



Truth Trekkers Christian Co-op

Policy Handbook

2016-2017

"If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed, And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." John 8:31b-32

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What is Truth Trekkers?

Truth Trekkers Christian Co-op was founded in 2010 by a small group of homeschooling moms in Knoxville, TN, who were looking for an **affordable** opportunity to further their children's **Christian** education in **both the realms of academics and the arts**. In the pursuit of such supplemental academic and enrichment experiences, the need for a **cooperative organization** that would provide such support to home-educating families became evident and motivated these pioneering ladies to action. Holding fast to a **Biblical worldview** and believing in the preeminence of God over all truth, the words of Jesus in John 8:31b-32 became the foundation for this endeavor: *"If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed, And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."*

Mission Statement

Truth Trekkers Christian Co-op exists to support homeschooling families in both the spiritual and academic training of their children, by providing biblically based classes designed to augment and enrich their home-based education.

Ultimately, it is the hope of *Truth Trekkers'* leadership that, through this co-op ministry, families will unite and support one another on the journey, or trek, of truth-based and God-honoring education.

Classes meet every Monday from mid August through May at First Baptist Fountain City at 2801 Holbrook Drive.

Statement of Faith

1. We believe that the 66 books of the Old and New Testaments stand alone as the inspired, inerrant, and authoritative Word of God (2 Tim. 3:16, 2 Pet. 1:21).
2. We believe that there is but one God eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, who is perfect, holy, and sovereign; the Creator, Preserver, and Ruler of all things (Gen.1:1, Mt. 28:19, Jn. 10:30).
3. We believe in the literal Biblical account of creation as set forth in Genesis 1 and 2.
4. We believe that man was originally created in the image of God but, because of the temptation of Satan, sinned against God and is therefore lost and separated from God. The only way one can be saved from eternal death and restored to God is by placing his faith in the saving work of Jesus Christ alone (Gen. 1:26, Gen. 3, Rom. 3:10-28).
5. We believe in :
 - the deity and humanity of our Lord Jesus Christ who is the only begotten Son of God (Jn. 10:30,33; Rom. 9:5)
 - in His virgin birth (Mt. 1:23)
 - in His sinless life (Heb. 4:15)
 - in His miracles (Jn 2:11)
 - in His vicarious and atoning death through His shed blood (1 Cor. 15:3, Eph. 1:7, Heb. 2:9)
 - in His bodily resurrection (Jn. 11:25, 1 Cor. 15:4)
 - in His ascension to the right hand of the Father (Mk. 16:19), and
 - in His personal and physical return in power and glory (Acts 1:11, Rev. 19:11).
6. We believe that for the salvation of lost and sinful man, regeneration by the Holy Spirit is essential, and that this salvation, which is a gift of God's grace, is received through faith alone in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, and not as a result of good works (Jn.3:16-19, Rom. 3:23, Eph. 2:8-10).
7. We believe in the resurrection of both the saved and the lost: the saved unto the resurrection of life, and the lost unto the resurrection of damnation (Jn. 5:28-29).
8. We believe in the current ministry of the Holy Spirit, which is to convict, indwell, teach, guide, and empower the believer to perform good works and live a godly life (Rom. 8:13-14, 1 Cor. 3:16, Eph. 4:30).

Admission Policies and Procedures

Policies:

Truth Trekkers Christian Co-op does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, nationality or ethnic origin in the administration of its admission policies or other co-op policies.

At least one parent must be a professing Christian who is part of a worshipping body of believers.

Truth Trekkers Christian Co-op has the right to positively affect the co-op climate by refusing admission to, or removal from, the co-op any student or family whose influence would be detrimental to the goals or the reputation of the co-op.

Procedures:

1. Both parents read the Truth Trekker Christian Co-op Handbook.
2. Pray for the Lord's guidance for your family's educational decisions.
3. Request, Complete, and Return the Application for Admission via email correspondence to tthomeschool@gmail.com.
4. Schedule a family interview. During the family interview at least one parent must be willing to articulate a saving relationship with Jesus Christ.
5. The co-op leadership will contact the parents regarding the decision concerning acceptance.
6. Submit signed Enrollment Agreement upon Registration.

