

CORNERSTONE

ADVENTIST ACADEMY

2023-2024 Handbook



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Cornerstone Adventist Academy

Cornerstone Adventist Academy opened its doors for the first time on August 15, 2016. Currently there is one classroom serving grades 1-8. Enrollment is capped at 20 students for this current school year with future plans to add a Kindergarten program and an additional classroom to separate the lower grades and the higher grades. The school is housed in the new Family Life Center located at the University City Seventh-day Adventist Church, 11431 University City Blvd., Charlotte, NC.

Cornerstone Adventist Academy is a ministry of the University City Seventh-day Adventist Church. The school is governed by a board selected by the church and operates under the supervision of the Carolina Conference Education Department.

Mission Statement

Cornerstone Adventist Academy exists to show Jesus to children by partnering with families and church members to nurture their love for Him and for others, to teach them to think, and to empower them to serve.



Educational Philosophy

The Seventh-day Adventist Church recognizes God as the ultimate source of existence, truth, and power. In the beginning God created in His image a perfect humanity, a perfection later marred by sin. Education in its broadest sense is a means of returning human beings to their original relationship with God. The distinctive characteristics of this Adventist worldview, built around creation, the fall, redemption, and re-creation, are derived from the Bible and the inspired writings of Ellen G. White.

The aim of true education is to restore human beings into the image of God as revealed by the life of Jesus Christ. Only through the guidance of the Holy Spirit can this be accomplished. An education of this kind imparts far more than academic knowledge. It fosters a balanced development of the whole person—spiritual, physical, intellectual, and social-emotional—a process that spans a lifetime. Working together, homes, schools, and churches cooperate with divine agencies to prepare learners to be good citizens in this world and for eternity.

Office Hours

Individuals who wish to make an appointment with the principal are urged to call during regular office hours: 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday, and 8:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. on Friday.

Admissions

The staff and board of Cornerstone Adventist Academy want the admissions process to be as easy as possible for all applicants.

To apply for admission:

1. Complete a CAA Enrollment Application
2. Submit a required, non-refundable \$25 application fee along with each application. This fee may be paid by check or online at AdventistSchoolPay.
3. Email a copy of your application to enrollment@cornerstoneadventistacademy.org, or mail the completed application to the school: 11431 University City Blvd., Charlotte, NC 28213.

Admissions and Other Forms

Please access the following forms from the school website

<https://www.cornerstoneadventistacademy.org/admissions>. Read, sign, and submit all forms on or before the first day of school:

- Consent to Treatment
- Model Release Form
- Student Pledge Form
- Student Release Form
- Record Request
- School Supply List

Nondiscrimination Policy

CAA admits students of any race to all the rights, privileges, and activities available to students. CAA does not discriminate on the basis of race or gender in education policies, application for admission, or extracurricular programs.

CAA Student Pledge

Every student who applies for admission to CAA pledges to willingly observe its regulations and to uphold the Christian principles upon which the school operates. Each student pledges to cooperate with the teachers and the other students to create a safe, encouraging environment for everyone. Each student also pledges to perform all academic assignments as well as all assigned school duties, including attendance at all music performances, Sunday events, and community service days.

Physical Examinations

Physical examinations are required of all new students. Physical exams must be submitted to the school office before a student will be permitted to attend classes.

Immunizations

New students must complete all health requirements for the state of North Carolina before class attendance. An Immunization Certificate signed by a medical doctor is required to be on file in the school office.

Student Character

The ultimate objective of education is the development of a good character. Character is who you are when no one is watching. Therefore, it should be a student's purpose to observe CAA regulations as a matter of honor, realizing these principles are necessary for a successful school and successful life.

The principles and policies for CAA are outlined in this handbook. Every effort will be made to help the student see the importance of cooperating with CAA rules as a means of good citizenship. If students exercise respect for themselves and respect for others, CAA will be a great place to learn and grow. If students do not adopt these principles, everyone suffers.

Parental Responsibilities

The success of CAA depends largely upon the good faith and cooperation between home and school. Regular attendance and promptness in meeting appointments are necessary for successful schoolwork. Parents should help CAA teachers by providing the following aids to school success:

- Demonstrate respect and support for the teachers and CAA programs by speaking positively about the school, especially when your children can hear you.
- Arrange for the student to arrive early enough to be in his/her seat for worship each morning.
- Provide adequate school supplies and study aids.
- Provide a place for students to study at home with regular study hours.
- Limit or eliminate television viewing during the school week.
- Observe all in-school and vacation days as listed in the CAA calendar.
- Monitor your student's diet, health, and exercise program.
- If your child is ill with a contagious situation, has a fever condition, or is vomiting, please keep him/her at home until 24 hours after the symptoms have disappeared.
- Inform the office if you must take a student off campus during school hours.
- Write a note of explanation to the teacher for absences or tardiness.

