

2023-2024

KAT PARENT HANDBOOK



DEDICATED TUTORS

HONORING CHRIST

SERVING FAMILIES

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What is KAT? (Purpose and Organizational Description)

KAT stands for “Kalamazoo Area Tutoring Association, Inc.” Kalamazoo Area Tutoring, Inc. (KAT) is a parent-facilitated, Christian co-operative where parent involvement and participation are required. KAT is an educational resource to homeschool families operating every Monday from September to May at Centerpoint Church in Kalamazoo. KAT is organized by a volunteer Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) and overseen by a volunteer Board of Directors. Qualified, experienced, Christian tutors provide a wide variety of core and elective courses taught with a Biblical worldview in mind. Tutors are an independent business who work under the KAT umbrella to serve the homeschool community of the greater Kalamazoo area. Our qualified, Christian tutors challenge, stimulate and encourage students in their academic, spiritual and social growth, while parents remain as the core educators who assist their children with weekly KAT assignments.

KAT Biblical Statement of Faith

- **Biblical Authority:** The Bible is the inspired, inerrant, authoritative Word of God, and the authoritative rule of faith, life, and conduct for all Christians (Ps 119:105, 133, 160; Prov 30:5a; 2 Tim 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:19-21). As such, the Bible teaches us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires; we are to live sensible, righteous, and godly lives (Titus 2:11-13).
- **Humanity’s Need for Salvation:** All mankind has sinned (Rom 3:23). Jesus Christ came to earth to pay the penalty for sin through His death on the cross and resurrection to life (Rom 4:23-25; 5:8; 6:23; 1 John 4:9-10). Salvation comes by grace through faith in God’s son, Jesus Christ, totally apart from human merit (John 1:12; Eph 2:8-10). This salvation is available to every person in the world (John 3:16-17), for God desires all persons to be saved (1 Timothy 2:3-5).
- **Marriage and Family:** God established the institution of marriage and designed it to be an exclusive relationship between one man and one woman (Gen 2:24-25; Matt 19:4-6; Deut 17:17). This God-ordained model for marriage and the resulting family is also a picture to humanity of the relationship between Christ and His Church (Eph 5:21-30) and is not a mere social construct. All intimate sexual activity outside the biblical marriage relationship contradicts God’s design and intention, and is therefore sin (for example, Ex 20:14; Lev 18:22, 20:13; Rom 1:18-31; 1 Cor 6:9-10, 15-20; 1 Tim 1:8-11; Jude 7).
- **Sexuality:** God created human beings in His own image, male and female with equal personal dignity, and these two distinct complementary biological sexes together reflect the image and nature of God (Gen 1:26-27; Matt 19:4). God’s creation of humanity as male and female, combined with scriptural principles of sexuality, means that rejection of one’s biological sex is a rejection of the image of God within oneself; willful conduct contrary to God’s design and intention for human sexuality is therefore sin (for example, Deut 22:5, in addition to the sexuality passages in the marriage section).

KAT General Information

Communication and Website Information:

Please email katfamilies@gmail.com with any questions or concerns. Visit kalamazoo-area-tutors.com for all up-to-date information.

What does a typical day at KAT look like?

The KAT day consists of five 90-minute class periods that meet on Mondays between the hours of 8:00 am to 4:00 pm. Students typically “drop-in” at different times of the KAT day, according to their class schedules. Your student may take at least one or more KAT classes. Tutors are paid individually for each class and KAT oversees registration for these classes. KAT provides parent-monitored study hall areas for students who have breaks between class periods. There is a half hour lunch period provided mid-day from 11:00 am – 11:30 am.

Location

KAT is located at Centerpoint Church: 2345 N. 10th Street, Kalamazoo, Michigan 49009.

