

Family Academy

John & Abigail Adams

Virtual Junior High

Student / Parent Handbook

20010-11

Mission of the Academy

Building the foundations of the family, educating
youth and parents in the arts of liberty and life

*“I always consider the settlement of America with reverence and wonder,
as the opening of a grand scene and design in Providence
for the illumination of the ignorant,
and the emancipation of the slavish part of mankind
all over the earth.”*

-John Adams

www.JohnandAbigail.com

Table of Contents

Introduction and Philosophy

Program Summary	1
-----------------------	---

Academic Program

<i>John & Abigail 5 Methods</i> that make it all happen	1-3
Simulations.....	1
Student projects (<i>P.L.A.N</i> book and portfolio).....	1
Writing workshop.....	2
Student-to-student learning.....	2
Mentors	3
How Learning best occurs.....	3
Role of Parents	4
Role of JAAA Mentor.....	4
3-5 student groups.....	5
Correspondence Virtual.....	5
Student-led Learning	5
Students are Listeners First.....	5
Elective Classes	5

Accountability, Assessment and Accreditation

Natural Accountability.....	6
Student Assessment	6
Grading	6

General Information

Behavior.....	6
Religion	7
Student Supply List	7

Tuition and funding

Tuition	7
15-day Satisfaction Guarantee.....	8
Self-Funding with Education 360° <i>Level 3</i>	8
JAAA Financial Aid	8
Enrollment Procedure	8

360° Mentoring Program

Basic overview and link	8
-------------------------------	---

Conclusion

Thank you.....	8
----------------	---

Introduction and Philosophy

Welcome to the John & Abigail Adams Academy. You have chosen to embark on an exciting and fun filled journey. Through the academy you will begin to practice new forms of self-education. You will get to know students with great potential and genius and with them prepare for life and future pursuits. The John & Abigail Adams Academy is a safe and secure environment where you can be challenged and inspired.

As a student at the academy you will find a powerful program gleaned from the works of great educators both ancient and modern. There are few pursuits as rewarding as self-education.

Program Summary

The **John and Abigail Adams Family Academy** is a distance learning virtual Jr. High dedicated to *building the foundations of the family, educating youth and parents in the arts of liberty and life*. We offer liberal arts program for students ages 11-14 located anywhere in the world. We honor parent stewardship and tailor student instruction with small classes. Mentoring is a time to start a dialogue regarding life, the past, current goings on and the future.

Students engage in the standard *Liberal Arts Private School* methods using the *Oxford, Great Books and Leadership* models as core contributing models.

JAAA Mentoring

That academy is designed to magnify the strengths of prior habits. We strive to stimulate and add to the learning, which is already taking place.

Academic Program

Daily, weekly and monthly 6 Methods that make it all happen

1. Simulations

Simulations are fictional scenarios where students participate in true-to-life events. Simulations allow for and inspire student initiative and ownership in such a way that the student is empowered. The student is the driver and a real love of learning can be expressed and increase through application.

2. Student projects (*P.L.A.N. book*)

Due to the age of the students it is very important that the students choose what they want to study and that JAAA allow for a variety of skill levels.

Each student will be expected to keep and use a Personal Learning and Action NoteBook. This will be a 3 ring binder where they can print off pages from the Academy and develop a course of action that will help the channel their learning.

Seasoned students come to know themselves better by measuring their habits, abilities and improvability. Students should eventually know how long it takes them to attain specific levels of language mastery, providing confidence for the

next exercise. Eventually they will feel as though anything were possible.

Examples*:

- WPM Words Per Minute (reading & typing)
- ER Epiphany Rate
- LM Language Mastery
- Limits Measured as current not static
- Cycles Their personal response to cycles
 - New situation cycles
 - Renewal cycles (mental, physical, spiritual & emotional)

* The examples above may be foreign. The mentor will introduce students to new material gradually.

Students record these rates and their best work in their portfolio. They also include periodic histories, as a student values their production more and more, their ability to self-educate increases.

