Mount Sophia Academy's

PARENT & STUDENT HANDBOOK

School Year 2026-2027

This document is not all-inclusive, nor does it restrict Mount Sophia Academy administration or the Board of Directors' authority to take actions that are appropriate to maintain a safe and orderly educational environment.

Message from the Board

Mount Sophia's mission is "equipping our students to maximize their unique potential and encouraging them to follow the path of Christ". Along with fulfilling the requirements for high school graduation, we attempt to provide our students with the skills that they will need for their future endeavors.

Our teachers share the vision of the school and make every effort to give students a quality experience in their classes. We have classes that are geared to various learning styles and academic abilities.

We firmly believe that God has a unique plan for each of our students. We pray for our students and families and strive to make His grace evident in our school.

Core Purpose

Mount Sophia Academy exists to **assist parents** in providing an excellent education for their children. The staff of Mount Sophia is committed Christians, and this will be reflected in all our assemblies. However, people of other faiths are welcome to be part of the diploma program and classes.

While Mount Sophia does not discriminate on the basis of race, ethnicity, or religion, the school was formed on a foundation of biblical principles. Its staff must agree to read, understand, and respect our statement of faith and serve as examples of the Christian lifestyle, modeling for our students a life that is dedicated to honoring God in all they do and say.

Philosophy

High school is a time of transition from childhood to adulthood. Therefore, the content of a high school program requires more structure and accountability than in earlier years. As greater numbers of home school students complete their education at home it becomes more important for us to develop documentation that has meaning to the world beyond the home.

The intent of Mount Sophia Academy is to provide a diploma program and classes with a reputation of excellence. The standards we set are higher than some public schools because we feel that as home educators we need to be "above reproach" in our educational standards. Many parents involved in home education began as a response to the increasing failure of the public schools to maintain standards equal to that of other nations, as well as being respected by the workforce. We recognize, however, that not all students have equal academic abilities and are willing to work with each individual to achieve a meaningful transcript. Our classes are designed to meet the criteria of the diploma program and to attain our standards.

Admission to Classes

Mount Sophia classes are open to homeschooling students who wish to participate and are willing to abide by the rules of Mount Sophia. It must always be understood that attendance at Mount Sophia is a privilege and not a right. This privilege will be forfeited by any student who does not conform to the school's code of conduct and/or is unwilling to adjust to our environment.

All students must agree to apply themselves honestly and wholeheartedly to "study to show [themselves] approved unto God" (2 Timothy 2:15, KJV). They also agree to be courteous and respectful to their peers, staff, faculty, and other daily associates.

Mount Sophia admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school.

Parents must agree to support their students in their academic efforts. Parents maintain the final responsibility for their student's academic performance. It is imperative that they check email, keep up with Gradelink, and oversee their student's work.

Policies & Procedures

Admissions
In order to sign up for classes, parents must submit one class registration form per student along with a non-refundable deposit. Prior to the first class, an emergency medical card must also be filled out and the first payment made.

Special needs will be handled on a case-by-case basis. Parents should inform teachers of their child's special needs prior to the start of classes.

Orientation
Each year a mandatory new student orientation will be held for parents and students.

Payment
Please refer to mtsophia.com for the most updated registration and fee schedules.

Academics
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:

1. Attendance
    a. A student is expected to attend each class unless ill or excused. Because our classes only meet once or twice weekly it is important that the student be present at class as often as possible. Inform teachers in advance if a student has a planned absence.
    b. If the student is ill the day of class, email the office and the teacher at the beginning of the day (or as soon as you know the student will be absent).
    c. The school's email is mtsophiahs@yahoo.com. In the email, list which classes the student will be missing that day.
    d. Unexcused absences may result in a lowered or failing grade.
    e. If a student is ill, please keep the student home rather than risk infecting the rest of the school.

2. Participation
    a. Most, if not all, of our classes require some sort of participation. Refusing to participate in class or absenteeism will adversely affect a student's grade.

