

REACHING FOR EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE

REX POLICY HANDBOOK

MIDDLE SCHOOL AND HIGH SCHOOL

2023-2024



Our GOAL as Christian homeschooling parents is to do all things with excellence – as though for the King and not for man. Our FOCUS is educating our own children in the style and structure that best meets their individual needs. Our MISSION is to facilitate quality instruction of exceptional curricula with an emphasis on layered and discussion-based learning.

Our COMMITMENT is to bless one another and use our unique gifts to share knowledge, creativity, accountability, and encouragement so that we will all be able to run this race well, together.

Table of contents

| | |
|--------------------------------|----|
| Statement of Faith | 3 |
| Board of Trustees, Instructors | 4 |
| Calendar Schedule | 7 |
| Class Descriptions | 8 |
| Friday Class Schedule | 9 |
| Introduction | 10 |
| Admission | 10 |
| Fees | 10 |
| Class Instruction | 11 |
| Class Expectations | 11 |
| Campus Expectations | 12 |
| Dress Code Policy | 13 |
| Drugs and Alcohol Policy | 13 |
| Sick Policy | 13 |
| Inclement Weather Policy | 14 |
| Delayed Class Schedule | 14 |
| Zoom Emergency Policy | 14 |
| Food/Lunch Policy | 15 |
| Safety | 15 |
| Volunteer Policy | 15 |
| Drop-Off Policy | 15 |
| Discipline Policy | 16 |

Reaching for Educational Excellence

Statement of Faith

As a community of Christian Homeschoolers, we lean on Galatians 3:28 and the unifying gift of Jesus Christ. We reflect God's Light in our lives through the way we...

Believe.

We believe that the Bible is the infallible Word of God and the authority for salvation and Christian living. (2 Timothy 3:15-3:17) The Bible is unwavering and unmotivated by cultural trends, and all believers are part of the body of Christ. (Numbers 23:19) We parent, instruct, serve, love, and live with unending faith in Christ's promise for our future.

Love.

We recognize the perfect demonstration of love in the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross as a ransom for our sins. (1 Thessalonians 5:11) As iron sharpens iron we will encourage and build one another up, live in fellowship, ask forgiveness, bear each other's burdens, pray for each other, and hold each other Biblically accountable. (Proverbs 27:17)

Work.

We honor our commitments and do all things with determination and passion as if working for the Lord and not men. (Colossians 3:23)

Learn.

We invest time as families and as a community to expand our knowledge, grow in Godly wisdom, and endeavor to become effective witnesses for Christ. (Proverbs 2:1-12) We strive to do all things with excellence, extending grace for mistakes and shortcomings, spurring each other on to love and good deeds. (Hebrews 10:24-25)

Share.

We are passionate about sharing with others the good news of God's powerful work and His gift of salvation in our lives. We are designed to be in fellowship with other believers. (1 Corinthians 12:18-20) Our resources, our homes, our community, and our gifts are for His use and His glory. We recognize that our Spiritual gifts are received by the Holy Spirit and intended to edify and build up the Body of Christ. (Psalms 133:1)

Board of Trustees

Board Chair

Jennifer Richardson

Vice Chair

Dawn DeMille

Secretary

Kristina Steinmetz

Treasurer

Leslie White

Board Member

Amy Dandrade

Executive Director

Amy Dandrade

Instructors

Mrs. Jennifer Richardson

Favorite Bible verse: Mark 11:23

REX courses: HS American History for the 19/20 academic year; 11-12 World History, and HS Speech and Presentation Skills for the 20/21 academic year; HS World View, and HS Critical Thinking for the 21/22 academic year

Jen is a Conservative, Christian military wife, and a mother to three children. She has been married since 2002 and homeschooling since 2012. Her eldest son graduated from REX in 2022 and her daughter is a REX senior this year. Her youngest son is not yet in school. Her philosophy of home education can be best described as an eclectic mixture of travel/experience/adventure-based, blended with Traditional and Classical methods. Jen studied Political Science in both undergraduate and graduate school and studied in England and Israel. She worked as a civilian Intelligence Officer before forgoing her career for the higher calling of raising her children. She brings to REX her passion for history and politics, and her desire to instill critical thinking, effective communication skills, and a love of country in her students.

