

DC Academy Handbook

2005-2006



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Vision / Purpose

DC Academy fulfills the academic component of DC Teen Discipleship. The purpose of the DC Academy is to provide a safe, positive learning environment for students who are struggling academically. This environment may prove to be one of transition or one from which students obtain a high school diploma. We are committed to individualized intensive instruction in the core subject areas and flexibility in the rest of the curriculum. We believe that every student can and will learn if motivated and empowered to do so.

History

DC Discipleship was formed as a non-profit, 501(c)3 organization in 2003. As part of the incorporation of this adult discipleship program, a teen division was started and named DC Teen Discipleship. DC Teen Discipleship started as a residential boarding school for troubled students and, with the help of The Harbor House, immediately began to seek licensure as a group home. DC Academy, the school portion of DCTD, has operated as an extension of Harbor Academy.

Academic Probation

A student may be placed on Academic Probation for any of the following:

- Failing more than one class
- Ditching class or truancy
- Failing a drug test
- Absent three (3) or more days in one semester
- "Past Due" on assignments more than two weeks in any subject

Students on Academic Probation will lose any off-campus lunch privileges and will be required to attend Saturday school if offered. Students on Academic Probation will be required to attend Adopt-a-Block on Saturday mornings or another approved community service assignment.

Accreditation

DC Academy is an extension of Harbor Academy which is accredited with the National Association of Private Schools. DC Academy is currently in the process of seeking accreditation with the National Association of Private Schools.

Attendance: Absences and Tardies

Students are required to be in attendance every day. If a student is sick, will be absent or will be tardy, parents should call 213-273-7102 and leave a message. Attendance is taken at least twice a day, once in the morning and once in the afternoon. Parents

will be notified of absent students. Any student who is absent for more than three (3) days over the course of one semester will be placed on Academic Probation. A student who is absent form more than five (5) days in one semester may be dismissed from DC Academy.

Upon return to school after an absence, the student must bring a note from home. Any student that fails to bring a note will be considered truant and disciplined accordingly.

School starts at 8:30am. All students are expected to be in attendance no later than 8:30am. Any student that is tardy may be expected to receive detention for one hour that same day. Any student that misses chapel (more than 30 minutes tardy to school) will receive two hours of detention or Saturday School if available. For every 5 missed chapels (more than 30 minutes tardy) the student will be charged one day of absence unless the student attends Saturday School if available.

Behavior Outside of School

Enrollment at DC Academy is a choice. Students enrolled represent DCTD, DC Academy, and the Dream Center whether on campus or off campus. Students therefore may be held accountable for activities that occur outside school hours or off campus. Students may be held responsible and disciplined for fights, criminal activity, drug use (including alcohol and tobacco), or other behavior that reflects poorly upon the Dream Center, DCTD, or DC Academy even if said behavior or activity occurs after school hours or off school property. Students enrolled at DC Academy are expected to maintain high standards of conduct and character at all times.

If parents experience problems with their child at home, please feel free to contact us as we all work together to keep kids safe and allow them to realize their dreams.

Calendar

THE FOLLOWING ARE IMPORTANT DATES FOR THE 2005-2006 SCHOOL YEAR:

August 29	School Year Begins	Non-Residential Students
September 5	Labor Day	No School
November 11	Veteran's Day	No School
Nvovember 24-25	Thanksgiving	No School
December 22- January 3	Christmas Break	No School
January 16	M. L. King Day, Observed	No School
February 6-8	Pastors' School, Phoenix	No School
April 13-17	Easter Break	No School
May 29	Memorial Day, Observed	No School
June 22	School Year Neds	No School
July 10-August 18	Summer School	No School

Cell Phone and Other Electronic Devices

DC Academy will permit non-residential students to possess but not use cell phones or other electronic devices except outside the school day. During school hours, cell phones must be turned off. (Not on vibrate.) Students are not to receive phone calls or text messages during school hours. Non-resident students must never allow a residential student to use a phone. Students who possess electronic devices are to keep them out of view.

Cell phones may be used:

- On or off campus before or after school.
- Off campus during lunch.
- When a state of emergency has been declared (verbally or in writing) by the principal or designee.

