

# GRACE CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

2022-2023 Handbook



GCA | 5914 Beaver Ridge Road | Knoxville, TN 37931

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[www.gcarams.org](http://www.gcarams.org)

# GRACE CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

## 2022-2023 Handbook

We are grateful for the opportunity to partner with you as we work together to disciple the next generation of Christ-followers. This handbook outlines the policy and procedures of Grace Christian Academy. Please review this information carefully. All faculty, staff, students, and parents are expected to read this document annually and abide by the policies contained within.

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# GRACE CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

## School Information

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Exists to LEAD students to the saving knowledge of  
Jesus Christ, to BUILD them up to their full potential in Him, and  
to Equip them to serve Him.

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# PROFILE OF GRACE CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

## OUR HISTORY

In 1994, God began to call Grace Baptist Church to begin a new ministry . . . a Christian school. The board conducted research, met with other Christian schools, and set policies. With almost two years of preparation, enrollment began in 1997. God worked through fifty-five families and five staff members to make Grace Christian Academy more than a vision.

Over the next few years, GCA saw enrollment almost double from year to year. By the 2000-2001 school year, enrollment was over 300 students. During that year, the construction of a new 29-classroom building began. This eventful year also saw the accomplishment of accreditation through the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI) for grades K-8. In January 2002, the Academy moved into its new facilities.

In the 2003-2004 school year, GCA took another step by going through Upper School accreditation with ACSI and Cognia. The 2004-2005 school year brought the graduation of the first senior class and groundbreaking for Phase I of the new Upper School building and athletic fields.

Phase I of the new Upper School opened in the fall of 2006 with 175 students. Construction of Phase II began in the winter of 2010 and opened that fall. Phase II contains a lunchroom, a music suite, and nine additional classrooms. GCA continues to grow and thrive with the addition of classrooms, athletics facilities, extra-curriculars and arts programs, and more.

## PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATION

GCA is accredited Kindergarten-12th grade by the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI) and Cognia. GCA is also a member of the Southern Baptist Association of Christian Schools (SBACS).

## MISSION STATEMENT

Grace Christian Academy exists to LEAD students to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ, to BUILD them up to their full potential in Him, and to EQUIP them to serve Him.

## VISION STATEMENT

We are dedicated to being a distinctively Christian Academy that provides an educational experience which develops students who are committed to changing the world for Christ.

## CORE VALUES

- **Christ-Centered** - Those who say they live in God should live their lives as Jesus did. (1 John 2:6)
- **Truth** - All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness. (2 Timothy 3:16)
- **Church** - And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching. (Hebrews 10:24-25)
- **Family** - And these words that command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. (Deuteronomy 6:6-7)
- **Excellence** - And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. (Colossians 3:17)
- **Service** - Show me your faith apart from your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. (James 2:18)

## STATEMENT OF FAITH

- As a ministry of Grace Baptist Church, GCA adheres to their Statement of Faith, which can be found at <https://www.gracebc.org/whatwebelieve/>
- We affirm The Baptist Faith and Message 2000.
- We affirm the Nashville Statement 2018 on gender and sexuality.
- We believe the Bible to be the inspired, the only infallible, authoritative, inerrant Word of God. (2 Timothy 3:16, 2 Peter 1:21)
- We believe there is one God, eternally existent in three persons - Father, Son and Holy Spirit. (Genesis 1:1, Matthew 28:19, John 10:30)
- We believe in the deity of Christ (John 10:33), His virgin birth (Isaiah 7:14, Matthew 1:23, Luke 1:35), His sinless life (Hebrews 4:15, Hebrews 7:26), His miracles (John 2:11), His vicarious and atoning death (1 Corinthians 15:3, Ephesians 1:7, Hebrews 2:9), His resurrection (John 11:25, 1 Corinthians 15:4), His ascension to the right hand of God (Mark 16:19), and His personal return in power and glory. (Acts 1:11, Revelation 19:11)
- We believe in the absolute necessity of regeneration by the Holy Spirit for salvation because of the exceeding sinfulness of human nature, and that we are justified on the single ground of faith in the shed blood of Christ, and that only by God's grace and through faith alone we are saved. (John 3:16-19, John 5:24, Romans 3:23, Romans 5:8-9, Ephesians 2:8-10, Titus 3:5)
- We believe in the resurrection of both the saved and the lost; the saved to the resurrection of life and the lost to the resurrection of condemnation. (John 5:28-29)
- We believe in the spiritual unity of believers in our Lord Jesus Christ. (Romans 8:9, 1 Corinthians 12:12-13, Galatians 3:26-28)
- We believe in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit by whose indwelling the Christians is enabled to live a godly life. (Romans 8:13-14, 1 Corinthians 3:16, 1 Corinthians 6:19-20, Ephesians 4:30, Ephesians 5:18) Grace Christian Academy, as a ministry of Grace Baptist Church, believes and teaches the essential doctrines of the Christian faith. GCA adheres, without apology, to the Mission Statement of Grace Baptist Church, which is:

### *Changing Lives that Change the World*

## GCA LIFESTYLE AGREEMENT

Grace Christian Academy, as a ministry of Grace Baptist Church seeks to represent Jesus Christ by helping parent/guardians prepare their children spiritually, academically, physically, and socially to become His disciples. The biblical and philosophical goal of GCA is to work with families who desire themselves and their children to develop into mature, Christ-like individuals who will be able to exhibit a Christ-like life. This involves the school's understanding and belief in what qualities exemplify sexual purity based on the school's interpretation of Scripture. GCA requires its employees and students to maintain high standards of biblical conduct, living their lives as Christian role models at all times. A Christian lifestyle should reflect the biblical perspective of integrity and appropriate personal and family relationships, personal conduct, and moral behavior. GCA's biblical role is to work in conjunction with the home to mold students to be Christ-like. GCA believes that biblical marriage is limited to a covenant relationship between a man and a woman. On occasion, the atmosphere or conduct within a particular home may be counter or in opposition to the biblical lifestyle the school teaches. This includes, but is not necessarily limited to, sexual immorality, homosexual orientation, any other violation of the unique roles of male and female (Romans 1:21-27, I Corinthians 6:9-20), or inability to support the moral principles of the school. In such cases, the school reserves the right, within its sole discretion, to refuse admission of an applicant or to discontinue enrollment of a student.

## SPEAKING TRUTH IN LOVE

As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly ... And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him (Colossians 3:12-16a,17).

1. Allow the Fruits of the Spirit to permeate your way of interacting: Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness and Self-Control.
2. Focus your comments on issues being discussed, not on persons expressing them.
3. Avoid making generalizations about individuals and groups.
4. Commit yourself to unity as a body of believers, seeking consensus whenever possible.

## MISUNDERSTANDINGS | CONFLICT RESOLUTION

The faculty and staff of GCA are committed to resolving conflicts according to the principle of Matthew 18. Most problems are due to miscommunication. We seek to resolve conflict by the pattern expressed in Matthew 18:15-17 and in the spirit of Galatians 6:1. Forgiveness and restoration are the goals of conflict resolution. When a problem or misunderstanding arises, the parent/guardian or student **MUST** first go to the teacher or individual directly involved with the situation. If the problem is not resolved at that level, then a supervisor may meet with the parent/guardian and teacher or individual.

## PHILOSOPHY OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

We believe God has ordained this school for the edification and maturing of the body of Christ. We partner with each home and each church in our community to share in the development and operation of a functional Christian education program designed to impact its culture for Christ.

It is our responsibility to assist in discovering, developing, and channeling the student's talents and abilities for the glory of God and for the welfare and benefit of both the individual and society. We believe that each student is made in the image of God and should have the opportunity to develop their potential under the supervision of mature Christians who are academically competent, professional, and dedicated to God.

The educational program is a guide to enable each student to discover God's purpose for their life and to equip them to fulfill that purpose. Therefore, it is also our responsibility to provide a curriculum that is based on biblical standards and absolute truths which leads to the development of a biblical worldview. We believe in instruction that is ongoing, academically sequenced from one level to another, and that enables students to read and to use all areas of language arts with confidence and fluency. The curriculum should assist students to develop problem-solving abilities and use mathematical operations and concepts with accuracy through mastered skills; to gain wisdom and understanding by drawing conclusions through critical thinking based on God's absolute truths; to understand social studies and science in connection with God's relationship with mankind and the earth, His creation; to imitate the mind of Christ concerning one's self and others, exhibiting the fruit of the Spirit - love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control; and to acquire habits which will produce bodies healthy and available for God's use. Because we live in the United States of America where active participation in the governmental processes is encouraged of each citizen, the curriculum should incorporate the teaching of patriotism, citizenship and service.

The responsibility of all educational personnel is to provide a viable Christian education that develops academic, vocational, creative, social, physical and technological skills which lead to respect for learning God's truth, a desire for wisdom and knowledge, and the development of disciples ready to do good to all people, to share with others, to preach the Word in season and out of season, and to give an answer for the hope that is in them.

God has given parent/guardians the ultimate responsibility for educating their children. The Christian school functions as an extension of the home to facilitate, but not to usurp, its authority. The school can best fulfill its mission when it works cooperatively with godly parent/guardians to give the student a consistently God-centered environment

## PORTRAIT OF A GRADUATE

At Grace Christian Academy, our mission is to LEAD students to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ, BUILD them up to their full potential in Him, and EQUIP them to serve Him. This mission, in conjunction with our core values of Christ Centered, Truth, Church, Excellence, and Service, has inspired the administration and faculty of GCA to create the following portrait of a GCA graduate. It is GCA's aspiration to partner with God, parent/guardians, students, faculty, and staff in developing spiritually devoted, intellectually disciplined, and culturally engaged followers of Christ.

### A SPIRITUALLY DEVOTED STUDENT WILL:

- Continually grow in his/her personal relationship with Christ
- Display the Fruits of the Spirit
- Pursue God's purpose and calling for his/her life
- Demonstrate a genuine love and concern for others. In Mark 12:30, Jesus explains that the greatest commandment is to love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind, and all your strength. It is our desire to LEAD our graduates towards an authentic relationship with Christ. Jesus goes on to explain in Mark 12:31 that the second greatest commandment is to love your neighbor as yourself. It is also our desire to see our graduates make a profound influence in the lives of others as they share their knowledge of Christ and help disciple others.

### AN INTELLECTUALLY DISCIPLINED STUDENT WILL:

- Actively research topics and use appropriate resources
- Communicate effectively
- Discern truth through a developed biblical worldview
- Learn independently
- Apply knowledge to reach solutions

In 2 Corinthians 10:5, Paul writes that faithful followers of Christ must be able to demolish the world's arguments by taking every thought captive and making it obedient to Christ. This can only be accomplished if our graduates have journeyed through a rigorous path of intellectual discipline in which their minds were challenged to develop a biblically accurate understanding of truth and knowledge. At the end of this journey, it is our desire to BUILD capable graduates who will always be prepared to share the reason they have hope in a world that has none.

### A CULTURALLY ENGAGED STUDENT WILL:

- Approach cultural issues from a Christ honoring, evangelically focused, and biblically faithful perspective
- Engage in acts of service that are best suited to his/her own spiritual gifting and calling
- Uphold a focus of the spiritual, physical, and emotional needs of humanity both locally and worldwide
- Maintain a consistent lifestyle of active citizenship

The Great Commission of Matthew 28:19-20 necessitates cultural engagement. At GCA, it is our belief that evangelism and service must go hand in hand in order to fulfill our role in this process. Therefore, it is our desire to EQUIP GCA graduates to use their knowledge of the gospel, their love of others and their awareness of the world around them in order to evangelize and serve others.

## Ram Fan Code of Conduct

**Mission Statement:** Believing school spirit is an essential component of the GCA community, the following principles should guide our participants and attendees at school-sponsored events.

### Portrait of a Ram Fan:

- Christ-oriented
- Ram fan actions and attitudes should stay consistent with Christian values.
- Participative & supportive
- Ram fan participation should be spirited but supportive of GCA's mission and core values.
- Civil & respectful
- Ram fans should act in a way that is appropriate towards those leading or officiating all events and to others in attendance, especially hosts and guests of GCA.
- Leading by example
- Ram fans should avoid a "mob mentality" in their conduct, while creating a unified voice of support for GCA.

**"Be gracious in victory and accept defeat with dignity."**

# ADMISSIONS

## ADMISSIONS PROCESS

The admissions process for Grace Christian Academy is structured in such a way that allows the school and prospective families to explore a potential partnership for the education of their students' hearts, minds, souls and strengths. This process should be a prayerful, Christ-led experience to determine if GCA and the family are fit for a promising, long-term relationship.

GCA accepts year-round applicants, per class space availability. The process generally takes 3-5 weeks to complete but may take a bit longer in the summer due to allowing additional time for the previous school to submit records. Families are encouraged to begin the process by mid-July to ensure that their children's enrollment is finalized by the first day of school.

GCA admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. GCA does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs.

The admissions process is the same for all Preschool-12<sup>th</sup> Grade students, whether the family is new to GCA or if the student is a sibling to a current GCA student. The process is as follows:

## ONLINE APPLICATION

The online application can be found at [www.gcarams.org](http://www.gcarams.org) under the "Admissions" tab. The form must be filled out in its entirety, including the payment of a non-refundable \$100 application fee, for each prospective student. Upon submission of the application, families are welcome to apply for need-based tuition assistance through FACTS. Tuition assistance begins at Kindergarten.

## SCREENING

Once the application is complete, each student will be scheduled for a screening appointment. Prospective students will be asked to complete grade level appropriate work that will help determine proper classroom placement. Preschool and PreK students will screen during their parent's Family Interview appointment.

## APPLICATION REVIEW

Upon completing the screening process and having received all other required documentation, such as recommendation forms and 2 years of report cards and testing results, the admissions team will review each student's file.

## FAMILY INTERVIEW

In order to set the stage for a positive relationship between administration and prospective families, a family interview is scheduled with the principal(s) of the appropriate division(s). This time is spent getting to know the family as well as setting the foundation of GCA's vision, mission, theme verse and core values. This is a great time for families to ask additional questions.

## ADMITTANCE

Following the family interview, the admissions team and principals meet to discuss the admittance of each student. The family will then receive a phone call and/or email informing parents of the acceptance or denial of their application.

## ENROLLMENT

Should the student be offered admittance, the parent/guardian must complete the admissions process by completing the Enrollment Packet found on their FACTS account. Preschool and PreK students will be charged a non-refundable \$200 Enrollment Fee per child, while K-12th Grade students will be charged a non-refundable \$300 Enrollment Fee per child.

## ONBOARDING

Once students are enrolled, families will begin receiving correspondence from GCA personnel regarding scheduling, items the student will need for his/her classes and will begin receiving GCA's newsletter, The Ramblings. The Admissions Department will gladly direct families to the appropriate staff member to answer any questions.

# FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

## APPLICATION | ENROLLMENT/CONTINUOUS ENROLLMENT FEE

A non-refundable application fee is submitted for each applicant. A non-refundable enrollment fee is submitted along with the online enrollment packet. All students pay the Continuous Enrollment fee that is incorporated in their annual tuition and covers the following year's enrollment. This fee holds the student's place for the following school year and covers registration costs.

### APPLICATION FEE

\$100 per student (Non-refundable)

### ENROLLMENT FEE

\$300 per student (Non-refundable)

### CONTINUOUS ENROLLMENT FEE

\$200 per student (Non-refundable/Non-transferable after January 31)

## **FACILITY FEE**

All students will be required to pay an annual facility fee of \$400 (non-refundable/non-transferable). This fee is an investment in existing facilities and future growth and will be assessed each year.

## **TUITION**

Tuition covers a variety of expenses including textbook rental, workbooks, ACSI and SACS membership fees, science lab fees, various technology fees, yearbook, retreats, and testing.

## **INCIDENTAL FEES & EXPENSES**

From time to time students will need to share in paying for other supplies and expenses that are important for their educational experience. Students participating in athletics will be charged an athletic participation fee according to the schedule of fees published by the athletic department.

## **LUNCH**

Students may bring lunch from home or purchase one at GCA. Microwaves are on hand for student use. Kindergarten may not use the microwave. Ice cream, beverages, and snacks are available for purchase in the cafeteria during lunch. Menus are posted in the classroom, on the school website and on FACTS Family Online. Lunch prices can also be found on the website's parent portal under "Lunch Menus".

It is recommended that lunch accounts be paid at least 2 weeks in advance. Families with \$50.00 or more owed on their lunch account will no longer be allowed to utilize cafeteria services.

## **FACTS**

GCA partners with FACTS Tuition Management Company (FACTS) to manage our tuition payment program as well as other incidental items charged during the year. GCA families are required to enroll in FACTS as part of completion of the online enrollment packet.

Tuition, facility fee, and the continuous enrollment fee may be paid annually or monthly. Monthly payment options available are the 1st of the month, 10th of the month, 20th of the month, or bi-monthly on the 1st and the 20th. Annual payments receive a \$100 discount per student if paid by June 20th.

All families are required to be enrolled in Auto Pay for their students' incidentals. Payments will be automatically processed on the respective due dates using the same payment method in use for the tuition payment plan.

## **PAST DUE ACCOUNTS**

Monthly tuition payments are considered past due if not paid by the 20th of each month. A late fee of \$35 per family will be automatically assessed after FACTS second failed attempt to collect tuition. However, GCA reserves the right to assess a \$35 late fee if an account is paid after the 20th of the month. In addition, FACTS will charge a \$30 service charge for failure to collect. Delinquent accounts will be considered cause for removing a student from the school. Students will not be admitted to class or allowed to participate in athletics when an account has two months tuition past due. If the account is not made current by the designated date, the family's child(ren) will not be permitted to attend school. Once the account is paid in full, the child(ren) may return to school. No students will be allowed to start school the following year until all outstanding financial obligations are met.

## **WITHDRAWALS**

When withdrawing a student from GCA, these procedures must be followed:

1. Contact Admissions to request a link to the electronic withdrawal form. Complete and submit the form.
2. All textbooks must be returned to the teacher. All library books must be returned to the library. All athletic materials and uniforms must be returned to the athletic dept.

3. Tuition, prorated based on the number of months the student was enrolled (including the month of withdrawal), plus the full facility fee in non-refundable. Grades and records will not be released until all financial obligations have been met and all books, materials, and uniforms have been turned in.
4. If a student withdraws for disciplinary reasons, he/she may not be on campus during school hours or attend any extra-curricular activities unless permission is secured from an administrator. The student may not apply for re-admission for a period of 12 months.

If a student is withdrawn after the first tuition draft but before the first day of school, the full facility fee of \$400 per student will not be refunded.

## END OF SCHOOL YEAR | WITHDRAWAL

At the end of the school year or at the time of withdrawal, all outstanding bills are to be paid and all GCA textbooks and released. Fees must be paid in full and are non-refundable; refunds on tuition are pro-rated, based on the number of months the student was enrolled at GCA. Partial months are not refundable.

## STUDENT ACCIDENTS/INSURANCE

Medical requirements for student injuries is the financial responsibility of each parent or guardian. GCA only carries supplemental student accident coverage on its students. The policy will cover only those items not covered by the family's insurance and after a deductible is met per claim. It is the parent's or guardian's responsibility to request a Secondary Insurance Claim Form (and instructions) from the GCA Business Office within 30 days of the accident. It is the parent's or guardian's responsibility to file the claim and work directly with secondary insurance company for reimbursement.

### Provision for GCA Student Records in the Event of Closure:

In the event that Grace Christian Academy permanently closes, all student records and academic files will become the property of Grace Baptist Church and will be kept in a secure filing cabinet and/or digitally.

# TECHNOLOGY - ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

At Grace Christian Academy, we strive to provide our students and families with all the tools necessary to be successful both in and out of the classroom. Technology is one area that we have made a concerted effort to improve over the past couple of years. With the adoption of our three-year strategic technology plan in 2020, we are excited to partner with our families in providing devices in a 1:2 environment for our K-2 students and in a 1:1 environment for our 3rd-12th grade students.

The following provides information regarding the specific type of technology per grade level, how it is provided, and who is responsible for its maintenance and upkeep:

K-2 || iPads in a 1:2 environment that remain on campus, provided by GCA, and maintained by grade level instructors.

3-4 || iPads in a 1:1 environment that remain on campus, provided by GCA, and maintained by grade level instructors and students.

5-6 || Chromebooks in a 1:1 environment that remain on campus, provided by GCA, and maintained by grade level instructors and students.

7-9 || Chromebooks in a 1:1 environment provided by GCA and maintained by students both on and off campus

10-12 || Laptops in a 1:1 environment provided and maintained by students/families in accordance with the BYOD initiative found on the GCA website.

In addition to the above information, below is an agreement statement that each student and parent/guardian are required to sign before beginning the school year.

**Users can**

- examine and use interactive electronic formats.
- examine a broad range of opinions, ideas, and information in the educational process.
- locate, use, and exchange information on the Internet.
- retain ownership of their own intellectual works as users of the Internet.

**Users cannot**

- use the GCA network/devices for personal, commercial, or for-profit purposes.
- participate in harassment, discriminatory remarks, or other inappropriate behaviors.
- use the GCA network/devices to access obscene or pornographic material.
- use the GCA network/devices for any illegal activity, including violation of copyright or other contracts.
- damage GCA computer(s), computer systems, or computer networks.
- invade the privacy of other GCA network users.
- gain unauthorized access to GCA computer networks, resources, or materials.

GCA network users are expected to abide by accepted rules of network etiquette. These rules include but are not limited to the following:

- Be polite.
- Use appropriate language.
- Do not become abusive in your communication to others.
- Do not copy software for which you have not paid, use computer resources without authorization, or plagiarize the intellectual property of others.
- Be mindful of the rights of other GCA network users.
- Do not violate the privacy of other users.
- Do not use the GCA network in any way that would disrupt its operation or that would interfere with another user's computer work.
- Abide by the policies and procedures of each network accessed.
- Keep your password private.
- Be careful when using sarcasm and humor. Without face-to-face communication, a joke may be viewed as criticism.
- Always think about the social consequences of what you do on the GCA network.

**\*\*\* For grades K-9 only \*\*\***

I understand that the equipment provided is owned by Grace Christian Academy, and I am using it exclusively for school-related purposes. I understand that I am responsible for the care and maintenance of the equipment. In case that the equipment is, in any circumstance, damaged, lost, or stolen on or off the premises of Grace Christian Academy, it is my responsibility to immediately report these matters to my homeroom teacher to receive further instructions.

I understand that upon separation from Grace Christian Academy, I shall surrender and return the equipment back to GCA. Grace Christian Academy reserves the right at any time to inspect or requisition issued school devices. There will be no expectation of privacy and the GCA technology department reserves the right to access and control school-provided devices at any time and without notice. All files stored on school-provided devices are under the ownership of Grace Christian Academy.

## VISITOR POLICY

GCA is a closed campus. All parents and visitors must sign in with the GCA receptionist upon arrival and wear a visitor badge throughout their stay. Student visitors are limited to prospective students and GCA graduates; non-GCA students are not allowed on the school campus during regular school hours. Visits should not disrupt instruction, testing, or other activities. The lunch period is “closed,” meaning that Upper School students may not leave campus unless for scheduled appointments. Lower and Middle School students can only leave campus for lunch with a parent. This also means that non-GCA students are not permitted in the lunchrooms.

