

# **CROWN OF LIFE CHRISTIAN ACADEMY**

**FAMILY HANDBOOK**

**EARLY CHILDHOOD**

**2025 – 2026**



# **Crown of Life**

CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

**Crown of Life Christian Academy**

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## INTRODUCTION

This handbook has been developed to assist families in understanding who Crown of Life Christian Academy ("CoLCA") is and introduce them to its policies and procedures. ***This handbook will be updated periodically and should be read by all school families.*** If there are questions concerning any of the school's policies or procedures, we ask that you bring them to the Early Childhood Ministry Director ("ECM Director") or the Education Committee.

## SCHOOL STRUCTURE AND GOVERNANCE

CoLCA is governed by the Education Committee in consultation with the Church Council of Crown of Life Lutheran Church. Under the Church Council, the school maintains the following structure:

Crown of Life Lutheran Church's Education Committee establishes policies and procedures and advises the Church Council on matters regarding CoLCA's educational ministry. The Chairman of the Education Committee is a voting member of the Church Council.

The ECM Director is tasked with overseeing the daily operations of CoLCA's Preschool and is responsible for carrying out all school-related tasks including supervision of instruction, discipline, staffing, and administrative duties.

Classroom teachers are directly responsible for their classroom and their students. Families are encouraged to speak regularly with their child's teacher regarding the progress of their child and any feedback (whether positive or constructive) and concerns they want to express.

The **Education Committee** of Crown of Life Lutheran Church is thankful for the opportunity to partner with you in *helping your child become all Christ calls them to be*. The Education Committee stands ready to serve families by striving to provide an outstanding educational experience for your child. May the Lord bless our partnership.

### The Education Committee of Crown of Life Lutheran Church

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### CoLCA and the WELS

The Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) has been providing Christian education for over 150 years. Considering its early childhood, elementary, and high school system, the WELS manages the fourth largest private school system in the United States. Currently, WELS congregations operate nearly 400 early childhood centers, 300 elementary schools, and 31 high schools.

CoLCA has been operating as part of the WELS school system since 2006. CoLCA operates Preschool, VPK/Prekindergarten, and Kindergarten through Grade 6 programs on the same campus. CoLCA is blessed with a faculty specifically trained to be professional educators in the WELS school system. CoLCA's faculty is among the best trained and educated faculties in Lee County.

## STATEMENT OF RELIGIOUS BELIEFS AND CONVICTIONS

As a Christian school and non-profit institution, CoLCA reserves the right to refuse enrollment or to disenroll students whose personal or family's beliefs and practices conflict with CoLCA's understanding of the Word of God. CoLCA is affiliated with the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS). The WELS website, <https://wels.net>, is a helpful resource to understand CoLCA's teachings and beliefs more fully as revealed in Scripture.

## DCF LICENSING

Crown of Life Christian Academy (CoLCA) is fully licensed by the Florida Department of Children and Families under the organization name Crown of Life Lutheran Church, Inc. Our license number is C10LE005. We have a licensed capacity of 105 early childhood students with hours of operation Monday – Friday from 7:30am – 5:30pm.

## MISSION, VISION, AND OBJECTIVES OF CROWN OF LIFE CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

CoLCA functions as part of the overall ministry plan of Crown of Life Lutheran Church and seeks to carry out the campus-wide mission of...

***"To Know Christ and Make Christ Known"***

This mission is carried out on campus and in the community. With the all-powerful Word of God, Crown of Life will encourage God's people to grow into all they have been designed to be and reach out into the community to those who may not yet know Jesus as their Savior from sin.

## VISION STATEMENTS

To carry out its mission, CoLCA commits itself to collaborate with families to accomplish the following:

- Partner with parents/guardians in fulfilling their God-given responsibility of bringing up their children in the training and instruction of the Lord (Ephesians 6:4).
- Help students discover and develop their talents and abilities to be used in thankful service to the Lord.
- Encourage students and their families to have a life-long relationship with Jesus Christ.
- Provide a safe, nurturing environment with high academic standards.
- Incorporate proven instructional methods, quality materials, and a standards-based curriculum taught in the light of God's Word.

