



Parent/Student Handbook

2019-2020

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****Please note that policies and procedures in this handbook are subject to change and parents will receive appropriate notice of changes.***

I. INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Grace Christian Academy! To encourage unity and to promote an effectively functioning school community, this handbook has been created to provide students, parents, and staff with a clear statement of GCA's philosophy and its basic policies and procedures. Although this is not an exhaustive handbook, it will provide answers and directions for most questions and issues. The guidelines found within these pages are intended to enable the school to function smoothly and effectively in its goal of providing a strong Christian education.

These guidelines should be viewed as one way the school encourages and trains students to recognize authority and to take responsibility for their actions. By becoming familiar with the contents of this handbook, every member of the GCA community will better understand both his/her responsibilities and privileges.

II. MISSION

The mission of Grace Christian Academy is to assist Christian families in the teaching of their children by providing them an experiential education that is distinctively Christian, biblically saturated, Christ glorifying, academically excellent, and service and mission oriented. We exist to help parents cultivate the legacy of Christ's hope in each student and to prepare them to spread that hope along every avenue God provides.

Educational Philosophy

At Grace Christian Academy, we believe the chief end and purpose of man is to glorify God. We aim to produce students who are committed to excellence in all things, with the understanding that it glorifies God when they apply themselves to the fullest. We believe that an excellent education is founded on disciplined attention to learning; that this discipline rests upon the student's moral character; and that this moral character can best be developed through a personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ. All students will be encouraged to develop wisdom, discernment, love for learning, and a heart for service. Our teachers will be committed to the vital task of teaching students how to think, reason, and process information in order to make wise and biblically grounded decisions.

Distinctives

Grace Christian Academy is committed to:

- Using the Word of God as the roadmap for everyday decisions. (I Timothy 3:16-17)
- Practicing Stewardship in all areas of school life. (Colossians 3:17)
- Serving others not only in our community but also throughout the country and the world. (Mark 10:45)
- Striving to be Christ-centered in every situation by displaying the fruit of the Spirit. (Galatians 5:22-23)
- Partnering with Christian families by providing an educational environment that is consistent with the standards of their church and home. (Deuteronomy 4:9)
- Providing an excellent education that meets or exceeds all local, state, and national standards. (I Peter 2:17)
- Employing excellent faculty and staff who are committed to serving the Lord by providing an excellent educational experience. (Luke 6:40)

Statement of Faith

The basis of Grace Christian Academy is the infallible written Word of God, known as the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, as they are interpreted in the historic, evangelical confessions of Christian faith. In accordance with these confessions, we hold unreservedly to the sovereignty of God as taught in Scripture and as specifically revealed in the Lordship of Jesus Christ over the world and thus over every department of human activity, thereby recognizing these Scriptures as the supreme and final standard for life. Grace Christian Academy is not a church nor is it subject to any ecclesiastical organization, but works with and through such bodies to aid and benefit both this school and such church bodies with which it may be associated. Therefore, the school is committed to and subscribes to the following articles of belief:

The Bible

We believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be inspired by the Holy Spirit, inerrant in the original writings, and accurately maintained over the ages by God's Spirit. They are the only supreme and final authority for the rule of faith and life for all men. [II Timothy 3:15,16; II Peter 1:21]

God

We believe in only one living and true God, who externally exists in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, having one substance, power and eternity, perfectly sovereign, holy and unchangeable and infinite in being. [Deut. 6:4; I John 5:7; Matt. 3:16-17; John 1:14; 18; John 15:26]

Man

We believe that man and the universe were created by an immediate and direct act of God. Also, we believe that man was created in the image of God, but he chose to sin and thereby incurred not only physical death, but also spiritual death which is eternal separation from God and that all human beings are born with a sinful nature and become sinners in thought, word and deed. All human beings stand accountable before and to God for their sins. [Gen. 1:1,26- 27; Gen. 2:17; Gen. 3:22-24; Rom. 3:23; Rom. 5:12, Rom. 5:15-19; Rom. 6:23]

Jesus Christ

We believe that Jesus Christ was begotten by the Holy Spirit, born to the Virgin Mary, and is truly God and truly man, yet one Christ, the only mediator between God and man. Also, we believe that He was crucified on a cross, died, and was buried, and resurrected by God. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father as our High Priest, King and Savior of His Church. [Luke 1:27,31,35]

