



**Educating Hearts and Minds for Eternity**

**Parent and Student Handbook | 2025-2026 School Year**

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920-500-0445**

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## STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

INspire Online Academy is an online synchronous school whose main purpose is to inspire students with a love and commitment to serve Christ. Through the avenue of technology, our purpose is to provide quality Seventh-day Adventist Christian education to students from the safety of their home.

## MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of INspire Online Academy is to restore in the hearts and minds of children the image of Jesus Christ. We aim to empower students to achieve excellence at every level and to equip them with the teachings and purpose of scripture.

## OBJECTIVES FOR CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Christ recognized the potential in every person He encountered, seeing within each individual the possibility of transformation through the power of the Holy Spirit. At INspire Academy, our mission is to honor and value everyone. We are committed to:

- encourage reverence for God and kindness to others
- glorify God in all things
- provide a Christ-centered curriculum
- treat others with respect and by so doing create a climate where independence and self-confidence is developed
- maintain high academic standards
- take note of the cultural, scientific, and technical development of our time in a distinct and purposeful manner
- encourage good manners, courtesy to others, and improve cultural relationships
- encourage honesty, reliability, and loyalty
- maintain a trust relationship as well as a healthy respect between pupils, parents, and teachers
- awaken a positive attitude towards profitable work and productivity
- develop and understand the principles of a healthy body and mind
- expose pupils to good literature, art, music, and to teach pupils to appreciate “...*those things that are good and that deserve praise: things that are true, noble, right, pure, lovely and honorable...*” (Phil. 4:8 Good News Bible)

## ADMISSIONS POLICY

### *Nondiscrimination Policy Statement*

INspire Online Academy admits students of any race to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at its schools and makes no discrimination on the basis of race, color, ethnic background, country of origin, or gender in the administration of education policies, applications for admission, scholarship or loan programs, and extracurricular programs.

### *Admissions procedure*

#### *Applicants must complete the following before the application is processed:*

1. Complete an online application.
2. Submit the application fee. (\$25)
3. A certificate of birth (copy is acceptable) must be presented at registration. (Students entering first grade must be at least six years old by August 15 and new students starting in 8th grade cannot be older than 14 years of age.)
4. A medical report from a physician must be submitted by anyone entering an Indiana school for the first time, with this evaluation being recommended at the start of grades 1 and 5.
5. Students transferring from another school must request transfer of the student's records. Transcripts and any testing are required documents.
6. Students who have not previously attended formal schooling will undergo an interview and assessment process to determine their appropriate grade placement.
7. Each student and parent/guardian must express their commitment to adhere to the school policies outlined in this handbook, as well as any other policies approved by the INspire school board, by signing the admission form.
8. If a student applies for admission when school is already in progress, they will be allowed to attend classes on a probationary basis for 60 days. The student's academic and behavior progress will be reviewed by the admissions committee. Failure to comply with handbook regulations, receive passing grades in classes, or lack of consistent attendance may lead to immediate dismissal during the 60-day period.

### *Qualifications for Admission*

To be accepted as a student, he/she needs to:

- Be in good and regular standing in their current school and capable of maintaining average grades in all courses at INspire Academy. INspire Academy is unable to accept students who have learning/emotional disabilities that distract from the integrity of the classroom environment.

- Students should be in harmony with the objectives of INspire Academy.
- Students should have a spiritual commitment and honor the principles of Christian living.
- Students should have a personal commitment to academic success including a desire to cooperate with teachers and fellow students to create a positive classroom environment.

#### *Re-Admission Policy*

Students who were previously enrolled but no longer attend INspire Online Academy will need to contact the administrative assistant to complete the re-admission process, and may undergo a reapplication interview that will be reviewed by the admission committee. The parents will be notified of the admission committee's decision if their child(ren) are/are not re-admitted. Students will not be readmitted if there is an outstanding balance from their previous admission.

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

#### *Accreditation*

INspire Online Academy and all Seventh-day Adventist schools are accredited by the Seventh-day Adventist Education Department.

#### *Handbook alterations*

The staff and school board of INspire Online Academy reserve the right to alter any of this handbook's policies and guidelines during and throughout the school year, as need dictates, according to voted action of the school board.

