



Alabama Church School Family Handbook

Version 2026.07 - Effective July 6, 2026

Purpose of this handbook

This handbook gathers ACS family policies, terms, refund policy, parent responsibilities, Alabama church school law information, transcript and graduation information, and support details in one clean reference.

Order Submitted = Final

Once an ORDER IS SUBMITTED, the order is FINAL. Services are rendered IMMEDIATELY because many parts of the ACS process are automated. ACS does not offer refunds for enrollment, re-enrollment, records, diplomas, graduation packages, workbooks, PDFs, downloads, custom products, or any other ACS service.

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Homeschool note

A good homeschool year is built in small, steady pieces: attendance kept, work saved, grades recorded, and paperwork placed where you can actually find it.

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Homeschool note

Print this handbook or save it with your homeschool records. Handbooks are not glamorous, but they are tiny paper shields when deadlines and questions start flying around.

1. About Alabama Church School

Alabama Church School (ACS) is a non-accredited, independent church school serving homeschool families in Alabama and across the United States. ACS provides church school coverage support, recordkeeping support, transcripts, diplomas, an optional K-12 curriculum, and a Family Portal to keep school information organized.

ACS is not state accredited and does not participate in the CHOOSE Act. ACS is designed for families who choose parent-led education and independent church school coverage.

Alabama Church School is a ministry of The Universal Church of Life.

No legal advice

ACS can provide general information about ACS procedures and church school coverage. ACS does not provide legal advice. For legal questions about your specific situation, consult an attorney, HSLDA, or the appropriate agency.

2. Parent-Led Education Philosophy

ACS believes that the parent leads the education. A family-based home education plan may look different from a public school classroom, and that is expected. Homeschooling gives families room to choose curriculum, pacing, projects, reading, field trips, life skills, and recordkeeping methods that fit the student.

ACS handles the administrative paperwork and provides support tools. The parent remains responsible for the day-to-day education, curriculum choices, grading, attendance records, and completed work records.

Homeschool note

Do not try to recreate a public-school day at your kitchen table unless it truly works for your family. Homeschooling can be structured, relaxed, project-based, textbook-based, online, hands-on, or a blend.

3. Alabama Church School Law Information

Current law review note

The law information in this section was checked against the publicly available 2025 Code of Alabama on July 6, 2026. Laws and agency practices can change. Families should verify current law before relying on any handbook as legal authority.

3.1 Alabama Code 16-1-11 - Private schools to register and report

This section says private schools or institutions with a school, except church schools as defined in Section 16-28-1, register annually and report certain statistics. It also states that this section may not be interpreted to authorize the Department of Education, State Board of Education, or State Superintendent to license or regulate a private, nonpublic, or church school offering K-12 instruction.

3.2 Alabama Code 16-28-1 - Definitions

The current definition of church school includes schools that offer instruction in grades K-12, or any combination thereof, including preschool, through on-site or home programs, and that are operated as a ministry of a local church, group of churches, denomination, and/or association of churches that do not receive state or federal funding.

3.3 Alabama Code 16-28-3 - Compulsory attendance and church school exemption

Alabama law generally requires children between the ages of 6 and 17 to attend a public school, private school, church school, or be instructed by a competent private tutor for the school term. The statute also provides an exemption for a child attending a church school as defined in Section 16-28-1, provided the child complies with the enrollment and reporting procedures in Section 16-28-7.

The law also allows a parent of a 6-year-old child to opt out of enrollment until age 7 by notifying the local board of education in writing.

3.4 Alabama Code 16-28-7 - Report of enrollment

For a child attending a church school, the enrollment and attendance must be filed with the local public school superintendent by the parent, guardian, or person in charge of the child on the form provided by the superintendent or agent. The form is countersigned by the church school administrator and returned to the public school superintendent by the parent.

The same section says that, if the child stops attending the church school, the parent directs the church school at enrollment to notify the local public school superintendent or agent that the child is no longer in attendance at the church school.

3.5 Alabama Code 16-28-8 - Reports and attendance register

This section says school officers, including private schools and private tutors, but not those in church schools, must make and furnish reports required by the State Superintendent and local superintendent or city board of education. It also states that the principal teacher of each public school, private school, church school, and each private tutor shall keep an attendance register showing enrollment and every absence of each enrolled child for a half day or more during each school day of the year.

