hot lunch program. Students will be asked to bring a sack lunch, including a drink, each day. Please send items that do not need refrigeration. DLA does not have the facilities to accommodate perishable foods. All lunch boxes or containers must have the child's name on them.

### ***Messages***

Students can receive **important messages** at school. The callers will contact the school office at (352) 622-3390.

### ***School Closure Information***

Listen to local radio and television stations for the list of closed schools. In case of weather emergency and/or other situations which might necessitate students being dismissed early from school, we will contact the parent. **Please note that if Marion County Public Schools are not in session for inclement weather, Destiny Leadership Academy will not be in session either.**



### **Textbook Selection Guidelines**

Textbooks and other printed materials are selected by a committee composed of school board members, administration and classroom teachers. Classroom materials will be evaluated annually by the school board and staff, with input being requested from parent representatives.

The administration of Destiny Leadership Academy reserves the right to release student directory information, without prior permission of the parent. "Directory Information" includes the student's name, address, and telephone number if it is listed, date and place of birth, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of athletic team members, dates of attendance, and degrees and awards received. The administration also reserves the right to publish pictures and images of students on school social media sites (Facebook, Twitter, etc.), local media outlets (newspapers, television, etc.) without prior permission.

**Parents objecting to this use of directory information and published images concerning their child must notify the principal in writing, within ten (10) school days after the beginning of each school year.**

The school system maintains permanent records on each student containing verifiable information of clear educational importance including the student's full legal name, date and place of birth, last known address, parents' or guardians' names, name and location of last school attended, demographic data, records of enrollment and attendance, courses taken, and records of achievement. It may also maintain temporary information, including health information, standardized test scores, honors and activities, personal attributes, work experience, teacher and counselor comments, sports, and activity participation. A parent/guardian or a student 18 years or older shall have the right, upon written request, to be provided with a list of the types of records and reports directly related to students as maintained by the institution which the student attends or has attended; the right of waiver of access to confidential letters or statements; the right to challenge the content of any record or report and to bring such matters to hearing if warranted; and the right of privacy with respect to individual student educational records. Parents or guardians wishing to exercise these rights may do so by contacting the Principal at the school. Such exercise of right must be in writing.

### **CELLPHONE POLICY**

We discourage students from bringing cellphones or electronic devices to school. They tend to create an unnecessary distraction. However, should you need for your child to bring a **cellphone** to school, his/her teacher must be notified in advance. The cellphone must be turned into the teacher at the beginning of class each morning. The student must ask for the phone at the end of school day. Electronic devices not issued by the school are forbidden on school property or school transportation. Each student has access to a Chrome book for any electronic academic work that must be done.

# ACKNOWLEDGMENT STATEMENT



**I acknowledge that I have received and read a copy of the Destiny Leadership Academy Parent/Student Handbook 2023-2024.  
I will review this information with my student who is enrolled at Destiny Leadership Academy.**

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**\*Parent signature**

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**\*Student name (list only one student)**

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**\*Date**

**This form is required! \*All areas must be completed. It must be returned to the student's teacher.**

**A separate form must be submitted for each child enrolled at Destiny Leadership Academy.**