Students with Disabilities

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is a federal law that requires each state to ensure that a free appropriate public education (FAPE) is available to all eligible children with disabilities residing in that state. Students enrolled in private schools may be able to access some of these same benefits, although the benefits available may differ from the benefits for children with disabilities in public schools.

More information about how to access benefits is available in a booklet on the U.S. Department of Education website, [Provisions Related to Children With Disabilities Enrolled by Their Parents in Private Schools](#). Parents wanting to obtain benefits for an eligible child should contact their local

public school district for additional instructions. Cornerstone staff members are available to assist with this process as needed.

Because of its small size and limited resources, Cornerstone Adventist Academy may not be able to accommodate students with disabilities.

Asbestos Management

Our school building has no asbestos-containing building material; therefore, no operations and maintenance programs or future inspections are required. In compliance with federal and state regulations controlling asbestos, the school is required to maintain an Asbestos Management Plan. You are welcome to review a copy of the Asbestos Management Plan at the Carolina Conference Office or at the school during regular business hours.

Student Accounts

Operating a private school is expensive. The University City Seventh-day Adventist Church provides an annual subsidy of more than \$20,000. The Carolina Conference of Seventh-day Adventists in Charlotte provides supervision and a portion of the teachers' salaries. Parents/guardians pay tuition based on enrollment and annual budgetary needs. Financing Christian education is a cooperative effort involving teamwork from many individuals.

Students with unpaid accounts at CAA or another school cannot have transcripts transferred, be permitted to start classes, or participate in final exams until the unpaid accounts have been settled or an appropriate agreement reached with the CAA school board.

Tuition

All registration fees must be paid before a student attends class. Tuition will be charged to all students on the first day of school and on the first day of each subsequent month. Those enrolling during the month will be charged for the full month. There will be no refund of tuition for early withdrawal during the month.

Students starting late but enrolling within thirty (30) days of the official opening of school will be charged the full tuition for the academic year.

Tuition Rates and Fees

- Application Fee \$35
- Music Fee \$140 (\$70 a Semester)
- Registration Fee \$485
- Tuition \$4,850 (\$485-a-month for 10 Months)
- We accept the North Carolina Opportunity Scholarship.
- Members of the University City Seventh-day Adventist Church are eligible for a scholarship of \$1,100 (\$100/mo. +\$100 towards registration).
- A multi-child discount is available if requested: 5% tuition discount for the second student, 10% Tuition discount for the third student and 15% discount for the fourth student.
- A 5% discount is available if tuition for the full year is paid in advance.

Late Payment Policy

When payment is two weeks overdue (on the 1st of the following month), the student will be asked to not return to school until satisfactory arrangements are made.

Financial Agreement

CAA's financial policies are as follows:

- Tuition statements will be issued on the 1st of the month.
- The monthly payment is due by the 15th of each month.
- There is a grace period until the 20th of each month. If payment is not received by 5 p.m. on the 20th, a \$20 late fee will be applied to the account.
- If payment is not received by the 25th of the month, a written warning will be issued.
- If payment is not received by the 1st of the following month, the student(s) will be asked to not return to school until the bill is paid in full.
- If a check bounces, the bank charges will be applied to the account.
- After school care charges will be billed on the 1st and 15th of each month. If payment is not received by the 1st of the following month, the above policies will be followed.

Student Insurance

Student insurance coverage is written on a secondary basis with no deductible or co-insurance. Coverage includes ambulance, hospital, doctor, and medical bills for injuries that occur while a student is in the care, custody, and control of CAA. Coverage is provided for school activities both on and off school premises. Injuries must be immediately reported to qualify for coverage.

Student Lunches

Students are expected to bring their own lunches to school. As a Seventh-day Adventist church, we believe and teach that our bodies are the temples of God, thus we are responsible to care for them in the best possible way. We encourage lunches to be healthy and nutritious. By minimizing products that contain large amounts of sugar, including soft drinks, students greatly increase their concentration levels. Except in case of emergency, students will not share lunches.

Prohibited lunch items include:

- Caffeinated beverages
- Unclean meats (As stated in Leviticus 11, unclean meats include: pepperoni, ham, pork, bacon, shellfish of any kind, and fish without fins and scales.)