KAT Registration and Class Enrollment

Families REGISTER for KAT and ENROLL in classes. The KAT Spring Parent Open House, held each May is where parents are given the opportunity to meet the tutors, view class offerings, and receive a family packet with all required forms and information for registration and enrollment. Families register either online or in-person at our KAT Registration and Class Enrollment events in early June or late August. Parents enroll students in classes directly with the tutor and our in-person events. See the yearly calendar for exact dates and times. Families with outstanding balances for class tuition and/or KAT fees are ineligible to register.

Tuition

Tuition payments are directly to tutors. For full-year classes, tuition is broken into two payments with each being due the first day of each semester (September and January).

Restrooms

Upper-level restrooms are in the hallway adjunct from the “Fireside” room. Lower-level restrooms are in the hallway to the right. KAT is not allowed to use the restrooms in the Base Camp area.

Snow Days

KAT follows Kalamazoo Public Schools in reference to snow days. If there is a two-hour delay for Kalamazoo schools, we will cancel first period and start with second period for the day at 9:30 a.m.

Pizza Days

Pizza Day is the second Monday of every month beginning in October and is facilitated by a parent volunteer. This opportunity is open to all students, parents, and non-KAT family members. Pizza forms are available on the website and at the building supervisor’s desk. Orders need to be received by the first Monday of each month. If you can prepay and preorder pizza, that is preferred to help with the planning.

Yearbook

Each year, KAT strives to have a student yearbook. These are available for preordering in late spring. Please watch for more information on the KAT website. You must sign a photo release form for your child to be put in the KAT yearbook. If you have a graduating senior, there will be special opportunities to showcase their picture and information.

Visitor Policy

KAT welcomes all visitors, but above all else is a learning environment. We are asking visitors wanting to connect with KAT members or tutors to please plan with those individuals, if possible. As a safety precaution, all non-KAT visitors on KAT days need to sign in and out at the monitor table near the entrance and collect a lanyard to wear while on church property. Please return the lanyard when signing out. We welcome visitors who would like to observe a class or tour the KAT facility to please contact a Parent Advisory Committee member, a tutor, or the building supervisor to make prior arrangements. **This does not apply to current KAT families.*

KAT Participant Guidelines

Participant is defined as anyone utilizing services at KAT, including but not limited to students, parents, and tutors.

Facility

God has graciously blessed KAT with an expansive facility (consisting of multiple parking lots, entrance/exit doors, classrooms, and restrooms). Out of joyful respect for Centerpoint's generosity, other activities happening on the campus, as well as for safety issues, all students and parents need to remain in the areas designated for KAT.

- Centerpoint has asked us to have identification for students and helpers. Each student will be provided a KAT ID lanyard at the beginning of the school year at no cost. After Picture Day, students will receive a personalized student ID lanyard.
- Please do not run in the building.
- Food and drink are allowed only in the study hall/lunchroom.
- Participants are responsible for disposing of their litter.
- Students are not allowed in the hallways during a class period unless they are entering or exiting the building.
- Students who drive to KAT may not sit in their cars or loiter in the parking lot. Parking permitted in KAT approved lot only.
- Parents with younger children may wait in the study hall locations. A nursery is not available.
- Please observe all "No Exit" signs and "Do Not Use" signs.
- The elevator is not to be used by KAT students unless there is an injury requiring a wheelchair or crutches.
- No wandering in the halls or outside during the KAT day.
- Students/siblings may play outside only when accompanied by their own parents.
- You may bring your non-enrolled children to KAT, but they must always remain with you while on site.

Use of The Point (subject to change at any time.)

The Point is located next to the main Centerpoint facility. The Point provides a coffee shop, gym and workout facility available for a nominal fee which KAT families are invited to use and offers a wonderful place to connect. We have been blessed with the privilege of using The Point during KAT operating hours. We ask that KAT participants follow these rules:

- All students must sign in and out with the Building Supervisor and wear a KAT lanyard when visiting The Point.
- Students under 13 years of age may only attend The Point with a responsible adult.
- Participants must obey all rules and postings of The Point.
- Participants must use front main doors to access & exit The Point. (Do not use the tunnel.)
- Students who do not respect The Point property or rules will lose their privilege.

