



HANDBOOK

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BecomeAVanguard.com

VANGUARD...

Is an elementary and secondary Christian school founded in 1985 by the congregation of Christian Character Ministries, Inc. The vision for this education ministry was to design and provide a unique schooling environment for their children. Great personal sacrifices were made by the staff to see the school established, and many were the times God made His support obvious. The dream became a reality that eventually reached children and parents outside the immediate body.

The first graduating class in 1991 had ten students. Some of Vanguard's graduates to date include the following: teachers, firefighters, doctors, office and business managers, law enforcement officers, civil engineers, anthropologists, military personnel, homeschooling mothers, medical students, ministers, film industry technicians, and other professionals. Vanguard students have frequently chosen service related occupations. A high percentage of graduating students attend college or vocational schools.

From the beginning, the heartbeat of Vanguard has been to prepare young people academically and spiritually to be successful, Godly citizens, capable of positive contribution to our society. Vanguard has been a directing force in the lives of many students. Emphasis on Christian values and character combined with a strong, traditional academic curriculum prepares students for challenges after high school.

Young people enrolled at Vanguard are encouraged to look to Christ as their example and to the Bible as their guide. Teachers set this precedent before the student body and are actively involved with the children. Students at Vanguard represent most of the major denominations. Christian Character Ministries, Inc. is a non-denominational church.

Teachers at Vanguard believe that every child is a unique person with individual strengths, weaknesses, talents, and personality. The mission is to see each student find a measure of success, thereby developing into a healthier, stronger adult. Opportunities range from playing sports and participating in contests and electives to developing projects that enable the child to realize his or her interests.

The student is nurtured, and talents are cultivated in every possible situation. Necessary time is devoted to this and additionally to finding solutions for existing academic needs. Vanguard's teachers focus on areas in which students need encouragement and, as a result, frequently find resolutions. The school's success has been notable. It must be said that in many cases, where students have not previously performed well in their academics, the necessary motivation (due to various causes) has been missing. Addressing this makes the difference in success. Vanguard spends a great deal of time correcting these deficits. Teaching academics and life-skills are responsibilities taken very seriously by the teachers and staff at Vanguard. There is a constant ministering to the students. Typically, children are tested and tried as they face the challenges of maturing. Vanguard's teachers direct and encourage their students as they grow in Christ. Children accepted for enrollment are loved and given personal attention, with the goal being to make a difference in this generation. Various means are employed to accomplish this, always with the development of the whole child in mind. With Christ as the author of our faith, Vanguard purposes to give its students the tools necessary to function in a challenging world and enable them to be a light to others in their generation.

TUITION & FEES

REGISTRATION FEE:

Registration fees include book leases and school supplies. Fees are nontransferable and nonrefundable once the student has entered classes. Withdrawal prior to the first day of classes will result in a penalty of \$200 per student registered. Any student asked to leave because of misrepresentation of his or her situation or because of unacceptable conduct will forfeit any payments of tuition or fees made previously.

New Student Registration Grades K – 12th \$450

TUITION:

Annual tuition may be paid in full or divided into a 10-month payment plan. Students choosing to be on campus only part of the day will pay full annual tuition. Tuition payments are due on or before the 10th of each month. If the 10th of the month falls on a weekend, payments must be in to the office on the Friday before and will not be deposited by the school before the 10th of that month. Students enrolling during the school year after August will begin tuition payments on the month of enrollment and will pay an additional month's tuition at the end of the school year. Students enrolling after the 15th of any month will pay a pro-rated, by the week, tuition for that first month.

LATE FEES: A \$45 late fee will be added to accounts for payments received after the 10th of any month. After the third late payment in one school year, tuition will be increased. Returned check fee is \$40. Prepaid annual tuition will be refunded on a monthly basis upon withdrawal.

GRADES K4 – 12TH TUITION OPTIONS:

Annual Tuition Grades K4– 12th \$*4250

Annual Tuition in 10 Monthly Payments (August – May) **\$425 each***

(September-June, if 1st tuition payment is made after Sept.1)

***Cash/check discounts on tuition (\$400 per month or \$4000 yearly)**

Students registering after September will have pro-rated tuition from their enrollment month through June to be paid in one payment or payments of \$425 monthly.

PAYMENT OPTIONS:

Check payments – Parents may turn in to the office at registration, post-dated checks for each month of payments, to be deposited on the 10th of each month OR set up automatic withdrawal checks from bank to school monthly.

Credit Card payments – Parents may leave a credit card on file in the office to be charged on the 10th of each month.

