



Hilger Higher Learning Handbook 2026-27 (Big Hilger)

This handbook has been compiled for Hilger Higher Learning families. We hope it will help you learn more about our program, policies, guidelines and overall structure.

Contact Information

Hilger Higher Learning, Inc.

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Front Office Phone: (423) 987-4276

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Website: www.hilgerhigherlearning.com

Hours of Service: Monday - Thursday 8:00am - 4:00pm (closed on Friday)

This handbook serves as a guide to the students and parents of Hilger Higher Learning. We encourage our parents and students to view this handbook as a tool that gives direction on how to be appropriate and positive representatives of HHL, especially in terms of modeling Christ-like behavior. We encourage you not to view this as a rule book that is used to “keep students in line;” rather it is meant to provide general guidelines for them as they thoughtfully consider their role at HHL as image-bearers of God. Students and parents agree to the policies contained herein by signing the application form for acceptance into HHL.

Furthermore, by receiving this you understand that failure of the student and/or parent/guardian to comply with the standards, payment guidelines, criteria, terms and conditions, set forth on your application form and in this handbook, may result in the student being dismissed from his/her enrollment at Hilger. You also understand that your child is attending classes at Living Word Fellowship or Brainerd Hills Baptist at his/her own risk. In receiving this, you will not hold Hilger Higher Learning, Inc., Living Word Fellowship, Brainerd Hills Baptist, or any teacher or employee affiliated with Hilger Higher Learning, Inc. liable in any way.

— Eddy & Carlee Hilger, Co-Founders

Philosophy

Higher Higher Learning is led by qualified teachers and an administration committed to supporting your child's education through a variety of homeschool classes in Chattanooga. It is our goal to reinforce the biblical values being taught at home while providing a quality education. Although the parent is not the teacher of the courses we offer, the parent maintains authority over their child's learning and is responsible for holding their child accountable for completed assignments and preparing for tests/quizzes/labs. Our teachers simply serve as support for the parents who have chosen to educate their child through the home.

Vision

Hilger Higher Learning aims to support the continuing education of homeschool children in the greater Chattanooga area, through a variety of classes based on a biblical worldview. Our classes are designed to enhance and help the home-education process, while you and your child still have the freedom and flexibility home-education provides. We are merely a support to what you are doing in the home.

Our Partnership

We believe in the primacy of the parent as educator and the home as the center of education and relationship. We also believe the Lord provides spiritually gifted teachers as a resource to His people. Hilger collaborates with parents to create an educational hybrid which strengthens home-education. Hilger Higher Learning is a distinctly Christian tutorial program providing quality educational classes from a biblical perspective for children of Christian families. Our classes and extracurricular activities supplement and complement the work of parents in educating their children. We come alongside families in the Chattanooga area, to serve and support them in the wonderful endeavor of homeschooling.

Facility Stewardship

All students are expected to use our facility as carefully as they would any other public or private building. Any abuse of the building, equipment, or fixtures will require immediate correction. Some other points to keep in mind are as follows:

- Please do not drop your child off more than 5 minutes prior to the start of class, unless they are meeting with a teacher for tutoring. If your child drives, please do not allow him/her to arrive more than 5 minutes before the class starts.
- All students must be picked up or leave the church premises within 5 minutes after their last class is finished. Students may not linger in the halls or parking lot. To reiterate, if your child has more

than 10 minutes between classes, other than lunch time, they must be in a study hall, with you in the parking lot, or leave campus.

- Pick up procedure: Your child can wait on the front portico ramp for you. Or your child can wait in the side yard. If you do not see your child on the front ramp as you pull through, then continue on to the side yard area to find your child.
- Students may not enter the sanctuary, unless for class, and should not be in a vacant classroom unsupervised.
- No food or drink (other than in an enclosed water bottle) should be consumed in any classroom, unless it is designated as a lunchroom or there is a teacher-supervised party.

Behavioral Guidelines

All parents and students are required to meet the following behavior, terms and conditions:

- At least one parent or guardian must profess faith in Jesus Christ and be in regular attendance at a local Christian church.
- The student must conduct himself/herself in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ.
- The parent must be involved in every subject the student takes from HHL.
- The student must complete all homework on a consistent basis.
- The student should not have excessive absences. Our teachers will let you know if this becomes a problem.
- The student's grades should reflect his/her ability.
- The student must leave the church premises (parking lot included) after class, unless otherwise supervised by an adult or if he/she has another class within the allowed 5-minute window.

Requirements for all ZOOM students: This may be a student who is registered full-time as an ORT student, or a student who ZOOMS temporarily for one class.