3.6 What ACS families should remember

- Keep a copy of your signed Church School Enrollment Form (CSEF) in a safe place.
- Submit the CSEF to the proper local superintendent when required.
- Keep attendance and homeschool records for your own family file.
- Contact ACS if a public school, attendance officer, or other official asks questions about your church school enrollment.
- This section is informational only and is not legal advice.

Homeschool note

Your CSEF is not a junk-drawer paper. It is the tiny kingdom document. Keep it where you can find it without summoning a paperwork goblin.

4. What ACS Provides

- Church School Enrollment Form (CSEF), signed by the ACS administrator
- Welcome letter and required documents through the Family Portal
- Family Portal access for organization and records
- Optional K-12 curriculum access with lessons, quizzes, and assignments
- Student login portal for curriculum access
- Academic recordkeeping and grade tracking tools
- Professional high school transcripts and diplomas when requested and paid for
- Community Hub for connecting with other ACS families
- Referral program when available under current ACS terms

What ACS does not do

ACS does not take over the parent role, choose curriculum for the family, guarantee college admission, guarantee public school grade placement, provide legal advice, or become responsible for the student's daily education.

5. Enrollment and Re-Enrollment

- New family enrollment is per family under the current ACS pricing and terms.
- Returning family re-enrollment must be completed each school year using the Returning Family Re-Enrollment form.
- Re-enrollment is due between June and August 15 each year unless ACS posts a different current deadline.
- Email reminders are a courtesy only. Parents are responsible for re-enrolling on time without being called, chased, or repeatedly reminded.
- Failure to re-enroll on time can create truancy concerns that the parent must resolve with the local school district.
- Enrollment does not transfer. If a child moves in with another parent, family member, or friend, a new enrollment is required.
- The enrollment fee covers only the children being enrolled with ACS at the time of enrollment under the current ACS terms.

Homeschool note

Put re-enrollment on your calendar as if it is a dentist appointment with paperwork teeth. June through August 15 is the annual window to handle it.

6. Policy and Terms of Service

Please read carefully before enrolling, re-enrolling, submitting an order, purchasing a product, requesting services, or making payment. These policies may change at any time. Families should always re-read the current policies before signing, submitting forms, placing an order, or making payment.

6.1 Parent agreement

- I understand that it is my responsibility to re-enroll my students each year without being contacted by anyone from ACS.
- I understand that ACS email reminders are a courtesy only.

- I do not hold ACS accountable or responsible if I fail to re-enroll my students.
- I understand that ACS is not responsible for calling each parent who has not re-enrolled.
- I understand that I should re-enroll before August 15 each year to avoid truancy issues.
- I understand that I must use the re-enrollment form only for returning family re-enrollment.
- I understand that enrollment does not transfer to another household.

6.2 Parent responsibility for education

- I agree it is my responsibility to educate and teach my children at home.
- I acknowledge responsibility for choosing my child's curriculum for each school year.
- I will keep and maintain a record of grades and completed work for each child.
- I understand that ACS places all educational responsibility on me, the parent.
- I do not hold ACS, the administrator, staff members, or volunteers liable for my child's education, curriculum, grading, testing, social development, or physical well-being.

6.3 Records and changes

- I agree to contact ACS if my address, phone number, email address, living situation, custody situation, or enrollment status changes.
- I agree to use the Family Information Form when family information changes.
- I authorize ACS to report to the public school superintendent should my child cease enrollment with ACS.
- I understand that failure to keep contact information current may be grounds for dismissal.

7. Full Refund Policy

Read before submitting any order

ACS DOES NOT OFFER REFUNDS. Once an ORDER IS SUBMITTED, the purchase is FINAL. Services are rendered IMMEDIATELY because ACS paperwork, access, document, and digital delivery systems may begin automatically as soon as the order is submitted or payment is made.

This policy applies to enrollment, re-enrollment, transcript orders, diploma orders, graduation packages, senior packages, report cards, letters, forms, document preparation, records services, administrative services, workbook purchases, PDF purchases, digital downloads, store products, custom worksheet or learning product requests, and any other product or service sold by ACS or through ACS pages.

There are NO refunds, NO partial refunds, NO cancellations, NO exchanges, and NO prorated pricing for any order once it is submitted.

It does not matter whether the family later withdraws, changes curriculum, stops homeschooling, forgets to use a discount code, does not use the portal, does not download a product, or no longer needs the document or service.

Enrollment and re-enrollment services are rendered immediately. Documents may be created, child(ren) may be enrolled, portal access may be granted, curriculum access may be opened, and records may be prepared right away.

