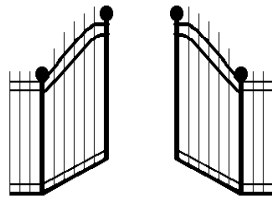


Gateway Christian Schools

Dr. Leo Crofford
Founder

Mr. Greg Stablein
Coordinator



P.O. Box 280117
Memphis, TN 38168-0117
(901) 454-1606
FAX (901) 454-9814
Gateway_@bellsouth.net

July 9, 2010

Dear Parent-teacher:

(Reading time: 15 minutes)

Enrollment for 2010-11—To re-enroll a student, it is necessary to send an application *each year*. The time to do this is the **BEGINNING** of each school year (August or before). Enclosed in this mailing are applications and an initiation form for the 2010-11 school year. Be sure that the applications you send are complete, including the educational plan for each student. Incomplete applications may be returned to you, sometimes causing weeks of delay or even preventing enrollment entirely. Parents who do not enroll their **senior(s)** at the beginning of the school year may delay or even prevent graduation altogether.

While the goal of home education is *education*, it is important not to overlook the paperwork aspect of this task. *Gateway believes that both students and parents have responsibilities in home education:* the student's responsibility is to complete the work that the parents assign and the parents' responsibility is to submit paperwork on time (in addition to choosing appropriate books/materials, planning and teaching lessons, and evaluating the student's work). If either the student or the parent/teacher fails to fulfill any of these responsibilities, then Gateway's program is not working for that family.

When submitting enrollment applications for **high-school students**, be sure to complete our new **High-School Educational Plan** sheet and include specific *course* names for high-school subjects (along with specific titles or publishers of your curriculum materials). This form (on the back of the enrollment application) is intended to assist you in preparing an acceptable educational plan. In addition, this plan will allow our high-school counselors to evaluate a student's status at the beginning of the senior year to make sure that there are no deficiencies which would prevent graduation.

Earlier Deadline for Registration—The *last possible date* for registration at Gateway has been changed to May 1 (previously May 15). If a student is not enrolled by the time 90% of the school year has elapsed, we consider it too late to enroll for that school year. It may be possible for such a student to complete appropriate forms to enroll for the following school year. It is particularly important to realize that Gateway does not enroll students retroactively. Returning families need to submit enrollment paperwork at the **beginning** of each school year, thus avoiding a lapse in enrollment. According to Tennessee's compulsory attendance law, students must be enrolled with a school at the **beginning** of the school year. Parents who do not enroll their children at the beginning of the school year may face truancy charges. **Late Fee:** In order to encourage earlier registration, we ask those families registering after December 15, 2010 to pay a late fee of \$20 per student. For a family of four students, this will be an *additional* \$80. Please register early in order to avoid the late fee.

Grade/Attendance Reports—The target date for sending final grades is June 30. The grade forms were sent to you with your Confirmation of Enrollment letter. If you haven't already, it is time to pull out the form on which you recorded first-semester grades, add second-semester and final grades, record days of study plus the date semester ended, and sign. (THIS LETTER IS BEING SENT TO ALL FAMILIES, EVEN THOSE WHO HAVE ALREADY SENT IN GRADES. It is not necessary to call if you have already sent in your grades.) Grades for a high-school student who does a summer session should be reported on a separate Grade/Attendance Report marked "Summer 2010."

High-School Credits—Students *graduating after August 2012* must complete an additional math course for a *total of four math credits*. This will increase the total number of required credits to 22 (previously 21). The new requirement will apply to students who begin the tenth grade in this 2010-11 school year and complete high school in the traditional four years. It is acceptable for a student to take Pre-Algebra (before Algebra I) to fulfill one of the four math requirements if it is done in 9th-12th grades. (Less-advanced math courses should precede more-advanced courses.) For students pursuing the college-preparatory course of study, we *recommend* a higher math in addition to the three currently required courses. Most commonly, this higher math would be Pre-Calculus with Trigonometry. Other options for acceptable math courses are Consumer or Business Math. This change in

math requirements is to ensure that Gateway students continue to be competitive with those from public and private schools as the state implements its new “Tennessee Diploma Project.” Half-credit courses in U.S. Government and Personal Finance would also be recommended (but not required).

High-School Students—Although beginning high school can feel intimidating to parents and students, Gateway has information to help you succeed. Our website includes information on guidelines, requirements, dual enrollment, seniors, graduation ceremonies, electives, and much more. It is vitally important for parents of high-school students to submit all paperwork (applications, grade reports, etc.) in a timely manner. Early or on-time submission of paperwork prevents many problems and can help our staff to assist you with any discrepancies in record keeping before they become a problem.

Distributive Education—High-school students who have a paid, **supervised** job may earn up to one high-school credit of Distributive Education per regular school year for 300 hours of work (150 hours for one-half credit). The emphasis should be “on-the-job” training. During the summer, Distributive Education may be taken for high-school credit only if academic course(s) are taken with it. A student may not earn more than two credits of Distributive Education over the course of high school.