Mrs. Leslie White

Favorite Bible Verse: Colossians 3:12-14

REX courses: HS Literature for the 19/20 academic year; 9/10 Classical Literature, and 11/12 World Literature for the 20/21 academic year; HS British Literature, HS Art History for the 21/22 academic year

Leslie White has been married to her husband Chad since 1997. Prior to their move to Chesapeake, VA in 2013, Leslie and her family served as missionaries in Malaysia and Thailand for seven years. She has been homeschooling children since 2004, graduated her eldest daughter several years ago, and most recently graduated her youngest daughter from REX in 2022. Leslie's homeschooling method of choice is

Classical, which enables children to "own" the material they initially memorize, as they move through grammar, dialectic, and rhetoric phases of developmental learning. Leslie has taught in homeschool co-ops for eight years. She loves seeing her REX students engaged and challenged by different perspectives; and she pours into her classes her passion for reading, discovering, and exploring textual themes and truths.

Mrs. Amy Dandrade

Favorite Bible verse: Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

REX courses: MS History of Science, MS Writing, and HS Essay Writing for the 19/20 academic year; and 9-10 American Government/Economics, and MS Modern History and Current Events for the 20/21 academic year; MS World History for the 21/22 academic year

Amy Dandrade has been happily married to her husband Paul since 1998 and has resided with her family in Chesapeake, VA since 2010. She has been homeschooling her two sons since 2006, and recently graduated her eldest from REX in 2022. In addition to teaching Writing at various co-ops prior to REX, most recently she has devoted much of her time and talents to creating and directing REX. With an education in Psychology, Amy's homeschool philosophy is centered around her understanding that all people learn differently and realizing the benefit of finding and utilizing what works best for each child in each subject. As an instructor at REX her greatest joy is seeing and fostering the "lightbulb moments" where students show their excitement for understanding a new concept.

Mrs. Dawn DeMille

Favorite Bible verse: Colossians 3:23

REX courses: MS Literature for the 19/20 academic year; and MS Literature and Writing for the 20/21 academic year; HS American Literature, and MS/HS Logic for the 21/22 academic year

Dawn DeMille has been married since 1991, and has lived with her family in Chesapeake, VA for since 2000. Dawn is an Aggie, a math teacher, and professional educator by trade. She put her career on hold in 2007 to focus her time and talents on teaching her own three children, one of whom she graduated from homeschool several years ago. Dawn is active in her church, teaches Sunday school class, and has taught at various homeschool programs over the years. She is sought out for her tutoring skills and subject expertise. Her approach to homeschooling is mostly Classical and she pours herself into every class God calls her to lead. Her biggest joy in teaching comes from being a part of an engaging learning environment and helping children succeed in mastering difficult concepts. Dawn's goal in instructing Literature at REX is to encourage her students to dig deep, and to instill in them a life-long love of literature.

Mrs. Courtney Jeffries

Favorite Bible verse: John 10:14

REX Courses: HS American History for the 21/22 academic year

Courtney has been married since 2002, and has lived with her family in Chesapeake, VA since 2014. Though formally educated in Elementary Education, Courtney has used her talents to raise her son Jax, who she has been homeschooling since 2019. She has volunteered in Sunday school and church nurseries and runs a successful online business. Her homeschool philosophy is to encourage students to search for true understanding of concepts, and not just memorization of facts. Courtney is passionate about challenging students to think for themselves.

Tentative Calendar Schedule 2023-2024

| Week | | Date |
|-------------|---------------------------|--------------------|
| Orientation | | August 25 |
| 1 | | September 1 |
| 2 | | September 8 |
| 3 | | September 15 |
| 4 | | September 22 |
| 5 | | September 29 |
| 6 | | October 6 |
| 7 | | October 13 |
| 8 | | October 20 |
| 9 | | October 27 |
| 10 | | November 3 |
| 11 | | November 10 |
| 12 | | November 17 |
| | Thanksgiving Break | November 24 |
| 13 | | December 1 |
| 14 | | December 8 |
| 15 | | December 15 |
| | Christmas Break | December 22 |
| | New Years Break | December 29 |
| 16 | | January 5 |
| 17 | | January 12 |
| 18 | | January 19 |
| 19 | | January 26 |
| 20 | | February 2 |
| 21 | | February 9 |
| | Winter Break | February 16 |
| 22 | | February 23 |
| 23 | | March 1 |
| 24 | | March 8 |
| 25 | | March 15 |
| 26 | | March 22 |
| 27 | | March 29 |
| 28 | Spring Break | April 5 |
| 28 | | April 12 |
| 29 | | April 19 |
| 30 | | April 26 |
| 31 | | May 3 |
| 32 | | May 10 |
| 33 | | May 17 |