Registration/Tuition Policy

The family registration fee helps to cover the co-op's operational costs. Class fees are paid directly to the teacher and go toward the teacher's services and expenses for materials. These fees will cover your child's spot in that class for the entire school year. To alleviate financial burden, applicants registering on one of the first two registration dates have the option to break payments for classes into two equal installments which will be paid on the following dates:

1st payment: March 22nd or June 14th (at registration)

2nd payment: August 15th (the 2nd Monday of school)

Further registration details:

- The registration fees are **non-refundable** and are due upon registration, and need to be **paid in cash or by check made out to FBC Powell**.
- Class fees are paid directly to the teacher via cash or check.
- There is a 2-week grace period after registration to drop a class for a full refund- this does not apply to the registration fee.
- *This grace period only applies for the first two registration dates.* Late registrations which occur after the second registration date of June 14th, **require payment in full with no grace period for class fee refunds.**
- **All** class fees are non-refundable after the two week grace period expires.
- A fee of \$10 per class will be added to any fees that are not paid on time.
- If a family's check is returned for insufficient funds, payment must be made to cover the intended fees as well as any additional charges incurred by the co-op as a result. The organizational Board reserves the right to require all future payments in cash.
- Teachers are not authorized to give you a refund after the grace period, so please do not request one.
- NEW-TTCC is a one-year program and commitment. If you decide to withdraw before that commitment is over, due to the reliance on parent helpers, there will be \$100 drop fee to help cover your area of responsibility upon leaving.

Mandatory Attendance (at least one parent) is required for **Orientation** on August 1st, 2016. If you are unable to attend due to extreme extenuating circumstances, please submit in writing to a board member for approval for a separate consultation for orientation. This meeting is critical and failure to attend orientation or communicate with the board may result in dismissal from Truth Trekkers.

Class Information

TTCC offers a variety of both academic and enrichment classes for grades 1-12. Families may choose to enroll their student/s in only one class or several.

We also offer special add-on classes to help support our homeschooling families who have at least one student enrolled in a minimum of 1 regular class. These classes include karate classes from Wheelers Karate studio for grades k-12, dance classes for girls, grades k-5, and various private instrumental lessons. These special add-on classes are only available to families who have students enrolled in regular classes.

Finally, we offer very affordable pre-k through kindergarten classes as add-on classes for families of older students who are enrolled in the regular program. This is not an independent pre-school/kindergarten program and is only available to children with older siblings at co-op (special exceptions may be granted on a case by case basis).

Organizational Policy

LEADERSHIP:

The responsibilities required to keep this organization operating smoothly from week to week will be shared by both the member families and the *Truth Trekkers* Board. This is a voluntary organizational Board that exists to:

- ❖ administer teacher searches;
- ❖ process registration;
- ❖ account for financial records;
- ❖ organize class/work schedules;
- ❖ facilitate communication among all co-op participants;
- ❖ organize and direct additional co-op activities

SERVICE RESPONSIBILITIES:

At this time, it is necessary for a parent from each family to teach or help two hours each week at the co-op, depending on the current needs of the co-op. These service commitments will be for the duration of the school year. Additionally, due to the increase in numbers of students, each parent of a student at co-op (including teachers) will need to work 2 lunchroom duties (on 2 separate days) during the year. *You will sign-up for service hours at registration.*

- Parents who are serving on the board or in a teaching role may or may not serve their entire obligation on co-op day, however, they more than certainly volunteer their time above and beyond that requirement when preparing for the school year and throughout each week of the school year.
- Parents who are serving as helpers are needed to fulfill their service obligations at co-op. Exceptions may be granted in light of extreme extenuating circumstances, which will be assessed by the board on a case-by-case basis. The Truth Trekkers Board will honor the parents' assignment preferences as much as possible. Helper assignments will be scheduled during or shortly after registration and will be posted on the Truth Trekkers' Yahoo loop. Helper positions include, but are not limited to, nursery workers, study hall monitors, classroom helpers, security/check-in monitors, hall monitors, lunchroom attendants, and closing duties.
- When fulfilling your service commitment, your own children are not to be in class with you or serving with you. Your children must be in the Nursery, enrolled in class, or enrolled in Study Hall.
- In general, it is policy for all helpers and teachers to be adults. Students will not be scheduled as regular helpers or teachers unless we have a special or unique need.
- NEW-TTCC is a one-year program and commitment. If you decide to withdraw before that commitment is over, due to the reliance on parent helpers, there will be \$100 drop fee to help cover your area of responsibility upon leaving.

