

***Staff Manual***

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***Administrator's Welcome***

Dear Missionary,

Greetings in the precious name of Jesus Christ.

Thank you for reading this teacher's manual.  There are two missionary types that will read this manual.

1. Those who are prayerfully considering becoming part of the team of missionaries winning the city of YORK for Jesus.
2. Those who have felt the call of God on their lives to “Go to YORK” and have made a commitment to the school board to be part of the team.

Whichever one of these two best describes you, I am thankful you’re reading the manual, and I trust God will lead you toward a deeper walk with Him and give you clear direction for your missionary assignment.

For those who have already decided to make this school their next missionary assignment, I trust that this will answer most of your questions about daily life and procedures here at Tidings of Peace.

My goal, as administrator, is to make your missionary assignment as fulfilling as possible.

My prayer is that when God calls you from here to your next assignment, that you will look back on your time here as dynamic years of usefulness to the Kingdom of God, and as personal growth in your walk with the Lord.

Mr. Shenk

Austin L. Shenk, Head of School

***School History***

The Tidings of Peace Mennonite Church held its first Sunday morning worship service on Sunday, October 24, 1954.  Throughout its 50 plus years of ministry to the city of YORK, the members have tried hard to be sensitive to the promptings of the Holy Spirit in finding new and exciting ways to reach as many persons as possible with the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.

With the encouragement of Brother Jay Fox, of Reading, PA, the congregation voted in the summer of 1994 to start a Christian Day School in answer to the call of several in the community that were asking the church to give an alternative to the public school system.

By July 1, of that year, God had not given the 3 answers to the “fleece”:

* three enrolled students
* one committed teacher
* $5000 in the bank

Without this “fleece” being met, the decision to start in the fall of 1994 was abandoned, but the resolve to start a school was not.

On July 3, 1994, the current school building at 329 E Poplar Street was offered to the church – free of charge, “if you pay the closing costs”.

The congregation accepted the offer and diligent plans began for opening day--September 4, 1995.

Opening day arrived with five students enrolled – along with one part-time and two full-time teachers.

The first supporters of the school were the board members of the Olive Branch Mennonite Missions, who faithfully supplied financial and technical support for the first 14 years of our mission venture.

Over these years, the student body has grown in numbers, and more than 30 missionaries have volunteered their time to teach and train these students.  Some have taught for a few months, others for longer than 12 years.

We look forward to adding you to the history of the school.

***School Purpose***

    Our goals include:

* Giving families a knowledge of the Bible
* Teaching families to fear GOD
* Teaching families to worship the one true GOD
* Leading students to a personal relationship with Jesus Christ
* Teaching Christ-like character
* Teaching stewardship of life
* Becoming dedicated to excellence

***School Mission Statement***

Giving hope for a brighter future through Christian education.

***Our Vision***

Every member of our team will model joyful and vibrant Christianity

to our students, their families, and the broader community, through:

* **P**RAYER – Recognizing my need and seeking God’s help to succeed in life.
* **E**NCOURAGEMENT – Praising each individual’s God-given talents.
* **A**CADEMICS – Excelling in understanding God and His creation
* **C**HARACTER – Allowing the mind of Christ to transform my heart and actions.
* **E**TERNITY – Living out a never-ending relationship with God.

***School's Relationship to the Church***

The school was started and continues to be an outreach ministry of the Tidings of Peace Mennonite Church.  The church leadership team has a representative on the board via the church administrator.

Additionally, the congregation votes for three of the seven members of the board.

* one from within the congregation
* one from without the congregation
* one that can be either way.

The school board votes for and appoints three members of the board.

The Church Leadership Team appoints a Pastoral Adviser to advise the Board.

All those who are nominated to serve on the board must get approval of both the school board and the leadership team before they are voted on, or appointed to serve.

The annual audit of the church books, includes an annual audit of the school records.

Since the church is a member of the Marietta District of the Keystone Mennonite Fellowship, all staff who serve the school shall abide by and subscribe to the Keystone Statement of Faith and Understanding of Practice, and the guidelines of the Marietta District.

The school is just one of several ministries of the church; therefore, we encourage school staff to also participate, where possible, in the Bible clubs, Sunday School classes and other opportunities of neighborhood outreach.  However, where participation in these other ministries hinders excellent ministry to the school, we would expect that the other ministries would be dropped from the staff's personal schedule.