## OBJECTIVES

CoLCA desires to collaborate with families to see children succeed in all aspects of life. Partnering with families, CoLCA seeks to ensure that children will have what it takes to make a positive impact in our community and beyond. CoLCA desires to serve families by helping their children grow and develop into all God has designed them to be. CoLCA has identified four specific areas in which it will serve students in the process of being prepared for this life and the one to come:

1. CoLCA will partner with families to help students grow within the five domains of development.

- **Spiritual** – Students will learn to grow in the knowledge and grace of God, trusting in Jesus Christ as their personal Savior from sin through His suffering, death and resurrection. In response to this gift, students learn to live a life of serving Jesus by serving others.
  - **Intellectual** – Students will receive a high quality, well-rounded, Christ-centered education that prepares them for a lifetime of service to God and neighbor. All subjects will be taught in the light of God’s Word. It will become evident that God’s Word applies to every aspect of life.
  - **Physical** - Recess, physical education classes, and athletic programs will help students grow physically. Students will learn that their bodies are a gift from God and that they accept responsibility for their health, safety, recreation, and rest.
  - **Emotional** – Students will learn to recognize that feelings and emotions are real and need to be identified, validated, and aligned with God’s will for his people.
  - **Social** – Students will learn to recognize all people as God’s creation and to show kindness, unconditional Christian love and respect to their peers, family members, pastors, teachers, government authorities, and all God’s representatives here on earth.
2. CoLCA also believes that students need to be equipped for a world that is constantly changing. It is likely that many of the careers CoLCA students will find themselves in do not even exist yet. CoLCA will partner with families to provide opportunities for students to develop the 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills of
- **Critical Thinking/Problem-solving** – comparing evidence, evaluating claims, & making sensible decisions
  - **Communication** – speaking and writing skills and the ability to process and analyze information through a variety of media formats
  - **Collaboration** – working with others effectively and efficiently to accomplish a common goal
  - **Creativity/Innovation** – exploring options and designing alternative solutions; “thinking outside the box”
3. CoLCA will partner with families to provide opportunities for students to develop the life success skills of
- **Integrity** – honesty manifested by adherence to moral principles
  - **Self-discipline** – self-monitor, delay gratification, and resist temptation
  - **Empathy** – understand the feelings and perspectives of others as decisions are made
  - **Perseverance** – tenacity in difficulty, striving to achieve, never giving up
  - **Clearly defined moral values** – understand Biblical guidance for daily living
4. CoLCA will partner with families to equip students for readiness in the 4 C’s.
- **Ready for Christian-living**
  - **Ready for College**
  - **Ready for Career**
  - **Ready for Citizenship**

The blessing of Christian education is that these objectives and qualities are developed with guidance from the scriptural tenets of “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind” and “Love your neighbor as yourself” (Matthew 22:37, 39).

## EXPECTATIONS

### **Families can expect that CoLCA faculty and staff will:**

- Reflect faith in Christ through words, actions, activities, and relationships.
- Know how to create and maintain a Christian learning environment.
- Express the joy of carrying out the Gospel ministry at CoLCA.
- Pray for the students and families of CoLCA.
- Be prepared to serve students and families each day.
- Show joy and enthusiasm for the teaching ministry.
- Demonstrate dedication to the teaching ministry.
- Know the subjects they are teaching.
- Know how individuals grow and develop.
- Understand that individuals learn differently.
- Communicate effectively.
- Plan a variety of effective lessons.
- Assess student progress.
- Grow spiritually and professionally.
- Have a servant's attitude in their approach to ministry.
- Encourage each student to work to his or her potential.
- Have a willingness to assist students.
- Be available for students and parents.
- Treat students and families with Christian love and respect.

### **CoLCA faculty and staff expect that students will:**

- Treat other students, support staff, and teachers with Christian love and respect.
- Pray for their families and CoLCA's faculty and staff.
- Have a willingness to participate, cooperate, and learn.
- Take responsibility for class assignments and projects.
- Complete all assignments on time using one's God-given talents to their fullest.
- Go to the classroom teacher when there is a question or problem regarding class work.
- Challenge themselves to succeed at the highest possible level.
- Understand and reflect the joys and blessings of the Gospel ministry carried out at CoLCA.

### **CoLCA's faculty and staff expect that families will:**

- Encourage your child to use his/her God-given talents to the best of his/her ability.
- Pray for your child, the faculty, and staff at CoLCA.
- Have your child at school on time each day.
- Provide spiritual development opportunities for your child.
- Regularly discuss school with your child.
- Encourage your child to seek help from his/her teacher when questions or concerns arise.
- Discuss your child's progress with his/her teachers.
- Share with your child and others the blessings of Christian education.
- Partner with teachers for at-home learning opportunities (*i.e.*, homework, family projects, etc.).
- Volunteer to support events and programs at CoLCA.
- Treat other families, the staff, and faculty with Christian love and respect.