Substitution Policy

If you are going to miss a day of school, **it is your responsibility** to arrange for a substitute for your class and/or helper duty. There are two ways to accomplish this.

1. In order to avoid paying a substitution fee, privately prearrange with another co-op parent to cover each other's shifts in the event of an absence.
2. Secondly, you may pay someone a set fee to cover your shift.

Procedure for arranging a substitute:

In the event of an unavoidable absence, please use the following options to cover your co-op duty:

1. Early in the school year, utilize the family contact list to prearrange with another co-op parent to help you and/or swap with you in the event you will miss co-op. Another option is to use an adult family member to fill your spot. PLEASE NOTE: Men may not fill positions in the nursery or preschool areas. Also, you may not send older students to work your shift; substitutes must be adults.
2. All other arrangements (including utilizing Facebook, Yahoo, or the Sub Coordinator) will include a \$15 hourly fee, no exceptions. Payment for these services are required when you return to co-op by placing a check in a labeled envelope and leaving the envelope at the front desk. Any payments not received should be brought to the attention of the sub coordinator.
3. Helpers who are a "no show" must pay a substitution fee of \$15/hr. to the sub coordinator to cover your absence; if this is a recurring problem, the helper's family may be subject to dismissal from the co-op.
4. In the event of an emergency or tragedy, immediately contact the sub coordinator, Catrina Beck at 387-0029 for assistance.

CHILDCARE: We do provide childcare in the nursery (0-3) for parents **during the time slot which they are fulfilling their service obligation. *This is not a full-time daycare.***

Security

- All students must be checked in via the sign-in folder by a parent or parent-approved adult listed on the student information card. Exceptions are only granted for high school students who are authorized to sign in for themselves and/or their siblings.
- All students must wear their lanyards or stickers identifying them as a student and being checked in for the day.
- All teachers and helpers must wear their lanyard.
- Identification will be required if an adult is not known to the desk monitor.
- All guest visits must be prearranged with a board member.
- Visitors may check-in at the desk to obtain a visitor's badge or lanyard.
- All students must check-out upon leaving for the day via *The City*.
- Current emergency contact information must be provided at all times.
- You are to enter and exit the building at the back door next to the check-in area. (Do not enter or exit at the church office, the Youth Worship Center, any other doors on the upper level, or any other doors in the lower level. Again, please use the door at the check-in/check-out area only.)
- All doors must remain locked at all times. Do not open the doors for your friends, family, and other co-op members. Have them enter through the door by the check-in/check-out desk on the lower level.
- No weapons or dangerous items of any kind are permitted on campus. Items considered dangerous will be confiscated.

Parking, Lunch, Dismissal and Miscellaneous

- Unless you have young pre-school children, do not park in the immediate lot out back. There are a large number of babies and toddlers in our co-op, and all of the spaces are needed to accommodate these families. Families eligible for immediate parking lot will be given a parking pass.
- Everyone needs to be in their designated lunch area. NO roaming the halls, NO dismissal until it is time to go to class at 12:55.
- Parents please do not be lunching with your kids in an undesignated lunchroom area – this makes other kids think that it is okay to lunch elsewhere.
- Important – please make sure all lunch areas are cleaned up after lunch.
- Remember that NO ONE is allowed to touch or move any stage or sound/computer equipment at any time!
- Dismissal procedures are as follows:
 - K-5 students will be escorted to the study hall room where parents will sign out their children.
 - Complete process by checking all students out at computer/check-in area.
 - Upon completion of check-out, please make an effort to exit promptly so as to not disturb continuing classes.