Dual-Enrollment—Parents who plan for their students to take dual-enrollment classes should check with Gateway first in order to get approval. Gateway requires that all parents of dual-enrollment students fill out Gateway’s Dual-Enrollment Form whether or not they plan to receive high-school credit for the class. Students who desire high-school credit for college classes but do not get approval from Gateway before the first day of classes may not earn high-school credit at Gateway.

Because college courses are not designed to be directly equivalent to high-school courses, we consider it our responsibility as a high school to examine dual-enrollment courses closely to ensure that the appropriate amount of high-school credit is given. In contrast to courses taken at home, college courses are a package deal in which you have no control over the content (or even the pace). In order for us to determine how a college course compares to a high-school level course, we ask you to provide a course description for each college course the student will take. (For instance, review of a college course description for Pre-Calculus might show that the substance of the course is largely a repetition of high-school math that the student has already taken.)

Dual-enrollment students must be taking at least as many credits at home as in college in order to maintain their status as students with Gateway. Dual enrollment may only be used to *supplement* home studies. Students taking *all* of their courses at another institution will not be considered students of Gateway. Also, please note that as soon as a student completes the minimum requirements for graduation, he/she is considered a graduate and not eligible to continue at Gateway. Diplomas will be mailed approximately two weeks after we receive final grades.

Gateway students must not take enough college classes to be considered a full-time student at college. Students who become full-time at another school (college or otherwise) would be considered withdrawn from Gateway’s program. Most colleges consider students to be full-time when they take 12 college credit hours per semester. Similarly, students should not take enough college classes to complete their freshman college year while registered at Gateway. Most colleges consider the freshman year complete when the student has earned 30 college credit hours. Students who complete the freshman college year before high-school graduation become ineligible for most scholarships. For more information about dual enrollment, consult our website at www.gatewaychristianschools.com/Dual_Enrollment.html.

Is it Necessary to Register with Two Schools?—In the past, Tennessee students enrolled in a distance-learning program of an out-of-state school were also required to be enrolled with a Category IV, church-related school in the state of Tennessee (like Gateway) in order to comply with the compulsory attendance law. In many cases (according to recent information from the Tennessee Department of Education), simultaneous enrollment with an in-state, Category IV school is no longer necessary for students already enrolled in an out-of-state, Category III school. [In Tennessee a Category III school is defined as a school with accreditation by one of six regional accrediting associations (e.g., the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools). Category IV schools are exempt from such accreditation. Note that accreditation typically requires teachers to have teacher certification or license.] Simultaneous enrollment in two schools can be problematic. Enrollment in an out-of-state, Category III school now satisfies Tennessee’s compulsory attendance law. If you have a question about whether a particular school qualifies, contact them and ask.

Tutorial “Schools”—Similar to Category III schools, tutorials offer classes for home-educated students, but unlike Category III schools, *they often do not offer the protection of a school*. Students who take all of their classes at tutorials go to class one or two days a week, use materials chosen by tutorial administration, study coursework at home under the supervision of the parent, and, in most cases, have their work graded by teachers at the tutorial. Gateway’s Total Home-Education Program is designed for parents/guardians to choose and obtain teaching materials, plan the lessons, teach the lessons, and evaluate the student’s work at home. While it is acceptable for parents to “outsource” one or two courses of their child’s education to a tutor or dual enrollment, it

is not within the scope of Gateway's Total Home-Education Program for parents to outsource their child's entire education. Gateway believes that a tutorial-style program can be beneficial for many families, but our Total Home-Education Program is not set up to accommodate those who choose outside tutorials entirely in lieu of home-education. In fact, no program that assigns grades for all of the student's coursework would fit within the parameters of Gateway's Total Home-Education Program. In order for Gateway's Total Home-Education Program to work for a family, some courses must be taken at home under the parent's supervision. Remember that the parent should grade *all* courses.

Who's Teaching at Your House?—Gateway's home-education program is designed for parents or guardians to teach their own children. Home-educating parents may utilize a tutor or group class for a specific subject, but these are not to take the place of home education. Beware if someone offers to school your child, saying you must pretend home education and register with Gateway to make it legal. Because Gateway's home-education program is based on a teacher-student relationship between parent (or guardian) and child, Gateway considers a student to be WITHDRAWN if he or she moves out of the home. Also, we consider it a serious ethical violation for a student to prepare and sign his or her own Grade/Attendance Report and/or application. Because this compromises Gateway's honor system, such students are typically dismissed from the Total Home-Education Program.

E-mail—In order to prevent infection by viruses or worms, we do not open e-mail attachments. Also note: though we do not accept applications or grade forms by e-mail, it is an excellent way to communicate your questions, concerns, and requests. Gateway's email address is: gateway_@bellsouth.net.

Getting-Started Seminars—About once a month we have a free seminar at Gateway entitled, "A Good Start in Home Education." About four times a year we have a free supplemental seminar entitled, "Teaching High School at Home." Check www.gatewaychristianschools.com/Seminars.html for dates, times, updates, directions, details, and topics.