## ILLNESS POLICY

Our top priority is to provide a safe, healthy environment for your child. If your child is sick, we ask that you please keep him/ her at home to rest and recover. Your assistance monitoring your child’s health at home every day will be needed and greatly appreciated.

A few specific requirements for other illness include but are not limited to the list below.

- Chicken pox (varicella): Exclude until lesions are dry and crusted and no new ones forming.
- Conjunctivitis (pink eye ): Exclude until 24 hours of antibiotic treatment.
- COVID: Masks are optional. Notify division principal for further instructions if a student or household member tests positive for COVID-19.
- Diarrhea: Exclude for 24 hours after end of symptoms. Note: if your child was sent home with diarrhea, he/she cannot return to the next school day.
- Fever > 100.4 Exclude until 24 hours without fever without medication. Note if your child was sent home with a fever, they may not return the next school day.
- Fifth Disease: May attend school if they are afebrile
- Herpes simplex virus: Exclude until cutaneous lesions are dry and crusted.
- Haemophilus influenzae: Exclude during acute illness, afebrile for 24 hours and until treated.
- Hepatitis (infectious): Exclude for 7--14 days following onset of illness.
- Impetigo (infectious): Exclude until 48 hours after treatment started.
- Influenza: Exclude until symptomatically able to tolerate general activity and afebrile for 24 hours.

- Lice (pediculosis): Before a child can return to school, the school nurse or designee must inspect and verify the appropriate treatment was effective (no active lice present).
- Mononucleosis: Exclude during time child feels ill and unable to tolerate general activity. Usually 1 to 2 weeks.
- Pharyngitis: Exclude only if child has fever or is unable to participate in general activities.
- Pinworms: Exclude until treated.
- Rash with or w/o fever. Child with undiagnosed rash must be excluded until diagnosed by a medical professional.
- Respiratory infections: Exclude only if child has fever or is unable to participate in general activities.
- Ringworm: Exclude until effective treatment started. Must remain covered.
- Roseola: Exclude until rash has disappeared.
- Rotavirus: Exclude until asymptomatic.
- Salmonellosis: Exclude during acute illness, usually 5–7 days.
- Scabies: Exclude until effective treatment provided.
- Shingles (zoster): Lesions must be fully covered or child excluded until crusted and dry.
- Staphylococcus: Exclude for 48 hours after the start of treatment. Infection must be covered.
- Streptococcal: Must be on antibiotic 24 hours after diagnosis and fever free for 24 hours before returning to school.
- Vomiting: Exclude for 24 hours after last episode of vomiting. Note: if your child is sent home from school, they may not return the next school day.

# GRACE CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

Little Rams Pre-K & Preschool



# STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Little Rams Pre-K & Preschool has a licensed and certified Pre-Kindergarten program through The Department of Education (DOE). This license is administered after the Knox County Health Department, the Fire Marshall, and the DOE licensing make annual inspections of the program.

We also offer a Part-Time Preschool Program, which enables parents to provide safe and secure childcare for their children in a loving, Christ-centered environment.

Little Rams Pre-K & Preschool is committed to incorporating a spiritual emphasis into the curriculum. This is achieved by having weekly chapel, daily Bible time, singing Christian songs, and praying, not only before meals, but also throughout the day's activities with the children. A Beka Christian Curriculum is the primary curriculum utilized in our program, as well as several other supplemental types of curricula.

## ADMISSIONS

### ENROLLMENT

Children are accepted at ages two through five in the Part-Time Preschool program and ages three through five in the Pre -Kindergarten program. A child must be of age by August 15 of the school year to be enrolled in the class. *All Children three and over MUST be COMPLETELY Potty-Trained* in both weekday programs. Children are enrolled on a first come basis. If classes are full, your child will be placed on a waiting list until a placement becomes available. The enrollment fee must be paid to enable your child to be enrolled for any preschool program. *A child is not considered enrolled until the enrollment fee is paid.*

### CHILDREN'S RECORDS

We are required to maintain specific records on each child as mandated by DOE. Before your child may attend one of our programs, we must have on file a registration form, shot and medical records signed by your physician or health department and parent signatures on all necessary forms. Shot records must be kept up to date. (See attachment of immunization requirements).

## SCHOOL HOURS

### PROGRAM HOURS

**Pre-Kindergarten** Hours are 8:00 a.m. until 1:45 p.m. Doors will open promptly at 8:00 a.m. We ask that you make every effort to have your child at school by 8:15 a.m. If late arrival is necessary, please plan to arrive no later than 8:30 a.m., so your child will receive the full benefit of the educational program provided.

**Part-Time Preschool** Hours are from 9:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. Doors will open promptly at 9:00 a.m. We ask that you make every effort to have your child at school by 9:15 a.m. If late arrival is necessary, please plan to arrive no later than 9:30 a.m., so your child will receive the full benefit of the educational program provided.

Since the program ends at a specific time, all children must be picked up promptly. Our staffing schedule is prepared with our working hours in mind, along with the number of children present at each hour. When pick up is later than 15 minutes after program ends, late fees will be accrued at \$1.00 per minute. Late fees will be billed to your tuition account.

# CURRICULUM

Our goal is to make all learning activities fun, so your child will perceive these activities as a form of “play.” Our curriculum encompasses all six of the developmental areas (Variations to this curriculum depends on program):

- Spiritual Emphasis – daily prayer, Bible stories, memory verses, weekly chapel, mission projects, etc.
- Gross Motor – gym time, outdoor play, climbing, running, jumping, etc.
- Fine Motor – scissors, painting, puzzles, manipulatives, etc.
- Cognitive – colors, alphabet, numbers, shapes, songs, poetry, etc.
- Language – body parts, animals, opposites, prepositions, cultures, etc.
- Personal/Social – interaction with others, name recognition, address, age, birth date, etc.
- Independence – putting on coat, zipping coat, snapping, dressing, and feeding self, tying of shoes, etc.

Our program primarily utilizes the A Beka Christian Curriculum and Bob Jones University Press Curriculum. Teachers may supplement with additional developmentally appropriate curriculum. Weekly lesson plans are prepared for each classroom.

# STAFF

The staff assigned to the Little Rams Pre-K & Preschool program maintains professional quality in all they do. The teachers are required to obtain intensive training in safety, CPR, First Aid, Behavior Management, and age- appropriate activities. All staff members maintain individual integrity inside and outside of the program.

It is our policy that all teachers treat each child and parent with respect and courtesy. We also ask that parents treat the staff with the same respect and courtesy to create a positive environment for your child. All aspects of the children’s behavior, parental situations, addresses and phone numbers, etc. will be held with the utmost confidentiality.

# DISCIPLINE

## DISCIPLINE

We feel that discipline should be administered with love. All discipline will be age appropriate. Our teachers and staff are trained several different discipline techniques, including the Conscious Discipline model and use these strategies to create a calm and consistent learning environment.

## RULES

Our school rules are simplified so that the children can understand and are explained to them daily.

- Love God
- Love Others

Teachers may use additional rules in the classroom which will be shared with parents at Open House

## CONSEQUENCES

The consequences are administered in order and in consideration of the number of times a rule is broken. If a behavior is harmful to that child or to other children, the teacher may find it necessary to begin with the third consequence. Physical violence (hitting, biting, spitting, etc.) WILL NOT BE TOLERATED to another child or staff members. Children, who exhibit violent behavior as described above, will be placed on a behavior plan that is agreed upon by the parents, teacher, and the Director. If the behavior has not improved, parents may be given a one-week notice of dismissal.

The consequences are as follows:

- 1st Verbal warning and redirection toward another activity
- 2nd Remove from situation
- 3rd Sit and watch (1 minute per year of child)
- 4th Parent notified by teacher
- 5th Director notified by teacher
- 6th Parent notified by Director – Parent Notification Form

## ILLNESS

Children who show signs of illness cannot be accepted. We must ask that your child be kept at home if any of the following exist:

1. Fever (100.4) **within the last 24 hours**: Tylenol, Advil, Motrin, etc. will only be administered with a doctor's written consent.
2. Vomiting or diarrhea **within the last 24 hours**.
3. Any symptom of the usual childhood diseases – Scarlet Fever, Chicken Pox, etc. (A child with Chicken Pox generally should remain out of school until all eruptions have completely healed).
4. Sore Throat
5. Croup
6. **Any** unexplained rash
7. **Any** skin infection – boils, ringworm, impetigo
8. Pink eye or other eye infections – child needs to stay at home if eye is tearing or draining even if on medication.
9. A child with a yellow or green runny nose will not be allowed in the program without a doctor's note.

All parents will be notified of outbreaks of infectious and/or contagious diseases within our weekday programs. Some of these include diseases/infections such as Chicken Pox, Scarlet Fever, Lice, Ringworm, etc. The Director has final authority over the admittance of a child. If a parent continually violates our illness policy, the Director has the right to ask for a withdrawal of the student from our program immediately.

## PICKING UP A SICK CHILD

You will be called if your child has any symptoms listed above. A child should be picked up within 45 minutes of parental notification.

## ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION

Medication should be clearly marked with child's name, name of medication, and in the original bottle. We will not administer any over the counter drug without a doctor's signature. Your doctor can fax this information to us; our fax number is 865-342-3833. An authorization of medication form must be filled out before any staff can administer any medication.

## SOILED CLOTHING

Program personnel will send all soiled (body fluids) clothes home in a plastic bag without being washed out per recommendations of the Knox County Health Department. This is for the protection of all. If the item is determined destroyed, the item will be thrown away and a note sent home to the parents. All Children in Pre-K or the 3-year-old and up Preschool classes **MUST BE COMPLETELY POTTY-TRAINED TO BE ENROLLED IN THIS PROGRAM.**

# MISCELLANEOUS

## MEALS

Children should bring a lunch for mealtime each day. **For the health and safety of all our students, we are a "peanut free" program.** If it is determined that there are no allergies in your child's classroom, your teacher may allow students to be peanut items. Please do not send glass bottles or containers for snack time or in lunches.

## ITEMS TO BRING

Each child should always have an extra set of clothes in the backpack. These should be in a Ziploc bag marked with the child's name. If your child must be changed due to an accident and no clothes are available, parents will be called to bring appropriate clothing for the child or pick up the child.

Children are not allowed to bring money, toys, or food to the program, unless otherwise specified by your child's teacher. Grace Christian Weekday Preschool is not responsible for the replacement of lost or damaged personal items, including medical devices, jewelry, sippy cups, lunchboxes, etc.

## POTTY TRAINING

All Students in Pre-K and the 3-year and up Part-Time Preschool classes **MUST BE COMPLETELY** potty trained. Children should be dressed in underwear and able to pull up pants independently. "Pull-ups" are not allowed. Bathroom breaks will be given throughout the day, and each child may also go as needed. **We understand that accidents do and will happen, especially at the beginning of the year.** If your child is consistently having accidents throughout the year, we may ask for the child to be withdrawn until the issues are resolved. The teacher will notify the parents if an accident happens.

## SHOE WEAR

We ask that you send your child in closed-toe shoes. Socks must be worn.

## BIRTHDAYS

We are glad to celebrate your child's birthday. We ask that you follow these guidelines, which help to ensure an enjoyable occasion for all:

- You may provide fruit, cupcakes, cake or cookies.
- Red food color is not allowed. This includes red Kool Aid, Hawaiian Punch, red punch, etc.

Your child's teacher cannot distribute party invitations unless everyone in your child's class is invited. Any video- taping of the class should be announced prior to the event, for other parent's notification. At the beginning of the year your teacher may give you the opportunity to sign up on a birthday invitation list, providing addresses and phone number to the class. It is completely your option to add your information to the birthday list.

## FIELD TRIPS

Students in the Pre-Kindergarten program and the Part-Time Preschool Program will have the option to participate in a field trip during the year. We must have a permission slip form for each child. Parents are required to attend all off-site field trips.

## SECURE PICK-UP POLICY

Parents will be asked to complete an Emergency Card at the beginning of each school year. This card will allow the parents to designate individuals that are authorized to pick up their child. In cases of emergency, where someone not listed on the Emergency Card will be picking up the child, the teacher must be notified in writing or by phone and the individual must be prepared to show proof of identity prior to obtaining the child. (Driver's license is preferred). If parents have any additions to their emergency card, they must see their child's teacher. If the staff believes that the person to whom the child is to be released is unable to drive safely, the next person on the list will be called to transport the child. All names and phone numbers must be kept current with the teacher.

## SIGN IN

All parents are required to sign their children in daily to the classroom. In an extreme emergency, such as an evacuation, all children will be accounted for utilizing this system.

## SCHOOL PORTRAITS

A professional photographer will take Portraits of the children, at least once a year. Payment for these portraits will be the responsibility of the parents.

## DIVORCE OR SEPARATION

In these cases, this program cannot legally refuse either parent access to their child unless we have legal documentation from the courts specifying a specific need to refuse the parent access to the child. These court documents should be provided to the Director as soon as possible when the need arises.

## ABUSE REPORTING

All staff are instructed to report any suspected cases of abuse or neglect to the Director. This information would be provided to the Department of Child Services (DCS). On identifying abuse or neglect, DCS's investigate procedures will be followed.

## CAR SEATS

No child will be allowed to be picked up from the program without the proper safety devices, as determined by the State of Tennessee. If a car seat is forgotten, the parents will be required to leave the child at the program and retrieve proper safety seats. A late fee of \$1 a minute will be required and will be billed to your tuition account.

## DCS INVESTIGATIONS

In the event Little Rams Pre-K & Preschool is contacted by the Department of Children's Services or a comparable agency of the State of Tennessee for the purpose of arranging for a DCS social worker to interview a student, our policy requires presentation of a court order by the social worker or representative before making the student available for an interview.

## CRITICAL INCIDENT PLAN (CIP)

In the event that Little Rams Pre-K & Preschool has an emergency such as fire, tornado, lock down, etc., we will follow our CIP plan. Each teacher is well prepared for these emergencies and a plan of action is in each classroom. We conduct regular drills to keep the teachers refreshed and the children prepared without being afraid. If you come to get your child while a drill is being conducted, you will not be able to take your child until the child is safely back in his/her classroom or other designated area.

## BIOHAZARD SPILLS

A Biohazard Spill is when a child has vomited, had diarrhea, or when a child has bled from a cut, nosebleed, loose tooth, etc. Our procedure is to care for the child with safety in mind first. The first priority will be to address the needs of the child, disinfect the area, dispose of the trash in the proper container. If the child has soiled his/her clothes, we will change the child into their extra clothes and send their soiled clothes home per recommendations from the Knox County Health Department.

## WITHDRAWAL FROM PROGRAM

Although we never want to dismiss a child from our program, if the need arises, the Director will make this determination. A request for withdrawal from the program will only result as a last resort. The following would constitute dismissal from the program:

- Continuous behavior problems
- Violent behavior
- Refusal to seek outside help when recommended
- Delinquent tuition payments
- Continuous bathroom accidents

## PARENT NOTIFICATION POLICY

Knowing that a change in personnel can affect children and parents alike, it is our goal to notify each parent involved regarding variations of the classroom schedule or employee status.

The timing of the notification to parents would occur in two steps:

- A. When a staff person has submitted a written notice of departure, parents will be informed. This will enable parents and children alike to express their appreciation to that staff member and adjust to the departure.
- B. When there is a sudden change in staffing for whatever reason, (death of employee, leave of absence, extended illness, employee termination, etc.), the parents will be informed as soon as possible.

## PARENT INFORMATION

It is our policy not to reveal the addresses or phone numbers of the parents who have their children enrolled in this program. We will not disclose or knowingly permit the use of any information concerning a child or family except as required by law or regulation.

Email is a vital communication tool within our program, and we highly encourage parents to keep this up to date with any changes. No email will ever be sold or provided to anyone for solicitation purposes.

## FOR YOUR CHILD'S SAFETY

If you must pick up your child early from the program, give your information to the receptionist at the desk. The receptionist will call to notify your child's teacher to prepare your child to leave for the day. Your child will be brought to you at that time.

If someone other than a parent will be picking up your child at any time, make sure that person is listed on the emergency card, or you have provided a note or called the office in advance. Proof of identity will be requested in these situations.

Because your child's safety is our priority, if at any time you remove your child from the teachers care during the course of the day, they will be considered dismissed for the day at that time.

If there are questions or concerns, call the direct line at 865-342-3836.

## ATTACHMENT FOR IMMUNIZATION RECORDS

All children must be immunized appropriately for age with DTP, Polio, MMR and HIB vaccines using the most current CDC/ACIP/AAP schedule. Refer to the chart, Recommended Childhood Immunization Schedule United States, January-December 1998, for the current schedule. HepB vaccine is required for all children born after September 1, 1997.

Starting September 1, 1999, children born after September 1, 1998, must provide proof of having Varicella vaccine (chicken pox) or proof of the disease for entry into a licensed childcare center. On the Tennessee Child Health Records there is a space provided for this date. If a child has had the disease, a month and year should be provided.

# GRACE CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

Lower School



# SCHOOL MANAGEMENT

## ATTENDANCE

Quality education requires regular student attendance. Irregular attendance deprives the student of an opportunity for effective learning. We recognize that situations arise in which missing school is unavoidable. More than 10 absences per semester are considered excessive. If a student accumulates more than twenty (20) absences during the school year, he or she may not be promoted to the next grade level (subject to administrative review). If a student is absent from school for reasons other than suspension, then he/she must adhere to the following procedure. Adjustments will be made for COVID-related absences.

**There are no excused or unexcused absences.** Any class missed counts as an absence which is accumulated over the semester. This includes dentist or doctor appointments, illnesses, church functions, and absences requested by a parent/ guardian with prior notification to the administration. Upon returning to school after an absence, the student must provide a written note, signed by the parent/guardian or e-mail. It should state the dates and reason for the absence.

If a student is absent due to suspension, he/she will not be allowed to attend or participate in extracurricular activities before, during or after school hours. This includes off-campus activities as well.

Parent/guardians of a child within the compulsory attendance age are responsible for their child's attendance at school, as required by the state. In order to gain the most from school, a student must be regular in attendance.

### **Additional attendance notes:**

- Every six (6) tardies to school results in one absence. (Tardies shall be accumulative by semester)
- Parent/guardians are expected to inform the school of any planned absences.
- The makeup work policy applies to all absences.
- Since the school calendar allows for several vacation opportunities periodically throughout the year, parent/guardians are encouraged to schedule vacations and doctor's appointments to coincide with school breaks/in-service days.

## TARDY POLICY

Beginning the school day on time is very important, and all students are expected to be punctual. Students who arrive at school after the bell rings are marked tardy and must sign in at the office by:

- Bringing a note from a parent/guardian, or
- Having the parent/guardian sign in the student

For the safety of our students and staff, all entrance doors will be locked after school begins.

Students who are tardy to class any other time during the day are to go directly to class. Students will be given an unexcused tardy unless they bring an excused tardy slip from the office or a teacher.

## LOWER SCHOOL AFTERNOON DISMISSAL

In an effort to provide security and supervision for our students, all students must be picked up by 3:15. If a person picking up a student in car line does not have a car tag for the student, they will be asked to show ID. Staff and faculty will not be available to supervise your child(ren) after that time. Should a student still be on campus at 3:15pm, a phone call will be placed to the parent/guardian.

## EARLY DISMISSAL & PARTIAL DAY ABSENCES

When early dismissal is necessary, a note from the parent/guardian stating the time of dismissal should be given to the teacher. The parent/guardian must sign the student out at the school office, and the receptionist will summon the student to the office.

**To avoid disrupting the educational process, early dismissals should be kept to a minimum. Anyone picking up a student for early dismissal must show a picture I.D. and be listed as an emergency pick up in RenWeb.** Parent/guardians will need to state the reason for the early dismissal or late arrival during the school day through signing in or out in person, or presenting a note, phone call or email. Students who have tests or quizzes scheduled the day of early dismissal or late arrival will be expected to take the test or quiz that day unless other arrangements are made with the teacher.

## DISMISSAL

If anyone other than a parent/guardian needs to pick up a child, please send a note to the classroom teacher with the date and name of the person responsible for picking up the student. Students are expected to leave campus at dismissal time. After school supervision is not provided, and GCA assumes no liability for students remaining on campus following school dismissal.

**\*AT NO TIME SHOULD ANY STUDENT CROSS OAK RIDGE HIGHWAY AS A PEDESTRIAN. \***

# ACADEMIC MANAGEMENT

## GRADE REPORTING

Lower School classes may be given a letter grade of E, S, N or U. Additionally, students in Kindergarten will receive a skill-based progress report on a quarterly basis. Grades and report cards for individual students may be viewed online at ParentsWeb.

**A** | 90-100

**B** | 80-89

**C** | 70-79

**D** | 60-69

**F** | 0-59

## TEXTBOOKS

All textbooks, whether Christian or secular, will be taught within the Biblical worldview.

- All textbooks are leased from the school.
- It is the student's responsibility to keep up with all assigned books.
- Books are to be handled with care and kept in good condition.
- If damage occurs, the student should report it to their teacher immediately.
- Any damage or replacement costs of books must be paid prior to the issuance of end-of-year report cards or transcripts.
- In the event of withdrawal from school, all leased textbooks must be turned in to the teacher.

## MAKEUP WORK

The student will have **one school day for every day missed to complete makeup work**. For example, if a student is absent Monday and Tuesday, he/she has Wednesday and Thursday to make up work missed. Students who are absent for 5 or more days should consult with their teacher to create a plan for making up their assignments. Exception: Students who have completed all work, including the review section (if applicable), may be required upon their return to school to take any tests missed. Adjustments will be made for COVID-related absences.

**It is the student's responsibility to make up missed assignments.** The student is expected to check with teachers or ParentsWeb for makeup work upon his/her return from an absence. If a student misses only the day a test is given or project/ assignment is due, the student is responsible to make up the work the first day he/she returns, provided the student was informed of the due date in advance of the absence. If a student returns to school on the day of a pre-announced test or quiz after a short absence, the student is expected to take the test or quiz on the day it is given.

**Students will have five school days to work with their teacher to change an "I" (incomplete) received as a nine-week grade to a passing letter grade.** Students not meeting the five-day deadline will receive a "0" for incomplete work except in cases of extreme hardship. These cases will be handled on an individual basis.

## LATE WORK POLICY

Student responsibility for turning in work is an important life skill that students must develop early. Your child's teacher will provide his/her late work policy.

## CLASSROOM COMMUNICATION

On Fridays each Lower School teacher will send home a "Friday Folder." In the folder there is a sign and return section which contains assessments taken and other important items which need to be signed and returned to school. The other side will contain classwork, announcements from the school, and a class newsletter. This newsletter contains important academic notes such as tests, Bible verses, and spelling words. It also includes information about upcoming events in the classroom. *ParentsWeb is a great communication tool where you can check your child's grades, see assignments and view report cards. E-mail is an additional tool that teachers use to communicate about activities in the classroom.*

## PARENT/GUARDIAN TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parent/guardian teacher conferences are encouraged as an excellent way to exchange information that will provide a greater understanding of the student. Parent/guardians may arrange teacher conferences by e-mailing the teacher directly. The teacher's e-mail address is the first name. followed by the last name@gcarams.org (firstname.lastname@gcaramsorg).

## TESTING

Standardized tests are administered to students in grades 3-8 each spring and are used as one of several measurements of academic achievement. Assessment reports will be provided to all parent/guardians.