3. Assignments
    a. Each teacher will give the students a syllabus. Any changes to the syllabus will be conveyed during class and/or by email. It is imperative that students and parents check their email on a regular basis, preferably daily.
    b. Assignments handed in late will receive a lowered grade.
    c. When a student is ill or misses a class, most assignments can be e-mailed to the teacher.
    d. If the student knows in advance that he/she will be missing a class, arrangements should be made for assignments that will be due.
    e. Unless otherwise instructed by the individual teacher, homework assignments are expected to be turned in as a hard copy (not emailed to the teacher). Teachers may penalize students for assignments emailed rather than being turned in as a hard copy.

4. Grading
    a. The following scale will be used in order to maintain consistency in grading:

        A 92% - 100%
        B 82% - 91%
        C 72% - 81%
        D 65% - 71%
        F 0% - 64%

    b. Letter grades will be given to all students and may or may not be accompanied by numerical grades.
    c. For purposes of graduation, the letter grades shall take precedence. The lowest possible passing grade for a quarter is 65% or a D. Credit will not be given for a final grade less than a C.

5. Gradelink
    a. Mount Sophia uses an online tool called Gradelink for on-site classes to keep parents informed about grades and missing assignments.
    b. After enrolling in Mount Sophia classes, each family will be sent a link and a temporary password to access the system.
    c. Teachers are not responsible for keeping you informed.
    d. Parents and students are responsible for checking grades on a regular basis.

Transfer or Change of Classes
Students transferring, withdrawing, or adding classes must fill out the appropriate paperwork. Students withdrawing from a class after the quarter has begun will still be held responsible for the cost of that entire quarter.

Fundraising
Fundraising must be approved by The Board or principal. A fundraiser request form is available in the school office. Fliers must be approved by the office.

Code of Conduct

Violation of the code of conduct may result in disciplinary action up to and including suspension or expulsion from Mount Sophia.

God

We expect all involved in the school to behave respectfully toward God. Prayer is foundational to our school. “Unless the Lord builds the house, the builders labor in vain.” (Psalm 127:1, NIV)

People

1. We respect ourselves by doing assignments to the best of our abilities and participating in class.
2. No cheating of any kind will be tolerated including plagiarism or using other resources to create your work (AI, solutions websites or apps, hired writing, etc.). Plagiarism is the use of someone else’s intellectual property. Any quotes, direct or otherwise, or images used from someone else’s writing (whether or not it is copyrighted) constitute as plagiarism unless credit is given to the author.
3. We are a drug-free, alcohol-free, and smoke-free campus. This includes the use of chewing tobacco and vaping.
4. Physical or verbal aggression, sexual harassment, bullying, or hazing of any kind (in person or online) are strictly forbidden. Foul or racially insensitive language will not be tolerated.
5. Students are expected to dress modestly.
6. Mount Sophia will uphold a community in which dress, behavior, bathroom, and locker room usage are in keeping with one’s biological sex at birth.
7. No weapons of any kind will be tolerated on the school grounds. Any violation may result in disciplinary action up to and including suspension or expulsion.
8. Electronics (cell phones, earbuds, tablets, laptops, etc.) must be used with respect. All devices will be turned off during classes. If a student is caught using a device during class, the device will be confiscated for the remainder of the class, and he or she will be warned. If it happens again, he/she will be dismissed from class.
9. Should the staff become aware of inappropriate posts on social media, they will be dealt with appropriately.