Parking/Entrance/Exit

KAT participants are asked to enter and exit KAT through Entrance A only. This is the main northeast parking lot facing 10th Street adjacent to The Point. These are the doors that lead into the main lobby near the Worship Center.

Arriving/Departing

- All participants should arrive about 5 minutes before class begins. If a student arrives more than 10 minutes prior to his/her class time, the student needs to sign into Study Hall.
- All participants are expected to exit the building by 4pm unless they are a closer or working with the Building Supervisor.

Study Hall

Study hall is available for participants throughout the school day. There are study halls on both the upper and lower levels. On the upper level, there are two study halls, one in the main lobby and one in the fireside area where round tables are located. We are asking participants utilizing study halls in these locations to be respectful of classes which are in session. During the lunch hour from 11:00 -11:30 a.m. the Base Camp area is available to students. In the lower level, the large “social” study hall can be utilized for talking, connecting, eating, playing quiet table games, or interactive schoolwork. There is also a “quiet” study hall in Room 408 located within the large study hall area (use of the quiet study hall is subject to change if utilized for a class).

- Students must sign into Study Hall in the lower level if they are not in class and are not with a parent or guardian.
- Students **must be in a study hall if they are not in class**, walking to class, or entering or exiting the building.
- The Study Hall is limited to three class periods per student/per week.
- Parents/Guardians may stay in Study Hall with their children. While we do have Study Hall Monitors, we ask that you do not leave younger students unsupervised if they will not be comfortable or mature enough to follow study hall rules.
- The Study Hall is to be utilized for study, quiet conversation and quiet games.
- Unruly behavior will not be tolerated (i.e. running, yelling, wrestling, throwing things, etc).

Use of Electronics

The purpose of these guidelines is to provide a clear set of boundaries for electronics use in order to maintain an appropriate work/study environment at KAT, free from unnecessary or inappropriate distractions. They apply to all KAT participants (parents, students, tutors, and supervisory personnel).

- Prohibited Use of Electronics:
 - No cell phone, smart phone or personal electronic devices may be used in class, including texting. (Unless specified as necessary by tutor).
- Proper Use of Electronics:
 - Use discretion with volume when electronics are used during study hall.
 - Use of cell phone or other electronics during study hall or hallways should be limited and respectful.

Behavior Policy

- Participants need to respect themselves, others, and the property we rent.
- Participants are expected to obey the adults in charge and the posted KAT signs.
- Parents will be notified if disrespectful behavior is displayed.
- Students should not engage in public displays of affection.
- In cases involving profanity, verbal or physical abuse, or bullying, students may be asked to leave KAT for the day.

Behavior Policy, Cont'd

- KAT has a zero-tolerance policy on verbal threats regarding violence against others, use of weapons including shootings, bombings, knives, etc. Police will be contacted immediately when threats or allegations of threats are made.
- Lying about or falsely accusing another person of making such threats is considered a serious violation of the Participant Agreement.

The KAT Board is the legal oversight entity for KAT, and according to KAT organizational documents, its responsibility includes overseeing legal, procedural, financial and location aspects of KAT, and providing advice to the PAC. The board provides conflict mediation and intervention, and acts as arbitrators with PAC members, tutors, prospective tutors, students, parents, and facility managers when needed. As such, the Board has final authority to administratively withdraw students from KAT and determine eligibility for each family to enroll in KAT.

KAT Dress Code

Purpose:

1. To establish standards for the KAT co-op that support our mission and are consistent with Biblical principles and our Statement of Faith; to glorify God and edify others.
2. To promote an effective and wholesome educational environment in our diverse Christian community, while recognizing parental authority and accountability regarding clothing choices.