## PROMOTION POLICIES

Lower School students will be promoted at the discretion of the teacher and administration based on satisfactory academic performance, Christ like conduct and work habits.

Kindergarten students must demonstrate mastery of academic benchmarks in phonics and math, as well as social and emotional maturity to be promoted to first grade. Parent/guardians will be informed as the year progresses if there are any areas of concern.

## LEARNING CENTER

At Grace Christian Academy (GCA), we recognize and value the variety of learning styles among our students. When there are a variety of learning styles, students present with different levels of academic needs. The Learning Center serves as a level of support to assist students with a variety of academic needs. The goal of the Learning Center is to meet students at the point of their need and help move them to the peak of their potential. We want each student to truly know that they are uniquely and individually made with a God-given plan and purpose for their lives. Academic challenges don't diminish His plan and purpose for their lives and in most cases, He uses these challenges to grow their faith and to develop perseverance.

Students with a current diagnosed educational or medical disability which impacts their learning or performance within the classroom may be eligible to receive classroom accommodations through a formal educational plan (Learning plan or 504 plan). Below list the criteria for developing a formal plan:

- Outside evaluation reports must be provided by the parents to support a student's need for a learning plan.
- Evaluations must be current and updated every three years to determine continued eligibility.

If a new applicant to GCA has ever had an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or 504 Plan, a copy of the plan, along with their most recent evaluation report, must be submitted to the Admissions Office to be included in the applicant's confidential file.

In addition, The Learning Center offers tutoring and intervention support services, to either provide a level of academic support or to promote academic acceleration, at an additional fee above tuition. These services are available to all students, grades K-12, during the regular school day. Please visit the Learning Center page on the school website to learn more about the adopted programs.

## ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Grace Christian Academy strives to teach students the importance of personal and academic integrity (He [God] stores up sound wisdom for the upright; He is a shield to those who walk in integrity - Proverbs 2:7). Cheating, falsifying, plagiarism, and theft or alteration of academic materials rob the child of God of academic integrity and will not be tolerated. Cheating is defined as obtaining or attempting to obtain, or aiding another to obtain credit for work, or any improvement of evaluation of performance, by any dishonest or deceptive means.

Examples of cheating or academic dishonesty include but are not limited to:

- Copying another student's homework, quiz, test or other paper without express permission from the teacher
- Using or allowing another student to misrepresent or fabricate work as one's own, unless part of a group project when work is shared
- Unauthorized possession, distribution or use of test or quiz materials in advance, using or displaying notes, "cheat sheets," or any other information devices inappropriate to the prescribed test conditions
- Seeking to deceitfully obtain, collaborate or secure answers during a test or quiz from any outside source, whether through visual, auditory, written, electronic, or verbal means
- Plagiarism in any form.

## FIELD TRIPS

We believe that on or off campus field trips are an extension of the curriculum and academic program. The cost is covered in tuition. **Due to the academic nature of our trips, parent/guardians are welcome to attend, but siblings are not allowed to accompany the class.** Regular school dress code, not spirit wear, is required unless otherwise noted.

## TECHNOLOGY

All students and parent/guardians must sign, return and abide by the school's AUP - Acceptable Usage Policy.

# SPIRITUAL LIFE

## BIBLICALLY BASED CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTION

In the pursuit of aligning all aspects of Grace Christian Academy with our core values and mission, our teachers participate in professional development and Kingdom education training so that each student finds his/her foundation of academia to also be firmly rooted in the infallible, inerrant Word of God. In addition to a daily Bible class, biblical truths are threaded throughout the concepts taught in all other courses and subjects.

## CHAPEL

All students attend chapel on a regular basis. Parent/guardians are welcome to attend chapel services and should sign in when entering the Grace Student Ministries Building.

## MISSIONS

In an intentional effort to explore, experience and engage our students in a lifestyle of serving, GCA has developed age level appropriate missional experiences. These experiences are intended to gradually increase a student's understanding and involvement in missions with the ultimate goal that a GCA graduate will be equipped to live a life of servant leadership in their families, workplaces, community and beyond!

# DRESS CODE

**Parent/guardians are responsible to ensure that their student's attire conforms to the following standards.** Realizing that it would be impractical to keep up with clothing fads and address every possible dress code nuance, GCA administration reserves the right to address situations that might not be outlined in the Student Handbook. If a child comes to school in violation of the dress code, the parent/guardian will be notified. On a second violation, the parent/guardian will be expected to bring proper attire to school. The student may be removed from class until his/her apparel meets school standards. Approved school apparel vendors are the following: My Aplus Uniforms, Lands' End, and uniform items in the G2 Store. These are the only approved vendors for school dress code apparel. The final determination of approved apparel is at the discretion of the school administration according to what has been posted as approved apparel on dress code lists. Vendors may not suggest or recommend anything other than approved apparel.

Students demonstrating non-conformity to the GCA dress code will be subject to disciplinary consequences. Warnings will not be issued.

## GENERAL GUIDELINES

The school administration shall reserve the right of authority on these matters to determine whether the student's dress is acceptable for the school setting.

## PANTS | SHORTS

- Solid khaki or navy shorts, or pants. They are expected to be neat and presentable, exhibiting a normal degree of wear.
- Blue jean pants are allowed (not shorts). There should be no writing, pictures, or designs on the jeans. Jeans should be free of holes, frayed edges or excessive wear.
- Pants must be worn properly around the waist, not extending below the shoes.
- Khaki and navy uniform style shorts may be purchased from any vendor but must be no shorter than 3 inches above the knee. Cargo shorts are not an approved style except those purchased from Lands' End.

## SKORTS | DRESSES

Skorts, as well as navy, khaki and plaid jumpers, are allowed but must be purchased from an approved GCA vendor. Polo dresses with the GCA logo are approved.

## SHIRTS

- All shirts, blouses, sweaters and fleece pullovers must be purchased from approved GCA vendors. All items must bear the official GCA logo. Approved GCA vendors will inform customers of the required colors and styles.
- All school uniform polo shirts must bear the official GCA logo and be purchased from an approved vendor.
- A school uniform polo shirt is required to be worn underneath a hoodie. **Only GCA approved outerwear (jackets, hoodies, fleece, etc.) is acceptable to be worn in the school building. Non GCA outerwear may be worn at recess.**
- Shirts worn under uniform shirts must be navy, royal, gray or white.

## SHOES

Shoes must have toe, sides and heel enclosed.

## SPIRIT WEAR

On Fridays, students in the Lower School may wear school spirit wear purchased from an approved vendor and jeans.

## OTHER

- Hair for boys, including facial hair, needs to be neatly trimmed and clean in appearance. For both boys and girls, extreme hair fads, colors and styles are not permitted, including anything deemed by administration to be distracting to the learning environment.
- Girls only are permitted to wear earrings, and any other body piercing on girls or boys should not be displayed at school or school events.
- Jewelry must be minimal and not distracting, as determined by GCA administration.
- Sunglasses are not to be worn indoors. Hats and bandanas are not to be worn at any time. Boys may not wear headbands.
- Makeup should not be worn in an excessive manner.
- Visible tattoos are not permitted.
- Boys are not permitted to wear nail polish.
- Students are expected to dress in traditional, gender appropriate attire at all GCA events.

## ACTIVITY DRESS

GCA students are expected to dress modestly and appropriately at all home and away GCA activities as approved by the school administration.

# DISCIPLINE

The Bible clearly indicates that parent/guardians are responsible for the discipline of their children. Grace Christian Academy exists to assist parent/guardians in their God-given responsibilities. Therefore, GCA seeks not to assume the task which God gives to parent/guardians, but only to serve as the parent/guardians appointed and authorized representatives in the child training process, in a limited way.

Attendance at Grace Christian Academy is a privilege and not a right. GCA will cooperate with the home in the nurturing of the student(s). GCA reserves the right and at its sole discretion may remove students from enrollment if the school can no longer assist the family in the nurturing of their children. GCA reserves the right to deny re-admission to any student whose actions demonstrate it is not in the school's best interest to allow re-admission.

## Disciplinary Goals:

1. Respect Authority: Someone has said, "Consequently, he who rebels against authority is rebelling against what God has instituted and those who do will bring judgment on themselves." (Romans 3:2)
2. Respect Yourself: "Teach us to number our days aright, that we may gain a heart of wisdom." (Psalm 90:12)
3. Respect Others: "Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you." (Ephesians 4:29, 32)

## STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

- Students should demonstrate respect to faculty members, staff members, and fellow students.
- Students are to be respectful of the property of GCA and others.
- Students are expected to maintain academic integrity as previously described.
- Students are expected to demonstrate appropriate behavior at all school functions.

## PARENT/GUARDIAN EXPECTATIONS

- Parent/guardians are expected to demonstrate a spirit of cooperation with the administration and faculty of the Academy. Any school-related concerns need to be resolved following the Matthew 18 principle.
- Parent/guardians are expected to be respectful of school staff and students and display Christ-like behavior in speech and actions.
- Parent/guardians are responsible to know and adhere to all school policies.
- Parent/guardians are expected to abide by all expectations listed in the re-enrollment guidelines.
- Parent/guardians are expected to dress modestly and appropriately at school-related events.

## STUDENT BEHAVIOR

To accomplish these student expectations, certain student behavior cannot be tolerated will result in action by the teacher and or the administration. Examples include:

- Running, yelling or acting in a disorderly manner
- Use of physical force or verbal intimidation
- Leaving school property without permission
- Defacing any property of the school or another student (damage caused by the student will be paid for by the student or parent/guardian)
- Bringing any article that distracts another to school
- Being disrespectful toward fellow students, teachers or staff in attitude, words or actions
- Inappropriate language
- Lying, cheating, or stealing
- Inappropriate public display of affection toward another student
- Involvement or the impression of involvement in immoral activities or activities that are contrary to the philosophy of GCA

- Obscene body language
- Chewing gum at school
- Possession on their person, in their locker, in their backpack, or in their cars of any kind of weapon, fireworks, drugs, drug paraphernalia, cigarettes, vapor products, alcohol or pornography. This includes any inappropriate content that is stored or viewed on an electronic device.

## DISCIPLINE POLICIES

Lower School students will be treated fairly and reasonably. Discipline will be based on careful evaluation of the circumstances for each case. It is our belief that discipline must address attitudes of the heart and lead students toward Christ-like behavior. Factors that will be considered are seriousness of the offense, the student's age, the frequency of misbehavior, the student's attitude and parent/guardian support.

## DISMISSALS

Grace Christian Academy reserves the right of suspension or dismissal at any time during the school year at the discretion of the respective division head. Any student who persistently neglects work, who fails to meet academic or other standards or qualifications, or who exercises poor citizenship, one who fails to cooperate, or whose parent/guardians fail to cooperate, may be asked to withdraw from the school. Dismissal will be administered by the respective division head with the advice and approval of the Head of School. Appeal of a dismissal may be made in writing to the Head of School within three days of the dismissal. A student may not attend classes during request for an appeal. A student who has lost the privilege to attend GCA is not permitted to attend school-related events.

## HARASSMENT POLICY

Grace Christian Academy is committed to providing an environment in which every student is treated as an image bearer of God. Conduct, whether intentional or unintentional, that subjects another student to unwanted attention, comments or actions because of race, national origin, sex, physical characteristics or disability, robs the student of dignity and is not permitted. It includes, but is not limited to, any or all the following:

- **Verbal Harassment:** Derogatory comments and jokes; threatening words spoken to another student.
- **Physical Harassment:** Unwanted physical touching, assault.
- **Visual Harassment:** Derogatory drawings, writings, cartoons, or gestures/actions.
- **Sexual Harassment:** Unwanted sexual advances, request for sexual favors.

Grace Christian Academy does not condone or allow harassment of others, whether engaged in by students, employees, or family members. Any student who believes he or she has been subjected to harassment should report these actions immediately to a teacher or administrator. Each report will be given serious consideration and investigated thoroughly in a prompt and confidential manner.

*Students who violate these principles will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. Students found to have filed false or frivolous accusations of harassment will also be subject to disciplinary action.*

## BULLYING POLICY

**Rationale:** To instill biblical values and create a more loving environment, the school has adopted a bullying policy. From time to time, conflict can occur. Grace Christian Academy realizes that while bullying may occur, it is never acceptable. We seek to implement a clear framework for dealing with bullying incidents in order to protect the students and help the bully to learn how to relate in a way that is in line with the biblical standard of relationships: "My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you." John 15:12

**Definition:** The following actions in an **ONGOING** form may be forms of bullying:

- Physical aggression: including hitting, punching, kicking
- Teasing or verbal abuse: including putdowns, insults, name calling, racial, or sexual remarks
- Intentional exclusion from activities or friendship groups; the setting up of humiliating experiences
- Damaging a person's property/possessions or taking them without permission
- Threatening gestures, actions or words
- Written, verbal, or electronic messages that contain threats, putdowns, gossip or slandering

**Policy Statement:** From time to time, in a large community such as a school, conflict and offence can occur. As part of living in a sinful world, when we don't relate to others as we should or when we try to exert power and influence over others, bullying can result.

Grace Christian Academy realizes that while bullying may occur, it is never acceptable and seeks to implement a clear framework for dealing with bullying incidents. The school's response to bullying is based on the pattern of relating to one another found in the Bible. God intended for us to live in a way that acknowledges differences and accepts others because we are all made in God's image.

GCA recognizes that not all behaviors should be considered bullying or willful violation of this policy. Behaviors will be assessed by the teacher and/or administrator and addressed according to the following procedures.

## PROCEDURES

1. All parties, including the victim, suspected bully, and sufficient bystanders - will be spoken to in order to establish the facts of the situation and to determine accountability for their actions/inaction.
2. All incidences are to be documented and written reports will be kept on the behavior by those staff members to whom the incident was reported.
3. Pertinent staff will be informed about and have access to the information recorded on all incidents so that they may be aware of any issues between students.
4. Investigations into bullying allegations must be undertaken in a timely manner and should be carried out in such a way as to minimize the risk of escalation.
5. All incidents of bullying will be followed up by those staff members originally informed to parent/guardians of at least the victim(s) and suspected bully.

## RESPONSIBILITIES

### Student

- Student should ask the offending student to stop their behaviors.
- Students being bullied should report it to staff, parent/guardians or another adult.
- Students who are aware of bullying should report it to a teacher or administrator.
- Students should take appropriate steps to discourage or prevent bullying.
- Students should be willing to resolve bullying situations, employing forgiveness and some changes in behavior.

### Parent/guardians

- Parent/guardians are encouraged to take what their children say seriously and to report bullying concerns to the teacher first.
- Parent/guardians should understand that the whole story may be quite complex and trust the school to resolve bullying issues.
- Parent/guardians not satisfied with the action may refer to administrators if the need arises.

## TECHNOLOGY POLICIES

### CELL PHONE & SMART WATCH POLICY

Students are not permitted to use cell phones or smart watches during the school day. The phone should never be visible during class. Smart watches may be worn but not used for anything other than checking the time during the school day. If a student brings a cell phone, it must be secured in the student's locker, cubby, or backpack and it must be turned off. If a student cell phone or smart watch rings while in a student's locker or backpack, the teacher will initiate disciplinary action according to the consequences listed below. *Forgetting to turn off the cell phone or smart watch is not an excuse for violation.*

- Use of a cell phone or smart watch during a test for any reason (i.e. text messaging, photos, etc.) will automatically be considered cheating, and appropriate academic and disciplinary action will be taken at the sole discretion of the administration.
- No taking of or other use of cell phone photographs or videos is permitted during the school day.
- Specifically, no cell phones are permitted in restrooms or locker rooms at any time. Violation of this prohibition is a serious disciplinary offense.

**Parent/guardians should not consider their student's cell phone or smart watch as a means of contacting their student for any reason during the school day.** Parent/guardians who need to contact their student during the school day for emergency purposes should use the Academy's normal emergency contact process and call the main office. GCA staff will assist parent/guardians in communicating with their child in appropriate emergency situations. Disciplinary consequences for violation of the cell phone or smart watch policy shall be as follows:

- The phone or watch will be confiscated by the teacher and returned at the end of the school day to the parent/guardian.
- If a student is caught using another student's phone, discipline will be administered as deemed appropriate by the division head.

GCA accepts no responsibility for use, breakage, theft or loss of cell phones or other personal items.

### SOCIAL MEDIA POLICIES

As members of the Grace Christian Academy community we continuously represent Jesus Christ and GCA whenever and wherever we use online communications (both at school and at home.) This includes, but is not limited to, email, chat, instant- messaging, video calls, texting, gaming, and social media sites. In all our online communication with classmates, teachers, and anyone else inside or outside the GCA community, we will treat others in love and respect as Christ teaches. Any illegal, disrespectful, obscene, or inflammatory language or media, ethnic or racial slurs, bullying, harassment or defamation, or other similar content posted or sent online will result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion.

## ONLINE ACTIVITY

Activity on social media sites such as Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook are not allowed at school. The school understands many students have access to these sites outside of school. Students are reminded that regardless of where their post originates, any text, photographs or videos they put on these sites or similar sites which would be obscene, derogatory to the school or the school community, or threaten, demean, or bully students or faculty is prohibited and will be subject to school disciplinary action and may be referred to local law enforcement agencies.

## RECORDING DEVICE POLICY

Students may not use any recording devices on the school grounds. This includes transmitting images, taking photographs with a phone, camera or other recording device, or using any electronic device on an audio or video record setting.

**EXCEPTIONS:** An exception may be granted if a GCA student has been approved for the use of a camera or video camera to record images for curriculum or school-related purposes.

## DIGITAL DEVICE USAGE

While not comprehensive (see AUP - Acceptable Use Policy - for more details), the following list identifies uses of a digital device for which a student could face disciplinary action ranging from loss of use privilege to expulsion from the school depending on the severity of the infraction:

- Unapproved recording (audio and/or video) or photography of individuals at any time on campus.
- Unapproved communication between devices – whether social or academic in nature.
- Access to unapproved websites at any time while on campus.
- Playback of unapproved or inappropriate material (audio and/or video) at any time while on campus
- Non-academic usage of a digital device during an academic class.

# ADDITIONAL POLICIES

## GUNS AND WEAPONS

Grace Christian Academy does not allow guns, knives, weapons or their facsimiles on campus. Violation of this policy will result in the immediate dismissal of the participating student or students with the exception of facsimile which may result in suspension or dismissal at the discretion of administration.

## SEARCH AND SEIZURE

To maintain order and discipline in the Academy and to protect the safety and welfare of students and personnel, school authorities may request a search of a student, student lockers, or student automobiles under the circumstances outlined below and may seize illegal, unauthorized or contraband materials discovered in the search. GCA reserves the right to invite the Knox County Sheriff's Department or an appropriate narcotics search group to visit at any time during the school year to search for drugs. Any alcohol, drugs or drug paraphernalia found in lockers, cars or other items under the student's control will constitute possession.

1. **Personal Searches:** A student and/or personal effects (e.g., purse, backpack, etc.) may be searched whenever a school authority has reasonable suspicion that the student is in possession of illegal or unauthorized materials. Students may be asked to empty their pockets, pocketbooks, wallets, backpacks, etc. without the parent/guardian's permission or the student's permission. Enrollment of the child constitutes parent/guardian consent to such searches. If the student refuses and the school feels a personal search of the student's person or belongings is required (as per the safety of that student or any other student), then the parent/guardians will be phoned and must come to school to perform the search. If the parent/guardians fail to come to the Academy to perform the search in a reasonable time (one hour) and/or the student refuses to empty his/her pockets or remove from his or her person what is suspected, then the student's privilege to attend this Academy will be revoked. If a phone is confiscated, the Academy reserves the right to review the phone's content for any reason.
2. **Locker Searches:** Student lockers are Academy property and remain at all times under the control of the Academy; however, students are expected to assume full responsibility for the security of their lockers. The Academy exercises exclusive control over school property, and students should not expect privacy regarding items placed in school property because school property is subject to search at any time by Academy officials. Students are responsible for whatever is contained in desks.

# GRACE CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

Early Middle School



# SCHOOL MANAGEMENT

## ATTENDANCE

Quality education requires regular student attendance. Irregular attendance deprives the student of an opportunity for effective learning. We recognize that situations arise in which missing school is unavoidable. More than 10 absences per semester is considered excessive. If a student accumulates more than twenty (20) absences during the school year, he or she may not be promoted to the next grade level (subject to administrative review). If a student is absent from school for reasons other than suspension, then he/she must adhere to the following procedure. Adjustments will be made for COVID-related absences.

**There are no excused or unexcused absences.** Any class missed counts as an absence which is accumulated over the semester. This includes dentist or doctor appointments, illnesses, church functions, and absences requested by a parent/ guardian with prior notification to the administration.

Upon returning to school after an absence, the student must provide a written note, signed by the parent/guardian or e-mail. It should state the dates and reason for the absence.

If a student is absent due to suspension, he/she will not be allowed to attend or participate in extracurricular activities before, during or after school hours. This includes off-campus activities as well.

Parent/guardians of a child within the compulsory attendance age are responsible for their child's attendance at school, as required by the state. In order to gain the most from school, a student must be regular in attendance.

School-initiated absences (such as field trips or snow days) are not counted as part of the cumulative total of absences for students. Students must be in attendance at least four (4) class periods of the school day in order to participate in any extracurricular activities that day.

### Additional attendance notes:

- Every six (6) tardies per class results in one absence from that class period.
- Students must be in attendance for at least 50% of their class schedule during the school day in order to participate in any extracurricular activities that day.
- Parent/guardians are expected to inform the school of any planned absences.
- The makeup work policy applies to **all** absences.
- Since the school calendar allows for several vacation opportunities periodically throughout the year, parent/guardians are encouraged to schedule vacations and doctor's appointments to coincide with school breaks | in-service days.

## TARDY POLICY

Beginning the school day on time is very important, and all students are expected to be punctual. Likewise, students should remain in class for the duration of the school day so they can receive the maximum benefit from all instructional activities. Students who arrive at school after the bell rings are marked tardy and must sign in at the office by:

1. Bringing a note from a parent/guardian, or
2. Being signed in by the parent/guardian

**For the safety of our students and staff, all entrance doors will be locked after school begins.** Students who are tardy to class any other time during the day are to go directly to class. Students are considered absent when more than fifteen (15) minutes tardy to class.

## EARLY DISMISSAL & PARTIAL DAY ABSENCES

When early dismissal is necessary, a note from the parent/guardian stating the time of dismissal should be given to the receptionist. The parent/guardian must sign the student out at the school office, and the receptionist will summon the student to the office.

**To avoid disrupting the educational process, early dismissals should be kept to a minimum. Anyone picking up a student for early dismissal must show a picture I.D. and be listed on the student's RenWeb account.** Parent/guardians will need to state the reason for the early dismissal or late arrival during the school day through signing in or out in person, or presenting a note, phone call or email. Students who have tests or quizzes scheduled the day of early dismissal or late arrival will be expected to take the test or quiz that day unless other arrangements are made with the teacher.

## DISMISSAL

If anyone other than a parent/guardian needs to pick up your child, please send a note to the receptionist with the date and name of the person responsible for picking up the student.

Students are expected to leave campus at dismissal time. Supervision is not provided, and GCA assumes no liability for students remaining on campus following school dismissal. Arrangements for after school athletic practices will be made by the athletic department.