Dress Code

WHAT NOT TO WEAR ☺

To promote the most respectful and least distracting learning environment, *Truth Trekkers* follows a modest, gender-appropriate, conservative **dress code**. The following are **not** permitted:

- Skirts or dresses shorter than the top of the knee (when standing)
- Shorts shorter than mid thigh
- Sleeveless tops (including tank tops of any kind)
- Clothing that reveals the midriff (sitting or standing)
- Sheer or skin-tight clothing
- Low-cut tops
- Clothing with inappropriate or offensive pictures, slogans or language
- Ragged-looking clothes with holes or other obvious signs of distress
- Visible undergarments
- Excessive unnatural hair color
- Pierced jewelry other than women's/girls' earrings

Anything that could be considered “distracting” should be avoided. **Students or participating adults who disregard this dress code policy will be asked to either leave, wear the school t-shirt, or change clothes at the discretion of Truth Trekkers’ leadership. An incident report will be placed in the family file.**

Nursery

Items Provided by Parents

- Diapers
- Wipes
- Sippy cups - (with name clearly identified on cup)
- Change of clothes
- Security items - (i.e. blanket, stuffed animal, etc.)
- All items must be clearly labeled with child's name.
- No toys, such as trucks, cars, baby dolls, etc., as they can cause distractions to other children.

Lunch

- Please be considerate to nursery workers and pick up children promptly for lunch.
- There will be NO lunch time nursery workers.
- Parents are permitted to remain in the nursery for lunch with their nursery-aged children. We ask that older children (8 & up) remain in the fellowship hall for lunch. If parents choose to eat in the nursery with their nursery-aged children, it is their responsibility to clean the table and floor.

Healthy Children

A well child is.....

- No fever in the past 24 hours
- No runny nose (except those that are teething or have allergies and fluid is clear)
- No diarrhea in the last 24 hours
- No crusted, matted eyes. No pink eye or eye infections.
- No viral cough or viral symptoms
- No unusual rashes

A sick child is to be kept at home. If any of these symptoms present while at co-op, parent may be asked to take child home.

Pre-K

Class Structure

Classes will be structured to include Pre-K children in the age range of 4 to 6 years of age. Pre-K children must be 4 years old by September 30, 2015, to be eligible for this class. Children who have not turned 4 years old by September 30, 2014, will attend the Nursery classes.

All Pre-K classes will be subject to their own class fee. The class periods will follow the regular schedule at the co-op. Each class will begin with approximately 30 minutes of structured class activities and teaching and the remaining 30 minutes will consist of free play. Because the class time is structured, your Pre-K student will need to arrive on time and be picked up on time

Lunch

It is the parents' (or older sibling) responsibility to take their child to and from lunch. All Pre-K students will be eating lunch in the fellowship hall. No Pre-K student will remain in the class room for their lunch period. Any exceptions to this will need to be approved by the Pre-K director.

Snacks

The co-op will provide two snacks per day (with water), one in the morning and one in the afternoon. Please do not send snacks or drinks with your children. Exceptions will be made only for children with food allergies. List of allergies must be noted on the Pre-K student information card.

Nursery and Pre-K Discipline Policy

The vast majority of discipline problems are to be dealt with at the classroom level. Our discipline guidance will always be consistent. Problems will be dealt with promptly and fairly, in a firm and loving manner. We do not expect perfection from our children, but we do expect reasonable cooperation from them.

If you have a special needs child, please inform the nursery coordinator, Bethany McMillan at 850-1114, so that our program and policies can be adapted to his/her needs.

1st STEP:

Our teachers will first use the following method of correcting behavior in the classroom:

- Talking with the child, explaining to him/her why the behavior was not acceptable and what he/she should do in a similar situation in the future.
- Teachers will explain their displeasure with the child's actions in a loving manner and the teachers will reassure them of God's love.
- Teachers will ask the child to repeat back what they heard the teacher say.

2nd STEP:

If the problem continues, as a final classroom result, the child will be placed in "time-out". Time out is the removal of the child for a short period of time from the group of children, about one minute per year of age. It is to be used on the occasion when a child needs extra time to think about the offensive behavior or if they need time to calm down before playing with the group again. When the time limit is up, the teacher will explain to the child what behavior is expected of them and will encourage their behavior in a positive way. The teacher will let the child know that we understand their feelings but cannot accept a negative way of showing it.

Behaviors warranting a timeout:

- Actions that could cause physical or emotional harm to classmates (biting, hitting, spitting, etc.)
- Actions that disrupt and interfere with the learning process of classmates or himself/herself
- Actions of improper care of equipment and property of others
- Rebellion that is outright disobedience in response to instructions
- Disrespect shown to any supervising adult. The supervising adult will be the judge of whether or not disrespect has been shown.
- Dishonesty in any situation, including lying, cheating, and stealing.

