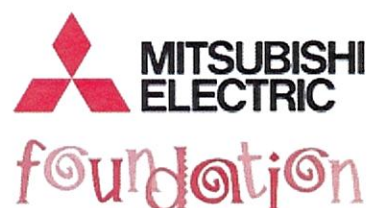


**2025 – 2026**  
**Student Handbook**

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## Welcome

Congratulations! You are remarkable! You have chosen to continue your education with a unique transition program that is designed to help you build life-ready skills, leading to increased independence, post-secondary education opportunities, and competitive employment. This year you will have many unique opportunities, remarkable successes, and some failures. Still, with each experience, you can count on the Achieve staff and the Evangel University peer mentors to help you through the ups and downs of building a vision for your future.

## Vision and Mission Statement

Achieve Southwest Missouri's vision is to change the fabric of the community by empowering young adults with disabilities to live their most independent life. Achieve's mission is to provide a post-secondary transition program that builds skills in life management, career exploration, and self-determination. The program is designed to provide unique opportunities, structured learning, and multiple practice sessions in work readiness and independence.

## Important Information You Should Know

Achieve of Southwest Missouri is a local not-for-profit that has a facility partnership with Evangel University. Achieve students must adhere to the policies and procedures of the Achieve program and the policies and expectations of Evangel University. Achieve is responsible for hiring instructors, student admission, evaluation, reporting, and graduation.

## Program Description

Achieve is a unique transition program that thrives on building life-readiness skills for young adults with disabilities. This process is accomplished by providing intensive person-centered instruction, coaching, mentoring, and worksite experiences for approximately 600 hours, resulting in a life plan for continued education, employment, housing, transportation, and recreation.

Achieve is housed on the Evangel University campus with same-age young adults who are also

exploring and building future life plans. Achieve students will be paired with a peer mentor who will assist them with building social capital and participating in various college activities. Achieve students and peer mentors will have specific person-centered goals to work toward, and students will be expected to reflect on their social experiences and learn from their reflections.

Achieve has developed cooperative relationships with various campus departments to provide work-based learning opportunities. This structured opportunity allows students to explore their career interests and learn transferable work readiness skills that any employer will value.

Achieve recognizes the lifetime role that supportive families play in the lives of thriving young adults. Therefore, Achieve will work closely with the family unit and provide support and coaching as their roles evolve.

Upon graduation, Achieve students will have a well-rounded person-centered plan that includes the goals and objectives for their next step in life. Individuals may then choose to enroll in college classes; they may apply for competitive employment or be referred to Vocational Rehabilitation to work with a local employment provider who will assist them with the final steps to employment.

Students will attend Achieve three days a week, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday. As planned, Achieve students will be off-campus on some days practicing life management skills (such as independence in shopping, banking, etc.), volunteering, or experiencing a work-based learning site in the community. All the while, Achieve students will be practicing self-advocacy skills to gain confidence and maturity.

During the day, students will spend half their time in the classroom receiving specialized person-centered instruction on life management, career exploration, and self-advocacy skills. In the other part of each day, students will explore career interests and learn work readiness skills with various University Departments. In addition, each student will participate in multiple worksite rotations during the school year. Differing job training locations and experiencing different

supervisory personnel will help expand the students' vocational skills. Achieve students who feel they may benefit from a second year at Achieve may apply to continue in the program.

## Transportation and Supervision

Each student will need to secure transportation to and from Evangel University. Students will be expected to be in the classroom at 9:00 AM and will be expected to be picked up from campus at 3:00 PM unless other arrangements have been made. Supervision from Achieve staff will only be from 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM. Students may choose to be on campus earlier or stay later, but they will not be under the responsibility of Achieve staff.

## Daily Schedule

The following times are approximate and depend on several factors, including the number of students, work-based learning site needs, and individual goals.