**\*AT NO TIME SHOULD ANY STUDENT CROSS OAK RIDGE HIGHWAY AS A PEDESTRIAN. \***

# ACADEMIC MANAGEMENT

## CURRICULUM

- All materials, whether from Christian publishers or non-Christian publishers, will be taught within the Christian worldview.
- All textbooks are leased from the school.
- It is the student's responsibility to keep up with all assigned books.
- Books are to be handled with care and kept in good condition.
- If damage occurs, the student should report it to a teacher immediately.
- Any damage or replacement costs of books must be paid prior to the issuance of end-of-year report cards or transcripts.
- In the event of withdrawal from school, all leased textbooks must be turned in to the teacher.

## EARLY MIDDLE SCHOOL ACADEMIC PLAN

5th Grade	6th Grade
Bible 5	Bible 6
Language Arts 5	Language Arts 6
History 5	History 6
Math 5	Math 6
Science 5	Science 6
Electives	Electives

## FACTS PARENTSWEB

Parent/guardians can view all grades, report cards, homework assignments, lesson plans, and more via their ParentsWeb account.

## GRADE REPORTING

Grades and report cards for individual students may be viewed online through ParentsWeb.

**A** | 90-100

**B** | 80-89

**C** | 70-79

**D** | 60-69

**F** | 0-59

## MAKEUP WORK

The student will have **one school day for every day missed to complete makeup work**. For example, if a student is absent Monday and Tuesday, he/she has Wednesday and Thursday to make up work missed. Students who are absent for 5 or more days should consult with their teacher to create a plan for making up their assignments. Exception: Students who have completed all work, including the review section (if applicable), may be required upon their return to school to take any tests missed. Adjustments will be made for COVID-related absences.

**It is the student's responsibility to make up missed assignments.** The student is expected to check with teachers or ParentsWeb for makeup work upon his/her return from an absence. If a student misses only the day a test is given or project assignment is due, the student is responsible to make up the work the first day he/she returns, provided the student was informed of the due date in advance of the absence. If a student returns to school on the day of a pre-announced test or quiz after a short absence, the student is expected to take the test or quiz on the day it is given.

**Students will have five school days to work with their teacher to change an "I" (incomplete) received as a nine-week grade to a passing letter grade.** Students not meeting the five-day deadline will receive a "0" for incomplete work except in cases of extreme hardship. These cases will be handled on an individual basis.

## LATE WORK POLICY

Student responsibility for turning in work is an important life skill that students must develop early. Please consult the syllabus for each class to determine the late work policy. Students may be required to attend a homework lunch if an assignment has not been submitted in a timely manner.

## FIELD TRIPS

We believe that on or off campus field trips are an extension of the curriculum and academic program. The cost is covered in tuition unless otherwise noted by teachers (does not include 6th grade retreat). **Due to the academic nature of our trips, parent/guardians are welcome to attend, but siblings are not allowed to accompany the class.** Regular school dress code, not spirit wear, is required unless otherwise noted.

## PARENT/GUARDIAN TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parent/guardian teacher conferences are encouraged as an excellent way to exchange information that will provide a greater understanding of the student. Parent/guardians may arrange teacher conferences by e-mailing the teacher directly. The teacher's e-mail address is the first initial followed by the last name@gcarams.org.

## TESTING

Standardized Tests are administered to students in grades 3-8 each spring and are used as one of several measurements of academic achievement. Assessment reports will be provided to all parent/guardians.

## PROMOTION POLICIES

If a student receives any failing grades in the five core classes, he or she may be subject to individual tutoring and may not be promoted. In the Early Middle School, a student who fails more than two courses may be required to repeat his/her current grade at the discretion of the administration and teachers.

## LEARNING CENTER

At Grace Christian Academy (GCA), we recognize and value the variety of learning styles among our students. When there are a variety of learning styles, students present with different levels of academic needs. The Learning Center serves as a level of support to assist students with a variety of academic needs. The goal of the Learning Center is to meet students at the point of their need and help move them to the peak of their potential. We want each student to truly know that they are uniquely and individually made with a God-given plan and purpose for their lives. Academic challenges don't diminish His plan and purpose for their lives and in most cases, He uses these challenges to grow their faith and to develop perseverance.

Students with a current diagnosed educational or medical disability which impacts their learning or performance within the classroom may be eligible to receive classroom accommodations through a formal educational plan (Learning plan or 504 plan). Below list the criteria for developing a formal plan:

- Outside evaluation reports must be provided by the parents to support a student's need for a learning plan.
- Evaluations must be current and updated every three years to determine continued eligibility.

If a new applicant to GCA has ever had an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or 504 Plan, a copy of the plan, along with their most recent evaluation report, must be submitted to the Admissions Office to be included in the applicant's confidential file.

In addition, The Learning Center offers tutoring and intervention support services, to either provide a level of academic support or to promote academic acceleration, at an additional fee above tuition. These services are available to all students, grades K-12, during the regular school day. Please visit the Learning Center page on the school website to learn more about the adopted programs.

## ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Grace Christian Academy strives to teach students the importance of personal and academic integrity (He [God] stores up sound wisdom for the upright; He is a shield to those who walk in integrity - Proverbs 2:7). Cheating, falsifying, plagiarism, and theft or alteration of academic materials rob the child of God of academic integrity and will not be tolerated.

Cheating is defined as obtaining or attempting to obtain, or aiding another to obtain credit for work, or any improvement of evaluation of performance, by any dishonest or deceptive means. Examples of cheating or academic dishonesty include but are not limited to:

- Copying another student's homework, quiz, test or other paper without express permission from the teacher.
- Using or allowing another student to misrepresent or fabricate work as one's own, unless part of a group project when work is shared
- Unauthorized possession, distribution or use of test or quiz materials in advance, using or displaying notes, "cheat sheets," or any other information devices inappropriate to the prescribed test conditions.
- Seeking to deceitfully obtain, collaborate or secure answers during a test or quiz from any outside source, whether through visual, auditory, written, electronic, or verbal means.
- Plagiarism in any form.

## TECHNOLOGY

Technology is an important part of today's society and therefore we must use it as a tool to teach all students. All students and parent/guardians must sign, return, and abide by the school's AUP (Acceptable Use Policy).

## ACADEMIC WATCH

- Any student who has two D's or one F at any eligibility check point (or sooner if determined appropriate by the administration) will be placed on academic watch.
- Individualized interventions may be implemented for a student who falls into this category.

## ACADEMIC PROBATION

- Any student who is failing two classes at the quarter or end of the year will be placed on academic probation and will be considered ineligible to participate in athletics until the next academic check point.
- Students on academic probation will be held accountable, at minimum, for the interventions as defined above for academic watch.
- Students may be eligible for practice (coach's discretion) during academic probation.
- A student who is placed on academic probation following the fourth quarter will be considered ineligible at the beginning of the next school year. This eligibility determination can be adjusted upon the completion of appropriate coursework for credit retrieval prior to the first day of the next school year.

Quarter	Mid-Quarter Academic Checkpoint	Quarter Ends	Grades Posted (Eligibility Determined)
1st	September 9, 2022	October 7, 2022	October 21, 2022
2nd	November 11, 2022	December 21, 2022	January 13, 2023
3rd	February 10, 2023	March 10, 2023	March 24, 2023
4th	April 21, 2023	May 24, 2023	June 3, 2023

## ACADEMIC CHECKPOINTS

- The dates for these checkpoints are listed above.
- Students cannot be determined ineligible at mid-quarter checkpoints but can become eligible at this time.
- Eligibility checkpoints at each quarter will determine athletic eligibility.
- If a student-athlete is determined ineligible at the quarter, he/she will not be considered for eligibility until the appropriate academic checkpoint date listed above.

Please note that a student's academic performance at the end of the fourth grading period will determine fall eligibility. Students who participate in athletics or other school sanctioned activities can be deemed ineligible for participation for disciplinary reasons at the discretion of the division head.

## EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

GCA offers a full array of extracurricular activities to provide opportunities for students to develop leadership, teamwork skills, and commitment.

**Athletics:** Interscholastic competition is available to students.

**Student Leadership:** The purpose of student Leadership is to foster an enthusiasm for academic scholarship, develop leadership, encourage servanthood, and build Christian character. Students in grades 5-6 who maintain an “A” average in all classes are eligible for consideration regarding membership. The students who meet the academic criteria are then evaluated by grade level teachers based on character, leadership, citizenship, and service.

## DROP | ADD POLICY

Dropping and adding of 6th grade electives for the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter must be finalized within the first week of the school year and must have parent/guardian and administrative approval. For the 2-4<sup>th</sup> quarter, all elective changes will be made the week prior to the start of the new quarter.

# SPIRITUAL LIFE

## BIBLICALLY BASED CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTION

In the pursuit of aligning all aspects of Grace Christian Academy with our core values and mission, our teachers participate in professional development and Kingdom education training so that each student finds his/her foundation of academia to also be firmly rooted in the infallible, inerrant Word of God. In addition to a daily Bible class, biblical truths are threaded throughout the concepts taught in all other courses | subjects.

## CHAPEL

All students attend chapel on a regular basis. Parent/guardians are welcome to attend chapel services and should sign in when entering the Grace Student Ministries Building.

## MISSIONS

In an intentional effort to explore, experience, and engage our students in a lifestyle of serving, GCA has developed age level appropriate missional experiences. These experiences are intended to gradually increase a student’s understanding and involvement in missions with the ultimate goal that a GCA graduate will be equipped to live a life of servant leadership in their families, workplaces, community and beyond. Early Middle School students will have the opportunity to engage in a variety of mission and service opportunities.

# DRESS CODE

**Parent/guardians are responsible to ensure that their student’s attire conforms to the following standards.** Realizing that it would be impractical to keep up with clothing fads and address every possible dress code nuance, GCA administration reserves the right to address situations that might not be outlined in the Student Handbook. If a student in early middle school is in non-compliance with the school dress code, he/she will be required to correct the situation. The student may be removed from class until his/her attire meets school standards. Approved school apparel vendors are the following: My Aplus Uniforms, Lands’ End, and uniform items in the G2 Store. These are the only approved vendors for school dress code apparel. The final determination of approved apparel is at the discretion of the school administration according to what has been posted as approved apparel on dress code lists. Vendors may not suggest or recommend anything other than approved apparel.

Students demonstrating non-conformity to the GCA dress code will be subject to disciplinary consequences. Warnings will not be issued.

## GENERAL GUIDELINES

The school administration shall reserve the right of authority on these matters to determine whether or not the student's clothing is acceptable for the school setting.

## PANTS | SHORTS

- Solid khaki or navy shorts, pants, or capris (cotton twill or corduroy) are permitted. Pants are expected to be neat and presentable, exhibiting a normal degree of wear, and fit appropriately.
- Pants must be worn properly around the waist, with the hem not extending past the shoes.
- Solid khaki or navy uniform style shorts with a flat or pleated front are allowed; these may be purchased from approved uniform vendors and do not require the GCA logo. Please note that cargo style shorts will not be permitted except those purchased from Lands' End. All shorts need to be loose fitting and no shorter than 3" above the knee.
- Jeans are not allowed except on designated days (see "Spirit Wear").

## SKIRTS | SKORTS

Dresses and jumpers may not be worn. Only approved skorts purchased from Lands' End or My Aplus Uniforms may be worn. Skorts should not come higher than 3" above the knee. Other skirts and skorts do not meet dress code guidelines and should not be worn.

## SHIRTS/OUTERWEAR

- All school uniform shirts, sweaters, and fleece pullovers must bear the official GCA logo and be purchased from an approved vendor (G2 uniform items, Lands' End, My Aplus Uniforms).
- Shirts worn under uniform shirts must be navy, royal, grey or white.
- Students are not permitted to wear hooded sweatshirts Monday through Thursday. Students may wear Grace hooded sweatshirts on Fridays as part of spirit-wear guidelines. Approved garments may be worn on any day (including crew neck sweatshirts). Students will be required to wear collared shirts (on regular uniform days) underneath any approved outerwear.

## SHOES

Dress sandals (including Chaco-styles) and any type of closed-toe shoes (including Crocs) may be worn. Rubber flip flops and sport sandals are not permitted.

## PE UNIFORMS

PE shorts must be purchased from an approved uniform provider (G2). Students may wear appropriate fitting Grace t-shirts in either white, grey, or navy (i.e. Spirit Wear). Points are deducted from the daily PE grade for not fully dressing in the proper PE uniform.

## SPIRIT WEAR

Students may wear jeans and spirit wear on Friday. There should be no writing, pictures, or designs on the jeans. Jeans should be loose fitting and free of holes, frayed edges or excessive wear.

## OTHER

- Hair for boys, including facial hair, needs to be neatly trimmed and clean in appearance. For both boys and girls, extreme hair fads, colors and styles are not permitted, including anything deemed by administration to be distracting to the learning environment.
- Girls only are permitted to wear earrings, and any other body piercing on girls or boys should not be displayed at school or school events.
- Jewelry must be minimal and not distracting, as determined by GCA administration.
- Sunglasses are not to be worn indoors. Hats and bandanas are not to be worn at any time. Boys may not wear headbands.
- Makeup should not be worn in an excessive manner.
- Visible tattoos are not permitted.
- Boys are not permitted to wear nail polish.
- Students are expected to dress in traditional, gender appropriate attire at all GCA events.

## ACTIVITY DRESS

GCA students are expected to dress modestly and appropriately at all home and away GCA events.

# DISCIPLINE

The Bible clearly indicates that parent/guardians are responsible for the discipline of their children. Grace Christian Academy exists to assist parent/guardians in their God-given responsibilities. Therefore, GCA seeks not to assume the task which God gives to parent/guardians, but only to serve as the parent/guardian's appointed and authorized representative in the child training process, in a limited way.

Attendance at Grace Christian Academy is a privilege and not a right. GCA reserves the right and at its sole discretion can remove students from their enrollment. GCA will cooperate with the home in the nurturing of the student(s). GCA reserves the right to remove students from enrollment if the school can no longer assist the family in the nurturing of their children. GCA reserves the right to deny re-admission to any student whose actions demonstrate it is not in the school's best interest to allow re-admission.

## Disciplinary Goals

1. **Respect Authority:** Someone has said, "Consequently, he who rebels against authority is rebelling against what God has instituted and those who do will bring judgment on themselves." (Romans 3:2)
2. **Respect Yourself:** "Teach us to number our days aright, that we may gain a heart of wisdom." (Psalm 90:12)
3. **Respect Others:** "Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only listen. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you." (Ephesians 4:29, 32)

## STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

- Students should demonstrate respect to the faculty members, staff members and fellow students.
- Students are to be respectful of the property of GCA and others.
- Students are expected to maintain academic integrity as previously described.
- Students are expected to demonstrate appropriate behavior at all school functions.
- Students are expected to report to Cullum Hall if arriving between 7:15- 7:45AM.

## PARENT/GUARDIAN EXPECTATIONS

- Parent/guardians are expected to demonstrate a spirit of cooperation with the administration and faculty of the Academy. Any school-related concerns need to be resolved following the Matthew 18 principle.
- Parent/guardians are expected to be respectful of school staff and students and display Christ-like behavior in speech and actions.
- Parent/guardians are responsible to know and adhere to all school policies.
- Parent/guardians are expected to abide by all expectations listed in the re-enrollment guidelines.
- Parent/guardians are expected to dress modestly and appropriately at school-related events.

## STUDENT BEHAVIOR

To accomplish these student expectations, certain student behavior cannot be tolerated and will result in action by the teacher and/or the administration. Examples include:

- Running, yelling or acting in a disorderly manner
- Use of physical force or verbal intimidation
- Leaving school property without permission
- Defacing any property of the school or another student (damage caused by the student will be paid for by the student or parent/guardian)
- Bringing any article that distracts another to school
- Being disrespectful toward fellow students, teachers or staff in attitude, words or actions
- Inappropriate language
- Lying, cheating, or stealing
- Inappropriate public display of affection toward another student
- Involvement or the impression of involvement in immoral activities or activities that are contrary to the philosophy of GCA
- Obscene body language
- Possession on their person, in their locker, in their backpack, or in their cars of any kind of weapon, fireworks, drugs, drug paraphernalia, cigarettes, vapor products, alcohol or pornography. This includes any inappropriate content that is stored or viewed on an electronic device.
- No food or drinks, other than water, will be allowed in the classroom except during approved periods.

## DISCIPLINE POLICIES

Early Middle School students will be treated fairly and reasonably. Discipline will be based on careful evaluation of the circumstances for each case. It is our belief that discipline must address attitudes of the heart, teach submission to authority without challenge, excuse or delay, and lead students toward Christ-like behavior. Factors that will be considered are seriousness of the offense, the student's age, the frequency of misbehavior, the student's attitude and parent/guardian support.

## DISMISSALS

Grace Christian Academy reserves the right of suspension or dismissal at any time during the school year at the discretion of the respective principal. Any student who persistently neglects work, who fails to meet academic or other standards or qualifications, or who exercises poor citizenship, one who fails to cooperate, or whose parent/guardians fail to cooperate, may be asked to withdraw from the school. Dismissal will be administered by the respective principal with the advice and approval of the Head of School. Appeal of a dismissal may be made in writing to the Head of School within three days of the dismissal. A student may not attend classes during request for an appeal. A student who has lost the privilege to attend GCA is not permitted to attend school-related events.

## HARASSMENT POLICY

Grace Christian Academy is committed to providing an environment in which every student is treated as an image bearer of God. Conduct, whether intentional or unintentional, that subjects another student to unwanted attention, comments or actions because of race, national origin, sex, physical characteristics or disability, robs the student of dignity and is not permitted. It includes, but is not limited to, any or all of the following:

- **Verbal Harassment:** Derogatory comments and jokes; threatening words spoken to another student.
- **Physical Harassment:** Unwanted physical touching, assault.
- **Visual Harassment:** Derogatory drawings, writings, cartoons, or gestures/actions.
- **Sexual Harassment:** Unwanted sexual advances, request for sexual favors.

Grace Christian Academy does not condone or allow harassment of others, whether engaged in by students, employees, or family members. Any student who believes he or she has been subjected to harassment should report these actions immediately to a teacher or administrator. Each report will be given serious consideration and investigated thoroughly in a prompt and confidential manner.

*Students who violate these principles will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. Students found to have filed false or frivolous accusations of harassment will also be subject to disciplinary action.*

## BULLYING POLICY

**Rationale:** In an effort to instill biblical values and create a more loving environment, the school has adopted a bullying policy. From time to time, conflict can occur. Grace Christian Academy realizes that while bullying may occur, it is never acceptable. We seek to implement a clear framework for dealing with bullying incidents in order to protect the students and help the bully to learn how to relate in a way that is in line with the biblical standard of relationships: "My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you." John 15:12

**Definition:** The following actions in an **ONGOING** form may be forms of bullying:

- Physical aggression: including hitting, punching, kicking
- Teasing or verbal abuse: including putdowns, insults, name calling, racial, or sexual remarks
- Intentional exclusion from activities or friendship groups; the setting up of humiliating experiences
- Damaging a person's property/possessions or taking them without permission
- Threatening gestures, actions or words
- Written, verbal, or electronic messages that contain threats, putdowns, gossip or slandering

**Policy Statement:** From time to time, in a large community such as a school, conflict and offence can occur. As part of living in a sinful world, when we don't relate to others as we should or when we try to exert power and influence over others, bullying can result.

Grace Christian Academy realizes that while bullying may occur, it is never acceptable and seeks to implement a clear framework for dealing with bullying incidents. The school's response to bullying is based on the pattern of relating to one another found in the Bible. God intended for us to live in a way that acknowledges differences and accepts others because we are all made in God's image.

GCA recognizes that not all behaviors should be considered bullying or willful violation of this policy. Behaviors will be assessed by the teacher and/or administrator and addressed according to the following procedures.

## PROCEDURES

1. All parties, including the victim, suspected bully, and sufficient bystanders - will be spoken to in order to establish the facts of the situation and to determine accountability for their actions/inaction.
2. All incidences are to be documented and written reports will be kept on the behavior by those staff members to whom the incident was reported.
3. Pertinent staff will be informed about and have access to the information recorded on all incidents so that they may be aware of any issues between students.
4. Investigations into bullying allegations must be undertaken in a timely manner and should be carried out in such a way as to minimize the risk of escalation.
5. All incidents of bullying will be followed up by those staff members originally informed to parent/guardians of at least the victim(s) and suspected bully.

## RESPONSIBILITIES

### Student

- Student should ask the offending student to stop their behaviors.
- Students being bullied should report it to staff, parent/guardians or another adult.
- Students who are aware of bullying should report it to a teacher or administrator.
- Students should take appropriate steps to discourage or prevent bullying.
- Students should be willing to resolve bullying situations, employing forgiveness and some changes in behavior.

### Parent/guardians

- Parent/guardians are encouraged to take what their children say seriously and to report bullying concerns to the teacher first.
- Parent/guardians should understand that the whole story may be quite complex and trust the school to resolve bullying issues.
- Parent/guardians not satisfied with the action may refer to administrators if the need arises.

# TECHNOLOGY POLICIES

## CELL PHONE & SMART WATCH POLICY

Students are not permitted to use cell phones or smart watches during the school day. The phone should never be visible during class. Smart watches may be worn but not used for anything other than checking the time during the school day. If a student brings a cell phone, it must be secured in the student's locker, cubby, or backpack and must be turned off. If a student cell phone or smart watch rings while in a student's locker or backpack, the teacher will initiate disciplinary action according to the consequences listed below. Forgetting to turn off the cell phone or smart watch is not an excuse for violation. No taking of or other use of cell phone photographs or videos is permitted during the school day.

6th grade student cell phones will be collected by their homeroom teacher each morning and safely stored throughout the school day. All cell phones will be returned to students at the end of the day.

Use of a cell phone or smart watch during a test for any reason (i.e. text messaging, photos, etc.) will automatically be considered cheating, and appropriate academic and disciplinary action will be taken at the sole discretion of the administration. No taking of or other use of cell phone photographs is permitted during the school day. Specifically, no cell phones are permitted in restrooms or locker rooms at any time. Violation of this prohibition is a serious disciplinary offense.

Parent/guardians should not consider their student's cell phone or smart watch as a means of contacting their student for any reason during the school day. Parent/guardians who need to contact their student during the school day for emergency purposes should use the Academy's normal emergency contact process and call the main office. GCA staff will assist parent/ guardians in communicating with their child in appropriate emergency situations.

Disciplinary consequences for violation of the cell phone/smart watch policy shall be as follows:

- The phone or smart watch will be confiscated and held in the school office until the end of the school day.
- The parent/guardian may retrieve the phone or smart watch between 3:00 and 4:00PM or during school hours on a later day. The phone or smart watch will not be returned to the student.
- If the phone or smart watch is confiscated more than once, additional consequences will be given.
- If a student is caught using another student's phone, discipline will be administered as deemed appropriate by the principal.

GCA accepts no responsibility for use, breakage, theft or loss of cell phones/smart watches or other personal items.

## **SOCIAL MEDIA POLICIES**

As members of the Grace Christian Academy community we continuously represent Jesus Christ and GCA whenever and wherever we use online communications (both at school and at home). This includes, but is not limited to, email, chat, instant- messaging, video calls, texting, gaming, and social media sites. In all of our online communication with classmates, teachers, and anyone else inside or outside the GCA community, we will treat others in love and respect as Christ teaches. Any illegal, disrespectful, obscene, or inflammatory language or media, ethnic or racial slurs, bullying, harassment or defamation, or other similar content posted or sent online will result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion.