***Nature of the Missionary Teacher***

There are three different ways that you will be viewed as a missionary here at Tidings of Peace. God and the Church view you as volunteers who are giving of your time to advance the Kingdom of God here in the city of YORK.  Any needs that arise from being here at Tidings of Peace shall be cast upon the Lord so that He will be able to do “above all that we can ask or think”.

The Government views you in two different ways.

* The IRS views you as a part-time church employee who is receiving money that needs to have taxes paid on that salary.
* The Department of Labor and Industry views your employment as full-time, such that the Federal and/or State Minimum wage must be paid.

***Missionary Compensation***

In order to keep everyone happy that is listed above, missionaries of the school are compensated for their time in the following ways.

The school will give a cash monthly allowance to each full-time staff member using the following schedule:

    First-year staff - $350.00/month

                    $35.00/month added each year of additional service

*While the above is the norm, the Board reserves the right to alter this table as needed to accommodate individual needs.*

For the benefit of the IRS, the school pays all Federal, State and Local taxes on the money given you.   That is to say, the amounts listed above are the net pay; the amount normally withheld from a paycheck is above and beyond these figures.

For the benefit of the Department of Labor and Industry, you are given minimum wage as follows:

* Moneys as listed above.
* Housing at a church-owned or rented house (furnished room at $125/week)
* Lunches at the school (valued at $5.00 per meal)
* Other meals (valued at $5 a meal x 2 a day or 3 a day on non-school days)
* Vitamins and health food supplements approved by the principal
* Utilities paid for at the house
* Household supplies
* Laundry, toiletry & personal hygiene items purchased at the York County Food Bank
* Continuing Education Reimbursement as per the following schedule:
  + 100% reimbursement of summer courses at Faith Builders if returning to teach the     following year
  + Mileage as outlined on page 21 of this manual.
  + Other reimbursement for learning, upon prior approval of the board & available funds

***Recruitment of Missionaries***

All staff should give the administrator names and numbers of friends and family that they believe would be helpful staff.

Additionally, staff will be recruited from Keystone and like-minded church fellowships.

When a potential staff member is found, an application, student handbook and school flier will be sent for informational purposes.

An interested individual returns the application to the school.

Any applicants that the administrator believes would be beneficial to the school will have their application forwarded to the school board chairman.

After reviewing the application, and calling references, the school board chairman will bring to the full board only applications he can recommend for the board's acceptance.

After an applicant is accepted by the board, the administrator will arrange for living, arrival times and assignment details with the new staff member.

Upon arrival in YORK, and before the start of school, the new staff member is required by state law to fill out a criminal background check with the PA State Police, and a child abuse clearance record with the PA Department of Welfare.

Only after both reports come back with a clear record shall the staff member be considered “fully hired”.

***Staff Roles and Responsibilities***

***Administrator/Pastor***

    To the Board:

* Attend monthly board meetings
* Work with the chairman to draft the agenda
* Have school secretary mail, fax or e-mail the agenda a week before the meeting
* Communicate to the board troublesome student behavior
* Get at least the board chairman's approval before expelling any student
* Communicate to the teachers and parents the directives of the school board
* Prepare an annual budget for the boards' approval. Budget shall be presented at the June Board meeting
* Before employment – attend the ACE Administrator's Convention
* At least once every five years, take a refresher course by re-attending
* Annually attend the ACE Educator's Convention
* Maintain building codes and PA Dept of Education guidelines in such a way as to keep the school within the legal boundaries
* Search for and recommend to the board individuals to fill open staff positions
* Remind board of staff year-end gifts, Christmas gifts and Teacher Appreciation Week celebrations
  + - Meet their annual goals for budgeted income
    - Personally keep or delegate the bookkeeping of the school's finances
    - Provide a monthly financial report
    - Solicit area businesses who could contribute to the FB Scholarship program
    - Solicit individuals who will become Student Sponsors
    - Establish and raise funds for an endowment Trust
    - Develop fundraising opportunities for the school
    - Annual Informational Supper
    - Trash-A-Thon
    - Capital Funds Drive

    To the Principal:

* Explain directives of the board
* Answer questions concerning staff and student relationships
* Meet weekly to establish current goals and assignments

    To the Teachers:

* Act as a sounding board in disputes between them and the principal
* Provide pastoral counseling and/or referrals for treatment
* Communicate any fundraisers that include staff and students

***Business Administrator***

We recognize the benefit and need of a Business Administrator.  Until the school growth allows for such a position to be filled, the roles of this position will be assumed by or delegated by the Administrator/Pastor.