Digital products, PDFs, workbooks, downloads, store files, and custom-created products are final sale because they may be accessed, downloaded, copied, or made available immediately.

Document and records services are final sale once the order is submitted because the request enters the administrative workflow immediately.

Discount codes are valid only for the dates, services, products, or order types stated in the offer. Discount codes must be entered at checkout and cannot be applied after an order has already been submitted.

All families receive the same service access and support regardless of enrollment date, purchase date, or the amount of time remaining in the school year. ACS does not prorate.

Plain-English version

Enrollment, re-enrollment, diploma packages, transcripts, forms, records, workbooks, PDFs, downloads, and custom products are all the same: NO REFUNDS once the ORDER IS SUBMITTED.

Before submitting an order

- Read the product, service, or enrollment description carefully.
- Ask questions before submitting the order, not after.
- Enter discount codes at checkout. Discounts cannot be added after the order is submitted.
- Confirm the correct student, family, document, or product before payment.
- Understand that automated access, document creation, digital delivery, or administrative work may begin immediately.

Homeschool note

A submitted order is not a maybe basket. It is a launched paper rocket. Check the fins before lift-off.

8. Parent Responsibilities

8.1 Educating the student

- The parent is responsible for teaching, supervising, assigning, grading, and evaluating the student's work.
- The parent chooses curriculum. ACS curriculum access is optional unless stated otherwise by a separate service.
- The parent is responsible for buying books, printing materials, purchasing curriculum, planning coursework, and ensuring work is completed.

8.2 Records

- Keep attendance records.
- Keep grades and completed work samples.
- Keep high school credit records as courses are completed.
- Keep ACS documents, CSEF, enrollment letters, withdrawal records, and transcript copies in a safe place.

8.3 Honesty and legal issues

- Parents must be honest with ACS about custody, truancy, withdrawal, legal, address, and student residence issues.
- Parents must not place ACS in legal jeopardy by hiding information that affects enrollment or records.

Homeschool note

Future transcript season is kinder when you do not make it hunt for four years of grades in couch cushions and old screenshots.

9. Communication, Records, and Contact Information

Families should contact ACS through the official school contact methods. Parents are responsible for reading messages, updates, website notices, portal notices, and handbook changes.

- Email: alabamachurchschool@gmail.com
- Phone: (334) 553-3444
- Mailing Address: 833 Ewell Rd, Slocomb, AL 36375
- Use the Family Information Form for changes to address, phone, email, student residence, or household information.
- Use the correct ACS forms for re-enrollment, transcript requests, records requests, graduation packages, and withdrawal needs.

10. Truancy, Attendance Officers, and School Requests

If a truant officer, attendance officer, public school employee, or other official contacts you about your child's enrollment, stay respectful, keep records of the contact, and contact ACS immediately.

1. Ask for the person's name, title, agency, and contact information.
2. Keep your CSEF available and do not give away your only copy.
3. Ask that any request beyond proof of enrollment be sent in writing.
4. Contact ACS and provide a clear summary of what was requested.
5. Contact HSLDA or an attorney for legal advice if the issue becomes legal or adversarial.

Important

ACS can help explain ACS enrollment status and documents. ACS cannot act as your attorney and cannot undo problems created by delayed paperwork, failure to re-enroll, failure to withdraw properly, or failure to keep your CSEF and records.

11. Attendance and Progress Records

Parents are responsible for keeping attendance and academic progress records. ACS provides tools to help families stay organized, but the parent remains responsible for the accuracy and completeness of the records.

- Keep attendance for the school year.
- Save examples of completed work, especially for high school courses.
- Record final grades and credits when each course is completed.
- Submit required attendance and grade information when requesting transcripts, records, withdrawal paperwork, or graduation documents.
- If returning to public school or transferring to another school, the parent is responsible for understanding the receiving school's requirements and submitting required ACS request forms and fees.

Homeschool note

Attendance does not have to be fancy. It has to exist, make sense, and be findable.

12. Curriculum, Testing, and Learning Suggestions

ACS does not require families to use one specific curriculum. Parents may choose ACS curriculum access, purchased curriculum, online classes, textbooks, unit studies, reading plans, life skills, projects, field trips, dual enrollment, apprenticeships, or a mix that fits the student.

12.1 Elementary suggestions

- Focus on reading, writing, and math foundations.
- Use hands-on learning, read-alouds, games, field trips, and real-life practice.
- Keep structure reasonable. Younger children often do best with short, consistent lessons.
- Let children move, ask questions, create, and explore.