## **ONLINE ACTIVITY**

Activity on social media sites such as Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook are not allowed at school. The school understands many students have access to these sites outside of school. Students are reminded that regardless of where their post originates, any text, photographs or videos they put on these sites or similar sites which would be obscene, derogatory to the school or the school community, or threaten, demean, or bully students or faculty is prohibited and will be subject to school disciplinary action and may be referred to local law enforcement agencies.

## **RECORDING DEVICE POLICY**

Students may not use any recording devices on the school grounds. This includes transmitting images, taking photographs with a phone, camera or other recording device, or using any electronic device on an audio or video record setting.

EXCEPTIONS: An exception may be granted if a GCA student has been approved for the use of a camera or video camera to record images for curriculum or school-related purposes.

## **DIGITAL DEVICE USAGE**

While not comprehensive (See AUP -- Acceptable Use Policy -- for more details), the following list identifies uses of a digital device for which a student could face disciplinary action ranging from loss of use privilege to expulsion from the school depending on the severity of the infraction:

- Unapproved recording (audio and/or video) or photography of individuals at any time on campus.
- Unapproved communication between devices – whether social or academic in nature.
- Access to unapproved websites at any time while on campus.
- Playback of unapproved or inappropriate material (audio and/or video) at any time while on campus.
- Non-academic usage of a digital device during an academic class.

# **ADDITIONAL POLICIES**

## **GUNS & WEAPONS**

Grace Christian Academy does not allow guns, knives, weapons or their facsimiles on campus. Violation of this policy will result in the immediate dismissal of the participating student or students with the exception of facsimile which may result in suspension or dismissal at the discretion of the Head of Lower and Middle School.

## **SUBSTANCE ABUSE**

The mission of Grace Christian Academy calls on the academy to provide a safe environment in which our students can grow spiritually and academically. The use of illegal drugs by any student or faculty member is strictly prohibited. The School Board and Administration believe it is the Academy's responsibility to address this threat to our children's safety.

Drug tests will be required for those students who show signs of drug use. These tests (administered at the cost of the parent/ guardian) will be administered off-site and required the same day the suspicion of use is addressed by the administration. A student who is asked to participate in a drug test will not be able to return to school until the results of the test conclusively clear the student of wrongdoing and a meeting is scheduled with the Head of Middle School, student, and parent/guardian(s). A positive drug test will lead to separation from the Academy. Refusal to take the test or share test results will be considered an admission of guilt and will lead to separation from the Academy.

Grace Christian Academy will not tolerate the buying, selling or other transfer of drugs and/or alcohol; such actions will result in the dismissal of the offending student(s). Consumption of drugs or alcohol is neither compatible nor permissible within the wholesome Christian environment we provide at GCA. Although consumption is an offense which warrants expulsion, individual situations will be evaluated case by case with an attempt to find the best solution for the individual and the student body as a whole. Situations that warrant restoration will be given due consideration by the principal.

## **SEARCH & SEIZURE**

To maintain order and discipline in the Academy and to protect the safety and welfare of students and personnel, school authorities may request a search of a student, student lockers, or student automobiles under the circumstances outlined below and may seize illegal, unauthorized or contraband materials discovered in the search. GCA reserves the right to invite the Knox County Sheriff's Department or an appropriate narcotics search group to visit at any time during the school year to search for drugs. Any alcohol, drugs or drug paraphernalia found in lockers, cars or other items under the student's control will constitute possession.

1. **Personal Searches:** A student and/or personal effects (e.g., purse, backpack, etc.) may be searched whenever a school authority has reasonable suspicion that the student is in possession of illegal or unauthorized materials. Students may be asked to empty their pockets, pocketbooks, wallets, backpacks, etc. without the parent/guardian's permission or the student's permission. Enrollment of the child constitutes parent/guardian consent to such searches. If the student refuses and the school feels a personal search of the student's person or belongings is required (as per the safety of that student or any other student), then the parent/guardians will be phoned and must come to school to perform the search. If the parent/guardians fail to come to the Academy to perform the search in a reasonable time (one hour) and/or the student refuses to empty his/her pockets or remove from his or her person what is suspected, then the student's privilege to attend this Academy will be revoked. If a phone is confiscated, the Academy reserves the right to review the phone's content for any reason.
2. **Locker Searches:** Student lockers are Academy property and remain at all times under the control of the Academy; however, students are expected to assume full responsibility for the security of their lockers. The Academy exercises exclusive control over school property, and students should not expect privacy regarding items placed in school property because school property is subject to search at any time by Academy officials. Students are responsible for whatever is contained in desks and lockers issued to them by the school. Periodic general inspections of lockers are conducted by school authorities for any reason at any time without notice, without student consent, without parent/guardian consent, and without a search warrant.
3. **Seizure of Illegal Materials:** If a properly conducted search yields illegal or contraband materials, such findings shall be turned over to the proper legal authorities for ultimate disposition.

# GRACE CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

Middle School



# SCHOOL MANAGEMENT

## STUDENT COMMITMENT

As a member of the GCA community I understand that I represent the school 24/7. This means I will seek to continuously uphold the values and standards embraced by the school.

This includes the choices I make on and away from campus as well as how I choose to use technology and social media. GCA considers my engagement with technology and social media as no different than if I were to stand up in the middle of a classroom and say or show what I've posted.

I understand that I have a right to an education, but that representing GCA in athletics, performing arts, or any other activity is a privilege. Failure to adhere to GCA's standards can result in forfeiture of the privilege to represent my school.

Finally, the way I treat others speaks volumes about what I believe. It will be my goal to always treat others (within and beyond the Grace community) as image bearers of Christ.

## ATTENDANCE

Quality education requires regular student attendance. Irregular attendance deprives the student of an opportunity for effective learning. We recognize that situations arise in which missing school is unavoidable. If a student is absent from school for reasons other than suspension or exposure to or a positive COVID-19 diagnosis, then he/she must adhere to the following procedure.

Any class missed counts as an absence, which is accumulated over the semester. This includes dentist or doctor appointments, mild illnesses, church functions, and absences requested by a parent/ guardian with prior notification to the administration. However, students should submit a physician's note for positive diagnoses of influenza, streptococcus, mononucleosis, pneumonia, or a concussion. Students who are ill or running a fever greater than 100.4 (without medication) should not be on campus. Students exposed to or diagnosed with COVID-19 should notify administration and remain off campus (for classes as well as extracurricular activities) until a doctor designates a safe return. For more information, you may refer to GCA's School Reopening Plan.

Upon returning to school after an absence, the student must provide a written note, signed by the parent/guardian or e-mail. It should state the dates and reason for the absence. If a student is absent due to suspension, he/she will not be allowed to attend or participate in extracurricular activities before, during or after school hours. This includes off campus activities as well.

Parent/guardians of a child within the compulsory attendance age are responsible for their child's attendance at school, as required by the state. In order to gain the most from school, a student must be regular in attendance.

At the Middle School level, attendance is taken during each class period. **Middle School students who accumulate more than eight (8) absences in a particular class per semester risk failing the class and losing academic credit, regardless of the grades achieved.** Students exceeding eight absences (10% of their class periods) will be required to attend either Academic Support (7:45-8:10am; 3:20-3:45pm), meet virtually with teachers, or complete a supplemental assignment to make up missed content. Until the content is recovered, a student remains ineligible for athletic participation (practice or game), performance in fine arts' productions, and/or extra-curricular activity as determined by administration and credit will not be awarded. As an accredited school, we are required to satisfy the minimum number of contact hours, or actual hours a student has with his/her teacher. Students are considered absent when more than fifteen (15) minutes late for class. Students are encouraged to plan medical appointments after school or at varying times of the day to avoid missing too many class periods and thus falling short of the contact hours required to receive credit for the class. School initiated absences (such as field trips or school athletic events) are not counted as part of the cumulative total of absences for students.

### **Additional Attendance Notes:**

- Students are considered absent if they miss more than 15 minutes of a class (either coming to class late or leaving class early).
- Students must be in attendance for at least 50% of their class schedule during the school day in order to participate in any extracurricular activities that day.
- Every six (6) tardies to school or class results in one absence. (Tardies shall be accumulative by semester).
- Parent/guardians are expected to inform the school of any planned absence exceeding three (3) days.
- The makeup work policy applies to all absences.
- Since the school calendar allows for several vacation opportunities periodically throughout the year, parent/guardians are encouraged to schedule vacations and doctor's appointments to coincide with school breaks | in service days.

## **TARDY POLICY**

Students who arrive at school after the bell rings are marked tardy and must sign in at the office by:

1. Bringing a note from a parent/guardian, or
2. Being signed in by the parent/guardian

**For the safety of our students and staff, all entrance doors will be locked after school begins.** Students who are tardy to class any other time during the day are to go directly to class. Students are considered absent when more than fifteen (15) minutes tardy to class.

**Tardies shall be cumulative by semester. Four (4) tardies to a class will result in a detention with the exception of 1st period in which the student will receive a detention after six (6) tardies.** Detentions will be issued for each successive tardy. Excessive detentions for tardies can result in additional penalties, including suspension.

## **DISMISSAL POLICIES**

**To avoid disruption the educational process, early dismissals should be kept to a minimum. Anyone picking up a student for early dismissal must show a picture I.D. and be listed on the student's RenWeb account.** When early dismissal is necessary, a note from the parent/guardians stating the time of dismissal should be given to the receptionist. The parent/guardian must sign the student out at the school office. Students who have tests or quizzes scheduled the day of early dismissal or late arrival will be expected to take the test or quiz that day unless other arrangements are made with the teacher.

Students are expected to leave campus at dismissal time. Supervision is not provided, and GCA assumes no liability for students remaining on campus following school dismissal. Arrangements for after school athletic practices will be made by the athletic department.

# ACADEMIC MANAGEMENT

## CURRICULUM

- All materials, whether from Christian publishers or non-Christian publishers, will be taught within the Christian worldview.
- All textbooks are leased from the school.
- It is the student's responsibility to keep up with all assigned books.
- Books are to be handled with care and kept in good condition.
- If damage occurs, the student should report it to a teacher immediately.
- Any damage or replacement costs of books must be paid prior to the issuance of end-of-year report cards or transcripts.
- In the event of withdrawal from school, all leased textbooks must be turned in to the teacher.

## MIDDLE SCHOOL ACADEMIC PLAN

7th Grade	8th Grade
Bible 7	Bible 8
Language Arts 7	Language Arts 8
History 7	History 8
Math 7	Pre-Algebra
Science 7	Science 8
Honors Math 7	Honors Language Arts 8
Electives	Honors History 8
	Algebra 1
	Honors Science 8
	Electives

## FACTS PARENTSWEB

Parent/guardians can view all grades, report cards, homework assignments, lesson plans, and more via their ParentsWeb account.

## GRADE REPORTING

Grades and report cards for individual students may be viewed online through ParentsWeb.

**A** | 90-100

**B** | 80-89

**C** | 70-79

**D** | 60-69

**F** | 0-59

## MAKEUP WORK

The student will have **one school day for every day missed to complete makeup work**. For example, if a student is absent Monday and Tuesday, he/she has Wednesday and Thursday to make up work missed. Students who are absent for 5 or more days should consult with their teacher to create a plan for making up their assignments. Exception: Students who have completed all work, including the review section (if applicable), may be required upon their return to school to take any tests missed.

**It is the student's responsibility to make up missed assignments.** The student is expected to check with teachers or ParentsWeb for makeup work upon his/her return from an absence. If a student misses only the day a test is given or project assignment is due, the student is responsible to make up the work the first day he/she returns, provided the student was informed of the due date in advance of the absence. If a student returns to school on the day of a pre-announced test or quiz after a short absence, the student is expected to take the test or quiz on the day it is given.

**Students will have five school days to work with their teacher to change an "I" (incomplete) received as a nine-week grade to a passing letter grade.** Students not meeting the five-day deadline will receive a "0" for incomplete work except in cases of extreme hardship. These cases will be handled on an individual basis.

## LATE WORK POLICY

Student responsibility for turning in work is an important life skill that must be developed early. Assignments submitted late will receive a 10-point deduction on the first day, a 50 point deduction on the second day, and a 0 (no credit received) on the third day.

## PARENT/GUARDIAN TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parent/guardian teacher conferences are encouraged as an excellent way to exchange information that will provide a greater understanding of the student. Parent/guardians may arrange teacher conferences by e-mailing the teacher directly. The teacher's e-mail address is the first initial followed by the last name@gcarams.org.

## TESTING

Achievement Tests are administered to students in grades 3-10 each spring and are used as one of several measurements of academic achievement. Assessment reports will be provided to all parent/guardians at the end of each school year.

## PROMOTION POLICIES

If a student receives any failing grades in the five core classes, he or she may be required to receive individual tutoring and may not be promoted if readiness isn't demonstrated. GCA will provide tutoring options from an approved academic program to assist parent/guardians in finding help for their child's academic needs. Documentation of contact hours and a summary of course work must be provided to the administration prior to the new academic school year.

## LEARNING CENTER

At GCA, we recognize and value the variety of learning styles among our students. When there are a variety of learning styles, students present with different levels of academic needs. The Learning Center serves as a level of support to assist students with a variety of academic needs. The goal of the Learning Center is to meet students at the point of their need and help move them to the peak of their potential. We want each student to truly know that they are uniquely and individually made with a God-given plan and purpose for their lives. Academic challenges don't diminish His plan and purpose for their lives and in most cases, He uses these challenges to grow their faith and to develop perseverance.

Students with a current diagnosed educational or medical disability which impacts their learning or performance within the classroom may be eligible to receive classroom accommodations through a formal educational plan (Learning plan or 504 plan). Below list the criteria for developing a formal plan:

- Outside evaluation reports must be provided by the parents to support a student's need for a learning plan.
- Evaluations must be current and updated every three years to determine continued eligibility.

If a new applicant to GCA has ever had an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or 504 Plan, a copy of the plan, along with their most recent evaluation report, must be submitted to the Admissions Office to be included in the applicant's confidential file. In addition, The Learning Center offers tutoring and intervention support services, to either provide a level of academic support or to promote academic acceleration, at an additional fee above tuition. These services are available to all students, grades K-12, during the regular school day. Please visit the Learning Center page on the school website to learn more about the adopted programs.

## ACADEMIC INTEGRITY / HONOR PLEDGE

Grace Christian Academy endeavors to teach students the importance of personal and academic integrity. Proverbs 2:7 proclaims, “He [God] stores up sound wisdom for the upright; He is a shield to those who walk in integrity.” Whether intentional or inadvertent, copying or sharing academic materials is a serious offense; therefore, GCA strives to educate students on how to recognize and avoid the pitfalls of plagiarism:

- Avoid copying (or allowing another student to copy) homework, quizzes, or tests.
- Avoid using, possessing, or distributing unauthorized assessment aids.
- Avoid plagiarism of any form.
- Do understand the true meaning of collaboration. Working collectively to find answers is not the same as copying someone else’s work. When in doubt, seek clarification.
- Acknowledge that “Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much.” Luke 16:10

### The Honor Code Pledge:

As a demonstration of GCA’s core values, I will complete my assignments and assessments with academic integrity and encourage others to do the same.

## TECHNOLOGY

Technology is an important part of today’s society and therefore we must use it as a tool to teach all students. All students and parent/guardians must sign, return, and abide by the school’s AUP (Acceptable Use Policy).

## ACADEMIC WATCH

- Any student who has two D’s or one F at any eligibility check point (or sooner if determined appropriate by the administration) will be placed on academic watch.
- Individualized interventions may be implemented for a student who falls into this category.

## ACADEMIC PROBATION

- Any student who is failing two classes at the quarter or end of the year will be placed on academic probation and will be considered ineligible to participate in athletics until the next academic check point.
- Students on academic probation will be held accountable, at minimum, for the interventions as defined above for academic watch.
- Students may be eligible for practice (coach’s discretion) during academic probation.
- A student who is placed on academic probation following the fourth quarter will be considered ineligible at the beginning of the next school year. This eligibility determination can be adjusted upon the completion of appropriate coursework for credit retrieval prior to the first day of the next school year.

Quarter	Mid-Quarter Academic Checkpoint	Quarter Ends	Grades Posted (Eligibility Determined)
1st	September 9, 2022	October 7, 2022	October 21, 2022
2nd	November 11, 2022	December 21, 2022	January 13, 2023
3rd	February 10, 2023	March 10, 2023	March 24, 2023
4th	April 21, 2023	May 24, 2023	June 2, 2023

## ACADEMIC CHECKPOINTS

- The dates for these checkpoints are listed above.
- Students cannot be determined ineligible at mid-quarter checkpoints but can become eligible at this time.
- Eligibility checkpoints at each quarter will determine athletic eligibility.

- If a student-athlete is determined ineligible at the quarter, he/she will not be considered for eligibility until the appropriate academic checkpoint date listed above.

Please note that a student's academic performance at the end of the fourth grading period will determine fall eligibility. Summer school work will be taken into consideration. Students who participate in athletics or other school sanctioned activities can be deemed ineligible for participation for disciplinary reasons at the discretion of the principal.

## EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

GCA offers a full array of extracurricular activities to provide opportunities for students to develop leadership, teamwork skills, and commitment.

**Athletics:** Interscholastic competition is available to middle school students in a variety of sports. A separate Athletic Handbook is provided for athletes and can be obtained from the athletic office or viewed online. All athletes must sign a statement affirming that they have read the athletic handbook before participating in sports.

**National Junior Honor Society:** The National Junior Honor Society chapter of GCA is a duly chartered and affiliated chapter of the national organization. Students in grades 7-9 with cumulative GPA's of 3.60 or better are eligible for consideration regarding membership. Those meeting the academic criteria are then evaluated by a faculty council based on character, leadership, citizenship and service.

## DROP | ADD POLICY

Dropping and adding of middle school classes must be finalized within the first week of the semester and must have parent/ guardian and administrative approval. After two weeks, no courses will be dropped, and students may not add a new class without administrative approval.

## MIDTERM & FINAL EXAMS

8th grade students will take midterm and final exams in their core subjects. Adequate review will be provided to the students prior to the exams.

# SPIRITUAL LIFE

## BIBLICALLY BASED CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTION

In the pursuit of aligning all aspects of Grace Christian Academy with our core values and mission, our teachers participate in professional development and Kingdom education training so that each student finds his/her foundation of academia to also be firmly rooted in the infallible, inerrant Word of God. In addition to a daily Bible class, biblical truths are threaded throughout the concepts taught in all other courses | subjects.

## CHAPEL

All students attend chapel on a regular basis. Parent/guardians are welcome to attend chapel services and should sign in when entering the Grace Student Ministries Building.

## MISSIONS

In an intentional effort to explore, experience, and engage our students in a lifestyle of serving, GCA has developed age level appropriate missional experiences. These experiences are intended to gradually increase a student's understanding and involvement in missions with the ultimate goal that a GCA graduate will be equipped to live a life of servant leadership in their families, workplaces, community and beyond. Middle school students will have the opportunity to engage in a variety of mission and service opportunities.

## DRESS CODE

**Parent/guardians are responsible to ensure that their student's attire conforms to the following standards.** Realizing that it would be impractical to keep up with clothing fads and address every possible dress code nuance, GCA administration reserves the right to address situations that might not be outlined in the Student Handbook. If a student in middle school is in non-compliance with the school dress code, he/she will be required to correct the situation. The student may be removed from class until his/her attire meets school standards. Approved school apparel vendors are the following: My Aplus Uniforms, Lands' End, and uniform items in the G2 Store. These are the only approved vendors for school dress code apparel. The final determination of approved apparel is at the discretion of the school administration according to what has been posted as approved apparel on dress code lists. Vendors may not suggest or recommend anything other than approved apparel.

Students demonstrating non-conformity to the GCA dress code will be subject to disciplinary consequences. Warnings will not be issued.

## GENERAL GUIDELINES

The school administration shall reserve the right of authority on these matters to determine whether or not the student's clothing is acceptable for the school setting.

## PANTS | SHORTS

- Solid khaki or navy shorts, pants, or capris (cotton twill or corduroy) are permitted. Pants are expected to be neat and presentable, exhibiting a normal degree of wear, and fit appropriately.
- Pants must be worn properly around the waist, with the hem not extending past the shoes.
- Solid khaki or navy uniform style shorts with a flat or pleated front are allowed; these may be purchased from approved uniform vendors and do not require the GCA logo. Please note that cargo style shorts will not be permitted except those purchased from Lands' End. All shorts need to be loose fitting and no shorter than 3" above the knee.
- Jeans are not allowed except on designated days (see "Spirit Wear").

## SKIRTS | SKORTS

Dresses and jumpers may not be worn. Only approved skorts purchased from Lands' End or My Aplus Uniforms may be worn. Skorts should not come higher than 3" above the knee. Other skirts and skorts do not meet dress code guidelines and should not be worn.

## SHIRTS/OUTERWEAR

- All school uniform shirts, sweaters, and fleece pullovers must bear the official GCA logo and be purchased from an approved vendor (G2 uniform items, Lands' End, My Aplus Uniforms).
- Shirts worn under uniform shirts must be navy, royal, grey or white.
- Students are not permitted to wear hooded sweatshirts Monday through Thursday. Students may wear Grace hooded sweatshirts on Fridays as part of spirit-wear guidelines. Approved garments may be worn on any day (including crew neck sweatshirts). Students will be required to wear collared shirts (on regular uniform days) underneath any approved outerwear.

## SHOES

Dress sandals (including Chaco-styles) and any type of closed-toe shoes (including Crocs) may be worn. Rubber flip flops and sport sandals are not permitted.

## PE UNIFORMS

PE shorts must be purchased from an approved uniform provider (G2). Students may wear appropriate fitting Grace t-shirts in either white, grey, or navy (i.e. Spirit Wear). Points are deducted from the daily PE grade for not fully dressing in the proper PE uniform.

## SPIRIT WEAR

Students may wear jeans and spirit wear on Friday. There should be no writing, pictures, or designs on the jeans. Jeans should be loose fitting and free of holes, frayed edges or excessive wear.

## OTHER

- Hair for boys, including facial hair, needs to be neatly trimmed and clean in appearance. For both boys and girls, extreme hair fads, colors and styles are not permitted, including anything deemed by administration to be distracting to the learning environment.
- Girls only are permitted to wear earrings, and any other body piercing on girls or boys should not be displayed at school or school events.
- Jewelry must be minimal and not distracting, as determined by GCA administration.
- Sunglasses are not to be worn indoors. Hats and bandanas are not to be worn at any time. Boys may not wear headbands.
- Makeup should not be worn in an excessive manner.
- Visible tattoos are not permitted.
- Boys are not permitted to wear nail polish.
- Students are expected to dress in traditional, gender appropriate attire at all GCA events.

## ACTIVITY DRESS

GCA students are expected to dress modestly and appropriately at all home and away GCA events.

# DISCIPLINE

The Bible clearly indicates that parent/guardians are responsible for the discipline of their children. Grace Christian Academy exists to assist parent/guardians in their God-given responsibilities. Therefore, GCA seeks not to assume the task which God gives to parent/guardians, but only to serve as the parent/guardian's appointed and authorized representative in the child training process, in a limited way.

