

Encounter Academy Community Contract

The aim of Christian education is to bring the students to the place where they walk routinely and easily in the character and power of Jesus Christ. - Dallas Willard

Understanding our Purpose

We exist to bring discipleship opportunities to cross-cultural ministry workers and their families on the field, so they may in turn make disciples of Jesus Christ from all nations.

A cross-cultural ministry worker is one who has crossed geographical and/or cultural boundaries to engage in full-time ministry responsibilities. A disciple is a learner, a student, an apprentice. At Encounter Academy our mission is to be a community where cross-cultural ministry workers and their children grow as disciples by learning...

- The story of God and His creation
- The disciplined, effective uses of the mind and body
- The skills necessary to love others well
- The practice of abiding in Christ and living in the power of the Holy Spirit
- The healthy care of self and family members
- The skill of accompanying others in their own journeys as disciples of Jesus.

Understanding What We Offer

We seek to provide opportunities that meet the unique needs of cross-cultural ministry workers while encouraging members to also be involved in the local community and local church.

The opportunities Encounter Academy offers at any location will depend each year on the resources available and needs present. Encounter Academy does not seek to offer everything, rather we prioritize the basic needs of cross-cultural ministry workers and their families that cannot be adequately met through other resources.

These opportunities may include:

- General Education for Children and Youth
- Community Events
- Professional Development
- Spiritual Formation Courses and Activities
- Advisory Services

Cross-cultural ministry workers are encouraged to supplement Academy activities with outside opportunities in the local church and community that promote health and growth for themselves and their children.

Encounter Academy is not...

- A school, in the traditional sense, because parents rather than personnel members are responsible for overseeing the child's education and deciding which courses and activities will be the most beneficial.
- A church, but rather we are an expression of the global church focusing on meeting specific needs for a specific group of people.

Understanding What We Expect from Parents

Community Members are actively engaged in their own discipleship process as well as the growth and development of their children.

All parents with a participating child..

- Commit to participating in activities that promote their own spiritual growth as disciples and professional development as ministry workers.
- Commit to praying for one other Encounter family each quarter.
- Assist on campus with a percentage of the supervision and instruction in proportion to the enrollment of their children.
- Assist children with completing assignments from home and preparing for assessments, while refraining from completing assignments for a student or dishonestly representing student work and achievements.

Understanding What We Expect from Students

We hold to high expectations for students in order to promote a healthy community and encourage growth and maturity.

Encounter Academy is a place of creativity and fun, but it is also a place of orderliness. Discipline is given to students to protect this orderliness and help students develop their own internal self-discipline.

Students are expected to...

- Treat all other community members with respect on and off campus.
- Follow Encounter Academy policies, rules, and specific instructions of volunteers and personnel members with a positive attitude.
- Hold to the Honor Code on or off campus and refrain from discussing items on the honor code without adult supervision.
- Limit the use of digital devices to academic blocks for educational purposes.
- Willingly assist with cleaning up the campus and taking care of Encounter property.
- Follow the Study Zone rules
 - No talking to other students without permission.
 - Stay on task

Understanding our Fences

Community members help create a healthy community by honoring the boundaries of the organization and each other.

As the old saying goes, “Good fences make good neighbors.” Understanding who is responsible for what, what the fences are, and how to properly communicate with one another is vitally important for creating a healthy community.

There are times to give and serve and times to rest and rejuvenate. Everyone needs a healthy balance of both. As a community we want to respect those needs and help each other keep boundaries that enable us all to stay healthy and able to minister at a full capacity by...

- Keeping communication about Encounter in the office hours window.
- Respecting campus closing times.
- Avoiding office business and talk with personnel members during their time off.

Understanding What We Expect in Community Relationships

Knowing our love for each other to be our greatest testimony, community members embrace the challenge of learning what it means to be loved and to love others well.

Community is vitally important for the emotional and spiritual health of cross-cultural ministry workers and their children. It is not only a place to receive refreshment and support. It is where the life of Christ is formed in us.

Isolation is the opposite of being in community. In isolation we can hide and carefully guard what people know about us and our families. In community we are known. We are in the light, even those parts we may wish to keep hidden. But we are meant to live in the light. In the light, there is help and healing.

Community life brings with it fun, encouragement, and a sense of belonging. But it also brings disappointments, frustrations, hurt feelings, and conflicts, which are often our greatest discipleship opportunities. Many times, in painful things, we are healed, matured, and transformed by His Spirit. And from that we are enabled to minister to the lost world around us.

In order to grow and mature alongside one another, community members (adults, teens, and children) agree to practice these things ...

- Avoid divisiveness and stirring up conflicts within the community.
- Handle problems and issues between themselves and other community members by first meeting privately with the person before any other action is taken.
- Keep the addressing of issues and problems to planned, private, face-to-face meetings understanding that sending angry or accusatory emails or texts, gossiping about, or directly attacking another community member is not acceptable
- Avoid arguing about or pushing onto others secondary doctrines or other cultural differences instead focusing on the primary doctrines and the centrality of Jesus Christ.
- Speak to one another in a respectful manner.
- Prioritizing the safeguarding of children and teens under your care.
- Listen well and strive to learn when others bring our issues into the light.
- Seek the greatest good of other community members.

I have read through the Encounter Community Contract and agree to be held accountable for the expectations therein. (Signatures needed for all community members ages 10+.)
