

virginiaacademy



**Lower School Program Guide
2018-19**

This Program Guide provides an overall programmatic view of the lower school, which includes kindergarten through 5th grade. For policies and procedures, please refer to our parent/student handbook. For more specific details regarding anything in this guide, please contact our Lower School Principal.

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ACCREDITATION

Virginia Academy is fully accredited by the International Christian Accrediting Association (ICAA) and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, which also certifies our faculty and affords Virginia Academy full accreditation with the state of Virginia.

International Christian Accrediting Association (ICCA)

ICAA exists to assist Christian educational institutions in the improvement of education within its Christian distinctive by establishing an organizational witness to their credibility of performance, integrity, and quality. For more information, visit www.icaa.us.

Southern Association of Colleges & Schools (AdvanceED)

The mission of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools is the improvement of education in the South through accreditation. School leaders engaged in AdvanceED Accreditation will:

- Take stock of themselves in relation to a set of research based quality standards
- Establish a vision, assess their current reality, implement an improvement plan, monitor progress and evaluate results
- Enhance the school's best thinking with the insights and perspectives of an external review team

MISSION AND VISION

Mission

Virginia Academy is a college preparatory Christian school serving families with children age 2 through 12th grade. Virginia Academy exists to prepare students for their best life through...

Faith

A confidence in God

Scholarship

A passion for knowledge

Purpose

A desire to make a positive impact

Vision

We see Virginia Academy graduates making a positive impact in every arena of life!

ACADEMIC OVERVIEW

Virginia Academy lower school is a diverse and supportive learning community where students are developing a life-long love of learning and being prepared for their best futures. Smaller class sizes, favorable ratios, and teachers focused on individual student success help everyone receive the attention and support needed to excel at their highest level.

Christian character development and mentoring help students to become the best versions of themselves - poised not only for success in higher education, but also in life. Music, performing arts, STEM, and art enrichment help to provide for a well-rounded education and life-long love of learning. Extended hours provide parents with flexibility of schedule & peace of mind to know their child is in safe care.

We use a blended approach to develop our lower school curriculum. Grades K - 2nd use "A - Beka" curriculum, while students in grade 3rd - 5th use a combination of "A Beka" and BJU Press (Bob Jones University curriculum).

The lower school teachers at Virginia Academy seek to provide a structured environment in which children can learn more about God's world from a Biblical perspective. Students not only learn about God's wonderful world but also about how they can use their understanding of it to be a blessing to Him, themselves, and others. The following provides the core of our lower school academic programming.

LOWER SCHOOL SUBJECTS

BIBLE - A Beka Publications (K - 5th)

Stories from God's Word and the teaching of principles of Christian living begin each school day. Students are encouraged to "hide the Word in their hearts" through Scripture memorization. A special chapel program is held each week for all students to help teach God's Word, encourage godly character, and build a foundation of Biblical understanding, which leads to faith in Christ.

READING/PHONICS - A Beka Publications (K - 2nd)

The goal of the K - 2nd grade reading program is to build upon the excellent phonics training received in the preschool to develop strong reading skills. Comprehension skills, advanced work analysis and vocabulary development are stressed to help the pupil increase his ability to read narrative and informational material independently. Students reinforce the application of phonics rules in their reading. Readings include excerpts from children's classics, biographies, historical events, poetry, scripture readings, etc to develop a well-rounded love

for reading in a variety of genres. By the end of 2nd grade, students will have developed a strong phonetic foundation in reading to build upon.

READING - BJU Press (3rd - 5th)

Students in grades 3 - 5 will have exposure to a variety of genres. BJU Press selects text that support a Biblical worldview and Christian character development. Passages emphasize literary skills, reading comprehension strategies, and vocabulary development through feature pages before and after each passage. The goal of our 3rd - 5th grade reading curriculum is to inspire a love for reading and teach an appreciation for literature.