## STATEMENT OF EXCELLENCE

CoLCA will pursue excellence in:

- Being a school dedicated to the Word of God
- Being a school that demonstrates Christian love and respect toward all
- Being a school seeking to serve students, families, and our community
- Being a school committed to academics
- Being a school striving for continuous improvement

## CULTURE OF PROFESSIONALISM

CoLCA strives in every way to follow the scriptural encouragement found in *Colossians 3:17*, “*And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.*”

## THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT AT COLCA

CoLCA teachers know how to create and maintain a Christian learning environment. CoLCA teachers use an understanding of the proper use of Law and Gospel as well as individual and group motivation and behavior management to create a learning environment that promotes Christian living, self-discipline, positive social interaction, active engagement in learning and self-motivation. CoLCA teachers:

- Model and encourage Christian living in words and actions.
- Establish an effective learning community in which students assume group- and self-responsibility, participate in decision making, work collaboratively and independently, and engage in purposeful learning activities.
- Organize, allocate, and manage resources (*e.g.*, time, space, activities) to provide equitable engagement of students in productive tasks conducive to classroom goals.
- Establish Christ-centered values and expectations that foster a positive classroom climate of openness, mutual respect, support, and inquiry.
- Analyze the physical classroom environment and make adjustments to enhance social relationships, motivation, engagement, and productive work.
- Organize, prepare, and monitor independent and group work for full and varied participation of all individuals.

## COLCA POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

### ADMISSIONS

#### GENERAL GUIDELINES

- Admission to CoLCA is based on availability determined by class size and teacher to student ratios.
- To enroll in VPK students must be 4 years of age by September 1<sup>st</sup> of the desired school year.
- As availability allows, students will be placed with their age-appropriate classrooms (2-year-old preschool, 3-year-old preschool, VPK/PreKindergarten)



## ADMISSIONS PROCESS

**Step 1:** Family connects with CoLCA via phone, email, or the CoLCA website and is directed to either schedule a campus visit or complete an *Admissions Application*.

**Step 2:** Campus visit schedule is finalized, the family visits, and is provided with additional school information including current school calendar and tuition information. (This visit could include the prospective student.)

**Step 3:** Family completes the application and pays the Application Fee.

**Step 4:** Each family submits all required records, forms, and fees. Documents are reviewed by administration.

**Step 5:** Notification from the school office of acceptance, waitlist, or denial for enrollment will be made within five school days of a final decision.

**Please Note:** Updates of immunizations and health records will be required while students attend CoLCA. Your child's immunization and health records will be evaluated on a regular basis by DCF childcare licensing officials. *Children who do not have updated immunization records (or exemption documentation) or updated school health entry forms cannot be allowed to attend school.*

## RE-ENROLLMENT

Re-enrollment for CoLCA will occur each year beginning in December. A yearly registration fee will be charged for continued enrollment. A registration fee discount may be provided to current families prior to open enrollment for the community on February 1<sup>st</sup>.

## STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

CoLCA desires to serve all families with God's Word. However, our limited resources do not allow us to meet the needs of all children, such as those with severe physical or learning challenges. If the staff cannot adequately meet the child's needs, we will suggest agencies and other schools or institutions through which parents can receive help and students can be better served. These actions are always carried out in the best interests and care of the student and with their educational needs in mind.

## BULLYING

**Definition:** Bullying is unfair, one-sided, and is repeated. It happens when there is an imbalance of power and someone purposely and habitually hurts, teases, frightens, threatens, or alienates someone else. Bullying behavior is intentional and repetitive with a negative impact.

CoLCA is committed to making our campus a safe and caring place for all students. Everyone is to be treated with Christian love and respect. Bullying of any kind will not be tolerated. All concerns relating to bullying should be reported to a teacher or the ECM Director and will result in appropriate consequences according to the discipline policy.

Instances of bullying will be immediately addressed with an individual consultation, resulting in, at minimum, a removal from the classroom and up to expulsion from school.

**BULLYING BEHAVIORS MAY INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:**

- Hurting someone physically such as hitting, kicking, tripping, or pushing
- Stealing or damaging another person's things
- Ganging up on someone
- Teasing someone in a hurtful way, or name calling
- Using put-downs, such as insulting someone's physical attributes or appearance
- Spreading rumors or untruths about someone
- Leaving someone out on purpose, or trying to get other kids not to play with someone

**STUDENTS AT CROWN OF LIFE CHRISTIAN ACADEMY WILL BE ENCOURAGED TO DO THE FOLLOWING TO PREVENT BULLYING:**

- Treat each other with unconditional Christian love and respect
- Refuse to bully others
- Refuse to let others be bullied
- Refuse to watch, laugh, or join in when someone is being bullied
- Try to include everyone in play, especially those who are often left out
- Report bullying to an adult

**TEACHERS AND STAFF AT CROWN OF LIFE CHRISTIAN ACADEMY WILL DO THE FOLLOWING TO PREVENT BULLYING AND HELP CHILDREN FEEL SAFE AT SCHOOL:**

- Closely supervise students in all areas of the school and playground
- Watch for signs of bullying and stop it when it happens
- Respond quickly and sensitively to bullying reports using the *Four-A Response* process and coaching (Affirm/Ask/Assess/Act)
- Look into all reported bullying incidents
- Assign consequences for bullying based on the school discipline policy
- Provide immediate consequences for those who retaliate against students who report bullying.