12.2 Middle school suggestions

- Begin building stronger writing, math, study, and independent reading habits.
- Use projects and life skills alongside academic subjects.
- Let courses take the time needed. Not every subject must fit neatly inside a traditional calendar box.

12.3 Testing

ACS does not require standardized testing unless a separate diploma track, program, or outside institution requires it. Parents may choose testing for their own records, placement, or planning purposes.

Homeschool note

The best curriculum is the one you will actually use consistently. The prettiest unused workbook is just expensive shelf decor.

13. Transcripts, Grades, and Records Requests

A transcript is an official academic record showing completed courses, credits, grades, and other academic information. Transcripts may be needed for public school transfer, private school transfer, college admission, dual enrollment, job applications, scholarships, military, insurance, or graduation records.

- Parents must submit accurate subjects, grades, credits, student information, and attendance when requesting a transcript.
- ACS will not supply a transcript without the applicable fees and proper forms.
- Parents are responsible for accurate grades, credits, coursework, attendance, and records.
- ACS may request credit validation in the form ACS chooses when needed.
- Processing time can take up to 2 business days for routine paperwork unless the service description says otherwise. Some records and graduation services may require more time.

13.1 Transfer transcripts

If a student transfers to another school, the parent should request records using the proper ACS form and provide required grade, attendance, and course information. Receiving schools may have their own placement policies, and ACS does not control public school placement decisions.

13.2 Pre-college transcripts

For dual enrollment or pre-graduation college requests, the parent should use the current ACS transcript request process and confirm the college's requirements in advance.

14. High School Planning

High school families should plan ahead. A diploma path should match the student's future goals, including work, trade school, community college, four-year college, military, business ownership, or personal goals.

14.1 Ways to earn high school credit

- Traditional textbooks or online courses
- ACS curriculum courses
- Parent-created courses with assignments and grades
- Portfolio work and projects
- Essays, research, labs, and presentations
- Life skills, work, volunteer, apprenticeship, business, and career experiences when properly documented
- Dual enrollment or outside classes when records are kept

Credit validation

Alabama Church School reserves the right to request credit validation in the form of our choosing to be completed or submitted upon request.

14.2 Diploma tracks

Track	Core credits	Electives	Total credits
Standard Diploma	English, History, Math, Science	8 elective credits	24 credits

Track	Core credits	Electives	Total credits
	- 4 credits each		
Academic Diploma	English, History, Math, Science - 4 credits each. Required: Algebra 1, Biology, US History, World History	10 elective credits	26 credits
Advanced College Prep	English, History, Math, Science - 4 credits each. Required: Algebra 1, Algebra 2, Geometry, Biology, US History, World History, Basic Computer Skills. ACT/SAT score 16.	12 elective credits. Recommended: Foreign Language, Chemistry, Literature	28 credits

14.3 Elective course examples

Electives may include, but are not limited to, Business Math, Accounting, Entrepreneurship, Marketing, Public Speaking, Creative Writing, Journalism, Computer Applications, Web Design, Programming, Art, Music, Drama, Photography, CPR, First Aid, Nutrition, Driver's Ed, Home Economics, Auto Mechanics, Financial Management, Physical Education, Debate, Logic, Psychology, Sociology, Astronomy, Botany, Meteorology, Gardening, Career Development, Sign Language, and current events.

14.4 College-bound students

- Check each college's admissions requirements early.
- Register for ACT or SAT testing if needed.
- Keep complete course, credit, grade, and attendance records.
- Request transcripts early, especially during senior year rush seasons.
- ACS does not guarantee any college, employer, agency, or school will accept a diploma or transcript in a particular way.

Homeschool note

Before senior year, compare completed credits to the diploma track. Tiny gaps are easier to fix before graduation season starts knocking.

15. Graduation, Diplomas, and Senior Packages

Graduation documents are official records and require accurate parent-submitted information. The parent is responsible for confirming the student has completed the selected diploma track and for submitting all required information, fees, forms, attendance, courses, grades, and credits.

- Graduating students are required to submit senior package fees by December 15 unless ACS posts a different current deadline.
- An attendance sheet must be submitted to ACS upon withdrawal or graduation.
- Families should read diploma information and understand what is required for each diploma track.
- Parents take full responsibility for making sure required subjects are completed for Academic and College Prep diplomas.
- Graduation packages, diploma orders, transcript orders, sealed transcript requests, and senior services are final sale once the order is submitted.
- Processing times vary based on service type, season, missing information, and whether a rush option is available and purchased.