- All ZOOM students will adhere to the guidelines within the Hilger Higher Learning handbook. Including dress code during class!
- ZOOM students will be on time to all classes and will be considered tardy if they are not present at the assigned class time.
- ZOOM students must have working video and audio capability prior to the start of class.
- ZOOM students will prepare ahead of time by going to the class website to make sure they have all materials necessary for class that day, including all printed off classwork, quizzes, tests, lab supplies, lab sheets, etc. Quizzes and tests will come from the parent via the Parent Portal.
- Video will be required to be turned on at all times so that all ZOOM students can be easily and fully seen by the teacher. If a ZOOM student needs a break from the video or needs to step away, the video must stay on at all times!
- ZOOM students will remain muted at all times unless they are speaking to the class or the teacher.
- ZOOM students will be held to the same standards of behavior and participation as any student attending On Campus classes at Hilger Higher Learning.
- ZOOM students should be prepared to respond/answer verbally when called upon. Pressing the spacebar is the quickest way to unmute and respond while on ZOOM.

- ZOOM students who are emailing assignments must send it as a PDF attachment.
- When sending a PDF attachment, multiple-page assignments MUST be merged into one file. Please do not send separate PDF files for each individual page.
- On the subject line of any PDF file you send, ZOOM students MUST type your name, the name of your class, your class time, and the name of the assignment.
- The NOTES app on any iPhone has a camera icon that enables you to scan any page and send it as a PDF document. Go to Notes, click the icon to type a new note (the square with the pencil), and click the camera icon to scan a document. When finished, click save, then click the three dots icon, then send a copy, then click the email icon.

Matthew 18 Principle

“If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over. But if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan or a tax collector.” Matthew 18:15-17

Students and families should love and honor one another by not participating in gossip or slander. Conflicts and disagreements should be promptly handled with love, honesty, humility, and direct communication. If an issue comes up in class, please contact your child’s teacher first. If further communication is needed, or you would like to talk to Taylor Woodruff or Eddy Hilger, feel free to email either/both of them at: Taylor.WoodruffHHL@gmail.com & Eddy.HilgerHHL@gmail.com.

Discipline

Correction is mandated by God through Scripture for conduct that is unacceptable according to set standards. The ultimate goal for students is that they become self-correcting because they are truly committed to doing the will of the Father. We will work with you, the main and final human authority in your student’s life, should a disciplinary situation arise.

Dress Code for middle and high school — Updated 2026-27

If you have any questions about our dress code, please let us know. Students who do not meet the following guidelines will be given a dress code slip and may be asked to call a parent for a new set of clothes if necessary.

- No tank tops of any kind
- No off-the-shoulder sweaters or sweatshirts
- No crop shirts that show any portion of a bare midriff are allowed
- No low-cut shirts of any kind

- No inappropriate advertisements or symbols may be worn. For example, the rainbow is a beautiful symbol of God's promise to his people. Wearing the rainbow to celebrate God's promise is wonderful. Wearing the rainbow symbol to promote or support the LGBTQ community is not allowed
- No excessively dark/gothic clothing
- Shorts and athletic skorts must extend to the end of the student's fingertips when arms are resting naturally at their sides.
 - Athletic shorts (e.g., Nike, Lululemon, etc.) often do not meet HHL's modesty standard. These may only be worn if they meet the fingertip rule on their own, or are worn over biker shorts that meet the fingertip rule.
- For skirts and dresses, the length must be no shorter than four fingers above the top of the student's knee caps.
- Leggings and tights (including flare yoga pants) are NOT allowed
- All pants and jeans must be free of holes or rips that lie above the mid-thigh area
- We request that pajama pants and tops be reserved for pajama day during Spirit Week, and not worn during the regular school year.

Public display of affection (PDA)

HHL encourages healthy interactions between students. We ask that students refrain from gestures of affection such as holding hands, kissing, prolonged hugs, massages, etc. Brief side hugs are appropriate.

Absences

It is the student's/parent's responsibility to visit the class website for information and homework assignments that were missed due to sickness, family trips, mission trips, inclement weather, etc. If your child is going to be absent, or you know they will be absent in the future, please contact your child's teacher in a timely manner.

Cell Phones & Ear Buds/Headphones

Cell phones are no longer allowed at HHL. In the event of an emergency, or if a student needs to get in touch with their parent, the student may ask for permission from the teacher in order to use their phone. Also, if a student needs their phone for studying purposes during a study hall, they may ask for permission from their study hall supervisor. Students are expected to have their phones put away and out of sight when they are on campus. This includes lunchtime and between classes. Last, if a student has their phone out or is caught using their cell phone in ways that we have not listed above, staff and teachers will take it away until the student's class day is over. If a student needs to take a photo or video for class purposes, then they must get permission from their teacher. If a student needs to check their phone for medical purposes, that is also permissible. We ask that Apple Watches, like cell phones, be kept in student's backpacks unless they ask permission to use them during study hall.