3. Writing workshop

Each week students will participate in a writing workshop. The purpose of writing workshop is to build a love of writing in the student and show the child that they have the capability of writing amazing things, even if they don't currently spell well or use proper punctuation.

4. 3-5 Student-to-student learning

Each 3-5 student group will choose operable and doable semester goals using the structure of the curriculum. They will then help each other get from point A to point B by sharing common experiences and ideas as well as explanation and instruction. They will learn student-to-student as they move from one subject to another. The goal of a team is to function together in such a way that everyone is using their unique contribution to accomplish what may not have been considered possible alone.

Live-online learning through Elluminate

This is where students discuss books with their 4 classmates. The mentor will often join the dialogue questioning and prompting students.

This environment benefits the students because they are getting that real time response in an organized setting. The discussion exercise will be fairly fast paced because; unlike the classroom, students can all talk at once. Forums will be periodically archived for the students' use.

Parents will be asked to occasionally model this style of colloquia and at times join in the dialogue with students.

Student-consultant Conference Calls (C³s)

Because of the online nature of our program and our unique focus on epiphany-

rate students will often take on the role of consultants with the other students.

One student presents to the other four students. Students present their current project, discovery (epiphany), or article. In this setting the student presenting will always be the living classic. The other 4 students become readers and consultants. Students will be provided with a C³ format sheet and several inspirational trainings as they transition into the C³ system. The presenter/student will then receive an email from each of the 4 consultant/students with thoughts/questions/suggestions.

C³s provide a forum to *project* or give voice to epiphanies. This becomes really valuable as the student increases their *epiphany-rate* and begins to recognize natural epiphany correlations. C³s affect the student-to-student *relations*. Each student will grow as they value themselves and other students for what they can contribute (gifts, talents, skills etc.). C³s also affect students' *writing*. Most of the communicating in this environment will be highly valued and fairly technical. Students will begin student-to-student *dialogues* here and may eventually feel to add personal phone calls, email etc. when needed.

Natural accountability: After several calls and as the student begins to fully express genius we will begin to invite experts contributing passionate experience to join the call. This occurs especially at the high school and college levels, but it will likely turn out to be important that the framework be experienced in Jr. High. This will naturally add to the accountability a student receives from testing as they write and speak with an audience in mind

5. Mentor Meetings

Students call their mentor and report regarding their education each month. Each call is calendared at the beginning of the semester and is often prefaced by several e-mails. Students use the call to ask questions and consult with an experienced learner. Students also use this time to ask about people, find resources and expand options. In conjunction with the meeting they design accountability and assessment solutions and make commitments. At first many students will not be self-led and may even be dependent. Mentor meetings help students gradually pull themselves out of dependence.

Mentor-Student Correspondence

This communication has been referenced above and is fairly self-explanatory. Mentor/Student correspondence is critical. A student will often come to value their mentor as a friend; as this discovery is manifest education becomes more and more enjoyable. Mentor/student correspondence is a time for real humor and dialogue between people are glad to be alive and learning.

How learning best occurs

When students come in contact with knowledge and then relate it to themselves, knowledge becomes part of them. Through this process students relate knowledge back to the world around them and then back to themselves yet again. This back and forth

interplay converts knowledge through service into a *burning desire to make a difference*. Education is recognized as critical to that end and this is how learning best occurs. The best education is achieved as self-education is fostered.

Role of Parents

John & Abigail Adams Academy honors parental stewardship of their children. Parents will literally participate in the classroom. Parents will be expected to moderate and even teach for 3 weeks per semester about 9 classes. In the JR. High setting students are still very much under the tutelage of parents and teachers. They cannot be expected to design and understand the rigor high-school and college learning, but what they are doing now will have great impact on what occurs in higher education. Parents and mentors will discuss this and students should know that while they are really focused on the now there is more going on than meets the eye. Respectfully, we work to support and assist parents in educating their children. We will continually communicate with and include parents in their student's educational experience.

The environment of learning established in the home will greatly affect a student's attitude and ability to learn. We recommend parents take an active role in guiding, supporting and encouraging their children in their studies and preparation for life. Parents should familiarize themselves with their student's program and do what they can to read and discuss with their children often. Parents are encouraged to observe the student dialogue once every two weeks in addition to their focused 3 weeks, and join in the parent dialogue.