#### *Special Education Needs*

INspire Online Academy has at times accepted students with special needs. Students are accepted if the school feels the child will progress academically and socially. Parents/guardians of students with special needs need to recognize that INspire Academy does not have the resources (i.e. personnel, facilities, equipment) to offer special education services.

#### *First Grade*

Students who are at least six years of age by August 15<sup>th</sup> may apply for admission to the first grade. A readiness test will be administered before admission into first grade if Kindergarten is not completed or if a student was homeschooled.

#### *Grade Placement*

INspire Online Academy reserves the right to administer grade placement tests and, in consultation with the parents, will place the student where it is best for him/her.

### *Acceleration*

INspire Online Academy discourages accelerating a student ahead of his/her age grouping. If a parent or guardian is interested in acceleration, an appointment must be made with the principal no later than February 1<sup>st</sup> of the year prior to a proposed acceleration. Excellent grades and at least an overall score in the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile on the MAP test will be necessary to start the process, while other factors such as social, spiritual, maturity and classroom grade sizes will be evaluated.

### *Retention*

INspire Online Academy recognizes that some students will need the gift of time before being prepared for the scholastic, emotional, or spiritual challenges of the next grade. In conference with parents, teachers will discuss a student's progress throughout the year, and at the beginning of the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter, discuss the likelihood of a child being retained another year in his/her current grade. This does not mean that the child has failed the grade, but that current and future success will be better guaranteed by spending another year reviewing the present grade's standards. "It is the work of true education... to train the youth to be thinkers, and not mere reflectors of other men's thoughts. True education means more than the pursuit of a certain course of study. It means more than a preparation for the life that is now. It has to do with the whole being, and with the whole period of existence possible to man. It is the harmonious development of the physical, the mental, and the spiritual powers. It prepares the student for the joy of service in this world and for the higher joy of wider service in the world to come." Education, pp. 13 & 17.

## **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

INspire Online Academy is a synchronous class experience that demands students be present for the day's instruction. It is imperative that the student's face be visible on the camera for the teacher to monitor the student's focus and understanding. Failure to consistently comply with this could lead to expulsion from the school.

### *Unexcused Absences*

Academic credit will not be given for time or classes missed that are unexcused. Three unexcused tardies equal one absence. A student who misses two or more hours of a day may be marked absent.

### *Written Excuses*

All absences and tardies must be covered by a written explanation from a parent or guardian the day the student returns to INspire Online Academy or the absence or tardy automatically becomes unexcused. Any discrepancies regarding attendance must be cleared up within five school days of the absence. An absence for which no notification from the parent is received shall be considered as being an unlawful absence. A person who is suspended from school is lawfully absent.

### *Absence and Tardy Policy*

The goal for all students should be perfect attendance. Emergencies occur, and it is not always possible to be in school every day. Every day missed, however, poses a problem. It is impossible to miss class time and not miss instruction. Even with the best of intentions, an absence or tardiness can hurt a student's academic performance. Therefore, the INspire Online Academy faculty expects faithful attendance. When a student has excessive tardiness or absences, the following procedures will be followed.

- Three unexcused absences in a quarter will cause the teacher to send an email to the parent warning them of their child's attendance.
- A fourth unexcused absence in a quarter will result in a virtual meeting with the parent and teacher to ensure that the student understands and is able to meet during class times.
- A fifth unexcused absence in a quarter will result in virtual communication with school administration. At that time, school administration may recognize that INspire Academy is not a fit for the family situation. If that happens, the student will be asked to withdraw.
- A sixth unexcused absence in the same quarter will result in the student being asked to withdraw.

### *Lawful Absences*

INspire Online Academy recognizes the following as lawful reasons for absences.

- illness or injury (written verification from parent or physician required)
- medical/dental appointments (When possible, please schedule for Fridays)
- death of immediate family member
- court or administrative proceedings
- religious observances
- educational opportunities (approval must be secured in advance by school administration)
- other circumstances discussed with school administration.

### *Unlawful Absences:*

An unlawful absence is defined as follows:

- A student's willful absence from school or class with or without the knowledge of the parent, or
- A student's absence from school for any reason other than those listed under "Lawful Absences."