### Typical Achieve Schedule (subject to change as needed)

8:45 – 9:00	Students arrive on Campus
9:00-11:00	Achieve Curriculum Instruction
9:45-10:45	Chapel Attendance- (Friday)
11:30-12:00	Lunch
12:15-2:45	Work-based learning sites
2:45-3:00	Instruction/Debriefing (Achieve classroom)
3:00	Dismissal



## Project Life-Curriculum

Achieve of Southwest Missouri received a matching grant from Mitsubishi Electric Foundation to purchase our curriculum from Butler Tech. This partnership and evidence-based curriculum provide Achieve students with quality instruction in the following course units:

**Unit 1:** Safety Skills

**Unit 2:** Self-Determination

**Unit 3:** Independence

**Unit 4:** Social and Communication Skills

**Unit 5:** Financial Skills

**Unit 6:** Technology Skills

**Unit 7:** Physical and Emotional Wellbeing

**Unit 8:** Independent Living Skills

The curriculum enables instructors to measure information received and the transfer of knowledge. Students and parents will be provided with progress reports, assessment results, work-readiness reports, and documented behavioral concerns during the Student Planning & Reflection meetings.

## Lunch

While on campus, Achieve students can access the Evangel University Dining Hall, the Joust, and snacks in The Barracks Coffee Shop. As an Achieve student, one lunch meal a day is provided when students are on campus and Achieve classes are in session. Students must have available and present their ID card/prox at the register, in the main dining area, at the time of purchase to access food service meal plans. Each meal purchased is deducted from a prepaid meal plan. Unused prepaid lunch meals are not carried over or reimbursed. Should a student desire to eat more than one meal on campus, it will be at their expense. Students are encouraged to bring cash for snacks and additional meals if desired. Additionally, students will need cash to purchase lunch while attending community trips.

Students with specific dietary needs or allergies can meet with the Director of Food Services or call 417-865-2815 X 7252 to discuss their nutritional needs. See Achieve Program Handbook for dining hall hours.

## Work-based Learning Site Rotations

Subject to the individual needs of each Achieve student, they may participate in up to three (3) job training experiences. Each rotation will be determined by the Achieve staff and the student's needs. During the first two weeks of the year, each student is evaluated and placed in the most appropriate job training location based on the recommendation of Achieve staff. Students will be evaluated each rotation by both the instructor and job site personnel.

***Note: Worksite partners may refuse any student who does not meet business site standards and policies for fitness, duty, health, safety, dress, appearance, proper identification, or ethical behavior.***

## Reasonable Accommodations

Achieve staff will collaborate with Evangel University Department managers to ensure our work-based learning sites are accessible. Please let staff know how they can assist you if you need reasonable accommodations. ***A reasonable accommodation is a change or adjustment to an environment that allows an individual with a disability to perform their job effectively.***

## Skills Coach

A Skills Coach is an employment training professional who provides job-site training support, assessments, and on-site fading supervision for individuals with disabilities. At Achieve, a skills coach may be used to assist students by providing specialized training and job-related support services, sometimes referred to as reasonable accommodations in the world of work. They also record daily notes and provide detailed weekly reports on student progress.

A Skills coach provides these services until the student can perform the tasks independently. This determination depends on the student's ability to safely and independently follow the



department rules and tasks of the job training environment. This time can take anywhere from one week to ten weeks. It is very individualized.

## **Your Future, Your Dream, Your Team**

Everyone participating in Achieve of Southwest Missouri is unique. You are here to make a better future for yourself. Therefore, it is essential for you to "self-advocate" or talk with us about what you want so that we can better assist you in your journey to adulthood and employment. Throughout the program, you will be challenged to be self-aware and to communicate your wants and needs. ***Self-advocacy means speaking up for yourself. It requires knowledge of your personal strengths, needs, and rights as a citizen.***

For Achieve to help you reach your future goals of independence, community employment, or college, we must have meetings. These "Planning and Reflection Meetings" are designed to gather information, set goals, and develop a plan for your future. The meetings will also teach you how to use reflective learning skills to learn from your experiences and continue making better decisions. Your parents/guardians will be invited to this meeting, but you are welcome to invite anyone else whom you feel is a significant supporter. We are happy to assist you with this if you would like our staff to invite those you would like to attend. In addition, if there is someone you would like to be kept informed of your progress, with your permission, we can contact them with updates. These people will be your team!

## **Planning and Reflection Meetings**

Each Achieve student will have at least two scheduled planning meetings throughout the year in addition to the orientation meeting at the beginning of the year. Each student's team will be invited to participate in these meetings. This team consists of the program instructor, student, parent(s)/guardian(s), Evangel University Liaison, and at times local service providers such as (Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor, Service Coordinator, etc.) **Participants will be advised of the day and times available to schedule their meeting.**

## Progress Reports

Reports will be given to the student approximately every nine weeks following a work-based learning rotation. Students will also receive feedback on course-of-study progress throughout the school year. In addition, parents and/or guardians will receive this information during the Planning and Reflection Meetings.