Food Delivery Policy

High school students are welcome to have food delivered during lunch or study hall. HHL is not responsible for coordinating with delivery drivers or resolving concerns related to driver contact, safety, delayed or missing orders, incorrect deliveries, refunds, or delivery status.

Students must include instructions directing the driver to meet them in the parking lot outside the entrance. Before stepping outside, students must notify their study hall supervisor that they are meeting a food delivery driver.

Financial Information & Policies

Per your signature and initials on your student's application form, you have a binding agreement with Hilger Higher Learning and are committed to the following:

Tuition Payments and Fees

- All invoices are due upon receipt and considered late if HHL has not received your payment by the 20th day of the month.
- A \$25.00 late fee will be added to each overdue monthly bill on the 21st of the month.
- If a check is returned for any reason, a \$45 charge will be applied to your invoice.
- Unless you specify otherwise, we will charge your card on file for all withdrawal fees. The card on file is the one you use to pay the application fees.
- All application fees and payments are non-refundable. On the rare occasion that a class does not form, we will contact you and refund the fees you paid.
- If your account is not paid in full by the end of each semester, HHL will withhold your student's grades. Furthermore, HHL reserves the right to inform your umbrella school of your student's incomplete grade if deemed necessary.
- If your account becomes overdue by 2 months or more, you will be responsible for all late fees and collections fees if you are delinquent in paying. Also, interest at 1% per month will be charged if your balance becomes over 60 days past due. Further, you agree to pay all legal fees, costs, and expenses associated with collecting your balance and any other efforts Hilger Higher Learning makes to enforce the terms of our application agreement/contract. If your invoice has not been paid and your bill is 75 days overdue, and you have a credit card or bank on file with us, you give us consent and the right to authorize and charge your card or bank accordingly. This is in conjunction with your signed agreement and binding contract (application).
- If your student is dismissed at any time of the year, all application fees and tuition payments will be forfeited.
- If you are a current HHL family, have an overdue account balance and are applying for the next school year, we will hold (and **not process**) your application **until you are current on your tuition invoices**. In other words, if you apply in March but have not yet paid February's tuition fees, we will NOT process your application until you've fully paid February's tuition fees.

Withdrawal Fees

- There is a \$150 charge PER CLASS and \$50 charge PER STUDY HALL if your student withdraws from any class AFTER June 1.
- There is a \$250 charge PER CLASS and \$50 charge PER STUDY HALL if your student withdraws from any class AFTER July 1.
- If you withdraw your student AFTER August 1, you are responsible for the ENTIRE financial obligation of the fall semester and will be billed accordingly.
- If you withdraw your student AFTER December 1, for any second semester class(es), you will be charged \$150 PER CLASS.
- If you withdraw your student AFTER January 1, you are responsible for the ENTIRE financial obligation of the spring semester and will be billed accordingly.

If you have not paid the withdrawal fees by the due date, and if we have not heard from you after two attempts to contact you, or if you are non-compliant, we will charge your card on file for all withdrawal fees. Your card is on file from the application fees that you will pay today to submit this application.

Parking Lot Etiquette

Please do not park under the portico. If you need to park, please park in the parking spaces so others can drop off or pick up their child and traffic can continue to flow properly. Please drive slowly and carefully in the parking lot. If you have a high school student who is driving to class, please ask them to drive slowly and carefully. Remind them that many of our families have young children and elementary-aged students who may be in the parking lot or running into the building. Little children are hard to see behind parked vehicles. **ANY** form of reckless driving will result in a warning. After the second offense, the student will be suspended from driving on campus for 90 days.

Nut Free Environment

HHL is a NUT-FREE environment. Out of deference to those who suffer severe allergies to various nuts, please refrain from bringing foods containing nut products. In other words, please make this accommodation to ensure the safety of other students who have severe, and even life-threatening, nut allergies!

Social Media

It is our hope and prayer that our students are engaging with their peers in ways that are in line with what HHL stands for and seeks to uphold. If we learn of something that has been posted/communicated via social media, we will touch base with the student's parents to make sure they, too, are aware of their child's social media interactions. If a student communicates (verbally or by picture) something that is not in line with the standards and behaviors we encourage and require at HHL, he/she may be subject to dismissal from, and at the sole discretion of, Hilger Higher Learning. Hilger Higher Learning utilizes social media platforms such as Instagram and Facebook to keep you informed. Feel free to follow us on both. On Facebook, we have a general Hilger Higher Learning Facebook page, as well as a Hilger Higher Learning parent Facebook page.