Facility

1. The Newark Church of Christ is gracious to allow us to use the building. Students must respect the church property.
2. All students, staff, and visitors must sign in upon entering. They are to sign out upon leaving the building. This is important for safety in the event of a fire.
3. Students are not to leave the building during the day except with a parent’s permission.
4. If students sign out and leave during the school day, the school and its staff are not responsible for their safety or whereabouts. We encourage parents to discuss with their students whether they are allowed to leave campus, walk or drive with other students. We are not able to police these behaviors.
5. Students will only use bathrooms according to their biological sex at birth.
6. No vandalism will be tolerated.
7. Students will not use church supplies.
8. Students will clean up after themselves.
9. Delaware has mandatory recycling. Students are expected to put trash in trash cans and all recyclable materials in designated recycling containers.
10. Students are expected to report any damage to church property to a teacher, parent volunteer, or the school office.
11. Parking is at the rear of the building. The spaces near the church office are reserved for church business. Please be aware of students in the parking lot and drive slowly.
12. No standing or parking in front of the door. This blocks the flow of traffic.
13. Students should stay out of the church offices and all areas except those designated for Mount Sophia.
14. No food or beverages except in the large fellowship room (the tank), Room 1, Room 2, and Room 7. Water is permitted in all rooms.

15. Mount Sophia maintains the right to search any backpacks, purses, etc. brought on campus or to school events.
16. When not in class, students must remain in the tank. There should be no loitering in the hallways or bathrooms.
17. MSA is not responsible for any student who uses the playground without authorization from the school.

* Other issues will be dealt with on an individual basis.
* The Principal or Board of Directors has final decision-making authority

Suspension & Expulsion

If a student is accused of any rule violation, the principal (or designee) will investigate the incident including, but not limited to, interviewing the student and parent. The student may be requested to meet with The Board. Depending on the severity of the offense, suspension can occur until a decision has been reached. While suspended, a student is responsible to contact teachers to keep up with assignments.

Students are encouraged to report to the principal (anonymously, if desired) any rule violations, especially threats of violence or any type of harassment.

Athletics

1. Mount Sophia participates in three sports - soccer, swimming, and golf. In order to participate on our teams, students must fulfill all DIAA and Mount Sophia requirements for academic eligibility. Since 8th grade is part of the same administration unit as grades 9 through 12, this fulfills Regulation 2.7.5.1 found in the DIAA High School Sports Handbook allowing our 8th-grade students to participate on our sports teams. Mount Sophia only enrolls students in grades 8 through 12, therefore Regulation 2.7.5.3. in the DIAA High School Sports Handbook does not apply to our school. We do, however, allow the younger siblings of our high school students to be enrolled in an umbrella program to assist those families with their homeschooling.

2. Student-athletes must attend class on the day of a practice or meet/game or they will not be eligible to participate.

3. If a player is removed from play due to a head injury, parents will be notified in writing (either via letter or email) of a suspected concussion and given information regarding symptoms by the head coach, nurse, or principal.

Parent Responsibilities

Parents, YOU are still your child's primary teacher and must take responsibility for the following:

1. Mount Sophia communicates using both email and MailChimp, an email automation platform. Make sure you have mtsophiahs@yahoo.com and mtshophiahs.yahoo.com@send.mailchimpapp.com in your contacts. If not, the emails may go into spam. Please check spam folders regularly.
2. We will be using the email you supplied on your database sheet. If this is not the email that you check regularly (at least once daily), please let the office and the teachers know. If you are not receiving emails and your student is missing information, the responsibility lies with YOU to make sure that the information is correct.
3. If there is a second parent or guardian that wants to receive the emails, let the office and teachers know. If you have not received an email from MSA for a week or two, please contact us - something is wrong.

Payment & Fees
The first installment of class fees is due prior to the first day of classes. The class fees can be paid in full, paid through eight monthly installments, or paid through four quarterly installments. Failure to meet class fee schedule may result in late fees, inability to register, and withholding of transcripts. Any remaining balance after March 1, 2027 will be charged 5% monthly.

Gradelink
It is your responsibility to check Gradelink regularly. Your child's education is still your responsibility. Gradelink allows you to keep up to date on your student's grades and to see if they are missing assignments.

Assignments
Mount Sophia courses are syllabus driven. It is your responsibility to ensure your student follows the syllabus (or any alterations of the syllabus made by the teacher) whether he/she is in class or not.