Attendance at GCA is a privilege and not a right. GCA reserves the right and at its sole discretion can remove students from their enrollment. GCA will cooperate with the home in the nurturing of the student(s). GCA reserves the right to remove students from enrollment if the school can no longer assist the family in the nurturing of their children. GCA reserves the right to deny re-admission to any student whose actions demonstrate it is not in the school's best interest to allow re-admission.

## DISCIPLINARY GOALS

1. **Respect Authority:** Someone has said, “Consequently, he who rebels against authority is rebelling against what God has instituted and those who do will bring judgment on themselves.” (Romans 3:2)
2. **Respect Yourself:** “Teach us to number our days aright, that we may gain a heart of wisdom.” (Psalm 90:12)
3. **Respect Others:** “Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only listen. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.” (Ephesians 4:29, 32)

## STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

- Students should demonstrate respect to the faculty members, staff members and fellow students.
- Students are to be respectful of the property of GCA and others.
- Students are expected to maintain academic integrity as previously described.
- Students are expected to demonstrate appropriate behavior at all school functions.
- Students are expected to report to Cullum Hall if arriving between 7:15- 7:45AM.

## PARENT/GUARDIAN EXPECTATIONS

- Parent/guardians are expected to demonstrate a spirit of cooperation with the administration and faculty of the Academy. Any school-related concerns need to be resolved following the Matthew 18 principle.
- Parent/guardians are expected to be respectful of school staff and students and display Christ-like behavior in speech and actions.
- Parent/guardians are responsible to know and adhere to all school policies.
- Parent/guardians are expected to abide by all expectations listed in the re-enrollment guidelines.
- Parent/guardians are expected to dress modestly and appropriately at school-related events.

## STUDENT BEHAVIOR

To accomplish these student expectations, certain student behavior cannot be tolerated and will result in action by the teacher and/or the administration. Examples include:

- Running, yelling or acting in a disorderly manner
- Use of physical force or verbal intimidation
- Leaving school property without permission
- Defacing any property of the school or another student (damage caused by the student will be paid for by the student or parent/guardian)
- Bringing any article that distracts another to school
- Being disrespectful toward fellow students, teachers or staff in attitude, words or actions
- Inappropriate language
- Lying, cheating, or stealing
- Inappropriate public display of affection toward another student Involvement or the impression of involvement in immoral activities or activities that are contrary to the philosophy of GCA
- Obscene body language
- Possession on their person, in their locker, in their backpack, or in their cars of any kind of weapon, fireworks, drugs, drug paraphernalia, cigarettes, vapor products, alcohol or pornography. This includes any inappropriate content that is stored or viewed on an electronic device.
- No food or drinks, other than water, will be allowed in the classroom except during approved periods.

## DISCIPLINE POLICIES

A cumulative detention system is used at GCA as a means of correction for infractions of school standards, rules, and classroom procedures. Corrective measures of varying degrees of severity will be used.

- **Warning** - A verbal reprimand and a formal notice of consequences to follow should the inappropriate behavior not be corrected.
- **Parent/guardian Notification** - A warning with the intent to inform parent/guardians of a problem and to solicit their help in supporting GCA rules and correcting unacceptable student behavior.
- **Detention** – Students must serve detention within one week of the day the notice is received. An additional detention may be given each time a student misses a detention deadline.
- **Suspension**
  - Begins on the date assigned and may range from 1-5 days.
  - May be in-school or out-of-school as deemed necessary by Middle School Administration.
  - Students are to complete all work given during their absence.
  - When a student is serving an out-of-school suspension, he/she is not permitted on campus and is not permitted to attend any school function unless permission is secured from the Head of the Lower and Middle School.
  - Students who served a suspension during a semester will automatically be on probation for the remainder of the school year. Students suspended during the last nine weeks of the year will automatically be on probation for the first semester of the following year.
  - Students who are suspended from school for disciplinary reasons may be suspended from activities or positions for the remainder of the school year at the discretion of the Head of Lower and Middle School.
- **Expulsion**
  - Grace Christian Academy reserves the right of dismissal at any time during the school year at the discretion of administration. Any student who persistently neglects work, fails to meet academic or other standards or qualifications, exercises poor citizenship, fails to cooperate, or whose parent/guardians fail to cooperate may be asked to withdraw from the school.
  - Dismissal will be administered by the respective principal with the advice and approval of the Head of School. Appeal of a dismissal may be made in writing to the Head of School within three days of the dismissal. A student may not attend classes during request for an appeal. A student who has lost the privilege to attend GCA is not permitted to attend school-related events. Students who have been dismissed may not apply for re-admission for a period of 12 months.
  - Dismissals may occur when any of the following take place:
    - Possession or use of non-prescription drugs of any kind, or the misuse of any prescription drugs of any kind on or off school property.
    - Selling or supplying illegal drugs, prescription or non-prescription drugs
    - Possession, consumption, supplying or selling of alcohol on school property or at school sponsored events
    - Repeated violations of discipline that have resulted in suspensions

- Failure of parent/guardians to cooperate with the Academy in the discipline of their children
  - Assault of a staff member
  - Sexual Misconduct - Physical conduct and/or contact of a sexual nature, verbal abuse of a sexual nature, sexual innuendoes and gestures or other serious sexual misconduct, to include sexting or social media use. This includes the sharing of sexually suggestive photos by any means.
  - Moral Misconduct - computer/internet use for immoral purposes or other serious moral misconduct
  - Lying/dishonesty
  - Stealing
  - Possession or use of any object used as a weapon in a threatening or dangerous manner
  - Possession, transfer, sale or discharge of any gun (including a starter gun or pellet gun), firearm or any other explosive device of any type whether loaded or unloaded, on school property or at a school-related activity
  - Any other situation at the discretion of administration

## HARASSMENT POLICY

Grace Christian Academy is committed to providing an environment in which every student is treated as an image bearer of God. Conduct, whether intentional or unintentional, that subjects another student to unwanted attention, comments or actions because of race, national origin, sex, physical characteristics or disability, robs the student of dignity and is not permitted. It includes, but is not limited to, any or all of the following:

- **Verbal Harassment:** Derogatory comments and jokes; threatening words spoken to another student
- **Physical Harassment:** Unwanted physical touching, assault
- **Visual Harassment:** Derogatory drawings, writings, cartoons, or gestures/actions
- **Sexual Harassment:** Unwanted sexual advances, request for sexual favors, including the sharing of inappropriate photos

Grace Christian Academy does not condone or allow harassment of others, whether engaged in by students, employees, or family members. Any student who believes he or she has been subjected to harassment should report these actions immediately to a teacher or administrator. Each report will be given serious consideration and investigated thoroughly in a prompt and confidential manner.

*Students who violate these principles will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. Students found to have filed false or frivolous accusations of harassment will also be subject to disciplinary action.*

Grace Christian Academy does not condone or allow harassment of others, whether engaged in by students, employees, or family members. Any student who believes he or she has been subjected to harassment should report these actions immediately to a teacher or administrator. Each report will be given serious consideration and investigated thoroughly in a prompt and confidential manner. Students who violate these principles will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. Students found to have filed false or frivolous accusations of harassment will also be subject to disciplinary action.

## BULLYING POLICY

**Rationale:** In an effort to instill biblical values and create a more loving environment, the school has adopted a bullying policy. From time to time, conflict can occur. We seek to implement a clear framework for dealing with bullying incidents in order to protect the students and help the bully to learn how to relate in a way that is in line with the biblical standard of relationships: "My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you." John 15:12

**Definition - Bullying is physical or verbal harassment occurring over a period involving an imbalance of power.**

The following actions in an ongoing manner may be forms of bullying:

- Physical aggression-including hitting, punching, kicking
- Teasing or verbal abuse-including putdowns, insults, name calling, racial, or sexual remarks

- Intentional exclusion from activities or friendship groups
- The setting up of humiliating experiences
- Damaging a person's property/possessions or taking them without permission
- Threatening gestures, actions or words
- Written, verbal, or electronic messages or photos that contain threats, putdowns, gossip or slandering

**Policy Statement:** From time to time, in a large community such as a school, conflict and offense can occur. As part of living in a sinful world, when we don't always relate to others as we should or when we try to exert power and influence over others, bullying can result.

Bullying is never acceptable and GCA seeks to implement a clear framework for dealing with bullying incidents. The school's response to bullying is based on the pattern of relating to one another found in the Bible. God intended for us to live in a way that acknowledges differences and accepts others because we are all made in God's image.

## PROCEDURES

1. All parties, including the victim, suspected bully, and sufficient bystanders will be spoken to in order to establish the facts of the situation and to determine accountability for their actions/inaction.
2. All incidences are to be documented and written reports will be kept on the behavior by those staff members to whom the incident was reported.
3. Pertinent staff will be informed about and have access to the information recorded on all incidents so that they may be aware of any issues between students.
4. Investigations into bullying allegations must be undertaken in a timely manner and should be carried out in such a way as to minimize the risk of escalation.
5. All incidents of bullying will be followed up by those staff members originally informed to parent/guardians of at least the victim(s) and suspected bully.

## RESPONSIBILITIES

### Student

- Student should ask the offending student to stop their behaviors.
- Students being bullied should report it to staff, parent/guardians, or another adult.
- Students who are aware of bullying should report it to a teacher or administrator.
- Students should take appropriate steps to discourage or prevent bullying.
- Students should be willing to resolve bullying situations, employing forgiveness and some changes in behavior.

### Parent/guardians

- Parent/guardians are encouraged to take what their children say seriously and to report bullying concerns to the teacher first.
- Parent/guardians should understand that the whole story may be quite complex and trust the school to resolve bullying issues.
- Parent/guardians not satisfied with the action may refer to administrators if the need arises.

# TECHNOLOGY POLICIES

## CELL PHONE & SMART WATCH POLICY

Students are not permitted to use a cell phone/smart watch during the school day. The phone should never be visible during class. If a student brings a cell phone to school, it must be secured in the student's locker or backpack and it must be turned off. If a student brings a cell phone to class or the phone rings while in a student's locker or backpack, the teacher will initiate disciplinary action according to the consequences listed below. *Forgetting to turn off the cell phone/smart watch is not an excuse for violation.*

Use of a cell phone during a test for any reason (i.e. text messaging, photos, etc.) will automatically be considered cheating, and appropriate academic and disciplinary action will be taken at the sole discretion of the administration. No taking of or other use of cell phone photographs or videos is permitted during the school day. Specifically, no cell phones are permitted in restrooms or locker rooms at any time. Violation of this prohibition is a serious disciplinary offense.

*Parent/guardians should not consider their student's cell phone as a means of contacting their student for any reason during the school day.*

Parent/guardians who need to contact their student during the school day for emergency purposes should use the Academy's normal emergency contact process and call the main office. GCA staff will assist parent/guardians in communicating with their child in appropriate emergency situations.

Disciplinary consequences for violation of the cell phone/smart watch policy shall be as follows:

- The phone/watch will be confiscated and held in the school office until the end of the school day.
- The parent/guardian may retrieve the phone between 3:00 and 4:00PM or during school hours on a later day.
- The phone will not be returned to the student. The student will receive one detention.
- **If the phone is confiscated more than once, additional consequences will be given.**
- If a student is caught using another student's phone, discipline will be administered as deemed appropriate by the division head.

GCA accepts no responsibility for use, breakage, theft or loss of cell phones/smart watches or other personal items.

## SOCIAL MEDIA POLICIES

As members of the Grace Christian Academy community we continuously represent Jesus Christ and GCA whenever and wherever we use online communications (both at school and at home). This includes, but is not limited to, email, chat, instant-messaging, video calls, texting, gaming, and social media sites. In all our online communication with classmates, teachers, and anyone else inside or outside the GCA community, we will treat others in love and respect as Christ teaches. Any illegal, disrespectful, obscene, or inflammatory language or media, ethnic or racial slurs, bullying, harassment or defamation, or other similar content posted or sent online will result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion.

## ONLINE ACTIVITY

Activity on social media sites such as Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook are not allowed at school. The school understands many students have access to these sites outside of school. Students are reminded that regardless of where their post originates, any text, photographs or videos they put on these sites or similar sites which would be obscene, derogatory to the school or the school community, or threaten, demean, or bully students or faculty is prohibited and will be subject to school disciplinary action and may be referred to local law enforcement agencies.

## RECORDING DEVICE POLICY

Students may not use any recording devices on the school grounds. This includes transmitting images, taking photographs with a phone, camera or other recording device, or using any electronic device on an audio or video record setting.

EXCEPTIONS: An exception may be granted if a GCA student has been approved for the use of a camera or video camera to record images for curriculum or school-related purposes.

## DIGITAL DEVICE USAGE

While not comprehensive (See AUP -- Acceptable Use Policy -- for more details), the following list identifies uses of a digital device for which a student could face disciplinary action ranging from loss of use privilege to expulsion from the school depending on the severity of the infraction:

- Unapproved recording (audio and/or video) or photography of individuals at any time on campus.
- Unapproved communication between devices – whether social or academic in nature.
- Access to unapproved websites at any time while on campus.
- Playback of unapproved or inappropriate material (audio and/or video) at any time while on campus.
- Non-academic usage of a digital device during an academic class.

# ADDITIONAL POLICIES

## GUNS & WEAPONS

Grace Christian Academy does not allow guns, knives, weapons or their facsimiles on campus. Violation of this policy will result in the immediate dismissal of the participating student or students with the exception of facsimile which may result in suspension or dismissal at the discretion of the Head of Lower and Middle School.

## SUBSTANCE ABUSE

The mission of Grace Christian Academy calls on the academy to provide a safe environment in which our students can grow spiritually and academically. The use of illegal drugs by any student or faculty member is strictly prohibited. The School Board and Administration believe it is GCA's responsibility to address this threat to our children's safety.

Drug tests will be required for those students who show signs of drug use. These tests (administered at the cost of the parent/ guardian) will be administered off-site and required the same day the suspicion of use is addressed by the administration. A student who is asked to participate in a drug test will not be able to return to school until the results of the test conclusively clear the student of wrongdoing and a meeting is scheduled with the Middle School Administration, student, and parent/ guardian(s). A positive drug test will lead to separation from the Academy. Refusal to take the test or share test results will be considered an admission of guilt and will lead to separation from the Academy.

GCA will not tolerate the buying, selling or other transfer of drugs and/or alcohol; such actions will result in the dismissal of the offending student(s). Consumption of drugs, alcohol, tobacco, and vaping is neither compatible nor permissible within the Christian environment we provide at GCA. Although consumption is an offense which warrants expulsion, individual situations will be evaluated case by case with an attempt to find the best solution for the individual and the student body as a whole. Situations that warrant restoration will be given due consideration by the principal.

## SEARCH & SEIZURE

To maintain order and discipline in the Academy and to protect the safety and welfare of students and personnel, school authorities may request a search of a student, student lockers, or student automobiles under the circumstances outlined below and may seize illegal, unauthorized or contraband materials discovered in the search. GCA reserves the right to invite the Knox County Sheriff's Department or an appropriate narcotics search group to visit at any time during the school year to search for drugs. Any alcohol, drugs or drug paraphernalia found in lockers, cars or other items under the student's control will constitute possession.

1. **Personal Searches:** A student and/or personal effects (e.g., purse, backpack, etc.) may be searched whenever a school authority has reasonable suspicion that the student is in possession of illegal or unauthorized materials. Students may be asked to empty their pockets, pocketbooks, wallets, backpacks, etc. without the parent/guardian's permission or the student's permission. Enrollment of the child constitutes parent/guardian consent to such searches. If the student refuses and the school feels a personal search of the student's person or belongings is required (as per the safety of that student or any other student), then the parent/guardians will be phoned and must come to school to perform the search. If the parent/guardians fail to come to the Academy to perform the search in a reasonable time (one hour) and/or the student refuses to empty his/her pockets or remove from his or her person what is suspected, then the student's privilege to attend this Academy will be revoked. If a phone is confiscated, the Academy reserves the right to review the phone's content for any reason.
2. **Locker Searches:** Student lockers are Academy property and remain at all times under the control of the Academy; however, students are expected to assume full responsibility for the security of their lockers. The Academy exercises exclusive control over school property, and students should not expect privacy regarding items placed in school property because school property is subject to search at any time by Academy officials. Students are responsible for whatever is contained in desks and lockers issued to them by the school. Periodic general inspections of lockers are conducted by school authorities for any reason at any time without notice, without student consent, without parent/guardian consent, and without a search warrant.
3. **Seizure of Illegal Materials:** If a properly conducted search yields illegal or contraband materials, such findings shall be turned over to the proper legal authorities for ultimate disposition.

## TEEN PREGNANCY AND/OR MARRIAGE

Grace Christian Academy believes in providing a wholesome environment conducive to learning for all its students. We believe teenage pregnancy and/or marriage are incompatible and impermissible within this environment. Individual situations that conflict with this standard will be evaluated case by case with an attempt to find the best solution for the individual and the student body as a whole. However, no married student, pregnant student, or student responsible for a pregnancy may attend daily classes at GCA.

# GRACE CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

Upper School



# SCHOOL MANAGEMENT

## STUDENT COMMITMENT

As a member of the GCA community, I understand that I represent the school 24/7. This means I will seek to continuously uphold the values and standards embraced by the school.

This includes the choices I make on and away from campus as well as how I choose to use technology and social media. GCA considers my engagement with technology and social media as no different than if I were to stand up in the middle of a classroom and say or show what I've posted.

I understand that I have a right to an education, but that representing GCA in athletics, performing arts, or any other activity is a privilege. Failure to adhere to GCA's standards can result in forfeiture of the privilege to represent my school.

Finally, the way I treat others speaks volumes about what I believe. It will be my goal to always treat others (within and beyond the Grace community) as image bearers of Christ. (Gen. 1:26)

## ATTENDANCE

Quality education requires regular student attendance. Irregular attendance deprives the student of an opportunity for effective learning. Parent/guardians of a child within the compulsory attendance age are responsible for their child's attendance at school, as required by the state. In order to gain the most from school, a student must be regular in attendance.

Although GCA Upper School does not distinguish between Excused and Unexcused Absences, we recognize that situations arise in which missing school is unavoidable. If a student is absent from school for reasons other than suspension or COVID-19 related situations (TBD), then he/she must adhere to the following procedure:

Any class missed counts as an absence, which is accumulated over the semester. This includes dentist or doctor appointments, mild illnesses, church functions, and absences requested by a parent/ guardian with prior notification to the administration. However, students should submit a physician's note for positive diagnoses of influenza, streptococcus, mononucleosis, pneumonia, or a concussion in case a Temporary Health Plan needs to be enacted. Students who are ill or running a fever greater than 100.4 (without medication) should not be on campus. Students exposed to or diagnosed with COVID-19 should notify administration and remain off campus (for classes as well as extracurricular activities) until a doctor designates a safe return.

If a student is absent due to suspension, he/she will not be allowed to attend or participate in extracurricular activities before, during or after school hours. This includes off campus activities as well.

Juniors and seniors will be allowed two (2) days per semester for college visits IF they are pre-arranged and approved by the school office. They will not count towards the cumulative absences for students.

## TIME-FOR-TIME

As an accredited school, we are required to satisfy the minimum number of contact hours, or actual hours a student has with his/her teacher. At the Upper School level, attendance is taken during each class period. **Upper School students who accumulate more than eight (8) absences in a particular class per semester risk failing the class and losing academic credit, regardless of the grades achieved.** Students exceeding eight absences (10% of their class periods) will be required to attend either Academic Support (7:45-8:10am; 3:20-3:45pm), meet virtually with teachers, or complete a supplemental assignment to make up missed content. Excessive absences, as determined by administration, are not eligible for time-for-time. Until the content is recovered, a student remains ineligible for athletic participation (practice or game), performance in fine arts' productions, and/or extra-curricular activity as determined by administration and credit will not be awarded.

Students are encouraged to plan medical appointments after school or at varying times of the day to avoid missing too many class periods and thus falling short of the contact hours required to receive credit for the class. School initiated absences (such as field trips or school athletic events) are not counted as part of the cumulative total of absences for students.

#### **Additional Attendance Notes:**

- Students are considered absent if they miss more than 15 minutes of a class (either coming to class late or leaving class early).
- Students must be in attendance for at least 50% of their class schedule during the school day in order to participate in any extracurricular activities that day. On Block Thursdays, students missing Chapel and/or BTC may not be eligible to participate in extracurricular activities that day.
- Every six (6) tardies to school or class results in one absence. (Tardies shall be accumulative by semester)
- Parent/guardians are expected to inform the school of any planned absence exceeding three (3) days.
- The makeup work policy applies to all absences.
- Since the school calendar allows for several vacation opportunities periodically throughout the year, parent/guardians are encouraged to schedule vacations and doctor's appointments to coincide with school breaks | in service days.

### **TARDY POLICY**

Students who arrive at school after the bell rings are marked tardy and must sign in at the office.

For the safety of our students and staff, all entrance doors will be locked after school begins. Students who are tardy to class any other time during the day are to go directly to class. Students will be given an unexcused tardy unless they bring an excused tardy slip from the office or a teacher. Students are considered absent when more than fifteen (15) minutes tardy to class.

Tardies shall be cumulative by semester. Four (4) tardies to a class will result in a detention with the exception of 1st period in which the student will receive a detention after six (6) tardies. Detentions will be issued for each successive tardy. Excessive detentions for tardies can result in additional penalties, including suspension.

Tardies related to traffic will not be excused, except for extreme circumstances as determined by administration.

### **EARLY DISMISSAL**

When early dismissal is necessary, a note from the parent/guardian stating the time of dismissal should be given to the Upper School Receptionist. Student drivers must have a note from the parent/guardian requesting early dismissal; they may sign themselves out at the appointed time. Failure to sign out can result in disciplinary action.

To avoid disrupting the educational process, early dismissals should be kept to a minimum. Anyone picking up a student for early dismissal must show a picture I.D. and be listed on the student's FACTS Account. Parent/guardians will need to state the reason for the early dismissal or late arrival during the school day through signing in or out in person, or presenting a note, phone call or e-mail.

Students who have tests or quizzes scheduled the day of early dismissal or late arrival will be expected to take the test or quiz that day unless other arrangements are made with the teacher.

**Only seniors are permitted early dismissal from school on a regular basis.** Seniors must complete an Early Dismissal Agreement form and have it signed by a parent/guardian in order to leave each day before school is dismissed. Signing out at the Upper School office is still necessary for early dismissal students. Students with early dismissal must stay off campus until the end of the school day. Administration has the authority to revoke this privilege.

## DISMISSAL

If anyone other than a parent/guardian needs to pick up your child, please send a note to the Upper School Receptionist with the date and name of the person responsible for picking up the student. Arrangements for after school athletic practices will be made by the athletic department. Students are expected to leave campus at dismissal time. Supervision is not provided, and GCA assumes no liability for students remaining on campus following school dismissal. **STUDENT DRIVERS**

- The ability for a student to drive a motor vehicle on school property is a privilege. This privilege is earned by a student demonstrating that he/she will drive responsibly and is mature and will not endanger other students or damage school property. This privilege may be revoked if the actions of a student cast doubt on his/her maturity and responsibility.
- Student driver decals must be displayed at all times while on campus.
- Students are allowed to drive their cars to school and should park in the student designated parking area.
- Students must drive slowly and carefully on school grounds and on the streets surrounding the school.
- Students may not go to their cars at any time during the school day without permission from a teacher or administrator.
- Student drivers must sign out (with parent/guardian consent) when leaving school early.
- Student drivers are not permitted to drive to and from various buildings on GBC/GCA property during the school day.
- Upper School students may not leave campus unless for scheduled appointments.
- AT NO TIME SHOULD ANY STUDENT CROSS OAK RIDGE HIGHWAY AS A PEDESTRIAN.

