



## **Mid-Metro Academy Policy Handbook 2023-2024**

### **Our Purpose**

Mid-Metro Academy exists to provide support to homeschooling families by offering a variety of academic, arts, elective, and career-oriented classes. Classes are taught from a foundation of Christian values by instructors who are qualified in their respective fields and are passionate about helping youth achieve their highest potential.

### **Our Values**

Following the Golden Rule given by Jesus, we treat others with kindness and respect. We appreciate the unique, God-given gifts, talents, personalities, and aptitudes of ourselves and others. We provide positive reinforcement, praise, and encouragement freely. We promote critical thinking skills and understanding the “why” behind our actions, thoughts, behaviors, and attitudes. We acknowledge that no single person gets it right every time; there is always room for improvement, and mistakes can be the catalyst for discovery, deeper relationships, and personal growth. Every person has treasure within; positive learning environments and supportive relationships help draw that treasure out. We want to be part of that process.

### **Our Structure**

Mid-Metro Academy is a nonprofit educational organization registered under the laws of Minnesota that enables qualified teachers to provide selected academic and enrichment classes to member families. Upon paying an annual membership fee, families can register their students in grades 6–12 for the classes that meet the educational goals of their own homeschool. Some classes are open to “gap year” students (students who graduated the previous spring) and adults. Families pay tuition directly to the instructors via credit card or PayPal. Mid-Metro Academy is not a school and does not keep transcripts or submit reports to the school district superintendent or the State of Minnesota. Member families are responsible for those functions under Minnesota homeschool statutes.

## **Responsibilities**

### **Instructor Responsibilities**

Mid-Metro Academy instructors have been chosen because they have expertise in the subject(s) that they teach, a love for teaching students, and a commitment to Christian values. Instructors may assign homework, quizzes, or tests for students to complete between classes, and they may administer tests and quizzes during class. Instructors will provide parents with a syllabus at the beginning of the school year that will provide an overview of course lessons and assignments, due dates, and other expectations.

Some instructors make use of learning platforms such as Edmodo and Google Classroom. If so, they will provide the information you need to participate. Instructors may also use features of Mid-Metro Academy's website ([www.midmetroacademy.com](http://www.midmetroacademy.com)) to engage and communicate with students and/or parents. Each instructor will establish his or her own parameters for keeping parents advised of student progress.

If an instructor is ill or is unable to hold a given class for some other reason (travel, family emergency, etc.), the instructor will communicate directly with student families about making up the lesson for the week. Possibilities include a Zoom class, a recorded video, additional assignments, forum posts, or a substitute teacher. Instructors will make every effort to deliver the full content of the course even when unexpected events arise. We appreciate your understanding and flexibility.

Since instructors are hired directly by parents, parents should feel free to contact instructors as needed.

### **Parent Responsibilities**

As the person in charge of their students' education, parents are responsible for encouraging and supervising their students in their homework and course activities and making sure that work is submitted to the instructor on time and in the proper format. This may include helping students to complete an assignment or correcting assignments or quizzes and proctoring tests. Although instructors may provide scores or recommendations for grades, parents assign their students' final grades and/or credits in compliance with state homeschool statutes.

Since Mid-Metro Academy is a drop-off academy, parents must see that the students arrive on time and are picked up promptly. Parents may not attend class with their student. Students must be picked up no later than 3:45 (except for students taking a 5th-period class, who must be picked up no later than 15 minutes after the end of the period).

We require each family unit to serve for four hours per semester. The only exception to this is if you have a student that is signed up for only one class period/week. If this is the case, then you only have to serve two hours per semester. These hours can be filled in a variety of ways: study hall volunteer, fall cleaning, special events, etc.

This requirement can be filled by a parent and/or a responsible 16-18 year old student.

If you are unable to serve, you may choose to buy out your hours for \$40/semester. Please note that the buyout option is \$25/semester for families who have a child signed up for only one class. Those who do not claim their volunteer slots by the first day of classes will be invoiced for the buyout option and will not be able to register for the next semester until their invoice is paid.