**CAMPUS VISITORS**

All campus visitors are required to sign in and out at the school office. Parents of CoLCA students are always welcome to visit the school. Visits by other adults may also be arranged on a case-by-case basis with the ECM Director and classroom teacher at least 24 hours in advance of the proposed visit. Unauthorized visitors may be asked to leave the building and campus to ensure the security of our students.

**CELL PHONES**

The main office is staffed from 7:30am – 5:30pm for answering phone calls. Cell phones and smart watches are not permitted with students in early childhood classrooms.

## **COMMUNICATION**

CoLCA desires to build a culture where parents and teachers partner together in providing quality Christian education. To that end, the staff of CoLCA is truly committed to maintaining open channels of communication with the families of our students.

Below are some important avenues designed to promote efficient and effective communication:

### **TEACHER AVAILABILITY**

If at any time during the school year families have questions concerning their child's progress or behavior, they are encouraged to call or email the teacher and arrange a mutually convenient time to meet. The teacher will make every effort to return your call or respond to your email within 24 hours.

### **CLASSROOM VISITATION**

As part of CoLCA's open-door policy, parents are welcome to visit their child's classroom and see education in action. Parents may participate in classroom activities or just come and observe. Prior to the visit, schedule a day and time with your child's teacher. The day of your visit, you will check in to create observation goals and check out to review the goals with the ECM Director.

### **DROP-OFF/PICK-UP**

Families must walk to the classroom and sign in and out students. This can be a time to connect with teachers, but it is not the time to discuss concerns or sensitive issue. A future meeting should be set up to provide adequate time and attention to concerns. Please follow all instructions from the school regarding traffic flow and parking. *Please do not park anywhere but in a designated parking space.*

### **VOLUNTEERING**

Parents are welcome to volunteer at CoLCA. Opportunities are plentiful. Whether it's one day a month or one day a year, please consider being a part of your child's classroom experience. Your presence enhances your life, your child's life, and our educational programs as well. If interested, please contact your child's teacher or the Early Childhood Director.

### **WEEKLY UPDATE (E-NEWS)**

Classroom teachers will typically send home a weekly email or newsletter to inform families of classroom news and events.

### **WHEN CONCERNS ARISE**

We realize that at times problems or misunderstandings between home and school will arise. It is not good to leave these matters to themselves, even for a short period of time. If at any time you have a question or concern, please follow the process below which is based on Christ's instruction given to us in Matthew 18. "If your brother or sister sins, go and point out their fault, just between the two of you. If they listen to you, you have won them over. But if they will not listen, take one or two others along, so that 'every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.' If they still refuse to listen, tell it to the church; and if they refuse to listen even to the church, treat them as you would a pagan

or a tax collector. (Matthew 18:15-17) It is the aim of this process to resolve any problems in a God-pleasing manner.

Parents are encouraged to address concerns directly with the person or people involved in the issue, whether it be another parent, a teacher, a school administrator, or anyone else about whom a parent has a concern. If a parent has a concern about a teacher or another member of CoLCA's staff, the parent is encouraged to address that concern with the staff member directly, and if that fails, then to the ECM Director. However, the leadership of Crown of Life Lutheran Church, which oversees CoLCA, has an open-door policy. Any parent may bring concerns directly to the Education Chairman, the President of the Church Council, or the Church Pastor. Such leaders are empowered to take action as necessary, including but not limited to helping facilitate a resolution and taking any other follow-up action that they determine necessary or desirable under the circumstances.

If your child comes home and shares with you something of concern, it is often best to reach out to your child's classroom teacher and ask the question beginning with three important words, **"Help me understand..."** A classroom teacher may not be aware of an issue your child shares. This question provides an opportunity for families and teachers to work together for the good of the entire school community. It is important to remember to speak the truth in love as brothers/sisters in Christ.

Under no circumstances should families express concerns or frustrations with the school, a teacher, or other students on a public platform or via social media. This type of behavior is harmful to campus culture and will not be tolerated. Inappropriate use of social media on the part of a CoLCA family could result in a student's dismissal from or denial of re-enrollment to CoLCA.

## CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE

All students are expected to obey and show respect to those in authority. Hebrews 13:17 serves as a guide, "Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you... Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you." Students are also expected to be considerate, kind, and courteous toward each other. Matthew 22:39 states, "Love your neighbor as yourself."

Upon enrolling a child at CoLCA, a parent gives his child's teacher the authority to carry out the disciplining of the child while attending school or any of its functions. The parents can expect that CoLCA's teachers will correct their children properly in the spirit of Christian love and concern.