3rd STEP:

If disciplinary issues continue and are not resolved at the classroom level, parents will be expected to converse with the teacher(s) about a plan to correct the child's behavior in the classroom.

4th STEP:

If all of the above-mentioned measures among the teachers, parents, and student fail to correct the behavior, the teacher may refer to the Discipline Procedures in the *Truth Trekkers Christian Co-op* Policy Handbook.

Communication

If you have a complaint or concern:

1. **Express it promptly.** Keeping it to yourself can cause ill feelings and friction, which decreases our effectiveness.
2. **Tell it to the right person.** Concerns regarding the program should be expressed directly to the Pre-K Director.
3. **Express your concern clearly.** Make sure the person to whom you are expressing your concern knows all the details of the situation; exactly what you are concerned about, and why. Misunderstanding could lead to further problems and needless hard feelings.

Behavioral Expectations

Co-op leadership must require exemplary conduct and accountability for behavior.

All participants in *Truth Trekkers Christian Co-op* will be expected to adhere to the following **code of conduct**:

- Demonstrate the love of Christ and display **thoughtfulness and respect** toward other students, teachers, and parent volunteers at all times.
- Exhibit respect and care concerning church property which has been graciously provided for us.
- Neither food nor drinks will be allowed in classrooms apart from special teacher permission.
- Any damages incurred by student must be paid for immediately.
- All electronic devices are prohibited UNLESS needed for specific classroom activities as directed and approved by the teacher. Otherwise, these types of devices should be put away until a specific class/teacher requires.
- Cell phone use: students may carry cell phones but cannot use them for calls or texting during class—they must be silenced. Violation of this rule may result in confiscation, requiring parent retrieval.
- All participants including students, teachers, and parent helpers, are expected to be on time to class or scheduled duty.
- The board distributes a calendar to all co-op members well in advance, letting you know which days will be school days and which days are co-op holidays. Since we meet only once each week, any absenteeism will have a negative impact. Please realize that when we are out on a Monday, **we do not miss just one day but an entire week's worth of education**. We understand that there will be absences due to illness, etc. We also understand that we are homeschooling and need some flexibility. However, being in the co-op is a privilege and a commitment. The board asks that you plan and choose carefully any days you **MUST** be out. (see ***Unexcused Absences Policy***)
- It is imperative that students exit the church campus immediately upon class completion. Leaders and teachers cannot be responsible for students on campus after the dismissal of classes.
- *Concerning students who drive*, Truth Trekkers must have written permission on file authorizing these students to drive themselves and/or their siblings to and from class. In order for students to take other students off campus (other than their siblings) specific written permission from all parents involved will also need to be provided. Students will not be permitted to leave campus for any reason other than going home or to attend classes at another location. Students will not be permitted to leave the premises during lunch.

Co-op Academic Expectations

Truth Trekkers Christian Co-op is purely tutorial and supplemental and in no way replaces the parents' primary responsibility to educate their child(ren) at home. Parental supervision and participation is the key to each student's success! In order to ensure the most positive learning experience at Truth Trekkers, please assist your children in adhering to the following policies:

- After class each Monday, please check to see what weekly assignments need to be completed at home.
- Parents, please supervise the study and completion of coursework objectives and assignments throughout the week.
- Students are expected to complete assigned coursework and come prepared for each class.
- It is extremely important for students to attend class and to arrive on time in order to receive the utmost benefit and to eliminate any disruption to the learning process.
- Excessive incomplete work, absence, or tardiness may result in disciplinary action/dismissal.

Study Hall Policy

- Study Hall is available for grades K-12 only.
- All Students must be enrolled in a class while on campus. If you are not enrolled in a class and your parent is not present with you on campus, you must be enrolled in study hall.
- Students may schedule study hall for up to a maximum of two class periods.
- Study hall is not a social hour, so students will need to bring at least 30m. of schoolwork to complete during this time.
- Students will be expected to follow the rules of conduct as in any other class. Failure to do so may result in a suspension of his/her study hall privilege.
- Laptops and other electronic devices are allowed for school work. They are not to be used for playing games for the first 30m. and no Internet access will be permitted at any time. Failure to comply will result in suspension of this privilege.