### **Student Responsibilities**

For most classes, students will receive homework assignments each week that must be completed by the following class period. Students should complete all their assignments to the best of their ability and by the due date. Students should arrive to class on time with their completed assignments and should participate fully in class activities. Students should approach each class period with the enthusiasm of an active learner, knowing that what they get out of the experience depends on what they put into it. Students should follow the Golden Rule given by Jesus, treating others—peers, instructors, adult volunteers, and site personnel—with kindness and respect. They should respect all site property and any property belonging to instructors, taking care not to be wasteful or destructive. All students must follow Mid-Metro Academy's Code of Behavior. Students should report bullying or inappropriate behavior to their instructor or monitor immediately.

### **Financial Responsibilities**

Annual Family Membership: Before they may register for classes, families must join Mid-Metro Academy by paying a non-refundable \$75 annual family membership fee. Those joining only for second semester pay a non-refundable \$40 fee. Those who join at mid-year should send an email to [help@midmetroacademy.com](mailto:help@midmetroacademy.com) before attempting to complete online registration so the fee can be adjusted.

Class Tuition: Tuition varies by class and is paid directly to the instructor via PayPal or credit card upon registration. Your email confirmation from PayPal or USAePay serves as your receipt. Instructors pay a portion of the tuition payments they receive to Mid-Metro Academy for rent, administrative costs, and liability insurance. For full-year classes, tuition may be paid in full in the fall or in two equal payments. Fall semester tuition is due by August 13, 2023; spring semester tuition is due by January 5, 2024. Payments made after those dates will incur a \$25 late

fee. Students with unpaid tuition balances as of the first of class may lose their place in the course. Please make all payments in a timely manner.

Supplies and Textbooks: If the instructor is collecting additional fees beyond tuition, such as supplies or textbook fees, those fees will be noted on the registration page, and the amount indicated will be due with the first semester payment. Many classes require that you purchase a textbook or other supplies for the class. Instructors will provide that information to registrants, and parents are responsible for purchasing those items on their own and making sure students have all required materials on the first day of class.

Withdrawing from a class: You may remove your student from a class for which he/she is registered without penalty up until the tuition deadlines as stated above. If you haven't paid, you may cancel the registration yourself and your invoice will be canceled. If you have paid, it is your responsibility to contact the instructor to request a refund. The instructor will remove your student from the roster and process your refund. Processing fees are non-refundable as well as any fees incurred for purchased textbooks and supplies. Mid-Metro refunds tuition as follows:

- If you withdraw after the tuition deadlines as stated above but prior to the first day of class, you will receive an \$85 refund.
- If you withdraw on or after the first day of class but prior to the second day of class, you will receive a \$50 refund.
- If you withdraw on or after the second day of class, you will not receive a refund.
- If you paid for a full-year class and withdraw from it at any point in the fall semester you will receive a partial refund for fall semester following the guidelines above and full refund for the entire spring semester.

Class cancellation: If the class is canceled by the instructor or Mid-Metro Academy, you will be issued a full refund.

### **General Information**

**Building Use:** Students must enter only through designated doors. These policies will be clarified at the beginning of the school year. Students must remain in the Mid-Metro Academy part of the building at all times. All other areas of the facility are off limits unless accompanied by Mid-Metro Academy staff or instructors. Students who are not in a class that they're registered for must be in Study Hall or the Student Lounge. They may not hang out in hallways or unused classrooms. Students must comply with security measures and must keep their own safety and the safety of others in mind. For example, exterior doors must remain closed and

should not be propped open. Students should not admit someone who is not authorized to be on the property.

**Communication:** Our primary mode of communication is email. You must have an email address in order to register and participate in Mid-Metro Academy, and you must check that email inbox regularly. All forms, policies, and other important information will be posted on our website, [www.midmetroacademy.com](http://www.midmetroacademy.com). Instructors have their own pages on the website. Make sure you know how your student's instructors plan to use the website to communicate class information to you.