Academic Policies

Grading System

Grades 1-2

- E Excellent
- S+ Above Average
- S Satisfactory
- N Need Improvement

Grades 3-8

- 90-100 A
- 80- 89 B
- 70- 79 C
- 60- 69 D
- 0- 59 F

Parent/Teacher Conferences

Parent/teacher conferences will be scheduled at the end of the first and second quarters. These parent/teacher conferences are required. If parents miss the scheduled conferences, they must reschedule this time with the teacher within seven school days. Additional conferences can be scheduled at the request of the teacher or parent. Conferences will not be scheduled with the teacher before or during school hours.

Eighth Grade Graduation Requirements

1. A student who fails two or more core subjects may not be promoted to the ninth grade.
2. Each student must be eligible for promotion to ninth grade in order to participate in graduation exercises at the end of the year.
3. A student who is not promoted because of failed classes may remove the failing grades by attending summer school or by taking these courses by home study. Upon satisfactory completion of the courses, the student may/will be promoted.
4. The student's final statement of account must be **paid in full** before he/she will receive his/her diploma.

Elementary and Middle School Classes

The core classes offered at CAA include Bible/religion, math, reading, language arts, science, and social studies. Other areas of study include communication skills, computers, health and safety, physical education, and fine arts.

Instruction is delivered through cooperation and integration of the subjects. Learning and assessing are differentiated to meet the students' needs. Instruction may include lectures, hands-on activities, experiential learning, collaboration, etc.

Music Class

At CAA, we want each student to have a balanced education that encourages their spiritual, physical, mental, emotional, and social growth. The study of music is a valuable part of a well-rounded educational program.

The Value of Having a Music Program

Music education benefits students by contributing to all the areas of their intelligence.

- Gaining a knowledge of music helps students to understand the cultures of the world, and the development of musical skills gives students self-confidence.
- Discipline, teamwork, and leadership skills are built by practice and performance. As students develop their musical skills and gifts, they can bring enjoyment to others by sharing what they have learned through public performances.
- Sharing musical programs in the school, church, and community is one part of an effective recruiting plan for CAA.

Teaching Objectives

It is important to take active steps to help our children achieve music literacy and develop their musical talents and performance skills. In music class, students will:

- Learn to recognize and know the meaning of music symbols, be able to sight-read music notes, and be able to read music rhythms.
- Apply and reinforce these practical skills through performance on one or more instruments, such as recorder ensemble playing (melody), ukulele (melody and chords), and chimes (melody and chords), among other instruments.
- Develop their voices through unison & part-singing, preparing them for Christmas & spring concerts and sharing musical programs at UCSDA and area churches, at the school, and in the community.
- Gain an appreciation of music in general and an understanding of sacred and secular music from a historical and cultural perspective.

Music Classes & Grading

During music classes, students will practice singing songs and playing a variety of instrumental songs. They will learn music theory and history and prepare for performances. Music grades will be based on nickel quizzes (5 points), which review what has been learned in class; occasional tests; student effort in practice as well as their ability to perform assigned music in preparation for performances; and student attendance at performances.

Please note that attendance is required of all students at CAA Christmas and Spring Concerts, as well as University City SDA Church Education Sabbaths and appointments that take place during the school day and that have been scheduled ahead of time in the school calendar. When one or more students are absent from a performance, it affects the performance of the whole group. Some music appointments will be scheduled in various churches, for which students may be requested to participate on a voluntary basis. We encourage all students to participate in as many musical opportunities as possible.

CAA Student Music Fees: \$35/semester; \$70/year

Homeschool Student Music Fees: \$55 registration fee; \$12 monthly fee per child for music class

Music Teacher Experience

Kathy Russell has taught music for a number of years, focusing on the following areas:

- Church: Adult and children's choirs

- School: Classroom music (including soprano and alto recorders, ukulele and rhythm instruments), choir (children, youth), hand bells and chimes, mountain dulcimers, and band
- Private Lessons: Piano, voice, flute, and harp

If you have any questions about the music program at CAA, please contact Kathy Russell at her cell number: [\(704\) 641-1167](tel:7046411167).

Student Policies

Dress Code Policy

The CAA dress code policy is designed to promote school success. The principles are modesty, simplicity, cleanliness, safety, and health. Attire for all students is to be neat, clean, and modest. Students are expected to remain neatly dressed at all times. Any form of dress that is disruptive, calls attention to one's self, or is detrimental to the purpose of CAA is not permitted. If clothing contains text or graphics, the message communicated must be in harmony with the school's mission.