LANGUAGE STUDIES - A Beka Publication (K - 5th)

English grammar, spelling, penmanship, poetry, and creative writing are taught with a goal of preparing children for effective communication of God's gift of language whether written or spoken. Students develop a strong ability to understand sentence structure and paragraph formation at the basic level; building a strong foundation for excellent writing skills, which will serve them well throughout their education.

ARITHMETIC - A Beka (K - 2nd)

A strong foundation in math facts, money, time, and place value are established early on in Kindergarten and first grade. These concepts are reviewed and built on in 2nd grade, where students will explore more difficult concepts like fractions, graphs, simple geometry, and multiplication and division. Students will begin to develop strong critical thinking skills through daily reasoning questions that focus on real-life application of concepts. Year-long review is incorporated into each lesson.

MATHEMATICS - BJU Press (3rd - 5th)

Taking an interactive approach, 3rd - 5th grade students will master concepts in multiplication, division, fractions and geometry. Emphasis is placed on computation and problem solving with daily chapter and cumulative reviews to help students retain math concepts taught. In 5th grade, students will begin to dive deeper into geometry and begin an introduction into algebra, preparing them for a successful transition into higher levels of math as they enter into middle school.

SCIENCE - A Beka (K - 5th)

God has revealed Himself through His Word and through creation. Each year the students build upon previous knowledge of creation by studying energy and matter, space and the universe, the earth, and all living things. All science is taught from a Biblical perspective. Students are able to marvel in and investigate the wonders of God's magnificent creation and learn about how they can use their knowledge to be good stewards and keepers of it.

HISTORY/GEOGRAPHY - A Beka Publications (K - 4th)

History and Geography begins with a basic knowledge of God's plan for us through "The Children of the World" series and Our Great Country (Map studies, Famous Americans and Places) In addition to teaching our children the facts of American and World History as well as integrating geography/map skills, each student will be taught to love America and appreciate our Christian heritage while also being encouraged to use their knowledge of our past and present to be good contributors to society.

HISTORY - BJU Press (5th Grade)

To help students develop a sequential scope and sequence in history throughout their upper school years, 5th grade students will use BJU Press' Heritage Studies curriculum. Students will explore the lands, people, and cultures of ancient civilizations around the world.

HEALTH - A Beka Publications (K - 5th)

This is the study of our body and how we are to care for it. God's Word has something to say about how we are to treat it. This course explores proper health, safety, and manners at the primary level. It transitions into the circulatory system, nutrition and physical fitness, digestive system, our inner spiritual makeup, and interpersonal relationships in the upper grades.

ACADEMIC ENRICHMENT

Virginia Academy offers a variety of enrichment to accompany the curriculum to provide a well-rounded education. Students receive at least one class of instruction a week from teachers who specialize in the area of Spanish, Visual Arts, Music & Performing Arts, Computer & Technology Education, and Physical Education. Physical education is offered to all grades twice weekly and Spanish is also offered twice weekly to grades 3 - 5, while others are offered once a week.

VISUAL ARTS

The Art program for lower school is designed to develop artistic skills through visual art production while managing basic creative factors. This is done primarily through the knowledge of the elements and principles of design, basic color theory and creative stimulation. Students will work with the following techniques throughout the school year: watercolors, tempera, acrylic painting, clay modeling, crayons, markers, colored pencils, oil pastels, and mixed media creations.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Our health and physical education program at Virginia Academy is designed to cultivate a desire in students to honor the Lord by being good stewards of their physical bodies through a life of fitness and optimum health. Instruction is aligned

with Virginia's standards of learning for Physical Education. Students will develop their physical, cognitive, and psychosocial skills by learning rules, strategies, game play and proper technique of a variety of sports and functional movements. These skills will aid students motor skill development and prepare students for a healthy lifestyle, both now and in the future. Students will gain an understanding of important fitness concepts through the instruction of the body's physiological response to proper nutrition and exercise.

MUSIC & PERFORMING ARTS

Kindergarten & 1st Grade

The goal of the Kindergarten and 1st grade music program is for students to experience learning through their entire body. Each student can participate in music through many facets including movement, singing, playing instruments, reading, and creating. In addition to learning beginning music theory, students will also learn vocal and instrumental technique. The Christmas program and Kindergarten Graduation will provide an opportunity for students to showcase their performance skills.