In all cases of discipline, CoLCA's personnel will act with utmost love for the children and with their best interest in mind. We exist to partner with parents in *helping their child become all Christ calls them to be*.

In general, discipline is part of classroom management and is handled by the teacher. As deemed appropriate or necessary, Christian discipline may include the ECM Director and Education Committee.

### Disciplining as a Teaching Process

CoLCA's discipline program is based on the proper application of Law and Gospel. The Law condemns and curbs a person's sinful nature as it shows the undeniable need for a Savior. But it is the Gospel (good news) of Christ which changes the heart and motivates a person for true discipleship. Simply put, the discipline program at CoLCA is reflected in these three objectives:

- To teach, model, and reinforce appropriate behavior.

- To stop inappropriate behavior.
- To promote personal responsibility and accountability.

Each student is a unique child of God with unique personal, social and educational needs. As a result, every disciplinary situation becomes unique in nature. Consequences for misbehavior provide the best learning value when matched to the unique student and the unique situation. The odds for children learning from their mistakes increase dramatically when children see a reasonable connection between their behavior and the resulting consequences.

Our school staff dedicates itself to following a set of principles that provide a guide for dealing with student discipline. These principles guide our attempts to individualize disciplinary procedures and to help students see reasonable connections between their behavior and the resulting consequences.

Since these principles provide the guiding light for our professional decisions, the staff encourages parents to bring concerns and questions to us in the event we operate in ways that appear to be inconsistent with these core beliefs.

### **Principles for Addressing Misbehavior**

- Students will be shown their sin with the use of the Law and guided in God-pleasing behavior with Gospel motivation.
- Students should respect all those in authority (teachers, pastors, staff, and parents) according to the 4th Commandment.
- Students should be guided and expected to solve the problems they create without making problems for anyone else.
- Misbehavior should be handled with natural consequences instead of punishments whenever possible.
- There should be a logical connection between the student's behavior and resulting consequences.
- Every attempt should be made to maintain the dignity of both the adult and student.

In no instance will physical punishment be used (*e.g.*, spanking), nor will discipline be related to food, rest, or toileting. We will also not use discipline that is abusive, frightening, humiliating, or neglectful. We prefer to give encouragement for and praise of good behavior, while offering corrective guidance and redirection for improper behavior/attitudes. We do our best to anticipate problems and redirect a child's activities. We will narrow choices if necessary. Positive words will be used to encourage positive behavior. We will encourage children to use words to express themselves.

If a child is exhibiting an inappropriate behavior, the child will be told they need to stop, explain why the behavior is unacceptable, and offer reasonable alternatives. Logical and natural consequences as well as temporary loss of privileges may be used as a reasonable alternative. If the child is repeating inappropriate behavior, the parents will be consulted.

Under most circumstances, discipline follows a progression until the desired outcome is reached. This progression would include discussions with the student, teacher, parents, ECM Director, Pastor, and Education Committee as appropriate.

To maintain a high-quality learning atmosphere and educational program, students who consistently break the rules set by CoLCA will be disciplined appropriately. If corrective action is not taken on the part of the student, along with any necessary encouragement from his/her family, the student may be asked to leave the program.

**Situations which are considered extreme or presenting a danger, as determined by the ECM Director, are dealt with immediately. This will result in disciplinary action up to dismissal from the ECM program.**

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

All information concerning students and families is considered confidential. Information concerning each student will be shared with the teaching staff to ensure the very best care and education for all students.

Parents may also have access to confidential information as they observe children interacting during drop-off or pick-up times. Please respect the confidentiality rights of all students, families, and staff. Do not hesitate to talk with the Early Childhood Director if you are concerned with something you have seen or heard at CoLCA. "Brothers, do not slander one another. Anyone who speaks against his brother or judges him speaks against the law and judges it." (James 5:1)

## **CURRICULUM**

Early Childhood classrooms at Crown of Life Christian Academy utilize High Scope curriculum (<https://highscope.org/>) as the backbone of instruction infusing Christ throughout daily lessons. Daily routine, large group & small group lessons, and the plan-do-review process are all tied to Key Development Indicators (KDI) ensuring all domains of development are supported.

## **DAILY WORSHIP**

Students at CoLCA will have multiple opportunities to worship our Lord throughout the week. Teachers will conduct classroom devotionals and Bible story and the student body will meet for a chapel service led by Crown of Life Lutheran's pastor each Wednesday. Chapel services will also give students the opportunity to bring an offering for the Lord to support a mission project beyond the CoLCA campus.