Background and Biblical Principles:

1. The spirit of the dress code is summarized by Romans 12:10: "Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves."
2. Each person is responsible before God for his/her thought life and for conforming it to the mind and will of God, including lustful thoughts. Out of Christian love for our brothers and sisters we also are obligated to consider the effects of our choices on other people, including what we wear. 1 We strive to engage in behavior that is righteous and pleasing to God and avoid actions that could reasonably tempt others to sin, or promote harmful conduct or unbiblical ideologies.
3. We carefully considered the Biblical wisdom of: honoring God with our appearance; unselfishness, humility and consideration of others above ourselves; self-control, modesty, avoiding temptation, and setting a good example.

Guidelines for all KAT participants on site (students, tutors, supervisory personnel, and parents):

1. Clothing must be neat, clean, modest, and not distracting to others.
2. The following is/are prohibited:
 - Symbols, logos, or other materials (pins, buttons, etc.) on clothing or accessories (such as bags or backpacks) that are in direct conflict with this policy, the Statement of Faith, or the Word of God (such as those with offensive wording/pictures or graphics with double meanings).
 - Visible undergarments
 - Skin-tight shirts
 - Visible midriff, torso, shoulders, back, or chest (such as tank tops, spaghetti straps, halter tops) or pants with rips/holes (showing skin) above the knees
 - Clothing inconsistent with one's own biological sex (Deut. 22:5), including makeup or costume play.
3. Other specifications:
 - Shorts must be clearly below the mid-thigh when standing.
 - Skirts, skorts, and dresses must extend down to at least the top of the knee while standing.

- Tights, leggings, compression shorts, and skin-tight pants are considered foundation layers and do NOT meet dress code unless they are covered to the top of the knees with garments meeting the dress code.
- Sheer clothing is allowed only if the rest of the outfit would meet the requirements of the dress code if the sheer item were removed.

Process for KAT Supervisory Personnel Addressing Dress Code Violations

KAT Supervisory Personnel includes: Building Supervisor, Tutors, Committee Members, and Parent Monitors.

1. In the case of a potential dress code violation, a member of the Supervisory Personnel will briefly and discreetly notify the student and immediately send or escort the student to the building supervisor for guidance. In cases where the tutor has released the student from the classroom, the tutor should briefly follow up with the building supervisor after class.
2. The building supervisor, with a minimum of one other committee member or tutor, will discuss the potential violation with the student in order to evaluate if it is a violation. In case of a disagreement between the supervisory personnel, a third participant (committee member or tutor) will be asked to assist in the determination.
 - a. If two out of three supervisory personnel do not concur about the violation, the student can return to his or her class or activity.
 - b. Upon corroboration of a dress code violation by two supervisory personnel, they will discuss the violation with the student and the building supervisor will follow the outcome procedures in Step 3.
3. The building supervisor will contact the parent to address the issue with their student. In principle, there are three potential outcomes:
 - a. The student changes his or her clothes to meet the dress code.
 - b. The parent authorizes the student to go home and change clothes.
 - c. The student remains at the building supervisor's table until the parent arrives with code-compliant clothes or to pick up the student.
4. The building supervisor will grant permission for the student to return to class once the violation is remedied.
5. The building supervisor will keep a log book of dress code violations that will include: date, name of student, violation, whether the parent was notified, and any additional details for record.

In the event of three dress code violations:

1. The family will be required to meet with the PAC Chair and another appointed member (committee member, tutor, or building supervisor) before the student is allowed to return to KAT.
2. Unresolved issues will be brought to the attention of the KAT Board and may require additional meetings with the student and parent(s) involving a PAC member and KAT Board member.
 - a. Attempts will be made for all parties to understand the context, attitudes and reasons for the violation, voice questions and concerns, and review the KAT policies and rationale.
 - b. The goal is to restore the student to good standing at KAT. 3.

Additional violations may result in student removal from the co-op.