2nd - 5th Grade

2nd-5th graders take two semester-based music courses over the course of the year.

The instrumental music course is presented in the first half of the year and includes instrumental technique from the renowned Orff process. Students play various pitched and un-pitched percussion instruments including wooden xylophones, drums, and glockenspiels. Students also learn basic notation, music theory, and ensemble work.

Performing Arts begins in January as students begin to prepare a 1-hour musical production. After our elementary students are cast, they spend a few months in rehearsals as they learn to sing, act, and dance in various roles. Older students also have opportunities to work behind the scenes as stagehands. The final performance is presented in our main auditorium with full lights, sound, set, and costuming.

SPANISH

Spanish is the first foreign language offered at Virginia Academy. Students - kindergarten through 5th grade are required to take this beginner's language course designed to explore the multiple facets of the Spanish language and culture. This course will focus on an introduction to daily life communication, conversation, and culture. Because this is a beginner's language course and is primarily enrichment, children are graded on their participation and

communication skills in the classroom along with an occasional assessment for upper elementary grades.

COMPUTER & TECHNOLOGY

Computer classes at Virginia Academy will focus on digital learning - learning activities that effectively use technology to strengthen student's academic experience. Technology will be used to inform students in how to be a better digital citizen. Learning activities will include but are not limited to; coding, keyboarding, PowerPoint, Powtoons, Excel, Microsoft Word, Google Docs, Google Slides and other Google platforms.

CHAPEL

In addition to our academic enrichment courses, we provide a weekly Chapel service to guide character and spiritual development. Lower School chapel services take place weekly for all of Kindergarten – 5th grade students. Chapel begins with dynamic praise and worship songs followed by a staff-led Bible lesson. Lessons are usually presented in a series format and are tailored for elementary-aged students. The goal of Chapel is to instill a love for the Lord in our students and to help develop Christian character.

ADDITIONAL ACADEMIC SERVICES

ACADEMIC SUPPORT CENTER (ASC)

Virginia Academy views each student as an individual and endeavors to meet the academic needs of every student. On a case by case basis, Virginia Academy may be able to provide academic support for students with learning differences by managing and/or making accommodations for students with IEPs (Individual Education Programs) or private educational evaluations. A student's IEP/testing will be reviewed to identify needs and determine our ability to develop a Virginia Academy Academic Support Plan

REPORT CARDS

At the end of each grading quarter, parents and students will receive a comprehensive report card evaluating performance in all academic areas as well as conduct.

BASIC GRADING SCALES

Kindergarten, 1st Grade & Enrichment Courses:

Letter	Grade
O+	96 - 100
O	90 - 95
O -	87 - 89
S +	84 - 86
S	80 - 83
S -	75 - 79
NI	74 and Below

1st - 5th Grade Core Subjects:

Letter	Grade:
A+	97 - 100
A	94 - 96
A -	90 - 93
B +	87 - 89
B	84 - 86
B -	80 - 83
C +	77 - 79
C	74 - 76
C -	70 - 73
D +	67 - 69
D	64 - 66
D -	60 - 63
F	59 and Below

PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES

Lower School teachers are available for parent-teacher conferences throughout the school year by appointment. We will have extended office hours for parent-teacher conferences the week following 1st quarter report cards. Teachers will make themselves available until 5pm for conferences scheduled in advance.

Teachers may also request a parent-teacher conference for students of concern at this time and throughout the school year. We believe in teamwork and collaboration to ensure that all of our students have a successful school year.

Please reach out to your student's teacher if you have any questions or concerns. We look forward to partnering with you in your child's education!

END-OF-YEAR TESTING

Virginia Academy has implemented a number of measures to evaluate student performance and the impact of all our programs. Student performance measures focus on a number of instruments that provide data for assessment of our academic as well as behavior and spiritual development. Ephesians 2:10 tells us that "we were created for good works." We consider good test grades as evidence of "good works." In addition to our course assessments, Virginia Academy tests students in grades K - 10. This allows Virginia Academy to consistently gauge the academic performance levels of all students.

