



Family Tree Private School

THE SCHOOLHOUSE OF THE 21ST CENTURY

Contents of Welcome Packet

This “**Welcome Packet**” gives instruction to parents on how to begin their home education program by laying a good foundation of organization, and good habits. Regardless of *the parent directed education model* of our school, your student is considered a **private school student** for all intents and purposes of the law. Any time your child formally applies for a program, class or testing, they are to register as a “private school student”. If participating in informal homeschool activities in your community, you do not need to designate yourself as a private school student unless you want to, or it is required.

After you pick your curriculum and decide on your schedule, you and your child can make a simple daily “goal chart” to communicate academic goals that need to be completed every day. A “goal chart” sample is included. Plan to be flexible by letting your child decide the momentum of certain learning experiences. For example, you can let creative interest bloom in your child by doing some unplanned activities that may not be on the schedule, but are *inspired by* them. If a child is learning about measurements for instance, and they remember that you use a nifty measuring chart in the kitchen, it’s OK to pull it out and see if a meaningful discussion can begin. The rule of thumb is to not allow these good “diversions” to steer you away completely from the curriculum, or the schedule you set (as a general rule). When these “fun” times occur though, it’s fine to excuse parts of the formal assignment for that day, and pick up where you left off the next day. Don’t create “homework” to make up the missed work – this can seem punitive.

Students should engage in approximately 5-7 subjects a day, 5 days a week, for approximately 50 minutes per course, per day. This is a traditional schedule. Another choice is a “block schedule” where subjects are done one or two days a week as a block of time, totaling the equivalent amount of time as if they were taught the subject for 5 days, at 50 minutes a day. It is important to have students engage in learning experiences that are in achievable steps, which are based upon every child’s individual learning style and abilities. If you find it helpful, use the online Learning Style Survey at www.metamath.com/lswb/dvclearn.htm to identify your child’s learning style, and consider the recommended strategies from the survey, to help your student learn. At the same time, let yourself be guided by the curriculum publishers’ suggestions in their “scope and sequence” of learning for their product. For each fulltime course at the high school level, a student will earn one credit at the end of the



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year (See the high school packet for more detailed information). Also, keep in mind that your goal is to build your portfolio, contemporaneously (or *as-it-happens*). See the Portfolio Guidelines. This flexibility is part of the effectiveness of homeschooling, and inspires creativity and love of learning. Remember that your curriculum, your schedule, and the communication between you and your family are important pieces in a good homeschooling foundation. Pray often for wisdom and God's help.

*******CONTENTS OF THIS PACKET*******

1. First Day of School Plan A real-life, first day of school schedule to walk your child through, and work out the bugs of the school schedule. This first day is a combination of explaining your expectations, practicing the schedule, and completing any general assignments that can be done. On this first day of school, pay attention to details, have some fun, and let the children ask questions and make suggestions. During this day, you can verify that supplies are on hand, and design the school work area. "Practice" the schedule.
2. Student Supplies & Office List of required school supplies & description of a student office
3. Assignments Description of quality work habits for assignments and grading
4. Portfolio Guidelines Description and guidelines for a good Portfolio of student work
5. Goal Charts for students/Guide Daily record for students' use. Keep in your Portfolio.
6. Discipline Discipline is what we do FOR our children.
7. Book Report Guide To use for assigning and grading a Book Report
8. Grades for Art & Music Guideline and Description for grading work without tests
9. Monthly Report To make copies for Monthly Reports (copy is on website in the Members Link)



Families who take responsibility for educating their children in partnership with Family Tree Private School are not to subject to government interference, or direction unless mandated by law. For example, all students under the age of 16 must have adult supervision during the day. It is your right to conduct your program in the manner you design, free from threats; and unless there is a court order or summons for you to respond to you are not required to interact with or follow the direction of any official. Should an official of a governmental agency come to your home to inquire as to why your children are home during the day, give them my phone number and politely but persistently tell them to call your school director for answers to ANY questions. Do not let them in your home, do not answer any questions, get their business card and direct them to call me for any questions. If they threaten you in any way, inform them that if they return they must bring the police with them. Please call me immediately to inform me of the situation.

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