Cash Payments – Parents may choose to pay in cash each month. A credit card will be kept on file to be charged in event that payment is not turned in by the end of day on the 10th of the month if parents have not made other arrangements with school office ahead of time.

ADDITIONAL FEES:

Dual credit Semester Fees \$125 per course and any additional materials fees as designated by Alamo Community College will be due by end of 1st month of term (September, January). Sports Fees, Contest Fees, Field Trip Fees, and Dual Credit Fees due before events/classes or first game of season will be announced.

WHO MAY APPLY

Students who are unmarried and living with parents or guardians may apply for registration. A student's personal and school history must be free from major violations or criminal behavior. Application for admission is the parents' acknowledgment of and the testimony to the student's prior behavior being in conformity to these guidelines.

Vanguard was established for young people interested in education of the mind and spirit. At any time, students holding values contrary to those taught at Vanguard will be directed to another school for their benefit and Vanguard's. Students will not be discriminated for admittance on the basis of race, color, sex, or national or ethnic origin. No student should apply for the sole reason of avoiding the challenges of another school system or for personal problems. Vanguard is not a school for troubled youth.

Homeschoolers are allowed to apply for individual classes and do standardized testing with Vanguard.

REQUIREMENTS FOR ACCEPTANCE

Because the whole student will be educated at Vanguard, enrolled students are choosing to be trained in mind and in spirit which will include training in practical Christian principles. Students and parents must be willing to obey school rules and cooperate with school officials. It is our goal to maintain an atmosphere of honest and forthright communication with parents, and this includes their direct conversation with the staff concerning any issues that need to be addressed.

Parents and high school students are responsible to read this handbook before signing the Statement of Cooperation. The dictionary defines a vanguard as the leader at the forefront of an army. Our mission is to build character and confidence in each student, giving them the tools for success in academics and life. Only those wishing to be a Vanguard should apply as they must show a commitment to Christ and Biblical principles. They should express a sincere desire to be a Vanguard after reading and discussing the handbook with their parents. Since application to Vanguard is a choice, cooperation with authority is expected; and growth in grace should occur during their time at Vanguard. To remain at Vanguard, students are expected to exhibit Christian character within the community as well as on campus.

When a student has completed application processes and agrees to the school's expectations, Vanguard will notify the parents/guardians of the decision to accept or deny admittance. If accepted, records will be requested from the previous school.

CURRICULUM & ACADEMICS

Vanguard has 40 years of experience teaching children of all ages and abilities. The Abeka curriculum is an important source for books in addition to online materials and videos for teaching. Vanguard has a proven track record of success; the school's history speaks for itself in quality education of its students. Teachers assume a conscientious position concerning every student and treat each one as an individual. Vanguard is a member of A.C.T.S. and is in the process of being accredited with this accrediting organization. Vanguard is not affiliated or accredited with the State of Texas and receives no funding from the state. High school students transferring from any private school to a public school system would be well advised to check that district's policy concerning credit transferral.

As with any public or private school (or homeschool), diplomas and transcripts are issued upon graduation from Vanguard and sent to the colleges or schools chosen by graduates. Graduates receive a transcript and diploma from private schools and enter college with the same status as public school students. Seniors are encouraged to take the ACT or SAT. Dual credit classes with the Alamo Community College District in San Antonio are offered (beginning as freshman) and encouraged as a means to amass as many college hours as possible before graduation.

Standardized testing is performed as deemed beneficial.

Teachers are chosen to teach at Vanguard based upon character, ability to teach the subject area, skills dealing with the age group they will teaching, and life experience. Although most are degreed, Vanguard does not limit its staff to degreed teachers exclusively. Our teachers and how they present life education are highly important parts of our vision and mission.

GRADING

A=90-100

B=80-89

C=70-79

D=65-69

F=64 or lower

Report cards are emailed to parents when all grades are finalized for the grading period. Progress reports are made as needed. Teachers will stay in touch with parents when there is concern or praise to be noted.

TARDIES & ABSENCES

Absences should not exceed 5 per semester unless a doctor-supervised illness requires it.

Family trips are allowed without penalty and not considered absences.

Emails should accompany all absences and tardies.

Students should not come to school with any fever (in the last 24 hours), extreme coughing, sore throat, diarrhea or vomiting (72 hours after last symptom must pass before returning), pink eye, head lice untreated, or any other contagious condition.

