



Greater Things Cooperative Handbook
School Year 2023-2024

Dear friends,

On behalf of the Greater Things family, I am thrilled to welcome you to the Greater Things Cooperative Policy & Procedure Handbook! This handbook expresses our heart of partnership with you as we offer a creative, intentional and Kingdom-centered education for our children. And, please understand, those words are very specific. When you become a part of our Cooperative, you and your children are becoming part of our family with the goal of knowing Jesus and His lavish love more intimately.

As a part of our family, we have policies and procedures in place to inform and protect all our family members. Please read this handbook carefully as you will be asked to agree to the terms during registration. If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to me or your child's teacher.

We consider it an honor to walk in partnership with you and look forward to the days ahead.

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Let us begin by saying that we are a new school and we are creating this and will be clarifying it as we grow. But our policies, procedures and direction are at the GT Board's discretion as we seek to honor the Lord first and foremost through this school. Parents will be notified of any changes.

Foundation of Greater Things Cooperative

Introduction to Greater Things

The Greater Things Cooperative (GTC) is the educational arm of Greater Things. Greater Things is a 501(3)c nonprofit organization whose vision is to create opportunities to encounter the love of God, to elevate women and to expand the Kingdom of God. We serve the community through various events, retreats, and small group gatherings, in addition to New Wine Church, Kingdom Access School for adults, and other content-driven resources.

The Greater Things Cooperative will operate from this same foundation. We offer a creative, intentional and Kingdom-centered education for children.

Mission Statement

As with all things Greater Things and thus our school, we believe we are God's beautiful creations. We will teach all our children from that foundation. Our brains are wonderful and are ready to learn. We were created to learn, to create, to play, to worship Him and to love others.

Spiritual Foundation

Greater Things Cooperative is a nondenominational Christian homeschool cooperative. Because there is no specific denominational affiliation, your background, upbringing, and culture will not be the dictating factors for attending GTC. Your love for Jesus will be what connects you to others in this cooperative.

Statement of Faith

Our statement of faith is simple.

Jesus is the one true God, the only Son of the Father.

We believe in the word of God, as God's love letter to his people to reveal his heart and give us instruction on how to find him and be in a relationship with him.

Through the Holy Spirit, the Bible becomes our compass, correction and counselor.

We believe in heaven and God's heart is for us to be with him there, that's why Jesus opened the way through the cross.

We believe Jesus when he said that we would do greater things than he did through the Holy Spirit. We believe in prayer, healing, the power of the Holy Spirit to change the world we live in— on earth as it is in heaven.

Our desire is that they will know we are Christians by our love.

All are welcome to learn from this Beautiful God.

We believe God made women and men as identified by their DNA at birth. We honor God's children and believe every color was created by his hand. We welcome every soul. We work hard to see people grow up into the gifts that God has planted in each individual person to impact the world today.

We like to keep the gospel, which is good news, real simple.

To be loved by Jesus and to love like Jesus.

Teaching Philosophy

Our leaders and teachers come from varied backgrounds. Private, public and homeschool. We know first hand the pros and cons of each school culture. Our overarching commitment is to grow lifelong learners through creative curriculum, teacher involvement and student independence.

At GTC we will aspire to create environments that foster learning, discovery and play. We care deeply about educational excellence but not at the expense of the development of the total person. So, when your child is learning at GTC they will be physically and emotionally engaged as well as creatively challenged and educated.

Curriculum will be decided by the teachers and will have a distinctive hands on and creative approach to learning while still maintaining solid educational standards and goals.

Standards of Behavior

Parent/Teacher Partnership

Parents and teacher relationships are to be mutually respectful and with full understanding of the shared responsibility for the child's education. Both parties are committed to the education of the child, the nurturing of their spiritual development and their growth as a healthy human being.

Student/Teacher Relationship

Student and teacher relationships are to be full of mutual respect for authority, obedience to the school objectives. While the teachers will give ample opportunity for learning good choices, the teachers will not tolerate abusive language, bullying, threats or zero effort.

Student/Student Relationships

Student to student relationships, while the students are of course learning, there will be an expectation of personal restraint and respectful speech, listening and creating space for others with differing opinions. Students are not to be picking at, kissing, hitting, maligning other students, Student's will be held accountable for their actions on social media against other students.

Communication

We invite you to make an in-person appointment during posted office hours, Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday 9am-2pm. Or you can email Crystal at crystal@greater-things.org. Communication options with your child's teacher will be laid out in the syllabus.

Conflict Resolution

You can expect that we will have direct conversations about issues as they arise. Our goal is to speak directly to the person with whom there is difficulty. We want to learn as a community to speak the truth in love, and to practice humility and honor. Should there be no resolution, the teachers and staff will help navigate conflict and compromise. Please. Do not take issues or concerns to social media. It only hurts us all.

Path to peace:

- 1) Examine your own heart. See what you can own as your part of the conflict.
- 2) Speak, not text, to the person in conflict.
- 3) Give time for the Spirit to work. Endeavor to understand and forgive the other person.
- 4) Reconvene and see if repentance and understanding is possible.
- 5) If not, bring in a staff or teacher to assist with cooperation.

Personal Respect and Responsibility

We want to try something really different. We want to encourage expression. We also want to honor each other with how we carry and display our body. And. We don't want to have to police children, or parents, who push the limits. So please read these requirements carefully.

Daily Wear:

T shirts: Every GTC student will choose from several T shirt options available for purchase. The T shirts are to be clean, tucked in or left out. We do not allow cutting off of the shirt, or tying up of the shirt to expose midriff. There will be hoodies and long sleeve shirt options also.

Pants: Pant selection is khaki pants or jeans with no holes, tears, or rips. Khaki or jean shorts must be the length of the end of fingertips when hands are extended and held to the side of the leg.