New and Improved Gateway Website—With the exception of our enrollment forms, our website includes all of the information in our registration packet—and much, much more. (We continue to handle registration by mail or fax in order to help ensure the privacy and security of our home-educating families.) Our website also includes information on high school, dual enrollment, and getting started in home education. Go to www.gatewaychristianschools.com.

What Can We Do for You?—As home education in Tennessee continues to grow, options for enrolling students in other home-education programs also continue to crop up. Some offer online registration and others provide teaching materials. Gateway offers you a staff with a heart to serve and an established program with a rich history of high standards for graduates. To provide you with the information you need, we stay abreast of changes in Tennessee legislation concerning home education as well as changes in the home-educating community. Our staff is educated and always ready to help home educators who have a heart to teach. Gateway phone lines are sometimes quite busy with phone counseling. For those of you who find it hard to reach us by phone, try dropping us an email at Gateway_@bellsouth.net. We do our best to answer emails quickly and accurately! We appreciate all the families who have supported and continue to support us as we serve the Lord through home education.

From the Heart—Lifetime Education—Success in home education requires having the proper goal and the right vision. What if the things memorized today are forgotten tomorrow? What if the things diligently learned by your child are never used? What if all of the words and terms become like dust in a remote corner, and the formulas and definitions find themselves in solitary confinement, shut away in forgotten recesses of the mind? The way you approach home education makes a difference. It is not enough to simply "cover" material or complete worksheets. You must also show your child the relevance and practical application of things *before, during, and after* the lesson. Provide context for the concept that your child is attempting to master. Can you answer your child's questions? Do not be alarmed if you are currently challenged by them. (Think "Are you Smarter than a 5th Grader?") Answering your child's questions requires that you become a learner yourself, and to the degree that you succeed, you will be able to teach your child and apply what is learned, even on the spur of the moment. Children learn by example. When finding answers becomes a habit for *you*, not only will you be able to answer their questions, but your children will also follow your example by finding the answers for themselves. Your habit of learning will become part of your family's lifestyle. To become a learner, you need to become practiced at finding information. Are *you* willing to learn? You need to know where to look or who to ask. Who would know the answer? Are you humble enough to ask? Do you consider it worth your while to become skilled at using a concordance, a dictionary, an atlas, an encyclopedia, a field guide or the internet? Try to identify an unknown star, planet, cloud, animal, plant, place, or language. To assist in later identification, make a brief audio recording, snap a photo or jot down a few observations.

Yesterday, when asked where to find the planet Saturn, I had no idea. This, however, was not the end of the story. Using an internet search engine (e.g. Google), I looked for Saturn July 2010, and found that Saturn was

easily located in the western sky about an hour after sunset. This approach could be termed “observational astronomy.” Try this: With brilliant planet Venus as a starting point, proceed in a ten o’clock direction about 20 degrees to find reddish Mars and then continue in the same direction about 13 degrees further to find Saturn. (Ten angular degrees can be estimated as the width of your fist held at arm’s length.) I learned further that in mid-July, the planet Mercury would be joining this planetary assembly very low in the western sky. This sort of teachable moment might be remembered for a lifetime. I still remember the time my father prepared a giant pinhole camera for us to get inside to watch an eclipse of the sun. Of course, one should **NEVER look directly at the sun**, even from inside a giant pinhole camera made from a refrigerator box.

It is amazing what you can do with ordinary things. My children vividly remember various science experiments we have done at home. A purple-cabbage leaf boiled in a pan of water produces a fairly memorable pH indicator. Samples of this solution will change different colors when acid or base is added. Try this experiment (with supervision): Your children can use purple-cabbage juice to test the pH of various solutions around the house. This experiment could lead to a unit study on acids or bases. Try to find accounts of scientists who contributed to understanding of acid and bases. For example, can you find information about nitric acid (which is unusual in its ability to dissolve silver) or about Johann Rudolf Glauber, the Dutch chemist who made nitric acid by distillation from saltpeter? Hands-on and lifestyle of learning methods, biographies and unit studies are fantastic—using a variety of *appropriate* resources can be more effective than a textbook approach, but be sure to cover the full spectrum of course content.

At our house, a lack of knowledge sometimes precipitates a discussion, leading to a lesson that boils down to Latin or Greek word roots. Recently, in trying to differentiate the words elapse and lapse, we found that the Latin verb *labi* (meaning to slip, fall or slide), lies behind such words as collapse, prolapse, relapse and labile. We also found that *elapse* refers to time that has slipped or passed by, while *lapse* often refers to the unintentional failure to do something (e.g. membership, enrollment, or even concentration can lapse). Your membership with the YMCA might lapse if it *slips* your mind to send a check for the month. Your enrollment with Gateway might lapse if it *slips* your mind to submit the appropriate paperwork.

Use these ideas and examples as a catalyst to spark *your* willingness to learn and your ability to teach. Learn to see the world with the fresh eyes of a child.. Studies that are practical, real, and relevant contribute interest and this gives *life* to education.

Serving in the Kingdom,
Greg Stablein