Incident Communication Policy at KAT

Our KAT students have proven themselves overall to be very respectful, considerate, and obedient while at KAT. However, occasionally, situations occur that need attention. In order to provide clear communication with parents when situations arise at KAT, the following is our Incident Communication Policy. If your child violates the Participant Guidelines at KAT, a dated and signed note describing the incident will be sent home that day. This will provide an opportunity for you to discuss the behavior with your child, clarify any questions with the KAT Building Supervisor or PAC member who is aware of the situation (per signature), and respond by sending the signed note back with your child the next week. We are hoping this facilitates clearer expectations of students, provides monitors (parent volunteers) with the support and authority they need to complete their responsibilities well, and promotes open and two-way communication with parents as situations arise. These Incident Notes will be available to the following authority figures on hand during the KAT day: tutors, monitors,

Centerpoint Staff, PAC, and the Building Supervisor. If an infraction is noticed, the adult in charge (monitor, tutor, etc.) will fill out the form and seek out the Building Supervisor or a PAC member for verification and a signature before it is sent home with the student.

Examples of behaviors that would merit an incident would be, but not limited to:

- Disrespect of Centerpoint property
- Not wearing a lanyard or signing in/out after a clear grace period
- Not following rules regarding designated areas for KAT
- Disrespect of monitor, tutor, or authority at KAT
- Unruly behavior
- Using electronics such as cell phones in class
- Dress code violations

If a student receives three notes home, there will be a meeting with at least one Board member and one PAC member to discuss possible outcomes. Some behaviors from students and/or parents would merit a more serious reprimand than an incident notice, and would require a meeting with parents and possible dismissal from KAT. Examples of these behaviors would be, but are not limited to:

- Using Profanity
- Bullying (intimidating behavior to create a response in others)
- Verbal Abuse
- Physical Abuse
- Using drugs or alcohol, smoking or vaping on church property, including personal vehicles

Example of Incident Note:

Date: _____

_____ was spoken with today regarding _____.

This behavior happened (time, location, with): _____.

This is his/her _____ Participant Guideline violation at KAT. We want you to be aware of this interaction. Please contact katfamilies@gmail.com if you have any questions. Thank you!

Parent Involvement at KAT

We welcome parents at KAT!! Parents are strongly encouraged to be an integral part of our co-op and are always welcome to remain onsite while their children are in class. We have an open door and open communications policy. You may socialize in the study hall while your child is in class. It is helpful for students to wear a watch to keep track of when to leave study hall or the lunchroom in time for their next class. Please review your students' schedule with them so they are comfortable with it. Parents determine a child's readiness to be at KAT alone for more than one class period for the day.

Parent Commitment at KAT

Monitoring:

Parents are vital to KAT's success on a weekly basis. The main role a parent fills is monitoring the students and building for a day or days at KAT. We count on you to fulfill your monitoring duties to provide room set-up for classes and supervision for our students to help KAT run smoothly. Each family will have a chance to pick monitoring days based on how many classes that your family signs up for at registration:

1-2 classes = 1 monitoring day (or two ½ days)

3-4 classes = 2 monitoring days (or four ½ days or a combination of full and half)

5-6 classes = 3 monitoring days (or six ½ days or a combination of full and half)

7 & up = 4 monitoring days (or eight ½ days or a combination of full and half)

On their day of monitoring, monitors will be given a binder explaining their duties along with all the information they need to help their day run smoothly. **Monitoring times are from 7:15 am – 4:30 pm and each parent is expected to be on site for their scheduled time.** If you cannot fulfill your commitment, please ask your spouse or other current KAT parent to fill in for you. **Monitoring requires room set up, including lifting chairs and tables, vacuuming, emptying trash, etc.** If you are unable to perform any of these physical duties, please ask your spouse, child, (eleven years or older) or other current KAT parent to manage that portion for you. Scheduling for monitoring days is completed at registration and maintained through Sign-UpGenius.com throughout the year. For all inquiries regarding monitoring, please email the KAT Building Supervisor at katbuildingsupervisor@gmail.com.

If you are unable to fulfill your monitoring duties and know this upon registration, you may pay a **\$50/monitoring day fee to cover your day. Please see the Building Supervisor or PAC Treasurer to request a “buy out” on your monitoring commitment. You may also sign up to be a paid monitoring sub throughout the year.