## **DRESS CODE**

The following dress code has been developed in accordance with Crown of Life's commitment to excellence in education. CoLCA has developed standards of dress which are conducive to a positive learning environment and reflect pride in our school. As Christians, we want to reflect modesty, neatness, and appropriateness in our appearance as we reflect Christ in our daily lives. Students are expected to wear comfortable clothes designed for active play and learning. Clothing should reflect Christian morals, no games/characters/bands/etc. which would promote values contrary to Christian morals/faith should be displayed or worn. Girls must wear shorts under dresses or skirts.

### **GENERAL GUIDELINES**

- Jeans are to be free of rips, holes, distressing, etc.
- Clothes must be neat, clean, and in good repair.
- Closed toe shoes are required. Crocs may only be worn during potty-training.

## **FOOD**

Please feed your child something nutritious before coming to school. Children who do not eat breakfast may be quite sluggish until snack time. The child's attention span may be affected, preventing optimal learning during

class time. Hunger may also contribute to undesirable student behavior. Candy is not permitted in student lunchboxes (snacks or lunch) in any CoLCA classroom. Please reference MyPlate.gov for healthy meal ideas.

### **Snacks**

CoLCA does not provide snacks. Students should bring a snack for the morning snack (all students) and afternoon snack (full day students). A water bottle filled with only plain water is required for each student, in addition they may bring juice pouches/boxes for snack or lunch. Soda, tea (sweet or unsweet), coffee, or sports beverages will not be permitted.

### **Lunch**

CoLCA does not provide lunch. Parents are to provide a nutritious lunch for their child. Should an emergency arise, and parents need to have lunch delivered to school, they must arrive by 11:15 a.m. to ensure students are able to eat on time. Delivered lunches cannot contain soda, iced tea, coffee, sports drinks, or ice cream. Students will not have access to microwaves, refrigerators or plasticware.

### **Treats**

Children can bring store-bought treats for their birthdays or other special occasions. The treats will be distributed and eaten at an appropriate time, at the discretion of the teacher. Please check with your child's teacher at least 24 hours before a treat is brought to school about the timing of the treat and the contents of the treats (since some students have allergies). Additionally, classrooms may be required to be free of peanuts and other foods or allergens (e.g., latex).

**Please Note:** To best protect students from allergic reactions or violating dietary restrictions, students are not permitted to share, exchange, or bring food for other students.

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

### **IMMUNIZATIONS AND HEALTH FORMS**

Florida law requires that all students have the necessary forms on file by the first day of class. Students cannot begin classes at Crown of Life without a current, completed physical exam form and proper documentation of up-to-date immunizations or religious exemption. Forms are available from your doctor.

### **MEDICATIONS**

**If your child must have prescribed or non-prescribed medication, oral or topical, during school hours, the medication must be in the original container with specific instructions in writing.** This should include the child's name, medication name, dosage, and time to be taken. Parents must include written authorization for non-prescribed internal or external medication on a DCF approved form available in the front office. Parents are asked to deliver the medication directly to a teacher. Refrigeration will be available for those medications requiring it. *If medication—including diaper cream—is to be given during the day, a medical release and authorization form will need to be signed.*

## ILLNESS

**Parents are responsible for informing the school when a child is or will be absent for any reason.** For more information, please reference our attendance policy. In the case of illness, the staff would appreciate knowing the nature of the illness in case it might be contagious. When advisable, a release form from the physician will be necessary for a child to return to school. A parent may excuse a child from school by calling the office: 239-482-7315.

If your child arrives at school with the following symptoms - fever (greater than 100.4), nausea, runny nose, sore throat, flushed appearance, abnormal irritability - or develops these symptoms while at school, the parent/guardian will be notified and asked to take their student home as soon as possible. **The child must not come back to school until they are symptom free for 24 hours (this includes diarrhea, vomiting, or fevers of 100.4 degrees or higher) without the use of fever reducing medication.**

## EMERGENCIES

Medical emergencies may, on occasion, occur at school. In the event of a life-threatening situation (example - unconsciousness), the school may need to contact the appropriate emergency medical service first, before calling the parents. In case of an accident or illness where immediate emergency care is not deemed necessary, but where a child is unable to remain at school, the school will contact the parents to arrange transportation home. Likewise, if a child shows symptoms of illness during the day, the child will be isolated, and the parents will be called.

Parents, please remember that the school must always be able to reach you. If neither parent can be reached at home, work, or cell, the emergency contacts listed on the child's emergency card will be phoned and asked to pick up the child. If a parent/guardian or emergency contact cannot be reached, the appropriate authorities (Sheriff, DCF) may be contacted.

If for any reason during an emergency, the children cannot stay on school property, they will be taken somewhere safe, and parents will be notified where they can pick up their child via email, phone, or SMS.

## MINOR ACCIDENTS

All minor accidents – cuts, scratches, bumps, and bites are given First Aid treatment and recorded with accident reports. Parents/guardians will be informed of the specific event.