STANFORD 10

Each spring, our students take the well-known and widely used Stanford 10 (SAT) in Kindergarten through 2nd grade. It provides a comparison of achievement on a sample of grade-level curriculum to their national group. The purpose of the test is to provide a comparative rank and to show how a student performs when compared to their peers. The Stanford is scored on a scale of 1 to 99, with 50 representing the middle national ranking. Students are tested in the following subjects: Reading, Mathematics, Language, Spelling, Science and Environment, and Social Studies.

ACT ASPIRE

Likewise, our 3rd through 10th grade students test each spring, but take the ACT Aspire test. The ACT Aspire built in bench marking for the college readiness ACT test. This test allows us to track the yearly progress and readiness for college longitudinally while providing teachers and parents key prescriptions for needed improvement along the way. Students test in English, reading, and writing as well as science and math.

EXTRACURRICULAR PROGRAMMING

FIELD TRIPS

In addition to our enriching curriculum and classes, Virginia Academy students benefit from unique “out of the classroom” learning opportunities. Our students have approximately 3-4 field trips or guest presentations during the school year to compliment an already well-rounded curriculum.

STUDENT LIFE

At Virginia Academy we desire to prepare students for life. In addition to academic rigor, chapel services, and various field trips, we provide our upper elementary students the opportunity to serve on our safety patrol team, Student Council Association (SCA) and/or apply for admittance into the National Elementary Honor Society (NEHS). This gives them valuable leadership and service skills that will prepare them for future community and world impact.

Safety Patrol

5th grade students may apply to serve their fellow lower school students and families as a safety patrol monitor. Safety patrol team members help us monitor the hallways during our morning arrival times from 8 - 8:30 AM Monday - Friday. They are trained in how to greet students and families with a welcoming smile and will provide assistance to new families and guests as they learn to navigate our campus. This is an excellent service and leadership opportunity for our students!

SCA

Students participate in an annual election to determine student council leadership and class representatives. SCA officers and representatives meet with the lower school principal; speaking into the student life, service opportunities, and activities of the school. SCA leadership is made up of elected 5th grade students.

NEHS

Students in the 4th and 5th grades, who meet eligibility standards, can apply for admittance into the NEHS program. A committee of teachers will review applications and an induction ceremony is held each fall. Students will work to lead their peers in the four pillars of NEHS: leadership, scholarship, service, and responsibility. Students must maintain a 3.5 GPA and a clean conduct record in order to be eligible to apply.

STUDENT BEHAVIOR AND DISCIPLINE

POSITIVE BEHAVIOR INTERVENTION AND SUPPORT

Virginia Academy is dedicated to creating a positive climate with a research-based approach to discipline called Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support (PBIS). PBIS is an approach for teaching students appropriate behavior and providing the supports necessary to sustain that behavior. The goal of PBIS is to reduce challenging student behavior through a proactive, positive, and consistent manner across all school settings and to improve academic achievement and social competence. At VAA, our key component of PBIS is to teach students to be kind, safe, and responsible by setting the same expectations and using the same terminology across all school settings. These three principles foster a positive learning environment and increase student achievement through positive reinforcement. Our PBIS is associated with our school-wide “seventwelve” initiative, launched in the 2016-17 school year. This initiative is based on the Bible verse, Matthew 7:12 which states, “So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets.”

“seventwelve” Shoutouts

To help reinforce positive behavior, a merit is recognized by a “seventwelve” shoutout card. This is an immediate reinforcement of the positive behavior that also comes with a reward. Students may exchange their shoutout cards for a treat from the school’s lunch snack shack. Snack shack is open every Wednesday during lunch.

“seventwelve” Citizenship Awards

In an effort to recognize students for consistent positive behavior, each month teachers will choose two students to receive the “seventwelve” Citizenship Award. These awards will be given during our last Chapel service of the month. The award also comes with an invitation to a “Party with the Principal,” where students will have a special treat and or activity with the Lower School principal.