Reaching for Educational Excellence

Tentative Class Description 2023-2024

Middle School Core Classes

World History Curricula—Sonlight Core W World History, Various Readers
Students will see the connected flow of human history from creation through the present while developing critical thinking skills to understand the world today by seeing how we got where we are.

World Literature Curricula—Teaching the Classics, Various Readers, Lost Tools of Writing Vol 1

Students will utilize the Socratic method to conduct powerful literary discussions that can be used with any story. They will also learn to organize and write essays.

High School Core Classes

9-10 Grades

American History Curricula—Sonlight 100, Various Texts

Students will learn not only basic facts of history, but how to analyze the events of the past through discussion and the use of literature. This is the best of critical thinking, Socratic discussion, and analytical writing in history.

American Literature Curricula—Teaching the Classics, Various Readers

Students will utilize the Socratic method to conduct powerful literary discussions that can be used with any story. They will also learn to organize and write essays.

11-12 Grades (Each course is one semester)

American Govt & Civics Curricula—Sonlight 420

Students look at how and why our government works as it does, using founding documents, speeches, and additional texts to critically examine the founding as well as the changes and direction today.

Economics Curricula—Lessons for the Young Economist, Various Text/Media

Students learn both pure economic theory and also how markets work while debating economic systems.

American Literature Curricula—Teaching the Classics, Various Readers

Students will utilize the Socratic method to conduct powerful literary discussions that can be used with any story. They will also learn to organize and write essays.

British Literature Curricula—Teaching the Classics, Various Readers

Students will utilize the Socratic method to conduct powerful literary discussions that can be used with any story. They will also learn to organize and write essays.

Electives

Middle School TBD

Bible Study Skills TBD

Students will learn Bible study skills and principles with the goal of igniting interest, encouraging engagement, and thoroughly equipping students to correctly interpret the Word of God.

World View Curricula—Understanding the Times: A Survey of Competing Worldviews, Various Texts

Students will be encouraged to engage each other and think critically while examining how the Christian worldview compares with the five major competing worldviews of our day: Islam, Secular Humanism, Marxism, New Age, and Postmodernism.

Friday Tentative Class Schedule 2023-2024

- 8:30 Arrival
- 8:45-9:00 Announcements and Devotions
- 9:00-10:25 MS-World Literature
HS-American Historical Literature
HS- American/British Literature
- 10:30-11:55 MS-World History
HS-American History
HS-American Government/Economics
- 12:00-12:55 Lunch
- 1:00-2:30 MS-TBD
HS-Bible Study Skills
HS-World View

Introduction:

Reaching for Educational Excellence (REX) is a Christian, classical, non-profit, all-volunteer homeschool co-op. There are no fees for instruction. All families will pay a \$10 website fee, share in the cost of insurance (to be divided equally between families), and pay a \$50 per student registration fee to cover the cost of administration and basic supplies. Classes will also have a small supply fee. All parents and families will contribute to the success of the program by volunteering in some capacity to support the community. Volunteer positions will be on a first come, first pick basis, and each family will be required to volunteer a specific number of hours.

In order to maintain a vibrant community, an assortment of fellowship opportunities such as potluck and theme lunches, REX Spirit Days, Parents' Night Out, formal dinners, fun/educational field trips, and multi-day trips will be scheduled throughout the year. Each year, high school students will have the opportunity to participate in the REX Formal, a themed dinner/dance.

Admission:

Membership to REX shall be at the sole discretion of a majority of the Board of Trustees (the Board) while enrollment in any given class shall be at the sole discretion of the instructor. Membership will be determined using a Board-approved application for enrollment. Admission to REX assumes that families will pay the fees assigned, agree to the policies and procedures listed in the Student Handbook, abide by the REX Statement of Faith, and agree to the volunteer guidelines and responsibilities for each family.