Opening and Closing

There are usually 4-5 openers and 4-5 closers who rotate throughout the school year (about once a month). Openers help set up classrooms from approximately 7:15-8:30 a.m. Closers help at the end of the day from approximately 3:00-4:00 and oversee wiping down all KAT bathrooms and collecting garbage from all KAT areas: classrooms, lunchroom/study hall, KAT bathrooms and entrance areas. A parent who is an opener or closer does not have to monitor to fulfill their family responsibility for the school year. These positions are in lieu of monitoring.

Registration Fee:

Each family pays a one-time **Family Registration Fee** for the school year. If a family joins midway through the year or at second semester the full Family Registration Fee is required. Registration fees cover daily KAT operating costs and part of the building rent. Likewise, each family is expected to *read and sign the KAT Parent Agreement*, read and understand the Purpose and Organizational Statement, the KAT Biblical Statement of Faith and comply with the Participant Guidelines.

KAT Leadership Opportunities

Board of Directors

Role Description: A Board member is a volunteer position and a commitment to the KAT community. The Board term begins and ends in September. Commitments are as follows:

- Meetings four times per year, and as needed, to handle KAT business and legal matters.
- Assisting the PAC as needed.
- Hosting a pizza lunch in the spring for tutors and students.
- Communicating promptly by email; you must have the ability and inclination to answer emails.
- Be willing to enforce and support KAT participant guidelines and policies.
- While serving on the KAT board, board member families will not accept public school partnership funds for any child enrolled at KAT.

Prerequisites for prospective board members:

- At least two years of home schooling by choice (not merely due to pandemic restrictions in public or private schools).
- At least two academic years of KAT involvement; involvement includes, but is not limited to having students enrolled in KAT classes; being a tutor; PAC membership; or previous KAT Board membership.
- Affirmation of the KAT Biblical Statement of Faith.
- Reference letter from a person to whom the applicant is spiritually accountable, such as a pastor, shepherding elder, or other similar person. The letter should not be from a family member.
- Passing of iChat verification (required by Centerpoint Church).

Parent Advisory Committee (PAC)

A Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) member is a volunteer position and a commitment to the KAT community for at least two years (if possible). Commitments are as follows:

- 1 1/2-hour meetings one Monday of each month during the KAT school day. Usually the first Monday of each month.
- Assisting with June and August registration - both take place on Mondays from 9-3.
- Assisting with the Spring Tutor meeting. (Tuesday evening in April)
- Interviewing tutor prospects in February. (Mondays at KAT)
- Designing the schedule. (March and April PAC meetings. May require additional meeting times to complete)
- Hosting a tutor brunch in December. (Monday at KAT)
- Possibly assisting with pizza days, picture day, or any special events hosted by or at KAT. (Not all PAC members are necessary for these days)
- Communicating promptly by email; you must have the ability and inclination to answer emails.
- Be willing to enforce and support guidelines and policies.

Benefits for KAT Board Members and PAC

- Family Registration fee and monitoring responsibilities are waived.
- Early enrollment in classes.

2022-2023 KAT Leadership

Board of Directors:

Ben Brown
David Chapman
Dr. Michael Trexler
Denise Verhage
Dr. Peter Weilhouver
James Weiss

Parent Advisory Committee (PAC):

Bonnie Snell, *Chair*
Heather Gilsdorf, *Treasurer*
Katie Zeilenga, *Secretary*
Diane Bowman
Malissia Chopp
Laura Scheid
Lindsey VanderMeer

Please direct any questions for the Parent Advisory Committee to katfamilies@gmail.com.

BUILDING SUPERVISOR:

The KAT Building Supervisor is hired by the Parent Advisory Committee to help facilitate classroom set-up throughout the day and coordinates monitoring with parents.

Jocelyn Childs
katbuildingsupervisor@gmail.com

Thank you for your participation