**Please note:** Our goal at INspire Online Academy is to create a quality, interactive learning environment. A student will be considered present when the webcam is turned on and the student shows him/herself from the shoulders up. A student who shows only a partial face will be counted as absent.

**Parents/guardians are encouraged to be models to their children by demonstrating punctuality and responsibility.**

### *20% Rule*

To allow some flexibility for parents who may have to travel students are allowed to miss 9 (20%) class meetings per quarter. All such absences must be requested ahead of time. Videos for the missed class session with the assignment will be available to the student. Students who miss the class sessions due to a parent's schedule are still required to turn in the assignments and watch the class sessions by the scheduled due date in order to not be counted absent.

### *Early Dismissals*

Parents must provide permission ahead of time for students to leave class during school hours. This permission must be provided in a phone call, email, or text and should include the reason for the early departure and whether the student will return the same day.

## **SCHOOL DAY & WEEKLY SCHEDULE**

- Monday through Thursday-live online instruction:
  - Grades 1-6 8:30 – 3:30 PM
  - Grades 7-8 8:30 - 4:00 PM
  - Students can log in 10 minutes early each school day.
- Fridays – Independent workday
  - Students have online assignments without their teacher. These assignments must be completed before Sunday at midnight.

**NOTE:** A detailed daily schedule will be provided closer to the start of school and will be subject to change as needed. The basic framework of our start and stop times will not change.

### *Screen Time*

INspire Online Academy is a distinctive online school that offers daily, live, direct instruction to its students via the internet. Alongside instruction, assignments are provided during scheduled class periods, with dedicated time allocated for students to engage with their INspire teachers. Our primary objective is to emulate the traditional classroom experience for our INspire Academy students to the fullest extent possible. Throughout the scheduled class time students will be given breaks away from the screen. Some of these breaks from the screen may involve schoolwork.

## **USE AND CARE OF SCHOOL PROPERTY**

Laptops provided by INspire Online Academy are to be used only for intended school use. Students shall be responsible for paying the costs of replacing or repairing all property which they damage.

### *Textbooks and Laptops*

INspire Online Academy will provide textbooks (digital and print) and a laptop for academic use. A portion of the registration fee covers the rental costs associated with the textbooks. An additional technology fee is added for the laptop. At times, it may be necessary to return the laptops for repair, departure from the school, or at the end of the school year. **Parents must keep ALL boxes and packing material for the laptops to help facilitate the shipping process.**

### *End of Year Return*

At the end of the school year, it is the expectation that all textbooks and laptops will be returned to INspire Online Academy. Failure to return either will result in a full replacement charge for the items not returned.

### *Laptop Usage*

The INspire-issued laptop is to be used solely as an educational resource. Any information shared between students or other individuals from the school laptops will not be considered private. The school has full authority over the management of the laptop, which includes the ability to remotely:

- live-monitor devices
- view history of devices
- lock or disable devices
- set specific parameters on device usability

A laptop is a powerful tool providing access to the internet. INspire Online Academy will install filtering and monitoring software on each of its devices to minimize students' exposure to inappropriate content, whether intentional or accidental. INspire Academy will not be responsible for these devices. The software on INspire computers are intended to block access to:

- sexually explicit images, language, and advertising
- violent images, language, and advertising
- racist propaganda, images, language, and advertising
- aggressive behavior
- controlled substances
- shopping
- gaming

### *Laptop Care*

INspire Online Academy issues school-owned laptops to all students for academic purposes. Students are responsible for the proper care and use of their laptops. The school provides one

free replacement for accidental damage. Subsequent replacements will be charged to the family, including a \$100 processing fee. No further laptops will be issued to any student in a family with outstanding replacement fees.

### *Filtering*

INspire Online Academy staff and administration will do everything within their power to keep students who use the INspire laptops safe while online through internet filtering and monitoring of our devices. While we trust that these efforts will safeguard our students, persistent and intentional attempts to bypass filtering may lead to the inadvertent access of harmful, explicit, or otherwise inappropriate material. In such cases, INspire Online Academy cannot be held responsible. Repeated attempts by students to work around filters will lead to discipline including but not limited to expulsion.