Fees:

All REX fees are non-refundable and due within 30 days of billing unless otherwise noted. For ease, families are encouraged to make payments on the REX website: rexfhomeschool.com. Checks should be made out to *Reaching for Educational Excellence*. A late fee of \$15 per family will be charged for registration and/or insurance if not received within 7 days of the due date. A returned check fee of \$30 will also apply. Families that do not pay for Special Events, including Field Trips, or families that miss a deadline time will be assessed a 20% fee.

- Family Website Fee – All families are required to pay a \$10 annual fee to cover the cost of Homeschool-Life web hosting. Payment of this fee is required before a class registration day is assigned.
- Background Check Fee – River Oak Church (ROC) requires all adults that spend time on campus to have a background check. This fee varies depending on the service they use. This fee will be assessed to every new family, and then every 3 years.
- Registration Fee – All families are expected to pay a non-refundable, registration fee per student. This fee is to cover administrative costs for REX.
 - Registration Fee Payment Schedule (\$325 cap per family):
 - \$75 per student if paid before May 31
 - \$100 per student if paid before July 16
 - \$125 per student from July 16

- Insurance – All families will contribute to the Insurance policy for General Liability and Accidental Medical Coverage. The total amount will be divided equally between all participating families.
- Class Supply Fees – All families will pay a supply fee of \$15 for each class per student. (Elementary Fees may be higher)
- Volunteer Opt-Out Fee—Families that do not wish to volunteer will pay a \$300 opt-out fee.
- Late Fee--\$15 for Registration and/or insurance; 20% for Missed or delayed Special Events or Field Trip payments.

Payment may be mailed to: REX c/o
Amy Dandrade
337 Big Pond Lane
Chesapeake, VA 23323

Class Instruction:

In accordance with our by-laws, REX acknowledges the autonomy of the instructors as it pertains to all classroom matters under the oversight of the board. Instructors will determine the content and pace of the course while setting academic standards and deadlines. They will also provide classroom feedback on behavior and preparedness and specific feedback on assignments and exams. Parents are expected to work with/oversee students at home during the week, ensuring that they are doing their best to learn and review concepts and classroom material, are present on community days, and are arriving to class on time and fully prepared. Though some instructors offer grades, others do not. Ultimately, grading for transcript purposes or otherwise, is a parental responsibility. Parents and students are expected to stay abreast of all instructor/class communications utilizing the REX website and Signal. Students are expected to work to their full potential. This requires focused preparation outside of the class day, and continued commitment to excellence while on campus. By choosing to enroll in REX it is understood that students will arrive on time to all classes, complete all assigned work by their deadlines, and respectfully participate and engage in classroom discussions in a meaningful way. Since REX uses discussion-based learning it is imperative that students come to class with all necessary materials and be ready to engage. Though instructors extend grace for exceptional circumstances, they will not tailor class time nor lower expectations to suit those who are consistently unprepared. A habitual pattern of disregard for these standards may result in dismissal from the program.

Class Expectations

1. Punctuality to class is necessary to ensure students miss none of the classroom instruction or discussion and to avoid distracting the instructor and other students.
2. Parents choosing to observe class are encouraged to do so. However, we require that you refrain from engaging in conversation during class time.
3. Every student is expected to behave in a proper and respectful fashion. At any time, should a student be disruptive to the class, the following policy will be utilized:

- First notice: He/she will be given a verbal warning.
- Second notice: He/she will be asked to leave the room for the remainder of the class period. The parent will be notified and a discussion with the Executive Director will be required for both parent and student.
- Third notice: He/she will be required to have a parent or guardian attend class with the student for the following week.
- Finally: REX reserves the right to consider dismissal of the student from the class, or from the program.

4. Behavior concerns are to be addressed directly with a member of the Board of Trustees, the parent of the student involved, or the instructor involved.

5. Parents are responsible for obtaining all books and supplies necessary for each class.

6. It is the responsibility of the student(s)/parents to stay abreast of class communications.

Campus Expectations

1. Families need to be on time for classes and/or REX opening. All enrolled families need to be on-site no later than 8:30 am if you are enrolled in a 9:00 am class. Church doors will be locked beginning at 8:40 am. If you arrive past this time, you will need to call the REX phone to be let in. All REX participants on campus will wear a lanyard with a nametag.