Cell phones may not be used during:

- Instructional class time, including chapel, services, assemblies, or any other activity which takes place during regularly scheduled school hours.
- During breaks, passing periods, or on-campus lunch.
- On field trips or excursions, which are conducted during the normal school day and during regular classroom instructional hours.

Electronic Entertainment devices should not be brought to school. Neither DC Academy, the Dream Center nor DCTD is responsible for any lost, stolen or damaged item. Students are not to use any device during classroom time.

Music that is inappropriate in a Christian setting will not be allowed at DC Academy. Music that promotes drug use, sexual activity, illegal activity, gang lifestyles, etc. will not be permitted.

Inappropriate use of electronic device, including phones, will result in the confiscation of the phone or device. Depending upon the attitude of the student and the frequency of the problem, the phone or device may be returned after school or to a parent.

Contraband

The following list may be changed by Administration and is not all inclusive. Contraband is an item that is not permitted at DC Academy, the Dream Center or on any activities or events associated with DC Academy, DCTD, the Dream Center or Angelus Temple: Tobacco, drugs, drug paraphernalia, alcoholic beverages, weapons (or item that may be used as a weapon or looks like a weapon), wallet chains, items considered by school staff as dangerous or hazardous, pornography, permanent markers, aerosol canisters.

Curriculum

We use Alpha Omega's "Switched-On Schoolhouse" curriculum to teach the core subjects of Math, Science, Social Studies, and Language Arts. These courses are available via computer and monitored by School Staff. Students are supervised at all times by trained

adult staff. Most lesson content is self-explanatory but staff is available to assist students as needed. We also offer courses in Health, Anger Management, Life Skills, Social Skills, Overcoming Chemical Dependency, and Physical Education. (Other courses are available as student need demands.)

Discipline

Discipline may include the writing of CQ's (Character Qualities – definitions of different character qualities), extra essays, or detention. Saturday School may be assigned for disciplinary problems. Work detail assignments may also be utilized wherein students will have to pick up trash, attend Adopt-a-Block or help to clean the classroom. Corporal punishment WILL NOT be permitted. Serious infractions of the rules may result in In-School-Suspension, Suspension from school, or expulsion.

The possession, delivery, use, sale, offering or other manner of furnishing or distributing any controlled substance (including alcohol and cigarettes) or weapon will result in disciplinary action. Likewise, any item or material that is represented as a controlled substance, alcoholic beverage, intoxicant or weapon will result in disciplinary action. This disciplinary action may include arrest by local law enforcement.

Dress Code

DC Academy had developed a dress code to establish a safe atmosphere that promotes respect, safety and an educational environment. This is a unique educational experience and we strive to ensure a safe school environment. We expect students to dress as if they were coming to work and to take pride in their appearance while still remaining cost effective. A student's full-time job is his or her education. A student at DC Academy is expected to dress appropriately. The following dress code will be enforced daily.

DCTD enforces a dress code for the following reasons:

- It helps to maintain a safe, gang-free, and drug-free environment;
- It promotes a more effective climate for learning;
- It creates opportunities for self-expression in other means;
- It increases campus safety and security;
- It fosters school unity and pride;
- It eliminates "label competition";
- It ensures modest, more professional dress;
- It simplifies dressing;
- It minimizes costs to parents.

Male and Female Polo Shirts / Sweaters:

All shirts must have a collar (Polo/Oxford type or button up with collar). All shirts must be either plain white or plain gray. There should be no printing on the shirts. All shirts must be tucked in at the waist at all times. Basketball jerseys, pajamas, athletic wear, T-shirts and PE clothing are not acceptable as part of the uniform.

Male and Female Pants or Walking Shorts / Female Skirts / Skorts:

All pants and shorts must be black. Skirts and skorts must be black. ABSOLUTELY NO JEANS OR DENIM MATERIALS ALLOWED. All

pants, shorts, skirts and skorts must fit at the waist (no more than two sizes larger than the waist), must be hemmed, must be worn at the waist and must be no shorter than 3 inches above the knee. No long skirts or skirts with splits are to be worn. Short shorts are not allowed. Examples of appropriate pants include “Dickies”, “Dockers”, etc. Stretch, sweat and corduroy pants are not allowed.