**PLEASE NOTE: While INspire Online Academy makes reasonable efforts to provide appropriate internet filtering and monitoring, it is important to note that parents or guardians bear the responsibility of actively monitoring internet use, especially during after-school hours.**

### *Digital Citizenship*

One of the goals of INspire Online Academy is to teach students to be responsible digital citizens in this digital age. We encourage students to maintain privacy and safety while online. It is important that all private communication remains confidential. Under no circumstances should a student share their name, address, phone number, social media page, or email with anyone while online. *Games that facilitate communication with individuals outside our organization are not permitted.*

## **BALANCED AND HEALTHFUL LIVING - OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES**

At INspire Online Academy, recess and physical education are integral parts of our curriculum, aimed at fostering physical, social, emotional, and spiritual well-being. To promote balanced healthy living, INspire Academy students are encouraged to:

- Enjoy fresh air, engage in physical exercise, and take breaks from academic studies and computer use.
- Participate in assigned games and activities designed to enhance physical strength, endurance, and motor skills. Free play opportunities will also be available.
- Engage in outdoor activities throughout all seasons, weather permitting.
- Venture outdoors, unless weather conditions are extreme or dangerous. Students should be

appropriately dressed for all weather conditions.

**Please be advised:** Parents or guardians are entrusted with ensuring the well-being of their child at all times.

## PERSONAL APPEARANCE

All attire should be modest, tidy, and clean. Fads that contradict Biblical principles are not permitted. Teachers have the authority to request changes to students' attire or hair color if they believe it may be distracting from the Christian education process. Pajamas or overly casual clothing will not be allowed.

## DISCIPLINE

The goal of all regulations at INspire Online Academy is to create a safe school environment where learning is encouraged. Anything that contributes to this goal will be encouraged. Anything that interferes will be discouraged. To accomplish these goals, the primary responsibility rests on the classroom teacher to create a “positive learning environment.” When the student is not making a positive contribution to this environment, the following hierarchy of protocols will be followed:

- The teacher will work with the student to solve the continuous discipline problem and will follow up with a phone call to parents.
- If the problem continues, the principal may be consulted for solutions or suggestions.
- If the student is still non-compliant, the parent/guardian will join a parent-teacher-student-principal conference to decide if an action plan can be developed. If a satisfactory action plan cannot be agreed upon or the action plan that was agreed upon is not followed by the students and/or parent the student will be asked to withdraw.

Certain severe infractions such as sexual assault, cigarettes, drugs, alcohol, pornography, vaping, and severely inappropriate language call for an automatic suspension or expulsion. When this occurs, the administrative committee will review the matter and the issue will be documented in the student’s digital file. Depending on the degree of the incident or frequency of suspensions, the student may be placed on automatic probation or asked to withdraw, the principal will then bring the student’s name to the INspire Academy school board with a recommendation for expulsion.

Parents have a powerful influence in leading their children to cooperate with the teacher’s authority. Students learn best when parents and teachers cooperate directly in dealing with misunderstandings and problems instead of drawing conclusions and taking action on the basis of the child’s opinion. “He that handles a matter wisely shall find good... The wise in heart shall be called prudent, and the sweetness of the lips increases learning.” Proverbs 16:20, 21

### *Dismissal/Expulsion*

Only the school board has the authority to expel a student. If the school board chooses to exclude the student from school indefinitely the school will not provide reimbursement for tuition or fees.

### *Causes for Potential Immediate Dismissal*

Students who engage in any of the following practices may be asked to withdraw from school or may be denied readmission. Note: The expectations of conduct must be practiced in the hours outside of school as well. These things include, but are not limited to:

- willfully undermining the religious ideals of the school
- using profane language, indulging in lewd conduct or suggestions, or possessing or displaying obscene literature or pictures
- stealing, lying, cheating, willful deception, and dishonesty regarding violation of school regulations or any other phase of schoolwork or business
- repeated bullying of other students or staff
- failing to completely comply with the stipulations of any discipline administered by the faculty
- willfully destroying school property
- using school property (laptops or textbooks) in inappropriate ways
- possessing or using alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs, tobacco, or cannabis in any form, or misusing legal drugs
- threatening others with malicious intimidation or violence
- lack of academic progress. This may include not turning in assignments or not able to complete assignments on a regular basis

### *Bullying and Harassment*

Bullying means systematically and chronically inflicting physical hurt or psychological distress on one or more students, a school employee or a volunteer: unwanted and repeated written, verbal or physical behavior, including any threatening, insulting, or dehumanizing gesture that is severe or pervasive enough to create an intimidating, hostile or offensive educational environment; cause discomfort or humiliation; or unreasonably interferes with the individual's school performance or participation.