***Principal***

    To the Administrator:

* Keep informed of troublesome student behavior.
* Explain how the money is being spent and how the budget is going.
* Meet with weekly, and report progress of current goals.
* Help prepare board agenda.

    To the Teachers:

* Take troublesome students aside to give further instruction on good behavior
* When this doesn't work, give detentions, suspensions or arrange for

    parent-teacher conferences to assure correct behavior

* Answer daily questions about how to handle students and life's situations
* Consult with classroom teacher before accepting a student into that grade level
* Choose monthly memory passage
* Conduct or delegate high school gym class
* Answer academic questions
* Encourage them to continue good work
  + - Occasional gifts and cards of appreciation (all staff on the same day)
    - Distribute information for teacher improvement
  + Lead out in morning prayer time
  + Schedule and execute monthly fire alarm
  + Direct weekly staff meeting
* Upcoming events
* Get shopping list
* Weekly schedule
* Conduct a staff orientation at least a week before school starts
* Assure that the calendar of events for a smooth school, as outlined in the ACE Procedures Manual in chapter 5, page 85 – 90, is followed

***Principal, continued***

To the Secretary:

* Deposit money she gets ready for the bank
* Give her information for the weekly communication folder
* Direct which category each item spent will fit “in”
* Draft a monthly “Thank-you” letter for donations given
* Draft a bi-monthly newsletter to the churches
* Purchase supplies needed
* Fix office equipment-copier, computer, etc.

To the Parents:

 Communicate in the following ways:

* Acceptance of child to the school
* Discipline problems that need additional help from the home
* Plan for and lead out in PTF (Parent-Teacher Fellowship)
* Schedule parent orientation/picnic in August
* Send notice when child has lice
* Send notice when child has abnormal illegal and unexcused absence
* Publish and explain monthly tuition amounts
* Arrange for community service when parents can't meet tuition requirements
* Distribute and make sure Faith Builder's applications are returned in timely manner

    To the Students:

* Reinforce the discipline of the teachers
* Lead out and guide the Tuesday and Thursday chapel services
* Plan field trips
* Give positive comments of affirmation
* When necessary, issue detentions, suspensions and/or sentences
* Explain requirements for graduation and advise of studies to be completed
* Research colleges and other post-graduate studies
* Conduct a student orientation on the first day of school

***Principal, continued***

   To the Neighbors:

* + - Smooth “ruffled feathers” when students violate their space
    - Inform of upcoming school events
    - Supervise neighborhood cleanup days

    To the Salesman:

* Answer their phone calls
* Assure them that we can buy whatever they are selling locally

***Teachers***

To the Board:

* + - Answer all questions during the interview process
    - Open classroom for spontaneous board visits
    - Meet with board during annual board-staff interviews
    - Publicly support the decisions of the board to the students
    - Before employment, attend ACE's Supervisor training
    - Take a refresher course at least once every five years

    To the Administrator/Pastor:

* + - Communicate concerns about personal and household living

    To the Principal

* + - Attend morning prayer times
    - Attend weekly afternoon staff meetings
    - Make known the areas of difficulty among students or staff that need attention
    - Advise when a student needs held back a grade level
    - Give public support to decisions of the principal
    - Assist in Christmas program and other special program practices
    - Attend ACE's annual Educator's Convention
    - Explain reasons behind holding a child back a grade level

    To Secretary:

* + - Give adequate records in timely manner to make report cards
    - Give record of absences so that illegal notice can be given to Public School
    - Give adequate time for photocopies and other projects

    To the Other Staff:

* + - Take turns at recess and lunch time monitoring
    - Publicly support decisions of others
    - Privately share areas of concern both professionally and personal
    - In absence of a student's home-room teacher, correct inappropriate behavior
    - Give words of encouragement, praise and prayers