## PARENT/GUARDIAN TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parent/guardian/teacher conferences are encouraged as an excellent way to exchange information that will provide a greater understanding of the student. Parents/guardians may arrange teacher conferences by contacting the teacher directly. Parents desiring to meet with multiple teachers may contact the School Counseling office to assist with scheduling an appointment.

# ACADEMIC MANAGEMENT

## ACADEMIC INTEGRITY / HONOR PLEDGE

Grace Christian Academy endeavors to teach students the importance of personal and academic integrity. Proverbs 2:7 proclaims, "He [God] stores up sound wisdom for the upright; He is a shield to those who walk in integrity." Whether intentional or inadvertent, copying or sharing academic materials is a serious offense; therefore, GCA strives to educate students on how to recognize and avoid the pitfalls of plagiarism:

- Avoid copying (or allowing another student to copy) homework, quizzes, or tests.
- Avoid using, possessing, or distributing unauthorized assessment aids.
- Avoid plagiarism of any form.
- Do understand the true meaning of collaboration. Working collectively to find answers is not the same as copying someone else's work. When in doubt, seek clarification.
- Acknowledge that "Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much." Luke 16:10

**The Honor Code Pledge:**

As a demonstration of GCA's core values, I will complete my assignments and assessments with academic integrity and encourage others to do the same.

**Honor Council Members:**

- Faculty representative(s).
- Juniors and seniors will be chosen based on a collaborative process between students and staff.
- Honor Council members will receive training on peer mentoring.

**Honor Code Procedures:**

- First violations of the Honor Code will result in a student being referred to the US Principal and the teacher of record. The student and parents will be notified of the time/date of this meeting.
- For subsequent violations, the student will be referred to the Honor Council, typically comprised of a faculty member and four upper classmen. The student and parents will be informed of the date and time of the Honor Council meeting. Students referred to the Honor Council are expected to attend the meeting.
- Members of the Honor Council do not determine if an instance of academic dishonesty has occurred, nor do they determine consequences. Penalties are determined by administration.

**Honor Council Expected Outcomes:**

- Assist the student in identifying where their actions failed to support the Honor Code of GCA.
- Communicate and encourage future expectations for positive participation in the GCA community.
- Help the student restore any broken relationships and find effective ways to manage school/life stressors.

**Consequences of Violating the Honor Code:**

Students may:

- Lose National Honor Society leadership and membership status
- Lose Student Council leadership and membership status
- Lose the privilege of running for Student Council
- Lose any other leadership position

**1st Incident:** Meet with US Principal and teacher of record, serve one detention, write an apology letter, and re-do the assignment or assessment for 50% credit.

**2nd Incident:** Meet with the Honor Council, serve one day of ISS (in-school suspension), write an apology letter, and receive a zero on the assignment or assessment.

**3rd Incident:** Student and parents will meet with the Upper School Principal to determine the student's academic future and/or partnership with GCA.

## CURRICULUM

All materials, whether Christian or secular, will be taught within the Christian worldview.

- It is the student's responsibility to keep up with all assigned books.
- Books are to be handled with care and kept in good condition.
- If damage occurs, the student should report it to a teacher immediately.
- Any damage or replacement costs of books must be paid prior to the issuance of end of year report cards or transcripts.
- In the event of withdrawal from school, all leased textbooks must be turned in to the teacher.

## FACTS PARENTSWEB

Parent/guardians can view all grades, report cards, homework assignments, lesson plans, and more via their FACTS ParentsWeb account.

## GRADING SCALE AND CALCULATION OF GRADE POINT AVERAGE

Grade	Average	GPA Points	Honors GPA Points	Advanced Placement GPA Points
A	94-100	4.00	4.50	5.00
A-	90-93	3.70	4.20	4.70
B+	87-89	3.30	3.80	4.30
B	83-86	3.00	3.50	4.00
B-	80-82	2.70	3.20	3.70
C+	77-79	2.30	2.80	3.30
C	73-76	2.00	2.50	3.00
C-	70-72	1.70	2.20	2.70
D+	67-69	1.30	1.80	2.30
D	63-66	1.00	1.50	2.00
D-	60-62	0.70	1.20	1.70
F	0-59	0.00	0.00	0.00
NC	Excessive Absences	no credit, no grade points, factored into GPA		
P	Pass	credit, no grade points		
F	Fail	no credit, factored into GPA		

## GRADE POINT AVERAGE

In calculating GPA for Upper School students, GCA assigns an additional weight of 0.5 points for Honors courses and 1.0 points for AP/DE courses. If a student has transferred to GCA with high school credits, the earned credits will count towards GCA graduation requirements, but the GPA from the previous school will not be factored into the cumulative GPA on the GCA transcript.

## CLASS RANK

GCA does not rank students except to determine valedictorian and salutatorian. For external reporting purposes, GCA will only report the rank of students whose GPA falls within the highest decile (10%) level. Valedictorian and salutatorian designations are finalized at the end of the first semester of the senior year. Transfer students can be eligible for Co-Valedictorian or Co-Salutatorian after 3 semesters of course work at GCA. The grade point averages used to determine the valedictorian and salutatorian will be rounded to the hundredths.

## HONOR GRADUATE LEVELS

Honor levels are determined at the end of the 3rd quarter of the senior year. Honor levels for graduates are as follows:

**Cum Laude** | 3.50 - 3.64

**Magna Cum Laude** | 3.65 - 3.79

**Summa Cum Laude** | 3.80 - 4.00

## US HOMEWORK - FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**What is the purpose of homework?** Regular homework provides opportunities to develop independent study skills, apply learned skills, and experience enrichment activities.

**What type of homework is assigned to students?** All homework will be assigned with a purpose and tied to the current subject matter, given in amounts and at levels of difficulty which students can complete successfully, and be checked quickly with feedback. Emphasis will be placed on quality, not quantity.

**How much time should homework take my student?** The time required to complete assignments will vary with each student's study habits, academic skills, selected course load, and involvement in extra-curricular activities.

**What is the time frame for assigning and turning in homework?** Students will have at least one day between the time a homework assignment is given and the time that it is due; this includes electronically submitted assignments.

**Will homework be assigned during designated school breaks?** Homework assignments and class projects will not be assigned over the following scheduled school breaks: Fall Break, Thanksgiving, Christmas, Spring, and Easter. Students may engage in make-up work, if necessary, over a break.

### What are the responsibilities of the Student?

Students are expected to turn in work on time. The following are suggestions to help develop good homework procedures:

- Write down assignments in an agenda and look on Renweb for updated assignments.
- Don't be afraid to ask questions; utilize peer tutoring and academic support as needed.
- Develop a routine by setting aside a regular time for studying in a specific, well-lit area.
- Produce quality work, ensuring assignments are done according to the given instructions and completed on time.

### What are responsibilities of the Parent/Guardian?

Parents/guardians are encouraged to have a supportive role regarding their student's assignments. Parents/guardians can help by the doing the following:

- Make homework a daily activity—assume your student should be studying every night. Work with your student's outside activity schedule and preferences when setting up a regular homework time.
- Set up a comfortable location with the necessary supplies for doing homework.
- Show interest in your student's schoolwork and discuss what your student is learning.
- Watch for signs of failure or frustration. Discuss with your student and then, if necessary, encourage your student to contact the teacher to clear up any misunderstandings, troubleshoot problems, discuss time management and be informed about their learning progress.
- Check progress on homework through Renweb. Coordinate homework efforts with the teacher in special cases.

### What are responsibilities of the Teacher?

It is the responsibility of the teacher to:

- Assign relevant, challenging and meaningful homework that reinforces classroom learning.
- State the purpose of the assignment and provide homework that is specific, within the student's ability and have clearly defined expectations.
- Ensure homework assignments in Renweb are updated.
- Provide specific, written explanation of long-range assignments so that the requirements and expectations are clearly understood by the students and their parents.
- Assist students in breaking down larger assignments into smaller chunks.
- Define "late" for assignments and consequences for lateness and communicate both to students; repeat periodically.
- Involve parents if a pattern of late or incomplete homework develops.
- Be available to answer questions pertaining to the completion of all homework assignments.
- Provide specific and timely feedback on homework assignments; use results of homework to plan future instructional activities.

## ACADEMIC POLICIES

### MAKE UP WORK

For absences other than pre-arranged ones, the student will have one school day for every day missed to complete makeup work. For example, if a student is absent on Monday and Tuesday, he/she has Wednesday and Thursday to make up work missed. Exception: Students who have completed all work, including the review section (if applicable), may be required upon their return to school to take any tests missed.

It is the student's responsibility to make up missed assignments. The student is expected to check with teachers or ParentsWeb for makeup work upon his/her return from an absence.

If a student misses only the day a test is given or project | assignment is due, the student is responsible to make up the work the first day he/she returns, provided the student was informed of the due date in advance of the absence. If a student returns to school on the day of a pre-announced test or quiz after a short absence, the student is expected to take the test or quiz on the day it is given so long as no new material was introduced during the student's absence.

Students will have ten (10) school days to work with their teachers to change an "Inc" (incomplete) received as a nine-week grade to a passing letter grade. Students not meeting the ten-day deadline will receive a "0" for incomplete work except in cases of extreme hardship. These cases will be handled on an individual basis.

### TESTING

Information about registration and test preparation is provided by the school counseling office. GCA offers the ACT on campus during a regular school day in the Spring Semester.

Test	Grade Level	Time
Pre-ACT	9th-10th	Spring
PSAT	11th	October
ACT and SAT	11th-12th	Multiple Dates

## DROP | ADD PROCESS

Changes to a class schedule during the first part of the school year should be a rare occurrence. If, however, students see the need to make an adjustment to their schedule, the request for change should occur before the one-week drop/add period expires. In order to make these schedule changes, students should discuss the appropriateness of the class change with their teachers, parent/guardians, and school counselor. A student who drops a class after the drop/add period will receive an F in the class for the remaining grading periods of the semester. No changes should be made to the student's schedule after the completion of the drop/add process. Necessary schedule changes are made by the school counseling office with parent/ guardian permission.

## LEARNING CENTER

At GCA, we recognize and value the variety of learning styles among our students. When there are a variety of learning styles, students present with different levels of academic needs. The Learning Center serves as a level of support to assist students with a variety of academic needs. The goal of the Learning Center is to meet students at the point of their need and help move them to the peak of their potential. We want each student to truly know that they are uniquely and individually made with a God-given plan and purpose for their lives. Academic challenges don't diminish His plan and purpose for their lives and in most cases, He uses these challenges to grow their faith and to develop perseverance.

Students with a current diagnosed educational or medical disability which impacts their learning or performance within the classroom may be eligible to receive classroom accommodations through a formal educational plan (Learning plan or 504 plan). Below list the criteria for developing a formal plan:

- Outside evaluation reports must be provided by the parents to support a student's need for a learning plan.
- Evaluations must be current and updated every three years to determine continued eligibility.

If a new applicant to GCA has ever had an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or 504 Plan, a copy of the plan, along with their most recent evaluation report, must be submitted to the Admissions Office to be included in the applicant's confidential file.

In addition, The Learning Center offers tutoring and intervention support services, to either provide a level of academic support or to promote academic acceleration, at an additional fee above tuition. These services are available to all students, grades K-12, during the regular school day. Please visit the Learning Center page on the school website to learn more about the adopted programs.

## SENIOR COURSE LOAD & EXAM EXEMPTION

Seniors are required to take five credited courses for each semester of their senior year (not to include the Senior Capstone). Seniors earning an "A" average for each grading period of the school year may be exempted from their second semester exam in any class they have accumulated fewer than nine absences over the course of the entire semester. In the case of a one semester course, a senior must have an "A" average in both quarters of the class, with fewer than nine absences for the semester, in order to be exempt.

## SENIOR CAPSTONE

As a graduation requirement (1.0 credit), all seniors will successfully complete a capstone course that serves as GCA's culminating educational experience. The project encompasses written components and an oral defense that demonstrates the student's understanding of a controversial topic when applied against a biblical worldview. The Capstone Director and Capstone Committee will guide students through the process of planning, refining, and defending their chosen topic.

## SEMESTER FAILURE | CREDIT RECOVERY

A student must receive an average of 60% or higher in course work each semester to earn credit. If the student fails a required course either semester, the student must repeat the failed semester.

Students needing to remediate a failed course during the summer must take it through GCA's summer school program unless an exception is made by the guidance office due to legitimate conflict and/or need. If GCA does not offer a program in the course, the student must receive approval through the guidance office before registration in order to receive credit upon successful completion. The failing grade will remain on the transcript but will no longer be factored into the GPA if the student earns credit through alternative means (described above).

## EXPANSION OR REPLACEMENT OF GCA PROGRAM

Once a student is enrolled in GCA, all classes required to graduate must be taken at GCA or through GCA provided dual enrollment. If a student wishes to take any course as an expansion of the GCA program (including online and dual enrollment courses), permission must be granted through the Guidance Office. These alternative courses cannot be used to replace credit and GPA already earned on the student's transcript. Students are not permitted to bypass courses required for GCA graduation by taking the course at another institution. If special circumstance warrants an exception (e.g. a legitimate family hardship or personal illness), please contact the Upper School Principal.

## ACADEMIC WATCH

- Any student who has two D's or one F at any eligibility checkpoint (or sooner if determined appropriate by the administration) will be placed on Academic Watch.
- Students who are placed on Academic Watch will be expected to attend academic support periods from 7:45 AM - 8:10 AM; 3:20-3:45 PM each school day (at a minimum).
- Students who are placed on Academic Watch are not permitted to attend off-campus field trips.

## ACADEMIC PROBATION

1. Any student who is failing two classes at the end of the first quarter, first semester, third quarter, or end of the year will be placed on Academic Probation and will be considered ineligible to participate in athletic competitions until the next academic checkpoint. Students may be eligible for practice (coach's discretion) during Academic Probation.
2. Eligibility determination can be adjusted upon the completion of appropriate coursework for credit retrieval prior to the first day of the next school year for students on Academic Probation at the end of the 4th quarter.
3. Students on academic probation will be held accountable, at minimum, for the interventions as defined above for academic watch.
4. Students who are placed on Academic Probation are not permitted to attend off-campus field trips or to be dismissed early for athletic contests.

Quarter	Mid-Quarter Academic Checkpoint	Quarter Ends	Grades Posted (Eligibility Determined)
1st	September 09, 2022	October 7, 2022	October 21, 2022
2nd	November 11, 2022	December 21, 2022	January 13, 2023
3rd	February 10, 2023	March 10, 2023	March 24, 2023
4th	April 21, 2023	May 24, 2023	June 2, 2023*

\*Eligibility for Upper School Students will be determined AFTER the GCA Credit Recovery Session is concluded.

## ACADEMIC CHECKPOINTS

- The dates for these checkpoints are listed above.
- Students cannot be determined **ineligible** at mid-quarter checkpoints but can become **eligible** at this time.
- Eligibility checkpoints at each quarter will determine athletic eligibility.

## TSSAA ELIGIBILITY RULES

All GCA student-athletes and their parent/guardians need to be aware of the TSSAA Eligibility Rules: <https://cms-files.tssaa.org/documents/tssaa/2022-23/handbook/2022-23TSSAABylaws.pdf>

# GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

## COURSE OF STUDY.

In order to graduate, Class of 2023 students must earn a minimum of 26 credits. Beginning with the Class of 2024, students must earn a minimum of 25 credits. Seven credits are available each year (eight credits if taking a “zero period” class such as Choir). Credits are awarded on a semester basis, not on the basis of the yearly average in each class.

Bible (4 credits)	Science (3 Credits)	Fine Arts Electives*
Bible 9	Biology	Art Foundations
Bible 10	Honors Biology	Advanced Art
Bible 11	AP Biology	Honors Studio Art
Bible 12	Chemistry	3-D Art
English (4 Credits)	Honors Chemistry	Advanced Band
English 9	AP Chemistry	Drumline/Percussion Ensemble
Honors English 9	Anatomy & Physiology	Drama
English 10	Honors Anatomy & Physiology	Musical Theatre
English 11	Honors Physics	Ensemble
English 12	Dual Enrollment Environment Science	Worship Arts
AP Language & Composition	Gross Anatomy	
AP Literature & Composition	Social Studies (3 Credits)	General Electives
Dual Enrollment College Writing	World History & Geography	Yearbook
	AP European History	Accounting
Math (4 Credits)	U.S. History	AP Computer Science Principles
Algebra I	Honors U.S. History	Sports Management
Geometry	AP U.S. History	Medical Careers
Algebra II	Government/Economics	20 <sup>th</sup> Century World History
Honors Algebra II	Honors Government/Economics	Appalachian Heritage
Algebra III		Psychology
Honors Pre-Calculus	World Languages (2 Credits)	
Statistics	German I, II	
AP Calculus	Honors German III	Senior Capstone (1 Credit)
	AP German IV	
Physical Ed   Health (1 Credit)	Spanish I, II	
	Honors Spanish III	
	AP Spanish IV, V	

\*4 Credits class of 2023, 3 credits class of 2024 & beyond.

## PE/HEALTH

Beginning with the class of 2022, upper school students may satisfy their PE requirement by participating in at least one GCA sport during 9th-12th grades. Students are expected to complete an entire season. Injury-shortened seasons will be referred to upper school administration for consideration. The Health credit will be fulfilled through an on-campus course or an independent study program offered by GCA.

## WINTERIM

Winterim, an educational distinctive of Grace Christian Academy, takes students beyond traditional classroom study into unique learning experiences. For one week in March, all upper school students participate in hands-on learning activities not generally available within the school curriculum. Options include domestic and international travel, missional opportunities, on campus courses, and internship placements for upperclassmen. Students receive a partial credit for successfully completing Winterim.

# SPIRITUAL | STUDENT LIFE

## BIBLICALLY BASED CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTION

In the pursuit of aligning all aspects of Grace Christian Academy with our core values and mission, our teachers participate in professional development and Kingdom education training so that each student finds his/her foundation of academia to also be firmly rooted in the infallible, inerrant Word of God. In addition to a daily Bible class, biblical truths are threaded throughout the concepts taught in all other courses/subjects.

## CHAPEL

All students attend chapel on a regular basis. Parent/guardians are welcome to attend chapel services and should sign in when entering the Grace Student Ministries Building.

## MISSION ENGAGEMENT

As part of the Mission Engagement Development Process, Upper School students at GCA will be participating in meaningful mission experiences and service to others. Students will be encouraged and expected to reach out to the needs of their fellow students, churches, local nonprofit agencies and people all across the world.

The goal of the Mission Engagement requirement is to engage students both academically and spiritually as they seek to glorify God through service to Him. Through these experiences, students will develop skills in planning, research, communications, service and leadership. It is the hope that their work, combined with their personal experiences in ministry, will serve to enlighten their minds and inflame their hearts, that they might ultimately be transformed into both lifelong learners and servants of Christ.

## MISSION EXPERIENCE:

A mission experience is any act of volunteer | non-paid service for others that involves ministering to and serving those outside a student's immediate family.

**Categories** (students are encouraged to have experiences in all 4 categories)

- Education/Discipleship (e.g. coach, pre-school worker, camp worker, teacher)
- People in Need (e.g. elderly home, soup kitchen, shelter, special needs kids)
- Community (e.g. community centers, fire department, parks & rec, clean a stream, 5K run for a cause)
- Campus Based (A wide variety of activities and options will be made available throughout the year)

- **Expectations for each Grade Level**

- **Freshmen:** 15 hours, to be completed from June 1-May 15
- **Sophomores:** 20 hours, to be completed June 1-May 15
- **Juniors:** 20 hours, to be completed June 1-May 15
- **Seniors:** 20 hours, to be completed June 1-May 15

**Mission Engagement Reflection Form (MERF):**

Students will be required to fill out a Mission Engagement Reflection Form (MERF) for each mission experience from 9th-12th grade in their X2 Vol account. This form will summarize each student's mission experience and cause them to seriously reflect on the impact made on them personally, as well as on those served. It will also detail documentation for scholarships and awards. In summary, the MERF provides students opportunities for celebration, deep reflection, accountability and updated community service records.

## BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

Beyond the Classroom (BTC) occurs weekly and is a flexible use of enrichment time. Whether centered around community fun, personal development, or academic exploration, the wide variety of topics provide students an opportunity to connect GCA's core values to their own lives. While some activities enhance classroom instruction, others further equip students to explore their life calling, passion, and interests. Sometimes fun, sometimes serious, sometimes studious, BTC enhances what happens inside the walls of the traditional classroom.

## CULTURAL ENGAGEMENT

In an effort to promote and encourage cultural literacy, Grace Christian Academy expects each Upper School student to enjoy two fine arts' experiences as a non-participant outside of regular school hours during the academic year. This requirement is PASS/FAIL and will be noted on a student's report card. **At least one experience should include a GCA event marked with an asterisk (\*) below.**

GCA Fine Arts' Performances	
US Fall Play*	LS Christmas Program
MS/US Band Concert*	US Spring Musical*
MS/US Choral Concert*	Junior Musical
Night of the Arts*	

Students may elect to satisfy this requirement through community or out-of-area experiences as well. Non-GCA events must come by way of parental approval. Examples of possible experiences and/or destinations include:

Non GCA Events	
Concerts	Musicals
Plays	Museums
Community Festivals	

Students will self-report each experience in X2 Vol by listing the event, date, and a short description.

# DRESS CODE

**Parent/guardians are responsible to ensure that their student's attire conforms to the following standards.** Realizing that it would be impractical to keep up with clothing fads and address every possible dress code nuance, GCA administration reserves the right to address situations that might not be outlined in the Student Handbook. If a student in grades 9-12 is in non-compliance with the school dress code, he/she will be required to correct the situation. The student may be removed from class until his/her attire meets school standards. Approved school apparel vendors are the following: My Aplus Uniforms, Lands' End, and uniform items in the G2 Store. These are the only approved vendors for school dress code apparel. The final determination of approved apparel is at the discretion of the school administration according to what has been posted as approved apparel on dress code lists. Vendors may not suggest or recommend anything other than approved apparel.

Students demonstrating non-conformity to the GCA dress code will be subject to disciplinary consequences. Warnings will not be issued.

## GENERAL GUIDELINES

The school administration shall reserve the right of authority on these matters to determine whether or not the student's clothing is acceptable for the school setting.

## PANTS | SHORTS

- Solid khaki or navy shorts, pants, or capris (cotton twill or corduroy) are permitted. Pants are expected to be neat and presentable, exhibiting a normal degree of wear, and fit appropriately.
- Pants must be worn properly around the waist, with the hem not extending past the shoes.
- Solid khaki or navy uniform style shorts with a flat or pleated front are allowed; these may be purchased from approved uniform vendors and do not require the GCA logo. Please note that cargo style shorts will not be permitted except those purchased from Lands' End. All shorts need to be loose fitting and no shorter than 3" above the knee.
- Jeans are not allowed except on designated days (see "Spirit Wear").

## SKIRTS | SKORTS

Dresses and jumpers may not be worn. Only approved skorts purchased from Lands' End or My Aplus Uniforms may be worn. Skorts should not come higher than 3" above the knee. Other skirts and skorts do not meet dress code guidelines and should not be worn.