## Parent Workshops

Research indicates that family relationships and support influence an individual's success. No parent wants to watch their child struggle, and the urge to protect can be overpowering. These workshops will acknowledge the desire and need for protection but challenge parents to allow their children to struggle and practice using natural situations for coaching and building the student's decision-making and problem-solving skills. Parent workshop dates will be shared on the Achieve calendar and during the Parent/Program Orientation.

## Community-Based Trips

Students will participate in community-based outings throughout the year. These trips include restaurants, shopping trips, and other activities. Before these trips, students will discuss appropriate behavior, etiquette required at the locations, and a budget to maintain (when necessary). Activities will be selected and communicated to parents in advance, along with any additional cost. In most cases, transportation will be provided to and from Evangel University.

## Parent/Program Orientation

The Fall Parent/Student Orientation Meeting is a **required event** to attend. This meeting is designed to ensure each participant and their family is presented with an overview of the program's policies and requirements. In addition, the meeting provides time for students and their families to have any questions answered. Parents and Students are responsible for their transportation to and from this event.

## Policies

The following policies have been implemented for young adults to learn appropriate behaviors expected from adults. These policies support reflective learning and mature behavior. Some policies apply to the college campus environment, and others are built to simulate real-world employment expectations. These policies are essential to help prepare students for independence and integrated community employment. **General student conduct expectations can be found in the Achieve Program Handbook under Responsibilities of Membership in the Evangel community.**

### Attendance Policy

Students are expected to attend Achieve each day of your scheduled class. When students cannot attend Achieve, ***they must contact the instructor directly*** by calling the instructor (*Texting is not an acceptable method unless permission for this type of correspondence has been given*). If the instructor is unavailable, the student must leave a message with their name and the reason for the absence. (*See the back of this handbook for a script students can use to assist them*).

If the student is aware of an upcoming absence, a "Request for Time Off" form must be completed three (3) days before the absence and given to the instructor for approval. Students may use the "Request for Time Off" form for scheduled doctor appointments, agency meetings, and interviews.

Absences exceeding two (2) without a "Request for time off", two (2) no-call, no-show absences, or students who are ½ hour tardy past the program start time will be considered an unexcused absence. Achieve will take any steps of consequence needed to address absences. See page 16 of this Achieve Student Handbook.



## Inclement Weather

Achieve students will follow the closings/delay determinations of Evangel University. If classes are canceled or modified for the University, Achieve classes will be canceled or modified. In most cases, Achieve will host a Zoom class during days that the University is closed.

## Open House

Achieve may host an evening program, "Open House," each year. If scheduled, Student participation in the open house **is required**. Students will share information about their current experiences with Achieve. Students will be responsible for their transportation to and from this evening event. Achieve will inform students and families beforehand should an Open House be scheduled.

## Dress Code

At times, students may be required to wear an Achieve shirt. Students are provided one (1) shirt from Achieve. Additional Achieve t-shirts are available for sale upon request.

Students can wear black or tan pants with their uniform shirts. Pants must be clean and free of tears. Various worksites may have certain dress expectations for interns.

Every day at school, students must wear appropriate footwear.

If specific footwear is needed for certain worksites, the instructor will assist you in where to purchase them. The Achieve/Evangel Program Handbook contains additional information on appearance expectations.

## Hygiene

Students must always maintain an employment standard of hygiene. To achieve this level of hygiene, students should shower daily to eliminate body odor and keep their hair clean. Students also need to maintain a clean, shaven face, clipped and clean fingernails, clean clothes, and a business-appropriate hairstyle.

## Personal Belongings

Students must wear their Evangel University-issued name badge/prox during program hours. Achieve students will not be given a locker for their personal belongings. They are responsible for all materials they bring to the program. Personal belongings may be kept in a backpack and carried through campus or kept in the locked Achieve classroom during work site participation.

## Electronic Devices

Student use of personal electronic devices, such as cell phones, is allowed and used in an appropriate adult manner. However, if the student cannot utilize the device appropriately and its use causes problems, the behavior policy and consequences will be utilized (See the Achieve Handbook). This excludes devices used for assistive communication purposes. Achieve of Southwest Missouri and Evangel University are not responsible for lost, stolen, broken, or misplaced devices.