**Course Prerequisites and Grade Levels:** A student must be twelve years old by September 1 of the current school year in order to take classes unless special permission has been granted by the instructor. The grade levels shown on the registration page are those recommended by the instructor for the class. If your student falls outside the recommended grade level but you want him or her to take the class, contact the instructor for approval before registering. Similarly, if you believe your student should take a class even if a prerequisite has not been met, you must obtain instructor approval before registering.

**Drop-Off/Pick-Up Procedure:**

When dropping off, picking up, or parking, enter the south entrance of the two Hamline Avenue parking lot entrances. Drive around the perimeter of the parking lot to use the drop-off/pick-up lane. Approach the building from the south and drive parallel to the yellow curb that borders the south wing of the building. Drop students off next to Door 7. For safety, students should exit the vehicle from the curb side. Students will then proceed north on the sidewalk to access Door 4. Students must enter at Door 4 only. Drivers should turn left and exit from the north driveway onto Hamline Avenue.

Follow the same procedure for picking up. Maintain one-way traffic along the curb (south-to-north, then east-to-west). Drivers must not leave their cars in the drop-off/pick-up lane. Please keep traffic moving along the building to provide easy access for all.

Students awaiting pick-up can wait on the sidewalk between Door 4 and Door 7 or on the south yard or west yard.

Do not use the circle drive that leads to the front door of Advent Lutheran Church.

**Instructors:** Mid-Metro Academy is not a school, so it doesn't hire teachers. Instructors who offer courses through Mid-Metro Academies are not employees but are independent contractors hired by parents. Mid-Metro Academy chooses instructors based on their credentials, experience,

references, and other criteria the Mid-Metro Academy Board and staff deem important. MidMetro Academy endeavors to find instructors of the highest quality, standards, and integrity, but we cannot guarantee that they will meet every parent's expectations, nor can we guarantee their performance.

**Complaint Resolution Process:** Although it is rare, parents may have a complaint about a class or an instructor. If this happens, first contact the instructor via email. Our teachers want to serve our families and meet your expectations. You may request a phone, video, or in-person meeting if you feel the issue warrants it. Clearly describe your complaint and request a specific action step within the instructor's control that would resolve the issue. The vast majority of all conflicts can be resolved this way. However, if you and the instructor can't reach a satisfactory solution, email [director@midmetroacademy.com](mailto:director@midmetroacademy.com) to explain the situation or set up a meeting to discuss it. The director and/or the Mid-Metro Academy board will seek to mediate the conflict. However, keep in mind that instructors are independent contractors, not employees, so MMA gives them a wide measure of autonomy.

**Late or Second-Semester Enrollment:** New students will be accepted up to the third week of fall semester with the tutor's approval if space is available. Tuition will not be prorated for students who join the class already in progress. Mid-year entry may be possible in some classes. Instructor approval is required before registration. Full second-semester payment will be required, plus any supplies or textbook fees the instructor requires.

**Lunch Period:** Lunchtime is from noon to 12:30 p.m. A limited selection of snacks and drinks may be available for purchase in the Fellowship Hall. Students may bring lunch from home and may use the refrigerator and microwave. Students must label their food items clearly and remove them at the end of each day. Students who drive may go out for lunch if they have no third-period class, but it's unlikely they will be able to get out or back in time for a 12:30 class. Lunch must be eaten in the Fellowship Hall only. Chairs may not be available for all students during lunch. Students may sit on the edge of the platform but may not go into the altar area. Students may also sit on the floor.

Each instructor determines the policy for food or beverages in his or her classroom. Wherever students eat or drink—whether at lunchtime or during class, if allowed—they must use good manners, avoid spills, and clean up after themselves thoroughly, disposing of all waste products properly.