Headgear

Students shall not possess, display, or wear hats, scarves, beanies, caps, visors, or other headgear during school hours. Students may be permitted to wear official, unaltered Dream Center, DCTD, or Youth Fuego headgear while outside buildings. Students’ heads must be uncovered while inside buildings.

Students may wear sweatshirt or jacket hoods while outside but must remove them when speaking with any adult and when entering buildings. Bandannas, sunglasses, combs or hair picks, scarves, helmets, or curlers are not appropriate for school and should be left at home. Any inappropriate headgear possessed, displayed or worn by a student may be confiscated by school staff.

Belts

A belt may be worn with pants or walking shorts. No part of the belt may hang or dangle down. Belt buckles may NOT have initials or insignias.

Shoes

Only shoes of black, white, gray or a combination of those colors will be allowed. NO OTHER COLORS ARE ALLOWED including trim designs and lacing. Shoes, with a sole and a back strap, must be worn at all times. House slippers, sandals, thongs or any open-toed footwear are not allowed.

Hair, Nails, and Piercings

All hairstyles known to be gang-related are prohibited. Extreme hair colors are not allowed. Body piercing (pierced eyebrows, noses, tongues, nipples, etc.) is not allowed. Earrings may be worn by females in the lower lobes. Males are not permitted to wear earrings during the school day. All grooming must occur at home. There is no braiding of hair during the school day. Determination of “extreme” will be made by the Principal.

Inappropriate Appearance

Graffiti on book bags and notebooks is not allowed. Wallet chains and toys (such as water guns) are also prohibited. PE clothing may be worn in PE class only. The PE teacher will communicate the PE dress code expectations during the first week of school.

Students who continually violate the school dress code will be placed on a “Dress Code Contract” and may be disciplined appropriately.

Free Dress Days

At times throughout the school year, there will be free dress days. Free Dress Days are a privilege for students who consistently follow school rules and policies. On Free Dress Days, uniforms are not required but the policies concerning headgear (not allowed), shoes, and piercings still apply.

Further, the following rules apply to Free Dress Days:

1. Pants must be worn at the waist, regardless of whether the shirt is worn in or out.
2. Pajamas are not appropriate.

3. Tank tops or undershirts may not be worn except as undergarments covered by appropriate shirts and blouses.
4. Open-toed shoes are not permitted, including house slippers.
5. Undergarments and torso must be covered at all times. This is not the beach.
6. Any clothing that advocates sexual overtones, drugs, alcohol, tobacco, gang attire, violence, illegal acts, or morbidity is not allowed.
7. Any clothing that is lewd, vulgar, or offensive is not acceptable.

Drug Testing

All students are subject to random or periodic drug tests. A drug test may also be performed if staff believes that reasonable cause exists. Any student who refuses to take the drug test will be considered as failing a drug test.

Failing a drug test will result in Academic Probation. Three failed drug tests will result in dismissal from the school. While we will make every effort to work with students to help them overcome the influence of drugs and the pressures of their communities, we are committed to maintaining a drug-free school.

If a student fails a drug test, the parents will be notified within two business days.

We usually test for THC (Marijuana), COC (Cocaine), XTC (MDMA), AMP (Amphetamines), and MOR (Morphine and other Opiates). We can also test for nicotine and alcohol. Our tests also screen for common methods of cheating the tests through chemicals or other means.

In order to prevent altering test samples, students will be searched thoroughly before testing. This will include the washing of hands; the search of pockets, waistbands and zippers; a pat down; and a brief visual scan of the upper groin area if there is a suspicion or history of falsifying drug tests. (Students have employed various means of cheating the system by putting bleach on their fingers and mixing their fingers in the urine sample, taping urine samples from another student to their groin area, by taping condoms filled with another student's urine sample to their groin area, using pills or liquids available online or in some stores to mask drug use, by drinking large amounts of water in order to dilute urine samples, etc.)