Family illness where siblings may be exposed could result in school asking students to remain at home until illness has passed and that student is proven to be free of it himself. Recovery time at home should be considerate of the other families and teachers in the school who could contract the illness and be out of work time and incur doctor fees. Parents should request missed assignments as soon as possible.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES & BAD WEATHER

Parents should keep phone numbers accessible and updated with teachers and the office. Emergency contacts should know their numbers are on Vanguard records. Teachers will call in case of any situation (i.e. minor injuries during school or after hours) deemed necessary to the parents' information. If Vanguard cannot reach a parent in an emergency medical situation, EMS will be called. School accident insurance is carried by Vanguard on students and will apply after parent's insurance or in lieu of family insurance if there is none. Beyond these limits, any bill is the parent's expense.

Bad weather days that require changes in the normal schedule will be announced via emails. Parents should monitor email account regularly. Vanguard never encourages families to drive in hazardous weather.

SCHOOL HOURS

School begins at 8:00 a.m. and ends at 4 p.m. Students may arrive any time after 7:30 am when the campus opens and should leave by 4:15 p.m. Parents should notify the homeroom teacher or office as soon as possible in case of delayed pick up.

Students are not allowed on campus without adult supervision after hours. Siblings of students involved in afterschool activities should be picked up.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Dress code applies to school hours and after school hours, and Vanguard events on and off campus.

Hair should be a natural color. Closed-toe shoes only. No sandals or flipflops.

Clothes should be clean without holes and normal fitting. If appearance is distracting, staff will advise.

Boys - may wear long shorts, jeans, or khaki -type pants. Clothing should be free of inappropriate slogans/pictures. T-shirts, polos, sweatshirts/sweaters etc. (in good condition without holes and size appropriate) may be worn. No sleeveless tops, cut-off jeans, holes in jeans, low cut pants or shorts, wind shorts, spandex or skinny jeans/pants are acceptable. Boy's haircuts should be above the collar in the back and should be above ears and eyebrows. No facial hair or sideburns are allowed. Boys may not wear earrings.

Girls - may wear long shorts (No shorter than 1 inch above the kneecap), jeans, khaki-type pants, or capris. Yoga, form-fitting, and skinny jeans/pants are not permitted. Thighs, shoulders, and midriff should be covered. No skirts, "spaghetti-strap" or undershirt tops, bare backs, and cut-off jeans are acceptable.

Tattoos should not be applied while attending Vanguard, and existing tattoos must be covered at all times including during all school events and games.

BOUNDARIES

Students are given definite physical boundaries while at school which include at afterschool events. Students are not to lock classroom doors and are not to be in closed rooms without supervision. The pool and lake areas and upper field are off limits to students without adult supervision and permission.

CARS ON CAMPUS & VISITORS

Student drivers who have licenses and insurance may drive to Vanguard if there are no complaints about behavior with the vehicle. Students may not go to cars during the day at risk of losing the privilege to drive on campus, and they may not take others off campus without permission from both sets of parents *prior to the start of classes that day*. Cars on campus are subject to search as are lockers, desks, and personal belongings.

No school-age visitors should be invited to drive onto the campus. Visitors should be approved via email or phone call. Parents and relatives of students may eat lunch with their children per announcement ahead of time. Any unknown person will be asked to leave the property.

Students being picked up by relatives or friends of the family should be introduced by the family through email. Identification may be requested.

ITEMS NOT ALLOWED ON CAMPUS

The following is a list of examples of items that do not belong on Vanguard's campus, whether on a person, in a car, or in a backpack:

NOT ALLOWED: Any expensive item or possession, electronic device or music equipment, headphones, cash beyond lunch money, cards or magazine/books not related to schoolwork, knives, matches, fireworks, illegal drugs, prescription drugs not given to a staff member for dispensation during the day, alcoholic beverages, and tobacco items or paraphernalia.

Vanguard is **not responsible** to store items and not liable for lost or stolen items. Efforts to recover such may include searching backpacks, lockers, purses, or pockets etc.

Drivers may be requested to open cars or trunks. Failure to comply may result in expulsion.

CELL PHONES AND INTERNET

All students required to carry a phone by parents will adhere to Vanguard rules concerning such which include the current policy given to students at the beginning of the year. Cell phones create distraction during classes and can cause issues with students and parents when friends share phones during the school day. Families have different rules, boundaries, and expectations for their student's phone/music/internet etc. usage. Vanguard phone rules are in place to avoid these issues and create the best atmosphere on campus for learning and fellowship with families.