## Internet Usage

Achieve of Southwest Missouri and Evangel University is pleased to provide each student access to computers and the internet during the program. However, each student must take personal responsibility for the acceptable use and internet safety policies set forth by Evangel University and found in the Achieve/Evangel Program Handbook.

Unacceptable uses include:

- Inappropriate website searches
- Transmission of offensive or harassing messages.
- Behavior that jeopardizes individual security by sharing passwords or other unauthorized use of personal devices, networks, or informational systems.
- Students may not buy or sell anything over the internet.
- Do not use the internet to access, make, distribute, or redistribute jokes or stories based on race, gender, ethnicity, nationality, religion, or sexual orientation stereotypes.
- Don't assume that the sender of a message is giving you permission to forward or redistribute messages to third parties.



**Cell phone use:** Personal cell phones will be set to 'silent' or powered off during class and on worksites unless used for educational purposes as defined by the instructor. During students' free time, phones may be used as long as they are not a disruption, and such uses comply with Evangel University standards.

**Failure to follow Policy:** Use of the computer and the internet is a privilege, not a right. A user who violates this policy shall, at a minimum, have their access to the computer network and internet terminated. Achieve will determine further consequences on an individual basis.

## **Evangel University Responsibilities of Community Membership**

1. Demonstrate personal, social, academic, and professional integrity.
2. Maintain a healthy lifestyle.
3. Uphold standards of sexual purity and humility.
4. Strive to grow in a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

Read more about Evangel Community Membership in the Achieve/Evangel Program Handbook.

## **Responsibilities of Program Collaborators**

Achieve of Southwest Missouri is designed to help each student, and their families work in partnership to build life readiness skills in life management, career exploration, and self-determination.

## **Student Responsibilities:**

- Agree to seek the next transitional step after the Achieve program.
- Maintain appropriate attendance in alignment with the program attendance policy.
- Adhere to the standards of dress and appearance according to the program and worksite standards.
- According to the standards established by the worksite and program policy, including safety regulations, conduct oneself appropriately in the classroom and on the work assignments.
- Learn and perform duties and tasks identified in the job descriptions for each assigned work site.

- Actively participate in systematic planning and reflection meetings.

### **Parent/Guardian Responsibilities:**

- Support their son/daughter's interest and desire to pursue their next transitional step in the community after Achieve.
- Assist their son/ daughter in understanding the requirements of Achieve.
- Participate in orientation, planning, and reflection meetings with their son/daughter.
- Commit to being fiscally responsible for tuition and fees.

### **Achieve of Southwest Missouri Responsibilities:**

- Manage and operate Achieve in cooperation with its facility partner, Evangel University.
- Maintain ongoing communication regarding program operation and evaluation to students, parents/guardians, and other appropriate agencies.
- Manage financial support and reporting.
- Provide in-kind administrative and supervisory support for the program.
- Coordinate communication with worksite/business, participants, and their families regarding any issues or concerns.
- Keep reports of students' attendance, reflections, and progress.

### **Worksite Responsibilities:**

- Provide a contact person/liaison to assist in planning, communication, and implementation of Achieve.
- Define workplace expectations, processes, and rules.
- Identify potential work assignments and assist in developing and modifying those assignments.
- Provide job descriptions for work assignments if available.
- Assist in orientation, training, and evaluation of Achieve students as necessary.

## Consequences

All Achieve participants are expected to adhere to all policies. When necessary, Achieve will utilize the following steps if any of the general student conduct expectations have been broken.

**1<sup>st</sup> Offense:** A meeting will be held with the student and the instructor over the phone with a parent/ guardian, and a letter will be sent home for signature and returned the next day to the instructor.

**2nd Offense:** A team meeting will be scheduled to discuss the offense and create a plan to ensure the student adheres to program guidelines. The team will consist of the student, parent/ guardian, instructor, and the Evangel University liaison. The action plan will be put in place immediately following the meeting.

**3rd Offense:** *A team meeting will be scheduled to discuss possible consequences and possible release from the program.*

## Concerns and Appeals

If the situation arises, there will be ample opportunity to address concerns through regular correspondence between parents and instructors and during the fall and spring planning and reflection meetings. Additional meetings may also take place at the request of the instructor, parent, or student. Should the team determine that the program's structure is not an appropriate learning environment/placement for the student, Achieve will make all efforts to assist them with a smooth transition from the program while working to identify services/programming that will better meet their needs.