Assume that your student has homework due each week. It is your responsibility to oversee your student's work.

For test-taking protocols, please refer to each teacher's instructions. Many teachers require students to take the tests in the presence of a parent and have the parent sign the test and/or envelope in which the test is to be inserted.

Teachers require assignments to be handed in as a hard copy unless otherwise specified. Emailed copies are only accepted if the student is absent. If there are extenuating circumstances, the parent should let the teacher know why the homework cannot be printed at home. Any assignments emailed should include the name of the student.

Absence
If the student will be absent, it is your responsibility to contact the office and teachers via email prior to the start of the class.

Meetings
Parents of diploma program students must agree to schedule and attend mid-year and end-of-year review meetings, bringing necessary documentation with them. Evidence of instruction for

all non-Mount Sophia classes may include tests, quizzes, all writing assignments - essays, short papers, research paper or other long paper(s).

Levels for Classes
Mount Sophia reserves the right to determine the level for classes taken elsewhere.

Mount Sophia's Statement of Faith

1. We believe the Bible to be the inspired, infallible, and complete Word of God.
2. We believe that there is one God, eternally existent in three persons - the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
3. We believe in the deity of Jesus Christ, His virgin birth, His sinless life, His vicarious and atoning death, His resurrection, His ascension to the right hand of God, and His personal return in power and glory.
4. We believe in the absolute necessity of regeneration by the Holy Spirit for salvation because of the exceeding sinfulness of human nature and that men are justified on the single ground of faith in the shed blood of Christ and that only by God's grace and through faith alone can we be saved.
5. We believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person, male or female. These two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God.
6. We believe in the Resurrection of both the saved and the lost, they that are saved unto the Resurrection of life and they that are lost unto the resurrection of condemnation.
7. We believe in the spiritual unity of believers in our Lord Jesus Christ.

The above statement of faith does not exhaust the extent of our beliefs. The Bible itself, as the inspired and infallible Word of God that speaks with final authority concerning truth, morality, and the proper conduct of mankind is the sole and final source of all that we believe. For purposes of Mount Sophia's faith, practice, policy, and discipline, our board of directors is the organization's final interpretive authority on the Bible's meaning and application.

Students and their parents or guardians recognize the right of Mount Sophia Academy to have and follow the above statements of faith and core beliefs. They also accept that these principles will unequivocally be used for the guidance and running of the school and its interactions with students and parents regardless of if they themselves believe them. In affiliating themselves with the school, they agree to not promote within the school or in any actions involving the school policies that contradict or oppose these principles. At the same time, Mount Sophia Academy will respect their right to their own private views.

Name of Student: _____

Date: _____

As the parent (and primary teacher) for my student, I agree to the following (please initial):

_____ I will check email regularly, at least once daily. This is important for both students and parents. Changes in email must be reported promptly. If you do not receive an email at least weekly (except breaks), you will contact the office to make sure we have your correct email (after you have checked your spam/junk folder)

_____ I agree to read the Parent & Student Handbook that is available on the Mount Sophia website (mtsophia.com) under the classes tab.

_____I will not unsubscribe from Mailchimp (used by the office for school communications).

For non-diploma program students:

_____ Parent agrees to check Gradelink at least weekly.

_____ Parent agrees to oversee work completed at home.

For diploma program students:

_____ Parent agrees to check Gradelink at least weekly.

_____ Parent agrees to oversee work completed at home.

_____ I agree to pay the no-show fee for any missed appointments (without 24-hour notice).

_____ I agree to schedule and attend the mid-year and end-of-year appointments in a timely manner. I will bring the following with me to my appointment, understanding that without it the appointment is not able to proceed. It will be considered a no-show subject to the no-show fee.

- Evidence of instruction for all classes not taken at Mt Sophia which may include includes tests, quizzes, and all writing assignments - essays, short papers, research papers, or other long paper(s) as well as a book list. This also includes a final grade for the class.
- Logged hours with totals for each category

Signed: _____