**Open but Secure Campus:** Mid-Metro Academy is an open campus. That means we do not monitor when students leave the building. We ask that students sign in when they arrive and leave for the day, but we allow students to access certain areas of the Advent Lutheran Church

property, including the playground, during the lunch period or during a Study Hall if students are enrolled. Parents should set expectations for their students regarding whether they may leave the building during lunchtime or during a free period. They will not be supervised when using the yard or the playground.

All building entrances except Door 4 remain locked. We grant admittance to our space only to those who have an approved purpose for being in the building.

**Permission to Use Photo Images:** Members of Mid-Metro Academy grant permission to use without compensation photographic or video images of their family members with or without their names in Mid-Metro Academy's print and digital communications including the website, emails, press releases, promotional materials, and Facebook posts.

**Student Drivers:** Students who drive themselves to Mid-Metro Academy must comply with all parking instructions. Students may park in the West Parking Lot facing Hamline Avenue. They may not park in the West Parking Lot along the wood posts; this spot is reserved for parent parking. They must not park along the Advent Lutheran Church main circle drive or in the East Parking Lot, which is reserved for teacher and staff parking.

**Student Lounge:** A monitored Student Lounge is provided in the Fellowship Hall as a social Study Hall and lunchroom. Only students who are registered for Study Hall or have paid the Study Hall day fee may use the Student Lounge while classes are in session. Students who remain on the property between classes must be in the Fellowship Hall. (When weather permits, students may go outside per our Open Campus policy as stated above.) Students are not allowed in the Student Lounge on days on which they do not have classes. Purchase of Study Hall on a daily basis may not be granted if the administrator determines that adding more students to a period would increase the activity and/or noise level beyond acceptable levels.

Students who are registered for Study Hall may study or socialize in the Student Lounge or may choose the Quiet Study Hall end of the room. Socializing, games, watching videos, and listening to music together are acceptable in the Student Lounge during Study Hall in the social Study Hall section. Students should use discretion in what they watch or listen to, realizing that others in the room may not appreciate being exposed to something they haven't chosen. The Student Lounge monitor has the right to ask students to rein in their activities and volume or to turn off a video or music selection. Students are expected to follow the monitor's instructions promptly and courteously.

**Study Hall:** Study Hall is available for students who have a free period between classes or who are waiting for siblings or carpool partners who are in class. Parents must register their students for Study Hall on the website registration page if their students will be on-site but not in class on

a regular basis during the semester. Study Hall is monitored by volunteers, which allows us to keep the fee low. The cost for one semester for one class period is \$50. The Study Hall meets in the Student Lounge (Fellowship Hall), which is expected to be somewhat noisy but not boisterous. Students may work independently on homework, listen to music or watch videos on personal devices with headphones or with friends if the volume is very low, converse in low tones, or play quiet games with friends. The monitor will assure that the noise level remains reasonable. Students who prefer a quiet and more studious atmosphere may choose the quiet Study Hall section of the room.

**Weather:** In case of inclement weather, the decision whether to cancel on-site classes will be made by 10:00 p.m. on the evening before the class day. An email will be sent out as soon as possible, and the announcement will be posted on [www.midmetroacademy.com](http://www.midmetroacademy.com). Depending on the forecast, we may choose to delay our start time and shorten each class period instead of canceling all on-site classes for the entire day. When weather worsens while classes are already in session, we may dismiss classes early, possibly after shortening class periods.

If classes are canceled due to the weather, teachers may elect to hold classes via Zoom or other video conferencing platform. Teachers will email their students with instructions and links for the remote meeting and with assignments for the next week. It is understood that some students may not be able to attend such on-line classes; teachers will work with students to accommodate such situations. No refunds will be given for cancellations due to weather.

### **Code of Behavior**

Students at Mid-Metro Academy are expected to behave in a respectful manner in all circumstances. Students should display self-respect, respect for the property we're renting, respect for instructors and other adults, and respect for their fellow students.