Parent Participation

We will benefit from the affirmation and close observation of parents with their children. Parents are encouraged to participate in the learning process periodically in both online forums and conference calls.

Because our primary goal as an academy is to foster self-education, we feel mentors and parents must recognize and affirm student initiative. There will be intentional environments where students and student-teams learn autonomously, with out the influence of mentors or parents.

Parents will be asked to participate by:

- Modeling: colloquia, dialogue, simulations, consulting, etc.
- Planning and preparation
- Modeling love for and learning of the liberal arts
- In-person coaching and teaching will happen by parents and or local community relations. Students will soon become the teachers so this should be quite enjoyable.

In the end believing and inspiring both by example and love

Role of the JAAA Mentor

A mentor models through example and inspiration. Through the academy mentors will interact with the students several times per month in the classroom, through interviews,

correspondence and even periodic inspirational articles or videos.

Mentor:

- Consultant and listener, helping the student work through barriers and complications
- Coach: When a student wants to master a skill mentors help them through procedures
- Friend: Humor and play are an important part of life and indicative of friendship
- Networker: Students need to connect with people for different projects, etc.
- Teacher: A teacher's main purpose is to project him/her-self so powerfully that the student wants to change and become more. (This may take place during classroom time, media recordings, dialogues online, telephone calls or through published writings).

A mentor also has a strong respect and belief in the student; confident that he or she can realize "impossible dreams".

Student Groups

Groups will be comprised of 3-5 students. Students will take on different roles with each other as they operate in different environments and circumstances.

Correspondence/Virtual

One of the great benefits of the JAAA's dynamic learning environment is a student's ability to move at their own pace. We hope students will have a love, even a passion for learning. Their abilities to produce quality work will likely soon exceed what the very rigorous traditional brick-and-mortar programs are requiring. We will start where the student is doing well and move forward.

Student-led Learning

Students will progress in different directions often at different paces. Learning can be expressed as "becoming" and this suggests change. Students come into their knowledge through different paths.

Students are Learners and Listeners First

The only time in life where a student is commonly justified in selfishness is during their education. Students naturally question, "What's in it for me?" This will be an inevitable and justifiable feeling. On the other hand, discussions do not flow as well when students are self-centered. How does a program encourage genuine concern and real personal inquiry between students?

When working together, students will be first considered consultants (listeners) with each other. Eventually students will engage in productive dialogue as they have done or will do with people in-person regarding books and all other learning (projects, reviews of experiences, etc.). Once productive dialogue has proved to be effective and increases independent learning, tools such as *Google Talk*, text messaging, etc. can be introduced into the educational program.

Accountability, Assessment and Accreditation

Natural Accountability

We believe accountability becomes natural and has greater impact when it occurs incidentally as part of the student's normal learning process.

The initial-class student/student ratio is 1:40. The after class student/student ratio is 1:5. Because students are working in such small groups natural accountability will be a powerful part of everyday learning. Outside relationships will also play a key role in producing natural accountability.

Student Assessment

Assessment defines the educational institution, identifying it as a *How, When, and/or What* learning environment*. A "how to think" leadership program must empower the student to be self-educated which includes self-assessment. The student portfolio, relationships and actions are the natural indications of a student's educational development.

Assessment is inherently valuable to the student; it is not the primary role of the educational institution to assess. It is the role of a school to teach students how to self-assess and provide options, models and systems for student self-assessment. The academy's success will be evident from the quality of students' portfolios and the contribution they are making to society when they leave the school and throughout their lives.

If parents should choose to emphasize an additional testing model we will facilitate and integrate their suggestions as we can and particularly with their son or daughter.

* Learn more by reading "*Thomas Jefferson Education*" by Oliver DeMille

Grading

Students will receive an A or a DA from their mentor. A= Shows marked improvement toward great masterly work and DA= Do Again. A and DA will translate into an "A" or an "incomplete" respectively on student transcripts. Each semester parents will receive a detailed analysis of the student's progress with both lists and narrative accounting of the student's work. Students should never feel timid regarding grades or their mentor. Mentors are the student's advocates and on the student's team.