15.1 Senior package checklist

- Student legal name as it should appear on documents
- Date of birth
- Parent or guardian contact information
- Attendance sheet
- Four years of courses, credits, and grades
- Selected diploma track
- Payment for the senior package or requested graduation documents
- Mailing instructions, sealed transcript instructions, or college recipient information if applicable

Graduation planning note

Do not wait until the week a college, employer, or program needs records. Graduation paperwork is a paperwork parade, not a lightning bolt.

16. ACS Rights and Dismissal Policy

ACS reserves the right to dismiss a student at any time while enrolled if deemed necessary. Grounds for dismissal include, but are not limited to:

- Not re-enrolling in a timely manner by August 15 each year
- Not paying bounced check fees or clearing them up in a timely manner
- Failure to report any address or phone number changes
- Any conduct that puts ACS in jeopardy or legal trouble
- Parent or child becoming involved in illegal activities
- A child moving to another residence without informing ACS
- Parent not having full legal custody or spouse not agreeing with home education
- Disregard for policies ACS has set in place
- Parents not being honest about legal issues, custody issues, or truancy issues
- Not reading and complying with all policies and guidelines
- Not keeping a copy of the CSEF file available at all times

- Misuse of ACS documents, portal access, curriculum, records, forms, or school name
- Harassment, threats, abusive conduct, fraud, or dishonesty toward ACS, staff, volunteers, or families

Homeschool note

Clear policies are not there to be mean. They are rails on the paperwork bridge so nobody drives into the creek.

17. Frequently Asked Questions

What is a cover school?

A cover school provides church school coverage support for Alabama families who choose that path. ACS operates as an independent church school option and provides signed enrollment documents and administrative support.

Is ACS accredited?

No. ACS is not state accredited and does not claim to be state accredited.

Does ACS participate in the CHOOSE Act?

No. ACS does not participate in the CHOOSE Act and is not presented as a CHOOSE Act provider.

Do I need a teaching degree?

No. ACS does not require the parent to have a teaching degree.

Do I have to use ACS curriculum?

No. ACS curriculum access is optional. Parents may use their own curriculum, ACS curriculum, or a mix.

Do I need to keep attendance?

Yes. Parents should keep attendance records and have them available for withdrawal, graduation, records requests, or family files.

What happens if a truant officer contacts me?

Keep your CSEF available, request written details for anything beyond proof of enrollment, and contact ACS immediately. For legal advice, contact HSLDA or an attorney.

Can I get a refund if I do not use the portal or change my mind?

No. Once an order is submitted, it is final. ACS services are rendered immediately and ACS does not offer refunds.

Are transcripts automatic?

No. Parents must submit required grades, courses, credits, attendance, forms, and fees before ACS can prepare transcripts.

Can ACS guarantee public school placement or college acceptance?

No. Receiving schools, colleges, employers, agencies, and programs make their own decisions. Parents should confirm requirements directly with the receiving institution.

18. Family Acknowledgment

By enrolling, re-enrolling, submitting forms, placing an order, purchasing products, requesting services, or using ACS services, the parent or guardian acknowledges that they have read, understand, and agree to the current ACS policies, terms, refund policy, parent responsibilities, recordkeeping requirements, and dismissal policy.

I understand that ACS policies may be updated and that I am responsible for reviewing the current handbook and website policies before enrollment, re-enrollment, orders, purchases, and records requests.

Final reminder

Questions should be asked before submitting an order. Once the order is submitted, the order is final.

Homeschool note

Keep a copy of this signed acknowledgment with your homeschool records, along with attendance, grades, CSEF, transcript requests, and graduation records.

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Legal Source Notes

The following law references were reviewed while preparing this handbook section:

- Alabama Code 16-1-11 - Private Schools to Register and Report
- Alabama Code 16-28-1 - Definitions
- Alabama Code 16-28-3 - Ages of Children Required to Attend School; Exemption for Church School Students; Transfer Students
- Alabama Code 16-28-7 - Report of Enrollment
- Alabama Code 16-28-8 - Reports Required Must Be Furnished

This legal information is included for general family reference only. It is not legal advice and should not replace current legal research, attorney advice, HSLDA guidance, or official state sources.

Annual check-up tip

Before re-enrollment each year, review the current ACS handbook, current ACS website policies, and current Alabama church school law. Homeschool paperwork is quieter when it is checked before the school year starts.