Weather

We encourage you to opt into receiving text messages via "Remind" text messaging. We notify all parents via Remind when there is a delayed or canceled day. All delayed and canceled classes will also be updated on our website's homepage (www.hilgerhigherlearning.com). We try to update this area around 11pm the night before and/or by 6:30am (if an update is necessary) the next morning. We also post our delayed/closed classes on our Facebook page at facebook.com/hhlearning. If you are coming from a treacherous area, and we are still holding class, please use caution and decide whether the risk involved is worth coming to class. Remember, your child can participate as an Online Real Time (ORT) student if it's too dangerous and they cannot make it to class!

Lost and Found Box

There is a "Lost and Found" box in the kitchen, where items are put when left in classrooms, the kitchen, the foyer area, etc. If your son or daughter has lost an item at the church, please check this box during school days. Hilger Higher Learning is only open during class hours, which is Monday – Thursday (8:00am - 4:00pm). NOTE: We do not hold classes on Friday, and there is no HHL staff member at the church on Friday.

Administration Staff

We have administration staff on duty every school day (Monday—Thursday). Office hours are 8am to 4pm. If you need to get in touch with someone at the church, please see the contact info below. Our administration staff responsibilities include assisting anyone who has questions or needs help, greeting visitors, monitoring halls to keep noise level and congestion to a minimum, assisting teachers as needed, and performing office duties. HHL staff are available to serve you and help keep the dynamics of HHL running efficiently, decently, and in order. We ask that your child honor and respect them at all times.

Taylor Woodruff, Director (423) 653-0191 | Taylor.WoodruffHHL@gmail.com

Printing Off Assignments at HHL

It is the student's responsibility to print off their homework if their assignment has been typed and saved as a document. Teachers and front office staff will not print off your child's assignment. If you do not have a printer, your printer isn't working, or you've run out of ink, your child needs to hand-write their assignment so he/she can bring it to class.

Grades & Attendance

All teachers will evaluate the student through various methods (including tests, quizzes, homework, labs, projects, papers, attendance, etc.) and give a percentage grade according to the student's performance and progress in the class. In addition, a personal evaluation of your child's progress in each class will be included in a semester report card. At the end of each semester, and once your tuition is paid in full, you will be given access to view and print your child's semester average in the form of a PERCENTAGE grade. It is ultimately up to the parents to report this percentage grade to their umbrella school and follow the umbrella school's grading scale. If you do not have an umbrella school, it is up to the parent to establish a family grading scale. Hilger Higher Learning does not provide a grading scale. It is your responsibility to report your child's attendance to your umbrella organization/school or the department of education in your county.

Integrity Code

Christ has called us to be bearers of the truth and people of integrity and honesty. In line with what God tells us in His word, we have an Integrity Code to help students become more like Christ in their academic and personal pursuits. While students are encouraged from time to time to collaborate and help each other, they will ensure that the work they submit is their own and that they will neither give nor receive unauthorized assistance or information in any form of school work to another student. Since all HHL students are homeschooled, they may not be familiar with plagiarism. Plagiarism is cheating and is often a difficult concept for some students. Students must give credit on all writing assignments for work that is not exclusively their own -- whether that work is specifically quoted or paraphrased. Finally, students are expected to do all in their power to support the community of trust embodied in the Integrity Code, and we hope they will not condone violations of the Integrity Code by others.

High Priority - Academic Accountability

If your child is struggling in a class, you need to be in consistent communication with your child's teacher, you need to step in and spend several hours a week helping your child, and you may need to consider hiring a tutor for extra help. In seeking to develop a successful academic environment for each of our students, while maintaining academic integrity, any student who receives a semester average of 70% (or lower) may be put on High Priority - Academic Accountability.

Removal or Dismissal

If the aforementioned headings, as outlined in this Handbook, along with the terms and conditions as stated, are not met and/or if Biblical behavior is not kept throughout the year and/or over the summer, we reserve the right to ask the student to discontinue classes at Hilger Higher Learning. **We have a zero tolerance policy concerning certain items, which include but are not necessarily limited to the following: alcohol, drugs, tobacco (this includes vaping and e-cigarettes). Students should not possess or consume these items. Under no circumstances can a handgun, pocket knife, hunting knife or any other form of weapon be brought on campus! If a student is caught with a weapon on campus or it comes to our attention that a student has had a weapon on campus, they may be suspended and/or expelled. Also, if a student is caught cheating on a test or quiz, he/she may be subject to dismissal from Hilger Higher Learning, at the sole discretion of Hilger Higher Learning.**

Thank you for taking the time to read the Hilger Higher Learning Handbook.