DCTD and DC Academy strive to impose the least intrusive means of searching students while maintaining a safe and drug-free school environment. Students will never be stripped naked and searched but may be asked to pull undergarments away from the body to show that nothing has been hidden in waist bands. Students who have a history of falsifying drug tests or are suspected of falsifying drug tests will be subject to more intrusive searches.

Because DC Academy is a private school, its staff are not representatives of the state, thus students at a private school are not subject to the same protections as students in a public school. Again, it is our highest priority to maintain a safe and drug-free learning environment.

Emergencies

If an emergency occurs during school hours, parents may contact the school or program personnel. Drills are conducted

periodically to ensure that students and staff are familiar with emergency procedures. We will not release students to anyone except parents or approved emergency contacts.

Honor and Integrity

All students are expected to show the highest standard of honor and integrity. Cheating is not permitted under any circumstances. Lying is not permitted. Students are expected to adhere to an honor system. Any student involved in “underground” (conversations or activities that are hidden from staff) will be disciplined. If a student is asked a question, the student is expected to tell the truth. If a student has information that a staff member should know about, it is the student’s responsibility to let the appropriate staff know.

Hours

8:00am–8:25am	Monday – Friday	Prayer (Optional)
8:30am–8:55am	Monday – Friday	Chapel (Mandatory)
9:00am–3:30pm	Monday – Friday	Regular School Schedule
10:00am–12:00pm	Saturday	Adopt-A-Block (Optional/Discipline)
1:00pm–4:00pm	Saturday	Saturday School (Discipline)

Off-campus lunch

Non-Residential students may be granted off-campus lunch passes as determined by school staff. Parents should communicate to the school staff at the time of enrollment whether their children should be permitted off-campus lunch passes. Most students will not be granted this privilege unless they live very near the church and have not recently been involved in the residential program.

Off-campus passes may be revoked for returning late or for disciplinary reasons. Students on Academic Probation are not permitted to leave campus for lunch. Lunch will not be extended for students leaving campus. They must return to their class within 30 minutes. No exceptions.

Parental Involvement

Most of our students are in our residential program and parent involvement is detailed in the Parent Handbook. Parents of students not in our residential program are encouraged to participate as needed. We encourage parents to contact the school monthly to check on student progress. Because there isn’t much homework, parents are encouraged to have their children read while out of school. There is great flexibility with what students may read but we encourage parents to either read the same novel (thus modeling the task) or be very involved in the child’s progress through the book.

Setting clear guidelines for behavior, making sure students get plenty of sleep and actively participating in the child’s activities are the most effective ways for parents to be involved in their child’s education. While we want parents to be involved in the educational process, we need parents to call first before visiting or picking up their child from school. If parents would like to sit in on the

class, we welcome that but need to schedule this in advance. Please call us before showing up so that we can ensure that students are properly supervised while staff attends to your needs as a parent.

We highly encourage all of our students to be involved in community service, especially Adopt-a-Block. We also encourage students to be involved in organized athletics or some organized extra-curricular groups. Keeping teenagers busy is important.

Finally, we highly encourage all parents to participate in The Parent Project training provided by the Dream Center. The course lasts 12 weeks and provides parents of teenagers with extremely useful information to assist in raising their teens. This course may be required for families receiving scholarships or for families of students who are on academic, formal or informal probation.

Progress Reports

Progress reports will be mailed out at every six weeks.

Residential Students

Students in the residential program are more closely monitored and may not always be allowed contact with non-residential students. Non-residential students may never communicate through written or typed notes. Non-residential students must follow the rules when dealing with residential students. Residential students are never allowed to use cell phones that belong to non-residential students.

Residential students may ask non-residential students to get something for them or to contact someone for them. This is strictly forbidden. If a residential student asks a non-residential student to do or get something that is questionable, the student must inform a staff person immediately. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action.

Rules

General School Rules:

- We will respect ourselves and others.
- We will follow directions the first time they are given.
- We will be in the appropriate place at all times.
- We will use appropriate language at all times.
- We will use appropriate level of voice at all times.
- We will keep hands, feet and objects to ourselves.