General Guidelines:

- Clothing must be free of any holes, rips, tears, and frays, and may not reveal any undergarments.
- Excessively tight or excessively baggy clothing is not permitted.
- Sleepwear, athletic wear, and team uniforms are not permitted.
- Inappropriate words, pictures, or emblems are not permitted.
- Hats, bandanas, hoods, and head coverings are not permitted.
- Hairs must be of natural color and conventional style.
- No jewelry may be worn.

Girls' Dress Code:

- Pants, shorts, dresses, and skirts may not be tight fitting.
- Shorts, dresses, and skirts must be within three inches of the knee.
- Leggings, jeggings, and tights may be worn only under clothing that meets all other dress code criteria.
- All tops, including dresses, must fit within one hand's width of the collarbone and the bottom of the neck in the back, must have sleeves, and must cover the shoulder blades.

Boys' Dress Code:

- Pants and shorts must be worn at the waist, not sagging or revealing any clothing underneath.
- Shorts must be within three inches of the knee.
- Shirts must have sleeves and fit within two inches of the collarbone.
- Plain undershirts may not be worn alone.

Cell Phones

Students may bring their cell phones to school, but they must be powered off during school hours: 8:15 a.m. – 3:15 p.m. Monday – Thursday, and 8:15 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. on Friday. They must not be visible during class, in the halls, or anywhere on campus during school hours.

Computer/Technology Use

Students are expected to use computers/technology as instructed by the teacher. This includes web browsing, research, access to social media, etc. Students will treat the computers/technology with respect. Students will not be permitted to access any site without the teacher's permission. Research topics related to school projects are the only acceptable and appropriate use of the internet.

Field Trips

Field trips are an important educational tool, and all students are expected to participate fully. Permission forms must be signed by parents/guardians and be on file before a student will be permitted to go off campus. The CAA board will try to approve all major trips at least two weeks in advance. Trips will be limited to North Carolina and adjoining states during the academic year. More extensive educational and mission trips may be offered as money/schedules allow.

Inclement Weather

CAA usually follows the action of Mecklenburg County schools for emergency and snow day cancellations. CAA will follow Mecklenburg County schools for closings. All tardies or absences will be excused on inclement weather days.

Emergency Drills

All students are expected to cooperate in CAA fire, tornado, and critical incident emergency drills. The teachers take drills seriously and expect students to comply with all requests.

Attendance Policy

Daily Attendance

CAA school hours are Monday – Thursday, 8:15 a.m. – 3:15 p.m., and 8:15 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. on Friday.

Excused Absences

CAA and the Carolina Conference follow the North Carolina State Code in determining what constitutes an excused or unexcused absence (see below).

Unexcused Absences

Academic credit will not be given for time or classes missed that are unexcused. Three unexcused tardies equal one absence.

Written Excuses

All absences and tardies must be covered by a written explanation from a parent or guardian the day the student returns to CAA 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 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 tardy can hurt a student's academic performance. Therefore, the CAA faculty expects faithful attendance. When a student has excessive tardiness or absences, the following procedures will be followed, as established by the North Carolina state code: "Children between seven and 16 are required to attend." Chapter 115C, Article 26, Part 1, 115C-378.

Excessive Absences

North Carolina law requires all schools to notify parents of a student's excessive unlawful absence from school. When a student has accumulated five unexcused absences per quarter or a maximum of ten unlawful absences per semester, the principal shall request a conference with the parent and the school board to resolve the truancy problem. If the principal determines that the parent has not made a good faith effort to comply with the Compulsory Attendance Law, he/she must file a complaint with the juvenile court counselor or the district attorney. The student may also have to re-register to continue attending.

In grades K-8, a student who accumulates more than twenty absences (lawful or unlawful) will be retained in the same grade the following year.

Student Code of Conduct

Student Conduct

Good conduct is expected of all students in the classroom, at assembly programs, social functions, and religious services. The following should be noted:

- Boisterousness, running in the halls/classrooms, and discourteous conduct is out of order.
- Loitering is not permitted during school, after school hours, or during CAA programs. Anyone on the CAA campus is expected to be in a planned group activity.
- Harassment, verbal abuse, or threat of violence is unacceptable behavior. Roughhousing and aggressive behavior will not be perceived as "kids just being kids." There is never an acceptable time for hitting, tripping, wrestling and other physical contact, whether planned or spontaneous (in the heat of the moment). Even the first incident will likely result in suspension, and subsequent instances in expulsion. Our children will be free of violence.
- Students should keep hands, feet, and all other objects to themselves. Back rubbing is not permitted. Brief side-hugs (one-second "catch-and-release") are okay for dismissal goodbyes. The throwing of any object on the campus is forbidden except under supervision during recess, physical education class, or sports program.
- Students should always respond silently, immediately, and permanently to any CAA staff code of conduct requests. Conduct unbecoming a Christian student will result in either detention or possible suspension. Some practices cannot be permitted at CAA. The school does not knowingly receive students who indulge in these practices. Violating any of the following fundamental points automatically refers the student to the Administration Committee and will result in serious discipline or dismissal:

