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### **TDA Opposite Gender Relationships Policy**

Relationships among the students at The Daniel Academy are essential to our vision and focus. We desire to cultivate a safe, open social environment where students can live with wholehearted focus on the Lord. It is for this reason that TDA has gathered a large group of families who have chosen to have their students refrain from dating until they graduate from high school.

We have modeled our opposite gender policy for junior high and high school on these verses:

Do not sharply rebuke an older man, but rather appeal to him as a father, to the younger men as brothers, the older women as mothers and the young women as sisters in all purity. (I Tim. 5:1-2)

For this is the will of God, your sanctification; that is that you abstain from sexual immorality; that each of you know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, not in lustful passion, like the Gentiles who do not know God; and that no man transgress and defraud his brother... For God has not called us for the purpose of impurity but in sanctification. (I Thess. 4:3-7)

There is nothing impure about attraction; we realize that it is natural for students to have special feelings for each other and that some of them may even be ready to pursue a dating relationship while still in high school. However, most students are not. Dating in high school often results in major distraction at best and stumbling in sin at worst before young people are able to navigate the spiritual, emotional and social challenges that arise in that context.

Furthermore, we want all of our students to experience a broad range of friendships and enjoy

spending time together in groups, getting to know one another without feeling pressure to form or manage exclusive relationships with the opposite gender. We want their friendships to be a source of spiritual encouragement, strength and camaraderie rather than a source of distraction or distress. We also want to help them focus on learning and developing their talents and gifts.

Therefore we require all students to make a personal commitment to refrain from dating for the duration of their time at TDA and to be accountable to their parents as they walk out the decision. This commitment is expressed in three primary ways:

1. Actions that honor one's classmates as brothers and sisters rather than suggesting romantic or sexual intentions.

This means avoiding actions such as: engaging in physical interaction with or seeking exclusive one-on-one time with the opposite gender, dressing immodestly to attract attention, or making relationship announcements on social media.

2. Words that encourage and strengthen one another in purity and focus rather than weakening each other's resolve. This means avoiding actions such as: talking to one another about their feelings for each other or asking friends "who they like." (This means that students should discuss attraction with family and mentors, not with peers.)

3. An internal heart posture that seeks to "tithe their teenage years" relationally and emotionally to the Lord, allowing room to cultivate a lifestyle of prayer and holiness.

We strongly recommend that parents and students discuss their commitment before moving forward.

If an issue arises in our midst that is contrary to this policy, we will address it in coordination with the student's parents. We want to set a culture of confession and repentance when necessary, followed by complete restoration. Obviously, any kind of unrepentant sexual impurity or defiance and rebellion against parents, whether in school or out of school, will be treated with appropriate measures, which may include suspension or expulsion.