## SHIRTS/OUTERWEAR

- All school uniform shirts, sweaters, and fleece pullovers must bear the official GCA logo and be purchased from an approved vendor (G2 uniform items, Lands' End, My Aplus Uniforms).
- Female students may wear navy, grey, or white waist-length cardigan sweaters. The cardigan must remain open in front displaying the "G" logo.
- Shirts worn under uniform shirts must be navy, royal, grey or white.
- Students are not permitted to wear hooded sweatshirts Monday through Thursday. Students may wear Grace hooded sweatshirts on Fridays as part of spirit-wear guidelines. Approved garments may be worn on any day (including crew neck sweatshirts). Students will be required to wear collared shirts (on regular uniform days) underneath any approved outerwear.

## SHOES

Dress sandals (including Chaco-styles) and any type of closed-toe shoes (including Crocs) may be worn. Rubber flip flops and sport sandals are not permitted.

## PE UNIFORMS

PE shorts must be purchased from an approved uniform provider (G2). Students may wear appropriate fitting Grace t-shirts in either white, grey, or navy (i.e. Spirit Wear). Points are deducted from the daily PE grade for not fully dressing in the proper PE uniform.

## SPIRIT WEAR

Students may wear jeans and spirit wear on Friday. There should be no writing, pictures, or designs on the jeans. Jeans should be loose fitting and free of holes, frayed edges or excessive wear.

## OTHER

- Hair for boys, including facial hair, needs to be neatly trimmed and clean in appearance. For both boys and girls, extreme hair fads, colors and styles are not permitted, including anything deemed by administration to be distracting to the learning environment.
- Girls only are permitted to wear earrings or nose studs, and any other body piercing on girls or boys should not be displayed at school or school events.
- Jewelry must be minimal and not distracting, as determined by GCA administration.
- Sunglasses are not to be worn indoors. Hats and bandanas are not to be worn at any time. Boys may not wear headbands.
- Makeup should not be worn in an excessive manner.
- Visible tattoos are not permitted.
- Boys are not permitted to wear nail polish.
- Students are expected to dress in traditional, gender appropriate attire at all GCA events.

## ACTIVITY DRESS

GCA students are expected to dress modestly and appropriately at all home and away GCA events.

# DISCIPLINE

The Bible clearly indicates that parent/guardians are responsible for the discipline of their children. Grace Christian Academy exists to assist parent/guardians in their God-given responsibilities. Therefore, GCA seeks not to assume the task which God gives to parent/guardians, but only to serve as the parent/guardian's appointed and authorized representative in the child training process, in a limited way.

Attendance at Grace Christian Academy is a privilege and not a right. GCA reserves the right and at its sole discretion can remove students from their enrollment. GCA will cooperate with the home in the nurturing of the student(s). GCA reserves the right to remove students from enrollment if the school can no longer assist the family in the nurturing of their children. GCA reserves the right to deny re-admission to any student whose actions demonstrate it is not in the school's best interest to allow re-admission.

## DISCIPLINARY GOALS

- Respect authority: "Consequently, he who rebels against authority is rebelling against what God has instituted and those who do will bring judgment on themselves." (Romans 13:2)
- Respect yourself: "Teach us to number our days aright, that we may gain a heart of wisdom." (Psalm 90:12)
- Respect others: "Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only listen. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you." (Ephesians 4:29, 32)

## STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

- Students should demonstrate respect to faculty members, staff members and fellow students.
- Students are to be respectful of the property of GCA and others.
- Students are expected to maintain academic integrity.
- Students are expected to demonstrate appropriate behavior at all school functions.

## PARENT/GUARDIAN EXPECTATIONS

- Parent/guardians are expected to demonstrate a spirit of cooperation with the administration and faculty of the Academy. Any school-related concerns need to be resolved following the Matthew 18 principle.
- Parent/guardians are expected to be respectful of school staff and students and display Christ-like behavior in speech and actions.
- Parents/guardians are expected to exhibit gracious communication, whether by email, phone, or in-person.
- Parent/guardians are responsible to know and adhere to all school policies.
- Parent/guardians are expected to abide by all expectations listed in the continuous enrollment guidelines.
- Parent/guardians are expected to dress modestly and appropriately at school-related events.

## STUDENT BEHAVIOR

To accomplish these student expectations, certain student behavior cannot be tolerated and will result in action by the teacher and/or the administration. Examples include:

- Use of physical force or verbal intimidation.
- Leaving school property without permission.
- Defacing any property of the school or another student (damage caused by the student will be paid for by the student or parent/guardian).
- Being disrespectful toward fellow students, teachers or staff in attitude, words or actions.
- Using profanity or vulgarity.
- Lying, cheating or stealing.
- Inappropriate public display of affection toward another student.
- Involvement or the impression of involvement in immoral activities or activities that are contrary to the philosophy of Grace Christian Academy.
- Obscene body language.
- Possession on their person, in their locker, in their backpack or in their cars of any kind of weapon, fireworks, drugs, drug paraphernalia, cigarettes, vapor items, alcohol or pornography. This includes any inappropriate content that is stored or viewed on an electronic device.

## DISCIPLINE POLICIES

A cumulative detention system is used at GCA as a means of correction for infractions of school standards, rules, and classroom procedures. Corrective measures of varying degrees of severity may be used.

- **Parent/Guardian Notification** – At administrative discretion, a warning to inform parent/guardians of a problem and to solicit their help in supporting GCA rules and correcting unacceptable student behavior.

- **Detention** – Held in the afternoon on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday from 3:20 – 3:50 pm and in the mornings on Wednesday and Friday from 7:30 – 8:00 am. Students must serve the detention within 48 hours of the day the notice is received. (Ex. If a student receives a detention on Monday, that student would be responsible to serve that detention by Wednesday). An additional detention will be given each time a student misses a detention deadline. Missing multiple deadlines will result in further consequences.

- **Suspension**

- Begins on the date assigned,
- May be in-school or out-of-school as deemed necessary by the Upper School Principal.
- Students are to complete all work given during their absence.
- When a student is serving an out-of-school suspension, he/she is not permitted on campus and is not permitted to attend any school function unless permission is secured from the Upper School Principal.
- Students who served a suspension during a semester will automatically be on probation for the remainder of the school year. Students suspended during the last nine weeks of the year will automatically be on probation for the first semester of the following year.
- Students who are suspended from school for disciplinary reasons may be suspended from activities or positions for the remainder of the school year at the discretion of the Upper School Principal.

- **Expulsion**

- Grace Christian Academy reserves the right of dismissal at any time during the school year at the discretion of administration. Any student who persistently neglects work, fails to meet academic or other standards or qualifications, exercises poor citizenship, fails to cooperate, or whose parent/guardians fail to cooperate may be asked to withdraw from the school.
- Dismissal will be administered by the respective principal with the advice and approval of the Head of School. Appeal of a dismissal may be made in writing to the Head of School within three days of the dismissal. A student may not attend classes during request for an appeal. A student who has lost the privilege to attend GCA is not permitted to attend school-related events. Students who have been dismissed may not apply for re-admission for a period of 12 months.
- Dismissals may occur when any of the following take place:
  - Possession or use of non-prescription drugs of any kind, or the misuse of any prescription drugs of any kind on or off school property.
  - Selling or supplying illegal drugs, prescription or non-prescription drugs
  - Possession, consumption, supplying or selling of alcohol
  - Repeated violations of discipline that have resulted in suspensions
  - Failure of parent/guardians to cooperate with GCA in the discipline of their children
  - Assault of a staff member
  - Sexual Misconduct - Physical conduct and/or contact of a sexual nature, verbal abuse of a sexual nature, sexual innuendoes and gestures or other serious sexual misconduct, to include sexting or social media use. This includes the sharing of sexually suggestive photos by any means.
  - Moral Misconduct - computer | internet use for immoral purposes or other serious moral misconduct
  - Lying | Dishonesty
  - Stealing
  - Possession or use of any object used as a weapon in a threatening or dangerous manner
  - Possession, transfer, sale or discharge of any gun (including a starter gun or pellet gun), firearm or any other explosive device of any type whether loaded or unloaded, on school property or at a school-related activity
  - Any other situation at the discretion of administration

## SCHOOL PRANK POLICY

At GCA we Give Christ All in words and deeds. Our community respects the sacrificial giving through tuition dollars and generous donors because “to whom much is given, much is required” (Luke 12:48). GCA’s staff and administration, in cooperation with Grace Baptist Church leadership, do not condone any form of vandalizing our campus (such as school pranks). Students involved in these activities may not be permitted to participate in school events for the remainder of the year (athletics, commencement, and/or school trips) and will be held financially responsible for damage.

## HARASSMENT POLICY

Grace Christian Academy is committed to providing an environment in which every student is treated as an image bearer of God. Conduct, whether intentional or unintentional, that subjects another student to unwanted attention, comments or actions because of race, national origin, sex, physical characteristics or disability, robs the student of dignity and is not permitted. It includes, but is not limited to, any or all of the following:

**Verbal Harassment:** Derogatory comments and jokes; threatening words spoken to another student

**Physical Harassment:** Unwanted physical touching, assault

**Visual Harassment:** Derogatory drawings, writings, cartoons, or gestures/actions

**Sexual Harassment:** Unwanted sexual advances, request for sexual favors, including the sharing of inappropriate media

**Social-Media Harassment:** Unwanted and/or inappropriate postings on social media

Grace Christian Academy does not condone or allow harassment of others, whether engaged in by students, employees, or family members. Any student who believes he or she has been subjected to harassment should report these actions immediately to a teacher or administrator. Each report will be given serious consideration and investigated thoroughly in a prompt and confidential manner. Students who violate these principles will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. Students found to have filed false or frivolous accusations of harassment will also be subject to disciplinary action.

## BULLYING POLICY

**Rationale:** In an effort to instill biblical values and create a more loving environment, the school has adopted a bullying policy. From time to time, conflict can occur. We seek to implement a clear framework for dealing with bullying incidents in order to protect the students and help the bully to learn how to relate in a way that is in line with the biblical standard of relationships: “My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you.” John 15:12

**Definition - Bullying is physical or verbal harassment occurring over a period of time involving an imbalance of power.**

The following actions in ongoing form may be forms of bullying:

- Physical aggression including hitting, punching, or kicking.
- Teasing or verbal abuse including put-downs, insults, name-calling, racial, or sexual remarks.
- Intentional exclusion from activities or friendship groups.
- The setting up of humiliating experiences.
- Damaging a person’s property/possessions or taking them without permission.
- Threatening gestures, actions or words.
- Written, verbal, or electronic messages or photos that contain threats, put-downs, gossip or slander.

**Policy Statement:** From time to time, in a large community such as a school, conflict and offense can occur. As part of living in a sinful world, when we don't always relate to others as we should or when we try to exert power and influence over others, bullying can result.

Bullying is never acceptable and GCA seeks to implement a clear framework for dealing with bullying incidents. The school's response to bullying is based on the pattern of relating to one another found in the Bible. God intended for us to live in a way that acknowledges differences and accepts others because we are all made in God's image.

## PROCEDURES

- All parties, including the victim, suspected bully, and sufficient bystanders will be spoken to in order to establish the facts of the situation and to determine accountability for their actions/inaction.
- All incidences are to be documented and written reports will be kept on the behavior by those staff members to whom the incident was reported.
- Pertinent staff will be informed about and have access to the information recorded on all incidents so that they may be aware of any issues between students.
- Investigations into bullying allegations must be undertaken in a timely manner and should be carried out in such a way as to minimize the risk of escalation.
- All incidents of bullying will be followed up by those staff members originally informed to parent/guardians of at least the victim(s) and suspected bully.

## RESPONSIBILITIES

### Student

- Student should ask the offending student to stop their behaviors.
- Students being bullied should report it to staff, parent/guardians, or another adult.
- Students who are aware of bullying should report it to a teacher or administrator.
- Students should take appropriate steps to discourage or prevent bullying.
- Students should be willing to resolve bullying situations, employing forgiveness and some changes in behavior.

### Parent/guardians

- Parent/guardians are encouraged to take what their children say seriously and to report bullying concerns to the teacher first.
- Parent/guardians should understand that the whole story may be quite complex and trust the school to resolve bullying issues.
- Parent/guardians not satisfied with the action may refer to administrators if the need arises.

# TECHNOLOGY POLICIES

## CELL PHONE/SMART WATCH POLICY

Students may use their cell phone/smart watch during break and in between class. Cell phones are to be "docked" in designated areas in each classroom during class. Teachers can request for smart watches to be docked. The phone should never be visible during class unless permission is granted by the teacher as part of a class activity. Devices may not be used at any unapproved time during the school day. Forgetting to turn off the cell phone/smart watch is not an excuse for violation.

Use of a cell phone/smart watch during a test for any reason (i.e. text messaging, photos, etc.) will automatically be considered cheating, and appropriate academic and disciplinary action will be taken at the sole discretion of the administration. No unauthorized taking of or other use of cell phone photographs is permitted during the school day. Specifically, students should avoid using cell phones in restrooms or locker rooms at any time. Violation of this policy is a serious disciplinary offense.

**Parent/guardians should not consider their student's cell phone as a means of contacting their student for any reason during the school day.** Parent/guardians who need to contact their student during the school day for emergency purposes should use the Academy's normal emergency contact process and call the Upper School Receptionist. GCA staff will assist parent/ guardians in communicating with their child in appropriate emergency situations.

Disciplinary consequences for violation of the cell phone/smart watch policy shall be as follows:

- First Offense: Device will be given to Upper School Receptionist and student will be issued a detention.
- Repeated Offenses: Parent/guardians will have to retrieve the device from the Upper School Receptionist. The student will receive a detention or further discipline as deemed appropriate by administration.

GCA accepts no responsibility for use, breakage, theft or loss of cell phones/smart watches or other personal items.

Earbuds are not permitted to be used during the school day unless approved by a teacher and for instructional purposes. Disciplinary procedures follow the same guidelines as cell phone usage.

## SOCIAL MEDIA POLICIES

As members of the Grace Christian Academy community, we continuously represent Jesus Christ and GCA whenever and wherever we use online communications (both at school and at home.) This includes, but is not limited to, email, chat, instant- messaging, video calls, texting, gaming, and social networking sites. In all of our online communication with classmates, teachers, and anyone else inside or outside the GCA community, we will treat others in love and respect as Christ teaches. Students are reminded that regardless of where their posting originates, any text, photographs or videos they put on social media or similar sites which would be obscene, derogatory to the school or the school community, or threaten, demean, or bully students or faculty, is prohibited and will be subject to school disciplinary action and may be referred to local law enforcement agencies. Any illegal, disrespectful, obscene, or inflammatory language or media, ethnic or racial slurs, bullying, harassment or defamation, or other similar content posted or sent online will result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion.

## RECORDING DEVICE POLICY

Students may not use any recording devices on the school grounds. This includes transmitting images, taking photographs with a phone, camera or other recording device, or using any electronic device on an audio or video record setting.

**EXCEPTIONS:** If a GCA student has been approved for the use of a camera or video camera to record images for curriculum or school-related purposes.

## DIGITAL DEVICE USAGE

While not comprehensive (See AUP -- Acceptable Use Policy -- for more details), the following list identifies uses of any electronic device for which a student could face disciplinary action ranging from loss of use privilege to expulsion from the school depending on the severity of the infraction:

- Unapproved recording (audio and/or video) or photography of individuals at any time on campus.
- Unapproved communication between devices – whether social or academic in nature.
- Access to unapproved websites at any time while on campus.
- Playback of unapproved or inappropriate material (audio and/or video) at any time while on campus.
- Non-academic usage of a digital device during an academic class.

# ADDITIONAL POLICIES

## GUNS & WEAPONS

Grace Christian Academy does not allow guns, knives, weapons or their facsimiles on campus. Violation of this policy may result in the immediate dismissal of the participating student.

## DRUG TESTING PROGRAM

The use of illegal drugs by any student or faculty member is strictly prohibited. Drug education, a universal drug testing program, and strict enforcement of school policies support our drug-free environment. The school board and administration believe it is Grace Christian Academy's responsibility to address this threat to our children's safety.

The purpose of the universal drug testing program for grades 9-12 is meant to deter drug use. We believe a policy that supports early intervention and restoration will be an effective tool to bolster the students of Grace Christian Academy as they make these important life choices. Mandatory drug screening is conducted monthly that requires each Upper School student to be tested sometime throughout the school year. Since testing is randomized, students might be tested more than once during the year.

## DRUG TESTING PROCEDURES

The testing method is hair analysis performed by a licensed clinical laboratory, Psychomedics Corporation. Students will be scheduled for hair testing administered by the school nurse and Director of Campus Security; the samples will be sent directly to the clinical laboratory. Any unauthorized absence from a drug testing appointment or any attempt to evade participation, whatever the circumstances, will be considered a refusal to participate. A refusal to participate will be considered an admission of guilt and will be handled as a positive test result.

## HAIR COLLECTION PROCEDURES

1. Each student will be assigned a unique identification number. The school will follow the chain of custody procedures established by the Psychomedics Corporation.
2. A sample of hair will be cut cosmetically from the crown of the student's head. Students with insufficient head hair will have body hair collected, such as arm, leg, or underarm hair. In some instances, an oral test (saliva collection) is a better means of collection when insufficient hair is available. GCA Administration will determine if saliva test is preferable to a hair test.
3. The sample will be sealed by a designated staff person and initialed by the tested person. The sample will then be sent directly to Psychomedics Corporation.

## CONFIDENTIALITY & DISSEMINATION OF RESULTS

- All sample collections and results will be identified by the unique identification number of the student. No names will be recorded on the collection bag or the test results.
- Test results will be confidentially provided by Psychomedics Corporation to the Upper School Principal.
- Parent/guardians will not be notified if a test is negative. The school will notify the student's parent/guardians of a positive result within 15 days of the school's receipt of the test results.
- All test results of students will remain strictly confidential between the student, his/her parent/guardians, the Head of School, Upper School Principal, Dean of Students, and School Counselor.

## SELF-REFERRAL

Any student who, prior to the day of scheduled testing, admits that he/she has a drug problem will be required to follow the consequences of a positive test result. The first admission will not be considered as a positive drug test, but any subsequent admissions will be considered as a positive test result.

## REASONABLE SUSPICION

The administrative team of Grace Christian Academy may refer a student for a drug test if there is reasonable suspicion or cause to believe the student may be using drugs or alcohol illegally.

## CONSEQUENCES OF POSITIVE RESULT

In response to a student's positive drug test result Grace Christian Academy shall require:

- A conference with the student and his or her parent/guardians.
- An evaluation of the student's needs by a school approved counselor who will evaluate the student's needs and develop a rehabilitation plan including recommendation for services, behavioral guidelines and other appropriate conditions, making referrals as needed.
- If the positive drug test occurs with an individual who is already on disciplinary probation, it is the discretion of the Administration to separate the student from the school community.

If the student wishes to continue as a member of the Grace Christian Academy student body, the parent/guardians (or student if they are 18 years of age) must sign an *Authorization for Release of Information Form*, thus enabling the counseling staff to communicate with the Head of School, Upper School Principal and/or School Counselor regarding the student's rehabilitation plan and progress in the program. All costs of required counseling services are the responsibility of the parent/guardians.

1. If the student and parent/guardians or guardian are willing to meet the aforementioned requirements, then the student who has tested positive for the first time will continue normal academic activities. After a positive result the student will be re- tested at all subsequent random drug tests throughout the remainder of his or her enrollment at Grace Christian Academy. These subsequent tests will be administered at the expense of the parent/guardian.
2. A student who tests positive a second time during his/her enrollment at GCA will be separated from the school community.

## REFUSING TESTING | TAMPERING WITH TESTS

A student who refuses to provide a hair sample for testing, or attempts to tamper with the testing procedures, will be subject to discipline, up to and including expulsion from Grace Christian Academy.

## CONTESTING A POSITIVE RESULT

If a student or parent/guardian wishes to contest a positive test result, he or she may do so in writing within three days of notification of a positive test result. A hair sample will be collected a second time and sent to Psychomedics for analysis. Re- tests will be administered at the expense of the student's parent/guardians. GCA will notify the student's parent/guardians or guardians of the results within 15 days of receipt of the test results. All test results of students will remain strictly confidential among the student, his parent/guardians or guardians, and the Head of School, School Counselor, and Upper School Principal.

## SEARCH & SEIZURE

To maintain order and discipline in the Academy and to protect the safety and welfare of students and personnel, school authorities may request a search of a student, student lockers, or student automobiles under the circumstances outlined below and may seize illegal, unauthorized or contraband materials discovered in the search. GCA reserves the right to invite the Knox County Sheriff's Department or an appropriate narcotics search group to visit at any time during the school year to search for drugs. Any alcohol, drugs or drug paraphernalia found in lockers, cars or other items under the student's control will constitute possession.

1. **Personal Searches:** A student and/or personal effects (e.g., purse, backpack, etc.) may be searched whenever a school authority has reasonable suspicion that the student is in possession of illegal or unauthorized materials. Students may be asked to empty their pockets, pocketbooks, wallets, backpacks, etc. without the parent/guardian's permission or the student's permission. Enrollment of the child constitutes parent/guardian consent to such searches. If the student refuses and the school feels a personal search of the student's person or belongings is required (as per the safety of that student or any other student), then the parent/guardians will be phoned and must come to school to perform the search. If the parent/guardians fail to come to the Academy to perform the search in a reasonable time (one hour) and/or the student refuses to empty his/her pockets or remove from his or her person what is suspected, then the student's privilege to attend this Academy will be revoked. If a phone is confiscated, the Academy reserves the right to review the phone's content for any reason.
2. **Locker Searches:** Student lockers are Academy property and remain at all times under the control of the Academy; however, students are expected to assume full responsibility for the security of their lockers. The Academy exercises exclusive control over school property, and students should not expect privacy regarding items placed in school property because school property is subject to search at any time by Academy officials. Students are responsible for whatever is contained in desks and lockers issued to them by the school. Periodic general inspections of lockers are conducted by school authorities for any reason at any time without notice, without student consent, and without parent/guardian consent, and without a search warrant.
3. **Automobile Searches:** Students are permitted to park on Academy premises as a matter of privilege, not right. The Academy retains authority to conduct routine patrols of student parking lots and inspections of the exteriors of student automobiles on campus. The interiors of student vehicles may be inspected whenever a school authority has reasonable suspicion that illegal or unauthorized materials are contained inside. Such patrols and inspections may be conducted without notice, without student consent, without parent/guardian consent, and without a search warrant.
4. **Seizure of Illegal Materials:** If a properly conducted search yields illegal or contraband materials, such findings shall be turned over to the proper legal authorities for ultimate disposition.

## TEEN PREGNANCY and/or MARRIAGE

Grace Christian Academy believes in providing a wholesome environment conducive to learning for all its students. We believe teenage pregnancy and/or marriage are incompatible and impermissible within this environment. Individual situations that conflict with this standard will be evaluated case by case with an attempt to find the best solution for the individual and the student body as a whole. However, no married student, pregnant student, or student responsible for a pregnancy may attend daily classes at GCA.

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# LEAD.BUILD. EQUIP.

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# GRACE CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

Exists to LEAD students to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ, to BUILD them up to their full potential in Him, and to EQUIP them to serve Him.



**“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.”**

Mark 12:20 NIV