## SERIOUS INJURIES

If your child suffers a serious injury, the school will call 911 and will then call the parents; provide First Aid until help arrives; and determine who will accompany the injured student to the hospital. An Accident Report form will be completed describing the nature and extent of the injury. **All head injuries will be reported to parents.**

## LICE

If lice and/or lice nits (eggs) are discovered on any student(s), a "no nit" policy will be followed. ColCA understands how difficult it is to rid the hair and scalp of all the eggs related to lice, but also recognizes how easily lice can be spread. Therefore, if your child is sent home with lice and/or nits, they will not be allowed back into school until they are free from all nits for 24 hours. Students must receive clearance from a health care professional before returning to school or be checked/cleared by ColCA personnel.



## **SEVERE WEATHER**

Whenever possible the ECM Director will inform faculty and staff of area weather warnings issued by the National Weather Service.

## **EMERGENCY/EVACUATION DRILLS**

In compliance with state regulations, evacuation/emergency drills are performed once a month. For the safety of all, detailed drill procedures are shared and periodically reviewed in each classroom.

## **DIAPERING**

Each child will be promptly changed when wet or soiled from urine, bowel movements, and/or any other substances. All staff are required to wear gloves while changing children for the protection of the staff personnel and the children we serve. Children and staff must wash their hands after diapering or toileting routines.

**Parents supply diapers/pull-ups and wipes for their children. Teachers will inform you when more are needed.**

The diapering station will be cleaned with soap and water, wiped with a disposable towel, and sprayed with a state approved disinfecting solution and allowed to air dry after diapering each child. Lotions, powders, or salves may only be applied with a complete medication permission form which can be obtained from the front office.

## **TOILET TRAINING POLICY**

Parents are encouraged to have open communication with staff as to when they feel comfortable to begin the process of toilet training for their child. CoLCA will work with parents to create a plan of action for toilet training that is acceptable and consistent to the parent, child, and the staff. Toilet training is a process and will be looked at as such, that will happen when the child's mind and body are ready.

Children, regardless of age, will not be scolded, shamed, or punished for lapses in toilet training.

## **REST TIME ITEMS**

Full day students have a daily rest time. Cots or mats are provided for each child and sanitized after use. Parents must provide a crib sheet AND blanket or a nap mat set that includes a bottom and top covering for the mat and child. Please keep stuffed animals at home. **Rest time items MUST be taken home every Friday to be washed and returned on Monday.** CoLCA is not responsible for any items left in the hallway over the weekend.

## **INVITATIONS TO PERSONAL, NON-SCHOOL RELATED EVENTS**

If invitations are brought to school to be distributed for parties, an invitation must be given to each student in the class. If you do not want to invite the entire class, please send invitations another way, outside school hours.

## **PERSONAL PROPERTY**

Students are responsible for their own personal property. Toys, electronics, stuffed animals, etc. are not permitted at school. Personal property such as backpacks, lunch boxes, and water bottles should be

brought home with the student at the end of each day. CoLCA is not responsible for any items brought to or left at school.

## **PROPERTY DAMAGE**

Damage done to any church or school property, whether willful or accidental, must be paid for by the responsible party. Arrangements for the repair or replacement of the damaged property should be made with the school administration.

## **SCHOOL CLOSING**

In the case of severe weather, we will follow the closing announcements of the Lee County School District. Whatever action the Lee County Schools are taking, CoLCA will do the same and will be announced through local media outlets. If for any other reason the school needs to be closed, you will be notified via Facebook or emails.

## **SCHOOL HOURS**

CoLCA is open from 7:30 AM to 5:30 PM.

### **ARRIVAL/PICK-UP PROCEDURES**

- Turn immediately to the right upon entering the parking lot. Then drive around the circle to park in a designated parking space.
- Students must be walked to the classroom and signed in and out.
- If someone other than parents / legal guardians are picking up your child, please inform this person they are required to show picture ID at the front office. We will not release your child to anyone we cannot verify as an authorized pickup.

Late pick-ups (past 1:00pm or 5:30pm) may result in extended care fees of \$1 per minute.

## **SCHOOL PICTURES**

School pictures will be taken professionally each year, generally in the fall. Pictures may also be taken throughout the year and used on social media, CoLCA's website, in newsletters, and other promotional materials. If you have given your consent to your child's picture being taken, you consent to all uses. Once consent has been given, digital and print media will not be revised if consent is later withdrawn.

## **SECURITY**

CoLCA strives to be a secure campus and is equipped with secure doors and one secure entry point for all families. Security cameras are used to monitor entrances, parking lots, playgrounds, and hallways. Signs notify visitors that they must report to the school office. Visitors are required to sign in and sign out. The staff has been advised to approach any unfamiliar visitors and ask how they may be helped. CoLCA utilizes Tap App which provides direct and immediate communication between staff and also a direct line to the Lee County Sheriff in case of emergency.