    To the Parents

* + - Communicate daily homework assignments
    - Communicate weekly concerns via “take home” folder
    - Send excuse cards home for each absence
    - Schedule parent-teacher conferences, when needed, to verbally communicate troublesome academic and behavioral problems

***Teachers, continued***

To the Students:

* + - Give an ACE diagnostic test when a child enters above the third-grade level
    - Motivate each child to academic excellence
    - Correct child's inappropriate behavioral patterns
    - Keep accurate records of academic performance
    - Give heavy doses of praise for every correction given
    - Motivate correct behavior by issuing demerits and detentions, as outlined in the     ACE Procedures Manual – Chapter 5, pages 48 – 52
    - Keep careful record of each demerit, detention and greater form of child discipline issued.
    - Help each achieve mastery of monthly Bible Memory passage
    - Lead in devotions on days that there is no chapel

***Teacher's Aide***

To Teachers:

* + - Assist the teacher wherever needed to make the classroom run smoothly
    - Correct students when teacher is out of room
    - Make sure that the classroom is never without adult supervision
    - Tutor students who need extra help
    - Monitor the lunch breaks and recesses
    - Pull PACES from the files for students who have passed a test
    - Help with scoring tests, and any record keeping that teacher deems helpful
    - Assist with bulletin boards and room decorations

  To Principal:

* + - Monitor the back door in the morning between 8:00 and 8:15
    - Monitor the back door in the afternoon between 3:00 and 3:15
    - Attend weekly staff meeting
    - Attend Supervisor Training before employment

    To Students:

* + - Publicly support the decisions of the principal and teacher
    - Share concerns privately when a better way could have been chosen
    - Give heavy doses of praise for every correction given
    - Maintain order in the learning center when the teacher needs to step out

***Secretary***

    To the Principal:

* + - Type and mail letters
    - Keep a list of staff meeting agenda items
    - Answer the phone
    - Get bank deposits ready
    - Each Friday, review bills and have assigned for the bookkeeper to enter in computer.
    - Each Sunday, give bookkeeper the weeks' worth of bills.
    - Remind of upcoming assignments and appointments
    - Persist in getting material for the newsletters and take-home folders in a timely manner
    - Reserve church for Christmas program and park for the closing picnic
    - Be familiar with the responsibilities as outlined in the secretary's manual
    - Complete or arrange for the completion of the school yearbook
    - Email the monthly financial reports for him to forward to the board members

    To the Staff:

* + - Order PACES and other supplies for the classrooms
    - Print out report cards
    - Print out achievement awards for the closing picnic
    - Print supplies:  homework slips, excuse cards, detention slips, etc.
    - Photocopy papers as requested

    To the Parents:

* + - Send brown envelope home each Friday
    - Receive tuition donations and give them a receipt
    - Sell uniforms and yearbooks
    - Assist with financial records for fund raisers

    To the Students:

* + - Keep record of academic performance
    - Sell yearbooks, shirts, book bags and other store items
    - In the absence of a teacher, correct behavior that is unbecoming of students

***Cook***

    To the Principal

* Do grocery shopping
* Arrange for leftovers to be used before leaving for home on Friday
* Order paper and plastic supplies
* Assist in feeding special groups visiting the school
* Attend classes to obtain a Safe Serve Certificate to legally run a commercial kitchen

    To the Staff

* Submit weekly menu to the secretary
* Attend weekly staff meeting
* Take suggestions for menu items and improvements
* Pack lunches for field trips

    To the Students

* Prepare daily nutritious lunches
* Build character by not allowing dessert if main food not eaten
* Help each child learn the importance of good eating habits
* Work with high-school students in washing dishes, and putting leftovers away according to Safe Serve manners
* Provide daily fruit snack

***Nurse***

    To the Principal

* Maintain records in a manner that keeps the school legal
* Arrange for annual height, hearing and weight testing

    To the Students

* + - Administer annual height, hearing and weight tests
    - Inform parents of those students needing further professional attention
    - Send home all pertinent paper work to keep child legal

More Specific Daily Learning Center roles and Responsibilities are spelled out in the ACE Procedures Manual Chapter 4 - “School Staff”

***Other guidelines***

***Discipline of Students***

A complete guide of methods and procedures for child discipline is explained in the ACE Procedures Manual, chapter 5, beginning at page 47.  Each staff member should be fully aware of these procedures.