2. River Oak Church (ROC) has agreed to host REX. All insurance issues will be handled through REX's liability policy. Be respectful of the church property. Failure to respect the host facility can result in dismissal. REX has been assigned a specific space within the church building. REX families and students are to use only the areas designated for REX use. If you break property that belongs to the church, your family will be responsible for 100% of the cost of replacement.

3. Clean up after yourselves. We are expected to leave our facility the way we have found it. Everyone is asked to contribute to the care and cleanliness of the building throughout the day.

4. Students should walk, not run in the halls between classes. There should be no yelling inside the building.

5. Be respectful of others and their property. Making fun of others, bullying, using inappropriate language, and making physical threats or actions are prohibited and subject to the discipline policy.

6. Lunch is from 12 – 1 PM. Students are welcome to eat in room 218/219A. We will have access to a small refrigerator and a microwave.

7. Students are not permitted to leave the church campus without prior authorization from a parent and notification to the REX staff.

8. Driving on campus is a privilege. Safety is our priority. Drivers are expected to stay below 15 mph, stay in designated driving lanes, to follow the specified REX flow of traffic. Violators may lose the right to drive on campus.

Dress Code Policy

Our dress code is centered around the idea of respect and modesty as outlined in biblical principles. While at REX and at REX events, modesty is defined as a manner of dressing that honors God and refrains from drawing inappropriate attention. This includes no revealing clothing, no visible undergarments, no inappropriate messaging or imagery; hemlines of shorts, skirts and dresses should reach fingertip length or longer; shirts must cover the stomach (midribs, cleavage, and undergarments should not be visible whether sitting, standing, reaching, etc.); and shirts and shoes must be worn at all times in the facility.

Some REX events will require a modified dress code (the Formal, swimming events, etc.). REX reserves the right to set a dress code for any event that we sponsor. If there will be a change, families will be informed at the time the event is scheduled.

Drug and Alcohol Policy

Drugs, alcohol, or paraphernalia are not permitted. Violation of this rule will result in dismissal from the program. Prescription and OTC medication must be administered by the student's parent.

Sick Policy

Your student should stay home from co-op if he/she has any of the following symptoms:

- Fever above 100 degrees; and until the temperature has returned to normal (98.6F) for 24 hours without the aid of medication.
- Persistent, productive cough
- Excessive drainage from the nose or eyes
- Colored mucus
- Sore throat accompanied by general malaise or fever
- Vomiting and/or diarrhea. The child must be free from vomiting/diarrhea for a minimum of 24 hours before coming to the co-op
- Diagnosed with any infectious illness such as pink eye, scabies, head lice, impetigo, strep infection, chickenpox, influenza, shingles, or any other communicable diseases.

Remember, the best way to reduce the spread of germs and infections is good handwashing; and always cough into your arm, not your hand.

Though it is understood that parents and families are ultimately responsible for their own health, REX will defer to the policy of our host church.

Inclement Weather Policy

In the event of inclement weather, REX will follow Chesapeake Public Schools' delays and closures. If local public schools are operating on a delay, REX will also be delayed and will operate on our Delayed Class Schedule.

Delayed Class Schedule (Middle School and High School)

In the event of a *one-hour delay*, REX will follow the following schedule unless the church closes and REX makes an announcement otherwise:

| <u>Regular Class Time</u> | <u>Delayed Class Time</u> |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| 8:45am-9:00pm meeting | 9:45am-10:00pm |
| 9:00am-10:30am class | 10:00am-11:20am |
| 10:15am-11:45pm class | 11:20am-12:40pm |
| 12:00pm-1:00 lunch | 12:40pm-1:10pm |
| 1:00pm-2:30pm class | 1:10pm-2:30pm |

In the event of a *two-hour delay*, REX will follow the following schedule unless the church closes and REX makes an announcement otherwise:

| <u>Regular Class Time</u> | <u>Delayed Class Time</u> |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| 8:45am-9:00pm meeting | 10:45pm-11:00am |
| 9:00am-10:30am class | 11:00am-12:00pm |
| 12:00pm-1:00 lunch | 12:00pm-12:30pm |
| 10:30am-12:00pm class | 12:30pm-1:30pm |
| 1:00pm-2:30pm class | 1:30pm-2:30pm |