## TUITION AND FEES

A non-refundable registration fee of \$100 for preschool or \$250 for pre-kindergarten is required at registration and yearly on August 1<sup>st</sup>. Tuition and fees are determined by the Education Committee and the Church Council. Prior to the beginning of the enrollment process, tuition rates and all fees (application, registration, and extended care) will be available for families. A current tuition and fees schedule is available in the school office and on the website.

Tuition is determined based on a 12-month basis and monthly tuition remains the same regardless of center closures/holidays. Vacation time may be used to cover costs during CoLCA closures.

As of the writing of this Handbook, tuition and fees are as follows:

### Preschool (2- and 3-year-old) Monthly Tuition

Half Day (9:00am – 1:00pm)	\$720 (\$180 weekly)
Full Day (7:30am – 5:30pm)	\$1,020 (\$255 weekly)

### Pre-Kindergarten Monthly Tuition

With VPK Voucher	\$725 (\$181.25 weekly)
Without VPK Voucher	\$1020 (\$255 weekly)

Tuition will be billed monthly but may be paid in weekly installments. CoLCA accepts cash, checks, or credit cards at the front office. Please note, a service fee of 3% will be added to all credit card payments. Parents will be charged for any fees associated with declined charges. **Non-payment may be grounds for immediate dismissal from CoLCA.**

CoLCA requires a written notice of at least five days in advance of withdrawal. Charges will continue to be incurred during that period. All balances due must be paid on or before the student's last day of attendance.

## FINANCIAL POLICIES

CoLCA maintains its ability to offer a high-quality Christian education with qualified teachers through the tuition and fees it collects. It is necessary that all balances be paid in full and on time. Your cooperation with the following is appreciated!

- There will be **no proration or rebates of any prepaid fees for any student during any month**, including if your child is absent for vacations, sickness, etc.
- A late charge of \$50 will be added on the 5<sup>th</sup> of the next month if tuition is not paid in full.
- If tuition is not paid by the middle of the month in which it is due, the bill will be turned over to the ECM Director. If the tuition is not paid by the end of the month, the student will not be allowed to attend class until it is paid, or a payment plan has been made with the ECM Director and Education Committee. Families with an outstanding balance more than 60 days past due (of any amount) without repayment arrangements in place will be sent to a bill collection service and an additional fee of up to 40% may be added to the account.

CoLCA seeks to work with all its families. If there is a concern about tuition payments, please contact the ECM Director.

### **TUITION ASSISTANCE**

The members of Crown of Life Lutheran Church have established a scholarship fund that varies based on the amount of donations received and the amount of funds awarded. Eligibility is based on financial need, a demonstrated commitment to Christian education and Crown of Life's mission, and other criteria as determined by the Education Committee. No scholarship applications will be considered without a copy of both parents' or guardians' most recent federal tax returns.

For more information on scholarships and tuition assistance, please contact CoLCA's office administrator.

### **VACATION TIME**

Families that have been enrolled six full months with CoLCA may take one week of vacation and receive a tuition credit, and families that have been enrolled one full year with CoLCA may take two weeks of vacation and receive a tuition credit. Tuition credit is equal to the student's weekly tuition rate.

### **CLOSING THOUGHTS**

CoLCA is operated under the guidance and authority of Crown of Life Lutheran Church. Through the school, children are taught the precious truths of God's Word across the curriculum. The school does not take the place of the family's role in educating children; rather the school exists to partner with parents in this important responsibility. It is the desire of the CoLCA faculty and staff to create a culture of cooperation, high expectations, and mutual respect as we work together to carry out the task our Lord has placed before us – helping children become all Christ calls them to be.

This Family Handbook does not include every situation that may possibly arise during the school year. If any situation not specifically covered should arise, in Christian love, the administration will make every effort to act fairly and quickly. The best interest of the student, school, and God's kingdom will be considered. Each situation is different and will be handled on an individual basis.

May God bless us in our endeavors!

### **CONTACT INFORMATION**

Crown of Life Christian Academy      Office: 239-482-7315

5820 Daniels Parkway

Fort Myers, FL 33912

Website: <https://www.crownlifeacademy.com/>

Please utilize the website for information on contacting your child's teacher, the ECM Director, or the pastor. Also, your child's teacher will share contact information with you at the beginning of the school year. If you need additional information, please do not hesitate to call the school.

**School EIN Number: 59-1864724**

**License #C20LE005**

**CoLCA ECE FAMILY HANDBOOK**

**2025-2026 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

I have read and agree to abide by the Preschool Handbook at Crown of Life Christian Academy.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_