There will be other rules but the above form the basis of environment at DC Academy.

Saturday School

Saturday School will be available depending upon the availability of staff. Saturday School will start at 12:00pm and last until 3:00pm. Students who are late to Saturday School will not be admitted and will subsequently face disciplinary action.

School Supplies

Students are responsible for bringing the following school supplies each day: pencils, pens (no permanent markers), a 3 ring binder, and paper. Students should also have a Bible with them at school.

Searches

Students enrolled at DC Academy are subject to search at any time during the school day or on outings or activities organized, planned, or otherwise supervised by the Dream Center, Angelus Temple, DCTD or DC Academy Staff. Only DC Academy Staff or DCTD Staff will be authorized to conduct searches of persons or property. Any person, bag, back pack, purse or vehicle may be searched if suspicion exists. Searches will be as non-invasive as possible as we strive to honor the dignity of each individual student. Per DCTD policy, students will not be strip searched (asked to remove all clothing in front of staff) but in the unlikely chance that such a search is warranted, the parent will be contacted first to have the situation and procedures explained. Parents may then grant permission or deny the search. (The reality is that if we have to strip search a child, then this school isn't the most appropriate place for that student and the student needs to find another school.)

Students will be made aware if anything is found in their possession which is not allowed by DC Teen Discipleship Policy, and action of the facility will be documented in student's records. From time-to-time we will ask students to empty their pockets. Students will be subject to a "pat-down", in a non threatening form, always with two or more other persons present. Refusal to be searched will result in the student being disciplined, suspended, or expelled.

The most common problem we experience with day school students (non-residential students) is bringing contraband to students in our residential program. Contraband items are items such as drugs, weapons, pornography, music, outside communications, etc., which students in the residential program are not allowed to have, use, or possess. Students who bring unapproved items to school will be disciplined.

Please note that students enrolled at private schools are not entitled to the same level of protection under the 4th and 14th amendments of the U.S. Constitution as students in public schools. These amendments deal with search and seizure. Because private school staff members are not representatives of the State Government, they have greater freedom in the search of students and their property. By enrolling in DC Academy, students and their parents willingly and without coercion agree to allow a student enrolled at DC Academy to be searched to the extent deemed necessary by the school in order to maintain a safe and drug-free environment.

Sexual Harassment / Hazing

As defined by the California Education Code "hazing" includes any method of initiation or pre-initiation into a student organization

or any pastime or amusement engaged in with respect to such an organization which causes, or is likely to cause, bodily injury, physical harm, or personal degradation or disgrace resulting in physical or mental harm, to any student or other person attending any school; but the term “hazing” does not include customary athletic events or other similar contests or competition (California Education Code 32051). Hazing is not permitted at DC Academy.

DC Academy prohibits sexual harassment of any student by any person. Teachers shall discuss the issue with their students in age-appropriate ways and students will be taught that they need not endure any form of sexual harassment. Any student who engages in sexual harassment may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from DC Academy.

Suspensions/Expulsions

Suspended students will meet with the Director of Education and/or the Program Director before returning to school. Parents will be contacted if a student has been suspended.

Expulsions from the school may result from consistent infringement of the rules or for activity that immediately puts another student in harm's way. Students may be dismissed from DC Academy at any time without warning. Dismissals may occur for: consistent infringement of the rules, striking a staff member, physical violence, destruction of property, drug use or possession, inappropriate sexual activity, lying, cheating, plagiarism, or behavior that is incompatible with Christian Doctrine.

If at all possible, parents will be involved in the discipline process.

Any day-school (non-residential) student who supplies, sells, distributes, provides or any other way enables a student to use or possess drugs may be immediately expelled and/or arrested.

Any day-school (non-residential) student who supplies, sells, distributes, provides or any other way enables a student to use or possess any contraband may be immediately expelled.

Transcripts

Unofficial transcripts may be obtained upon written request from the Director of Education. Requests for transcripts may take several business days. Requests for official signed copies of transcripts will be made available to schools that make such a request. Official signed copies of transcripts are not usually given to students.