1. Contact the Director or Achieve/EU Liaison whenever there are questions or concerns regarding the provision of services, including instructors, skill coaching services, or the expectations of the sites or students.
2. If your program questions or concerns are not resolved, contact the Achieve Board of Director President, Shannon Holgerson.

## **Discharge from Achieve of Southwest Missouri**

1. Students are required to participate in the program consistent with the policies and procedures of the classroom and worksite environment, the Achieve Program Handbook, and the policies listed in this Student Handbook.
2. Communication with students, their families, and the worksite personnel will occur regarding any emerging concerns, and strategies will be implemented to correct the situation.

If improvement is not made, a meeting with parents/guardians will be held to discuss resources/supports available from the various agencies that may be implemented to address the concern(s).

If the support and interventions do not address the concern(s), the team will meet again to determine whether the student is in the appropriate learning environment.

Serious infractions that violate the rules of Evangel University's Student Conduct, the worksite, or constitute unlawful activity may result in automatic suspension or discharge from the Achieve program without the intervening steps noted above.

The Achieve Instructor, Skills Coach, EU Liaison, and two Admissions Committee members recommend the suspension or discharge of a student. Documentation will be provided to the student and family, along with a letter determining the suspension and dismissal. The results of this determination are final.

Achieve will determine the amount of tuition reimbursement (if any) given upon suspension/discharge.

## **Student Withdrawal**

The Achieve student will be expected to inform the EU/Achieve Liaison of their intent to withdraw and ask for the withdrawal form. The date the student returns the completed form to the EU/Achieve Liaison is when the student is officially withdrawn.



## Tuition Refund

The student deposit is non-refundable. Once the deposit has been paid, the student is officially enrolled in Achieve of Southwest Missouri.

Achieve will use the following tuition refund policy for all student withdrawals from the Achieve program. This Policy is based on semester costs.

- |                                        |     |
|----------------------------------------|-----|
| • First through Fourth week            | 80% |
| • Fifth through the Sixth week         | 60% |
| • Seventh through Eighth               | 40% |
| • Ninth through the Tenth week         | 20% |
| • After the Tenth week of the semester | 0%  |

Reasons for which a tuition refund is made:

- 1) Death of the student or death in the immediate family (parent, stepparent, spouse, child, sibling, or grandparent)
- 2) Illness of the student of such duration or severity, as confirmed in writing by a physician.
- 3) Cancellation of the program by Achieve or the partnering university.
- 4) Other exceptional circumstances that could not have been foreseen and are beyond the control of the student as reviewed by Achieve Board of Directors.

A student must submit a tuition refund request to the EU/Achieve Liaison within ten business days from which the student withdrew. Achieve will not consider refund requests received later than this specified time.



## Team Contact Information

**Student Name:**

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Address:

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Email:

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Cell Phone:

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Date of Birth:

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**Parent/Guardian Name:**

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Cell Phone:

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**Parent/Guardian Name:**

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Cell Phone:

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Email:

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**Transportation Provider Name:**

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Cell Phone:

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**Achieve Instructor:**

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Address:

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Email:

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Phone:

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**Achieve Skills Coach:**

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Address:

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Email:

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Phone:

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**Evangel University Liaison:**

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Address:

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Email:

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Phone:

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**Other Contacts:**

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### Calling in Sick

	<b>Dial your work Number:</b> _____
	<b>Say: "May I please speak to</b> _____ <b>(Supervisor's name)</b>
	<b>Wait until the person answers.</b>
	<b>Say: "This is _____.</b> <b>I will not be at work today.</b> <b>I am sick. I will try to be</b> <b>back tomorrow."</b>
	<b>Wait until the person responds.</b>
	<b>Say: "Thank you and goodbye."</b>

## Acknowledgment of Receipt Achieve Student Handbook

*After reviewing this handbook with your parents, please sign and return this form.*

The Achieve Handbook contains essential information about the program, and I understand that I should consult the program instructor regarding any questions not answered in the handbook.

My parents and I understand that by applying for and being accepted to Achieve, I agree to abide by the rules of the program and community expectations of Evangel University and fully participate for the entire school year.

In addition, I agree that I will give my best effort every day to gain the skills needed to reach my goals.

I have received a copy of the Achieve Student Handbook and reviewed it carefully.

**Achieve Student Signature:**

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent Signature:**

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Achieve Instructor Signature:**

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_