Harassment means any threatening, insulting or dehumanizing gesture, use of data or computer software, written, verbal or physical contact directed against a student, school employee or volunteer.

Bullying and harassment includes cyber stalking which means to engage in a course of conduct to communicate or to cause to be communicated, words, images, or language by or using electronic communication and/or social media directed at a specific person, causing substantial

emotional distress to that person and serving no legitimate purpose.

There are usually four elements that are present in bullying and harassment:

- The action of the bully is to hurt or humiliate the victim.
- There is a difference in power between the bully(s) and the victim, whether that power difference is height, weight, athletic ability, socioeconomic status, etc.
- The act of hurting and humiliation, on the part of the bully, is repeated.
- The victim has told the individual(s) to stop the specific behavior and the behavior is continued by the person(s).

## **COMMUNICATION**

While this handbook endeavors to offer comprehensive guidance, it may not address every facet of the academic environment. We encourage open and ongoing written and verbal communication among staff, parents, and students, which is regarded as equally binding as the guidelines outlined herein. Due to the predominantly online nature of our school, parents should anticipate frequent electronic communication from teachers. We expect communication between the school and home to be timely and responsive.

### *Parent-Teacher*

Parent and teacher communication is vital to the well-being of every student. It is accomplished through regularly scheduled conferences during the school year, through report cards and interim grade reports, homework, and classwork assignments, as well as virtual communication after school, and over the phone. Two virtual parent-teacher conferences will be scheduled during the school year.

## **GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS**

Collaboration between parents and teachers, rooted in Ephesians 4:2-3 which states “Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace,” fosters positive educational experiences. When students sense a spirit of mutual support and cooperation between parents and teachers, they are more likely to exhibit an enthusiastic attitude toward learning.

### *Classroom Guidelines for Parents:*

Parental involvement in the classroom is encouraged and appreciated. Please plan with the

teacher outside of scheduled class time when and how you might be able to help. This will enable the teacher to coordinate any offered assistance with areas of need.

- Never interrupt a teacher while they are teaching.
- Do not ask questions for your child. We want the child to be independent and comfortable asking questions.
- The teacher reserves the right to decide how much help, if any, they need.
- Parents should consider themselves as observers who can ask the teacher questions only during the teacher's office hours or other times designated by the teacher.

### *Grievance Procedure*

Communication between home and school is essential. Without proper communication, misunderstandings can develop into serious problems. To prevent misunderstandings and to provide a procedure for problem solving, this grievance hierarchy protocol has been adopted in harmony with the words of Jesus in Matthew 18. For all grievances, please follow this procedure:

- If you have a question or complaint about a classroom or school situation, first speak directly to the teacher involved before addressing it to the principal, pastor, board member, superintendent, or even "gossiping" about the problem to a friend.
- If still dissatisfied, speak with the principal. A parent-student-teacher- principal conference may be arranged.
- If no resolution has been reached, a meeting between the parents, teacher, principal, and school board chairperson may be arranged.
- If a parent is still unhappy with the results, an appeal to the entire school board may be made.
- When all local options/appeals have been exhausted, the final step is to contact the conference superintendent of education, who may refer the matter to the INspire Academy constituency board.

In all cases, please communicate directly with the person or persons most directly involved. Anyone of higher authority will refer grievances back to the "lowest" position in the hierarchy that has not yet been contacted. Our goal is to solve problems at the lowest grievance level. Goodwill and cooperation ensure that most misunderstandings can be solved at Step 1.