Leggings: For third grade and above, leggings may only be worn when the shirt completely covers the entire bottom area.

NOTE: *Students who do not honor required short's length or wear leggings without appropriate top length will be put in basketball shorts for the remainder of the day.*

Shoes: Shoes are at the discretion of the parents but must be suitable for outdoor play without concern of coming off or hurting the child when running, or getting dirty. Please, no flip flops.

Body Art: Girls' ears may be pierced. Any or all other piercings must be removed while on school grounds.

Accessories: Anything the student carries or wears onto school grounds should be in keeping with the heart of honor. Coats, rainwear, notebooks, bookbags, phone cases, lunch bags, etc, are to be free of any offensive images or words.

Sexuality: We affirm each student's sex as represented by the DNA at birth. Both boys and girls are to wear clothing that aligns with their DNA and likewise will use the bathroom according to biological design.

We are extremely conscious of the political climate we live in, and as always, our heart is for each child to discover their true identity in God. We understand that can be a process, and sometimes a troubled one. We will offer resources as needed for each child as they navigate this process. And we will affirm that God offers healing and wholeheartedness but equally does not make mistakes.

Discipline

Our goal in discipline is not for punishment but nurturing personal growth. When a child makes poor choices we will govern discipline through a lens of helping the child understand the offense, the effect of their choice on themselves and others, appropriate consequences, and how they might make restitution. Our discipline model will center around service to others because we believe that awareness of belonging to a bigger whole is critical in healthy development.

The parents will be notified of issues. In extreme cases, the parents will be called to participate in the discipline process.

Student Safety and Culture of Honor

Weapons/Violence/Drugs/Smoking

We have a zero tolerance policy regarding any kind of weapons, drugs and smoking in any form. Violations could result in dismissal from school. Students will not be permitted to roughhouse, fight, or exhibit violent behavior in the form of threats, cursing, or intimidation.

Suspension/Expulsion/Dismissal

We take school attendance seriously. So we encourage conflict resolution so that all students benefit from class instruction. However, we will also diligently protect the culture as a whole for our school. Students will be suspended for serious offenses that resulted from poor judgment. Students who have been suspended are responsible for all missed work, as well as, will be counseled on how to re-enter school with humility and honor.

Dismissal is a longer removal from school in attempts to course correct for the student. Once the student/parent can show valid improvement, the student may be considered for re-enrollment.

Expulsion results when a student commits a harmful and/or grievous injury, emotional or physical, to himself, another student, teacher, parent, or staff. Expulsion means the student may not return and the parents are still responsible for the remaining tuition.

Electronic and Digital Media

Our desire is for students to be fully present while at school. Therefore, cell phones are not to be used during school hours. They are to be stored in backpacks at all times, unless the classroom teacher has a special designated place. They are not to be used for music, school, soothing, or entertainment purposes during school hours. Teachers may allow selected use for dedicated purposes. Headphones and air pods are not allowed during class or lunch.

Teachers and parents are to work together to minimize any pornographic exposure through a child's unpermitted search on devices, or through another child. Actions will be taken for any student who continues in this behavior including expulsion.

Note: GTC is not responsible for any inappropriate material that is deliberately accessed on GT internet connection.

Our heart is to help the rising generations to be able to fight this onslaught of our culture through healthy choices and mutual respect rather than restriction.

General Policies & Procedures

Our motivation in these general policies and procedures is to promote freedom with clearly defined boundaries. We are still in the process of finalizing our policies and procedures but can inform you of the following.

Hours of Operation

Our traditional one day co-op is in session Mondays from 9am until 12pm.

Our hybrid co-op is in session Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 9am until 2pm.

Inclement Weather or Illness Closure

We will follow Knox County Schools' calendar. Inclement weather and illness closure will be handled on a case-by-case basis and will be communicated via text and/or social media.

Lunch and Snacks

Students will have 30 minutes for lunch each day. All lunches will be served cold and heating of lunches will be prohibited due to time constraints. Teachers will communicate their expectations for snacks in the classroom in their syllabus. Students will not be permitted to snack without prior teacher approval.

Umbrella School

Greater Things Cooperative is an accredited Category IV umbrella school. The fees to be a participant in our Umbrella School is outlined in the Fees & Tuition section of our handbook.

Fees & Tuition

The Greater Things Cooperative charges the following fees:

Traditional one-day co-op: \$325 per family per semester.

Hybrid 3 day co-op: \$3,000 per year per child and \$150 per child registration fee.

Umbrella School: \$60 processing fee, \$25 registration fee for each Kindergarten through 7th grade student, \$50 registration fee for each 8th grade through 12th grade student, additional Senior & Graduation fees.

We accept full payments and monthly payments only when auto drafted. Any declined payments will be subject to additional fees and must be paid in cash.

Processing fees and registration fees are non-refundable. Once accepted into any of our programs, you are committed to paying the full year's tuition, which is non-refundable in the event of student withdrawal or dismissal.

Attendance, Absences & Tardies

Regular attendance is vital. To communicate unforeseen emergencies, sickness or other absences, please email us at education@greater-things.org. It is the responsibility of the students to complete missed assignments.

Family Travel

In lieu of classroom work, family travel can be counted as school with appropriate classroom presentation. Prior teacher approval required.

Holiday Characters/Celebrations

It is the official position of Greater Things Cooperative to focus on the history and deep meaning of every holiday, especially the birth and resurrection of Jesus. We will have special dress up days and fun celebrations throughout the year. We will provide plenty of notice to parents. Please note, GTC will not participate in fictional holiday characters such as Santa Claus and the Easter Bunny. We will not include these in any holiday celebrations and will not discuss them with our students. We also will not celebrate Halloween.