Zoom Emergency Policy

There may be situations when circumstances ensure that REX will need to hold classes virtually. If a situation arises that would force us to not be able to meet at the church (inclement weather excluded), we will utilize Zoom virtual meetings for classes. REX will notify all families if we need to schedule Zoom classes, and instructors will provide the appropriate link for each class. If we are using Zoom, there are rules and etiquette. Zoom is a virtual classroom, and all students should:

- Dress and behave appropriately.
- Log into the meeting from a distraction-free, quiet environment.
- Keep audio on mute until speaking to help eliminate background noise.
- Use the "Raise Hand" feature to speak or answer a question.
- Keep the video function on for the entire class, facing the screen.
- Stay "in class" unless permitted to leave (to use the restroom, etc.)
- Remember that the chat box is public and should be used to discuss the class.

Food/Lunch Policy

Food is only allowed in designated classrooms and not in the halls. Water is permitted throughout the building. While there may be snacks available for purchase, lunch is the responsibility of each student. Please clearly label all food. REX will periodically have lunch events throughout the year, so please watch the REX calendar or email for information.

Safety

1. The instructors have the right to interview and/or question any adult at any time should there be suspicion of questionable behavior. If you have reason for concern for the safety of a child, or anyone else on site, you must immediately report it to one of the instructors. At no time should a dangerous situation be kept quiet.
2. Bathroom breaks are encouraged to be taken as a class at designated times. Except for a parent's own child, no parent or instructor should ever be alone in the restroom with a student. Medical emergencies excluded.
3. REX follows a two-to-one policy which states that best practice is to have at least two adults in any classroom, but when there are not two adults available, there must be at least two students in the room.
4. All parents that will be inside campus will require background screening to the same standard as ROC children's workers.

Volunteer Policy

REX is an all-volunteer co-op and cannot function without the help of all enrolled families. In order to provide academic, extra-curricular, and social activities for our students, families are required to find at least one volunteer position that best utilizes their time and talents. Positions vary greatly, and positions critical to the functioning of REX will need to be filled by Orientation. A 45-hour volunteer time commitment is expected of each family registered for classes each academic year, in addition to assisting as needed with various fundraisers and special events. Families who are unable to volunteer will have the option to pay a \$300 opt-out fee due before a class registration day is assigned. Volunteers are responsible for their positions, and if they are absent, it is their responsibility to find a backup in case of absence. In the event of unfulfilled or incomplete volunteer responsibilities, a family will receive an invoice for \$300 to be paid upon receipt.

Drop-off Policy

REX requires all student(s) under 13 years old to have a parent or guardian in the building.

Discipline Policy

Discipline notices are reserved for blatant or repeat disobedience of the policies in the Student Handbook, significant disrespect toward an adult, or for physical harm to another student. Warnings may or may not be given before issuing an official discipline notice for these offenses. Discipline notices may be written by any adult member of REX during any REX function, including regular or extra class days, programs, or field trips.

First offense: Verbal warning. Teachers/adults are encouraged to verbally inform the parent of the warning either in person during co-op that day or by telephone during the week after the verbal warning was given. A written communication slip may also serve as a verbal warning.

Second offense: Written discipline notice. The written discipline notice is given to the parent and the REX Board for a second offense. The student may be removed from class activities depending on his/her conduct.

Third offense: Second written discipline notice. The third offense requires a second written discipline notice. After the second discipline notice, the family will receive a written summary letter from REX's Executive Director. If necessary, a conference will be held.

Fourth offense: Final written discipline notice and possible expulsion. The fourth offense requires a final written discipline notice and will result in the expulsion of the student for the semester. REX's Board reserves the option of expelling the family.

The REX Board reserves the right to expel any student who receives two discipline notices per semester for three consecutive semesters.

Exceptions -Grounds for immediate expulsion:

Any purposeful acts of vandalism to the facility or any outside location we may utilize.

Any alcohol, cigarettes, vaping, drugs, or controlled substances on campus or at any REX event.

Any violent behavior toward another parent or student on campus or at any REX event.

Any possession of pornographic materials while on campus or at any REX event.