## FINANCIAL INFORMATION

### 2025-2026 Tuition Rates and Payment

Each Student	10 monthly Payments	Total Annual Tuition for School Year
1 <sup>st</sup> -8 <sup>th</sup> Grade	\$670.00	\$6,700.00

- Application fee of \$25 (nonrefundable)
- **Late payment fee:** All tuition payments are due by the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month, any payment made after this date will accrue a \$25 late payment fee.
- Any ACH checks returned for insufficient funds must be repaid with the addition of a \$35 service fee.

#### *Prorated Tuition*

INspire Online Academy does not offer tuition discounts for families enrolling more than one member.

#### *Payment Options*

Tuition may be billed in ten (10) equal monthly installments to spread the amount over a longer period to be more financially accommodating for families. For those choosing to pay over 10 months, tuition is payable no later than the 1st of the month. All tuition payments are due by the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month, any payment made after this date will accrue a \$25 late payment fee. After an account is 60 days past due with no satisfactory arrangements made with the school, the student's enrollment may be suspended until proper arrangements have been made.

The first month's tuition plus the registration fee for each child is due at registration, or prior to starting school. All previous years' debts to this school or to any other Adventist school must be paid in full at the time of registration, or we will be unable to proceed.

#### *When Transferring*

A student who may transfer to another school at any time during the year or at the beginning of the next year must have their account current or financial arrangements made before any transcripts can be sent.

The cost of damaged school property will be added to the account as required.

## SCHOLARSHIPS, SUBSIDIES AND DISCOUNTS

### *Indiana Choice Scholarship Program*

All students (1<sup>st</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade) who meet the eligibility requirements established by the Indiana Department of Education can apply through the INspire choice scholarship coordinator for the Indiana Choice Scholarship Program. Please see the guidelines below to see if your child(ren) would qualify.

#### **Choice Scholarship Program Eligibility Requirements 2024-2025 School Year**

In accordance with IC 20-51 and IAC 512 (4), to be eligible to receive a Choice Scholarship award, a student must satisfy each of the following requirements:

- The student must have legal settlement in Indiana;
- The student must be at least five (5) years of age and less than 22 years of age on or before October 1 of the school year;
- The student must be a member of a household with an annual income of not more than 400% of the amount required for the individual to qualify for the federal free or reduced price lunch program.

<b>Choice Income Guidelines</b>	
<b>Household Size</b>	<b>400% of Free/Reduced Price Lunch Eligibility Annual Household Income Limit<sup>1</sup></b>
1	\$111,444.00
2	\$151,256.00
3	\$191,068.00
4	\$230,880.00
5	\$270,692.00
6	\$310,504.00
7	\$350,316.00
8	\$390,128.00
9	\$429,940.00
10	\$469,752.00

<sup>1</sup>Add \$39,812 for each additional family member.

### *Employee Benefits*

*Indiana Conference of Seventh-day Adventist Employee Benefit for Children of Full-Time Teachers and Pastors* - Parents who are full-time salaried employees of the Conference, will receive monies for children enrolled in grades 1 through 8, that amounts to 35% of tuition and registration fees. This scholarship does not cover other fees, and it is determined solely by the Indiana Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

### *Conference Scholarships*

*Seventh-day Adventist Conference Church Member Scholarship* - An annual scholarship is available for students (Grades 1-8) of the Illinois and Wisconsin SDA Conference members in the amount up to \$3250. Funding for this scholarship is paid directly to the school from the respective SDA Conferences. This needs-based assistance is applied after all other scholarship monies have been applied. If you want to take advantage of these scholarships, please fill out an application and return it by August 10, 2024. Applications submitted after this date will not be considered.

**Any exceptions to the handbook will be handled by the INspire Online Academy school board.**

### **A FINAL STATEMENT**

In all our efforts at INspire Online Academy, there is no greater priority than exemplifying the transformative power of education to our students and their families. Across subjects like mathematics, language arts, science, social studies, art, and music, the core essence of an INspire Academy education remains centered on the promised triumph over death and sin through Jesus Christ, and the profound blessing of eternal life in heaven with Him. As expressed by Ellen G. White, 'True education extends beyond mere academic pursuit. It encompasses preparation for both the present and eternal life, fostering the holistic development of physical, mental, and spiritual faculties.'

Thank you for your commitment to partnering with us as we embark on an educational journey with your family.