DISCIPLINE

Kindergarten - 1st Grade

The teachers will use a color system in order to provide the students with a strong foundation in understanding and receiving discipline as well as prepare them for the behavioral policies in the upper grades. Students are assigned a color based upon their behavior. (Green for positive behavior, yellow when given a warning for undesired behavior, and red for repeated undesired behavior.) Parents are notified at the end of each day if their child is assigned a yellow or

red color. Students who earn a red at any time during that week have immediate consequences such as loss of fun activities that usually occur at the end of the week and communication to the parents that their child has been placed on red. Additionally, students who are assigned green all week are given a reward at the end of that week. The reward systems differs depending on the teacher and the grade level, but some rewards include: a visit to the treasure box, extra recess, special privileges, etc.

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2nd - 5th Grade

The teachers will use the RenWeb Demerit/Merit System. Students will be given demerits for undesired behavior and merits for positive behavior. When a student receives a demerit/merit, the student will be alerted; and the demerit/merit will be recorded on the behavioral report form in RenWeb and the parent(s) and divisional principal will also be notified.

CAMPS

Triple C Camp, also a ministry of Community Church, provides all extended hour care and camps throughout the year. Led by our Camp Director, Shani Nyandemoh, our camp staff provides quality care, enrichment, and fun during the hours children are not in school but parents are still hard at work. Students, kindergarten through 5th grade, may enroll in any of the following camps. (Additional fees above regular tuition apply.)

EXTENDED CARE PROGRAMS: B.A.S.E CAMPS (Before and After School Enrichment)

Morning B.A.S.E. Camp begins at 7:00 am. Breakfast and focus on studying, community service projects, prayer journals and mentally stimulating activity is the basis of the program. Our morning campers enjoy the ways in which B.A.S.E. helps them to start their day!

Afternoon B.A.S.E. Camp provides a snack, homework hour and many enriching activities to support the mission of being a 'home away from home' for our campers. We offer classes and activities within the program's foundation, as well as added bonus activities for an additional charge. Some of our activities may include: music, dance, martial arts, soccer and STEM education, just to name a few. The afternoon camp runs daily from 3:00pm until 6:30 pm and is available to campers on inclement weather days, when the school is closed.

INCLEMENT WEATHER CAMP

Full day camp is offered when school is closed due to inclement weather! Academic based games and winter-filled fun keeps campers safe and happy while parents trudge through the snow to and from work. Camp is open to those students registered in B.A.S.E. Camp and regular camp hours are 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM.

WINTER BLITZ

During winter break, school is closed for all ages. Winter Blitz is our winter break camp for preschool through 5th grade. Campers experience pictures with Santa, celebrating Jesus' birth, and participating in a variety of age-appropriate activities leading up to Christmas and New Year's Eve. Elementary campers also experience Fun-trips to various places like Chuck E. Cheese's, Atomic Trampoline, and Shenandoah Discovery Museum. School and B.A.S.E. Camp tuition does not cover Winter Blitz. All students and siblings of students are eligible to enroll, however. Regular camp hours are 7 AM to 6:30 PM.

SPRING EXPLOSION

During Easter Break, school is closed for all ages. Spring Explosion is a week-long burst of activities for preschool through 5th grade students. Indoor and outdoor games, amazing FunTrips, and creative crafts keep our elementary campers busy and enjoying every minute of the week. Regular camp hours are 7 AM to 6:30 PM.

SUMMER ADVENTURE

Triple-C Camp has been the best summer adventure in Northern Virginia for 25 years! Triple-C Camp provides forty plus hours a week of summer fun and care with a variety of both indoor and outdoor activities for preschool through 8th grade. Along with the most exciting summer activities around, Triple-C boasts a top-notch staff committed to making sure children and teens have a very safe, but most active summer adventure ever. Regular camp hours are from 8 AM to 4 PM with extended hours available. For more information about the summer adventure, go to www.TripleC.Camp.