- Spreading ideas, gossip, or rumors, or displaying attitudes that undermine the philosophy, ideals, or objectives of CAA as outlined in the Mission Statement.
- Using profane language, indulging in lewd conduct or suggestions, or possessing or displaying literature or pictures deemed obscene by the CAA faculty.
- Dishonesty, including theft of property, willful deception regarding school regulations, or cheating on class work or examinations.
- Consistently negative, sarcastic, un-Christian attitudes and/or comments.
- Willful destruction of school or personal property.
- Possession of anything the principal deems a weapon on school grounds.
- Involvement in fighting, regardless of who started it. Just walk away!
- Conspiring to or participating in any act that injures, degrades, or disgraces CAA, a CAA student, or a CAA faculty member.
- Continual disrespect, disobedience, or non-cooperation with faculty members.
- Failure to participate fully in the academic program of CAA or habitual failure to complete class assignments.
- Excessive absences or tardies.
- Verbal assault.

When a student's progress or conduct is unsatisfactory, his/her attitude is out of harmony with the principles of CAA, or his/her influence is found to be detrimental, he/she may be disciplined or asked to withdraw from CAA.

CAA Discipline Procedures

The goal of all regulations at CAA is to create a safe school environment in which 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 in an attempt 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 develop action plans before the student is suspended.

Certain severe infractions such as sexual assault, cigarettes, drugs, alcohol, pornography, and severely inappropriate language call for an automatic suspension. When this occurs, the principal will notify the board chairperson and constituent pastor. A letter will also be placed in the student's file. Depending on the degree or frequency of suspensions, the student may be placed on automatic probation, and the principal will bring the student's name to the board with a recommendation for expulsion.

Zero Tolerance Policy

Please note that all information received by the school administration and/or staff regarding a student possessing illegal substances, threatening or inflicting personal injury, death, or causing property damage to the school will be treated in a serious manner by the school administration, school board, and the Carolina Conference Education Department. When it is confirmed that any such actions have

taken place, the students will be immediately removed from school until further notice by the school board and/or Carolina Conference Education Department.

Bullying and Harassment

Bullying means systematically and chronically inflicting physical hurt or psychological distress on one or more students, school employees, or a volunteers. This includes 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 interfere with the individual's school performance or participation.

Harassment means any threatening, insulting, or dehumanizing gesture or use of data or computer software; or 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 through the use of electronic mail or electronic communication, directed at a specific person, causing substantial emotional distress to that person and serving no legitimate purpose.

CAA 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:

1. If you have a question or complaint about a classroom or school situation, first speak directly to the teacher involved before addressing it with the principal, pastor, board member, superintendent, or even talking about the problem with a friend.
2. If still dissatisfied, speak with the principal. A parent-student-teacher-principal conference may be arranged.
3. If no resolution has been reached, a meeting between the parents, teacher, principal, pastor, and school board chairperson may be arranged.
4. If a parent is still unhappy with the results, an appeal to the entire school board may be made.
5. 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 K-12 Board. In all cases, please communicate directly to 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 one.

Expulsion

The CAA school board is the only entity that can expel students. A student may be asked to withdraw from CAA if he/she is receiving little or no benefit from CAA or is not contributing positively to the academic or moral atmosphere of the school. When this occurs, as stated previously, the staff may make a recommendation to the board for the child's expulsion.

Classroom Discipline

The purpose of all classroom discipline and management is to modify negative behavior, focus on strong academic goals, improve achievement in all areas, and model Jesus to the students. CAA teachers will attempt to encourage a learning environment in which teachers are free to teach and students are free to learn. To accomplish this, CAA classrooms will operate under the following guidelines:

- Teachers will clearly communicate classroom expectations and operating principles.
- Students will be warned when principles are violated, and teachers will enforce classroom rules.
- If a student persists in disruptive behavior after warnings, he/she will receive the consequences.
- If students are well-behaved, they may be regularly rewarded with special activities and privileges.