A student who is not able to give obedience to verbal commands of a teacher will not be able to stay as a student of Tidings of Peace.  If a child becomes unruly, and refuses to obey the voice of the staff, the parents may be asked to come to the school and administer a scriptural paddling, of at least three strokes, but not to exceed five.

*Although we see clear scriptural instruction for correction of children via 'paddling', we recognize that we are working with homes who do not all have a strong sense of what is right based on the Bible.  Therefore, we will use the above mentioned 'paddling' as a last resort.*

If the parent is unwilling to administer a scriptural paddling, the administrator will recommend to the school board that the student be expelled from the school.

Since each situation varies, and no two family responses will ever be identical, the administrator will need to diligently follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit to know when the above should take place.

***Safety procedures:***

The parents are entrusting their children to our care.  It is of utmost importance that we are mindful of this trust and do everything in our power to protect the students.  The following guidelines are set by the board to ensure that we have done our part; fully trusting that GOD will protect above and beyond our feeble efforts.

* The school doors shall be locked at all times, except when students are arriving and departing as per below.
* A staff member shall be present at the door from 8:00 to 8:15 am each morning when the students are arriving at school.
* The same shall be true of the time between 3:00 and 3:15 pm when the school is dismissed for the day, and parents are coming to pick up their children.
* Only the staff shall open the doors, in answer to a door bell or knock.
* When leaving the property with the students for the library, the “circle”, or field trips, at least one staff member shall have a camera along, ready to record any incidences of violence or mischief upon the group or individual student.
* Additionally, at least one staff member in the group shall have a cell phone along with them.  If the phone has “picture taking” options, that would cover the requirement above.
* During recess, or walks away from the building, staff shall wear a florescent green safety vest for their own and the groups' protection.
* When available, staff shall avail themselves of the CERT training offered by the York Co Emergency Management Agency.

***Dress Code***

Students are required to wear a uniform every day to school.  Staff are not required to do so, but for the sake of not “lording it over the students”, we do ask that each staff member limits their “school” wardrobe.

***For male staff:***

We ask that all brothers on staff wear full length trousers, tailored shirts (collar and buttons), and shoes that hide their feet.

***For female staff:***

We encourage and prefer the traditional cape dress.  However, if the “cape” dress is not worn, then we do ask for the dress to be “caped”.  A “full-strapped jumper” is considered a “caped” dress. No skirts and blouses are to be worn while a missionary at Tidings of Peace. Dresses shall be of sufficient length to significantly cover the knee during all activities. Footwear that hides the feet shall be worn. Coverings shall be white and comply with your home congregational standards, and the Marietta District guidelines.

***Personal Time***

Since school is for 9 months, we do encourage staff to take personal vacations and breaks during the three months of summer as much as possible.

Having said that, we do understand that we can't schedule for others' funerals, weddings or organizations’ training programs.  Therefore, we do work with staff as much as possible to be able to participate in these kinds of activities.  With the following guidelines:

* Give the Principal at least one-month advanced notice wherever possible
* Try to schedule training opportunities when others aren't also asking to be off
* Be prepared to suggest a substitute teacher if leaving for more than a week

Especially for those staff members who have been in the city for more than a year, we encourage times away from East Poplar Street.  A weekend per month away for fellowship and refreshment with family and friends is honored and encouraged.

***Lodging***

Tidings of Peace Church owns several houses in the city, and a room will be granted for each VSer in one of these houses.  We provide a room and furniture including a bed, dresser, desk, and chair.  Since many people prefer their own bed linens and bath towels, we make these available upon request.

At any time a piece of furniture becomes unusable or undesired, we will gladly replace it and/or move it out of your room, allowing you to move your own in.

Each staff shall use utmost care to protect the privacy of others' bedrooms, and personal space.

If anything needs repair at your house, let the church trustees know as soon as possible.

The school provides for household cleaning supplies; those used by the members of the house to benefit the whole household.  Each staff member is responsible to provide for their own toiletries and items that they purchase for their own benefit.  The only exception to this guideline would be if the personal item can be found at the York County Food Bank. Then the School will pay for that personal item.