All cell phones must be turned into the office upon arrival of student on campus. Office will return phones at the end of school each day. Teachers' cell numbers will be available for parents to text during class with important/urgent messages for students. Students should not ask to use their phone during the day to converse with anyone. Parents may always call the office or teacher directly with emergency situations. With all other messages, teachers ask that parents text and allow time for teachers to respond when available after class.

Students are not allowed to use Vanguard's internet without permission and may lose all computer or phone privileges for violation of internet use.

Phones that are picked up due to violations will incur a \$25 fine the first time and \$50 the second.

STUDENT CONDUCT GUIDELINES

The student registered at Vanguard has agreed to comply with school policies and has stated that he or she is committed to becoming more Christ-like in character. Therefore, behavioral issues should be reconcilable with the individual student; and the student should benefit in his/her Christian growth with the instruction and rebuke that could be necessary in certain situations. Since all children are different and respond independently of a "norm," Vanguard seeks to deal with students on an individual basis, applying discipline that befits the child and the situation.

The goal of any reprimand is to correct the character flaw by the enlightenment of consequences to those actions in that child's life. Children are ever learning, and are not the finished product. Vanguard seeks to examine the heart and motive for actions and is interested in the best possible end results. Occasionally, mistakes will be made by most children and poor judgment will have occurred. The right counsel and recourse can make the difference in a person's life.

Students are expected to behave in the classroom and not disrupt the teacher or other students. When a student directs attention away from instruction and causes disorder, not being dissuaded by the teacher, action will be necessary. If a parent needs to know about a child's misbehavior, the teacher will make the phone call or send a note to inform them. Time out, counsel by authority figures, suspension, detention, parent/teacher conference, and missing privileges may all be means of achieving the desired conduct from the child. Typically, these are enough to dissuade such behavior. Extended or extreme behavior can result in appearance before the staff and/or an elevation in tuition rates or dismissal. Respect for others and the staff is required. Property damage by students will result in replacement or fines appropriate to the damage (to be decided by the school.) Students are taught to work together in harmony. Unsettled issues will result in counseling. Boys and girls may not exhibit physical affection at school. Parents will be informed by teachers if students violate these boundaries.

All disciplinary actions taken at school must be reinforced at home for the child to respect the authority of the school. Talking about school issues in a negative way to other parents rather than talking to the appropriate school personnel is not acceptable and not an adult way to reconcile an issue. Parents who question Vanguard's approach to a situation should seek an appointment with the principal as much of a child's attitude with those in charge comes from his or her parents' viewpoints. Information from the staff is critical in these situations as children do not always convey (whether due to immaturity, inexperience, or dishonesty) the total of the incident in question.

Christian teaching requires two parties to sit down and confront the issue with open minds and hearts to come to a resolution in an honest pursuit of the truth and the best outcome for growth and fellowship. Parents are encouraged to approach the staff and hear the full explanation of any situation before coming to a negative conclusion. Most parents realize that a child's perspective of life and its happenings is limited to their experience and maturing view of truthfulness. Open-mindedness is the mission of the Vanguard staff and its desired quality in the parents. If parents insist on a conclusion other than Vanguard's, they should withdraw their child and move on with their family in the direction they see for their children.

Working with children is challenging. Together, parents and teachers can arrive at truth and solutions that will enable the children at Vanguard to mature as they grow into adults. Vanguard is constantly looking toward the future adult a child will become.

LOOKING FOR VANGUARDS...

It is difficult to express the vision for Vanguard in a handbook of rules and regulations, but we are attempting to reach a certain parent and student. It is our prayer that this message will reach students who sense God's call on their lives to become Vanguards, people who are ahead of the rest, out in front.

Technically, a vanguard is a soldier who goes ahead of an advancing army. A vanguard is a courageous, perceptive person who is an explorer of life. He seeks out paths for others to follow and goes where others will not, seeing what others cannot.

Simply put, a vanguard is a leader; and the 21st century needs leadership in the worst way.

Vanguard Christian Education is a Christian school established for the purpose of equipping our next generations with the tools and resources necessary for successful Christianity. We are here to train future leaders. We have dedicated ourselves to this purpose.

At Vanguard, education starts with character and proceeds toward academics. A person whose heart is right desires to learn.

A Vanguard cannot be stopped from learning!

We, at Vanguard, are looking for young people who want to do more than just follow the crowd. We are looking for students who want to be different, who want to make an impact in society by leaving it better than the way they found it.

We are looking for young people that God is calling to become Vanguards.

Are you a Vanguard?

If so, come and join us in our quest for abundant life in the 21st century.

VANGUARD FOUNDER

Dr. Walter Tracy, Jr.