Students will learn to keep records and to write histories throughout their education. Their personal portfolio will be a truly remarkable work recommending them to any institution they choose to attend. This will become more relevant in high school. As students simply dedicate themselves to their education, credibility and honor will naturally become their constant companions.

General Information

Behavior

We accept the standard rules applied to online discussion groups found in a typical forum registration agreement.

Disciplinary procedures will be handled through the Mentor. Students with consistent problems will be expelled. Expulsion can be justified by one serious incident.

Religion

The John & Abigail Adams Academy is a fully inclusive private school. Our mission states:

Building the foundations of the family, educating
youth and parents in the arts of liberty and life

We value the stability and depth that the world religions foster in our students and encourage students to speak openly about their development as associated with their beliefs. We strive to be fully included in each student's community of believers. We believe that people are generally good and value the unique depth they contribute.

"We have no government armed in power capable of contending with human passions unbridled by morality and religion. Our Constitution was made only for a religious and moral people. It is wholly inadequate for the government of any other."

-John Adams

Student Supply List

To be in the live-online classroom students need a good computer, high-speed internet connection, headset with microphone and webcam. Learning is the priority; supplies should reflect self-led learning. A student should begin improving their learning tools, especially as they begin building personal and public relations. A more detailed list with tips and options can be requested.

Essentials

Computer, access to high-speed internet, telephone with good long distance, commonplace book (3), paper (2-3 reams per yr), lined paper (optional), word processing software, 1 inch 3-ring binder (with hole punch) and writing utensils

Building up your educational supplies (optional supply list):

Pencil sharpener, stapler, paper clips, file cabinet, desk, PDA (Smartphone), art supplies, software, seal, rolodex, whiteboard, digital camera, digital camcorder, DVD player/writer, Great Books set, an expanding personal library, musical instrument, sports equipment, calligraphy set, copy/print/scan machine, 1820 Webster's Dictionary, chemistry set, etc.

If students live outside of the country we may have to call them for conferencing and meetings; most European and English speaking countries (including Canada) will not cost extra using VoIP. Please contact us for details.

Tuition and funding

Full-time student tuition is \$480 per semester +\$45 non-refundable registration fee. Students will purchase their own books and materials.

15 day Satisfaction Guarantee

Guardians of students withdrawing from the academy must see the administrator to make all arrangements and notifications. Refund schedule follows: 90% given within the first 2 weeks following the first day of class; 50% during the following 3 weeks; and no refunds thereafter.

Self-Funding with PR-Learning Course (*level 3*) provided by www.EducationalAscent.com

We are as committed to self-funding as we are to self-assessment. A student will grow to own their education much more quickly if it is self-funded.

The **PR-Learning Course (*level 3*)** will begin in the winter as an elective course. Students that complete the Level 3 training will be prepared earn their tuition through self-publishing as they study and/or a fundraising event. Special arrangements can be made to learn enough to fund sooner if the parent and student are willing to put forth substantial effort.

JAAA Financial Aid

No traditional financial aid is available for the 2010-11 school year from the Academy.

Enrollment:

Students will be considered based on their letter of intent and academic interview.

Admissions procedure:

- 1) Application
- 2) Phone interview
- 2) Students receive an acceptance Letter
- 3) Registration and new-student interview

Thank You

Thank you for reading the JAAA Student/Parent Handbook, it carries with it much of the spirit and substance of the John & Abigail Adams Academy. We recognize that a scripted introduction cannot fully describe what the organization is or will become. Please take the opportunity to meet the founders Allen and Martha Levie; if not in person, please call. We would like to informally meet all of the students and their parents outside of interviews.

If you are an educator or friend not attending the academy, who has taken the time to better understand the John & Abigail Adams Academy, we would enjoy talking with you. If you can suggest corrections or areas of improvement please call us and share your insights. We are grateful for your efforts.

Contents of the JAAA Student-Parent Handbook subject to change at any time.