With that in mind, students must:

- Never bully, belittle, taunt, threaten, curse, or verbally abuse anyone.
- Refrain from inappropriate physical contact, including the following: kissing, holding hands, hugging (other than brief hugs of greeting), wrestling, slapping, punching, tripping, kicking, lifting, tickling, and rough-housing.
- Never cheat on tests, quizzes, or other graded work by obtaining answers from another student, resources that are not allowed, or the internet. Plagiarism (presenting someone else's words or work as your own without giving proper credit) is academic dishonesty and is a form of cheating.



- Not steal. Do not take items that belong to others. Do not take snack items that are available for purchase on the honor system without paying the specified amount.
- Dress appropriately for a school setting. Students may be asked to remove and/or replace articles of clothing that are distracting or could cause offense (such as t-shirts with vulgar or insensitive messages or images; outrageous items; costumes [unless allowed for special occasions]; attire that reveals too much skin or underwear). Extra-large t-shirts will be kept in the Study Hall. Students whose apparel is deemed distracting or offensive will be asked to wear one of those shirts for the day.
- Leave cellphones on silent and put them away during class. Instructors may confiscate any cellphones that are being used during class and hold them until the end of class.
- Comply with instructors' stated expectations for behavior and participation in class.
- Pay attention in class and not cause distractions. Students must not throw items, pester others, continually make off-topic or inappropriate remarks, or behave in any other way that interferes with the learning environment.
- Clean up after themselves in classrooms, lounges, hallways, bathrooms, and lunch areas. Waste should be disposed of in the proper receptacles. Any spills must be immediately cleaned up. Students should seek to leave an area in better condition than they found it in.
- Cheerfully assist as requested with set-up and take-down tasks if present when a room is being reset.
- Not write on, carve into, or etch any furnishings or structures. This is considered vandalism and will be treated as a serious offense. Students who vandalize will be required to pay for anything they have damaged.
- Report any damage to the building or equipment to an instructor or monitor. Students are responsible for paying for any damage they cause through improper use or deliberate misuse of the building or equipment.

### **Animals**

With the exception of service animals, no animals are allowed at any Mid-Metro Academy activities.

## **Prohibited Items**

Students must leave jackknives, box-cutters, and Exacto knives at home. If an in-class project requires such tools, the instructor must advise the Mid-Metro Academy Director and Program Administrator. Specific guidance will be issued on a case-by-case basis.

Tobacco, drugs, alcohol, weapons, pornography, and fireworks are not allowed on the property. Anyone discovered on the property in possession of any of these items before, during, or after a Mid-Metro Academy event or activity will be immediately expelled from Mid-Metro Academy for the semester **without refund**. No warnings will be given.

## **Threats of Harm**

Any threats of harm to a student's self or others are taken very seriously. Anyone making verbal or physical threats will be referred immediately to the local law enforcement authorities.

## **Consequences for Violations of Code of Behavior**

First offense: The instructor or director will notify the parent of the inappropriate behavior.

Second offense: The Mid-Metro Academy instructor or director will notify the parent of the inappropriate behavior. The parents must respond by e-mail or by phone to confirm that they have discussed the inappropriate behavior with their student and that the student is willing to make restitution or apologies if requested. The student will not be allowed back in class until parents have communicated this message to the Mid-Metro Academy representative.

Third offense: The instructor or director will notify the parent of the inappropriate behavior and will request a conference with the parent, student, and Mid-Metro Academy board members to determine the intentions of the student and whether he or she may continue attending Mid-Metro Academy classes. If the student is expelled or chooses not to continue at Mid-Metro Academy, no refunds will be given.

Mid-Metro Academy reserves the right to address on a case-by-case basis any situation that has not been directly mentioned in this Handbook or Code of Behavior. Any serious offense in which a student's behavior is distracting or disruptive will be addressed according to the considered judgment of at least three Mid-Metro Academy representatives. The consequences will depend on the perceived severity of the offense.