High School Academic Policy

This policy exists in an effort to help students to achieve success at *Truth Trekkers Christian Co-op*.

In the event that a student is exhibiting the following behaviors in class:

- coming to class unprepared
- missing or incomplete work
- average below 75
- disruptive or disrespectful behavior
- struggling with the material
- cheating

The Academic Policy is as follows.

First Notification: A High School **Communication/Incident Report** will be sent home with the student. This report is to be signed and returned to the teacher the following week. The completed report, with signatures of the teacher, parent and student, will be placed in the student's file.

Second Notification: A notice will be sent home to schedule a **Parent-Teacher Conference**. The conference will involve an evaluation of the student in a face-to-face meeting with the parent in order to resolve the problem. The Parent-Teacher conference report and the incident report, with signatures, will be placed in the student's file.

Third Notification: **Academic Probation**. (The purpose of Academic Probation is to help the student refocus and to achieve success) A Parent-Teacher Conference, with a representative from Truth Trekkers' board, will be scheduled. At this point, an evaluation will explore the student's continued enrollment with the class. (Is this class the right fit for this student?) If the issue(s) are not resolved within a month, the student may be dismissed from the class. If multiple classes are involved, the student may be dismissed from *Truth Trekkers Christian Co-op*.

** Parents of students with learning disabilities or special needs must make teacher aware of need for a modified teaching/grading plan. Parent must meet with teacher before the first class period. **

Co-op Discipline Procedures

Each teacher has the authority to enact his or her own specific class rules concerning behavior and/or homework policies. In general, however, if an adult corrects a student, and he or she responds in a respectful manner with a prompt return to proper conduct, then no further action will be necessary. If the student is disrespectful or does not correct the inappropriate behavior, or if the offense is more serious in nature (i.e. inappropriate language, fighting, destruction of property, inappropriate PDA-public displays of affection, etc.), then the incident will be documented by the supervising adult, a copy will be sent home with the student for parent signature, and the copy will be placed in the family file.

The following additional options may be implemented:

- Parent notification via email or phone call
- Student removal from classroom (will stay at sign-in desk with adult monitor)
- Leadership meeting with parents and student to discuss incident and a plan of action to correct unacceptable behavior

Teachers and/or board members reserve the right to permanently dismiss students from classes if the situation cannot be resolved. Extreme offenses may result in the immediate dismissal from co-op participation altogether.

Finally, if a parent has a concern about how a teacher has handled a situation with their child, it is critical that the parent contact the teacher in person to clarify the context of the problem and work toward a resolution. Board members are willing to help with mediation on unresolved issues, but it is important to follow appropriate protocol by contacting the teacher first.

Unexcused Absences Policy

Middle School and High School students:

Students who have a total of 3 unexcused absences per semester may be dismissed from the class. In the event of an extreme circumstance, such as illness, please notify your teacher for an excused absence.

Medical/Health Policy

Co-op leaders/teachers are not permitted to dispense any medication to students other than the leader's or teacher's own child. It is the parent's responsibility to administer his or her child's medicine, prescription or otherwise.

Please refrain from bringing children to co-op who have had a fever or any other contagious symptoms within the last 24 hours. If we see that your child has any of these symptoms you may be asked to take your child home. If a child has significant allergies or other special medical conditions, please inform each of his or her teachers.

Miscellaneous Business

Out of respect for our generous host church, we ask that you do not put any posters or flyers on the wall, and also that there be no solicitation of any kind on campus. Feel free to share your products or opportunities with Truth Trekker families on the Yahoo! loop and arrange exchanges in person, however, please refrain from promoting businesses or services on campus.

Concerning tutoring services or other private lessons, all class offerings, even tutoring services, must be board approved. The church at Fountain City has given *Truth Trekkers Christian Co-op* permission to use this facility to offer home school classes and they have entrusted the managing of this privilege to our leadership board. Any use of this facility in the name of Truth Trekkers must be approved by the board.

2016-17 Board Members

Danielle Walker – Middle School & High School – 599-1250

Linda Willett – Elementary school– 256-0408

Laura Miller – Middle School & High School - 388-8590

Stacy Williams – Elementary school – 567-9119

Bethany McMillan – Nursery through pre-k/k – 850-1114