***Mileage Reimbursement***

We fully recognize that having a car while in VS can be a great expense.  You are certainly welcome to bring your personal vehicle with you into VS, but we caution that there may be limited reimbursement for mileage.

The school does reimburse for mileage at a rate of $0.40/mile for the following:

* Miles driven for approved educational experiences  ie: Faith Builders training
* Miles driven for an assignment as a school representative  ie: you are asked to take students to SMBI for a 'PR tour'
* A weekly trip to the store to purchase groceries and household supplies
* The church evangelism fund will reimburse for miles driven to help neighbors who need rides to the hospital, stores, work, etc.

***Household Integration***

Recognizing that there are plenty of things to do after school hours, and that there is a natural tendency to do things together as a “household”, instead of as a “team” we offer the following as suggested ways to integrate the houses as a staff team, instead of individual households.

* Weekly meals together
* Prayer partners with those of the “other” house (same gender)
* Sunday socials with others from the church, including the “other” house

***Involvement in Tidings of Peace Mennonite Church***

As a missionary serving at school, you are encouraged and expected to participate in the congregational life of the local congregation as follows:

* Sunday worship
* Prayer meeting
* Communion
* Special events, such as the Ladies Banquet, and Men's Meetings

Additionally, as time permits and school responsibilities allow, you are welcome to participate in the following:

* Youth and young adult activities
* Thursday night Bible school
* Third Sunday afternoon Evangelism Projects
* Fifth Wednesday family sharing
* Fifth Thursday evening prison service
* Fourth Saturday night detention center services
* Summer Bible school
* Individual and personal neighborhood outreach

***Internet policy***

The School Board has developed a policy relating to the use of the Internet for staff and students.  No one shall use the Internet for any purpose until that policy has been read, fully understood and a signed statement of compliance filed in their folder with the secretary.

***Reducing the Risk Policy***

The School Board has developed a separate manual for how staff relate to students, their parents and governmental agencies in relation to physical touch and sexual child abuse.

The Administrator shall annually, before the start of each school year, thoroughly instruct all staff through that manual.

All incoming staff shall have the complete training. All returning staff shall review it and sign a statement that they have done so.

***Dating***

As with all normal male/female situations, courtship, dating and marriage sometimes result from the missionary activity of the School.

Since the world is so perverse in their dating relationships, it is of utmost importance that the highest possible standards are followed to set a Christ-like model for the watching students and their families.  Therefore, we ask that all school staff and their visiting friends observe the following guidelines.

* If you are not dating, we ask you not start a dating relationship during your first year of school employment.

*Exceptions could be granted by Administrator and Board Chairman*

* All dating relationships must have the full blessing of both sets of parents.
* No physical affection shall be exchanged between non-married couples.
* Before marriage, couples shall sit on opposite sides of the congregation during the worship services.  (While some couples may be able to “handle” sitting together, our experience has been that many couples can’t.  Therefore, to make it equitable for all and as a testimony and example of deference to others, we ask for this guideline.)
* Unless engaged to be married, dates shall be limited to one per week.
* Because the primary purpose of being in YORK is to win the City for Jesus, engaged couples shall limit their dates to two per week.
* Dating couples shall be very careful to not spend so much time on the phone, that it hinders the outreach into the neighborhood, and or the harmony of the staff houses.
* Dates that are not part of a group activity, shall conclude at 10pm.
* Group activities shall conclude at or before 12 midnight.
* No member of the opposite gender shall be above the first floor of the staff houses.  If your date needs the restroom, the school shall be made available.
* If your date includes “visiting”, it shall be done in the front room, with the blinds fully open.

***Adoption and Changes***

This Manual was adopted by the Board of Directors of the Tidings of Peace Christian School on Tuesday, August 18, 2009.  All provisions of this Manual shall be considered “enforced” until amended or revoked by the School Board.  Such revisions, amendments and additions to this manual will take effect immediately upon approval of the Board, with or without prior notice to the staff.

***Completion Statement***

I, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, a staff member of the Tidings of Peace Christian School, verify this day that I have reviewed the above material and have had my questions related to it fully explained.  I pledge myself to live by it to the best of my ability, as GOD gives me strength and wisdom.