Salvation

We believe that the Lord Jesus died for our sins according to the Scriptures, as a representative and substitutionary sacrifice and that all who believe in and trust in Him alone are justified on the grounds of His shed blood and perfect, righteous life. We further believe that all who receive the Lord Jesus Christ by faith are born again by the Holy Spirit, and thereby, become children of God and are thus becoming sanctified by God. [John 3:16-19; Rom. 3:23-26; Rom. 5:19; Heb. 9:14,16; Heb.10:14; Eph. 2: 8-10]

Resurrection

We believe that on the third day after His Crucifixion, our Lord Jesus Christ rose from the dead with the same body in which He suffered and with which He also ascended into heaven and there sits at the right hand of the Father making intercession for the saints. [I Cor. 15: 3-5; John 20:25, 27; Mark 16:19; Rom. 8:34]

Second Coming

We believe that our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will personally return and set up His Kingdom wherein He will rule and reign in righteousness. [Matt. 25:31; Rom. 14:9-10; Acts 1:11]

Final Resurrection

We believe in the bodily resurrection of the just to eternal blessedness according to the pattern of Christ's own glorious body and the bodily resurrection of the unjust to eternal punishment. [John 5:28-29, Acts 17:31; Acts 24:15; II Cor. 5:10; Rom. 2:5-6,16]

Grace Christian Academy does not promote or endorse any particular denomination. Our statement of faith is based on fundamental Christian beliefs that we support as primary doctrine. Other doctrinal issues upon which this organization has no official stance will be considered secondary doctrine, and there shall be no attempt made by Grace Christian Academy to promote or disparage individual beliefs or positions concerning these issues. We desire to remain united in the life of Christ, avoiding any dissension, which may be caused by denominational distinctives.

III. GENERAL POLICIES

Attendance

Student absences from school for all or part of a day fall into two categories: excused and unexcused. Generally, most unavoidable absences will be excused. An unavoidable absence is one due to a personal illness, a serious illness in the family, a death in the family, a school sponsored trip, a medical appointment, a court appearance, or a pre-planned and pre-approved family trip. Absences for any other reason are considered avoidable and thus unexcused.

The parent must email attendance@gcalions.com (for Pre-K through 8th grade) or HSattendance@gcalions.com (for 9th - 12th grades) or call 615-591-3017 by 9:00 am to notify the school that their student(s) will be absent. If the school is not notified by 9:00 am, a phone call will be made to the parent using the phone number provided in RenWeb.

- The total year-to-date absences plus the planned absences are not to exceed five per semester (5), unless given permission by the Principal.

Too many absences will require a parent conference. Five absences are the maximum allowable for handwritten excuse notes. After five absences are reached during the school year, each additional absence requires a medical excuse note. If a student exceeds five (5) absences, a parent conference is required to discuss strategies to eliminate further problems. Exceptions may be granted by the Principal when documentation is provided for prolonged or chronic illnesses or extenuating circumstances.

All in school suspensions, out-of-school suspensions, and truanancies are unexcused absences. Whether an absence is excused or unexcused, the student is expected to make up missed work in a timely manner. Work not made up in a timely manner will receive a reduced score or a zero.

Though we understand and appreciate the value of family vacations and mission trips, we strongly recommend that such trips not be taken during the school year. Research indicates that if a student misses seven days a year, his academic work suffers. There is also a negative impact

on the community of learners as well as on the teacher.

Campus Visitors

Any visitor to the campus is to report directly to the school office. All visitors, including parents, must check in through the campus office before entering other parts of the building. Students should not ask students from other schools to join them for lunch. Visitors are required to wear a visitor's badge and they must sign in and out in the office.

Change of Address

When a parent and/or student's address, telephone number, or email changes, it is imperative that the change is reported to the office as soon as possible. Please email the change to information@gcalions.com.

Computer Use Procedures

All GCA students and parents must sign, comply, and submit to Final Forms the Acceptable Use Policy. All Intermediate, Middle School and High School students will receive a notification from Final Forms requiring their signature.

Early Dismissal (For Appointments, etc.)

Early dismissal should be kept to a minimum as it disrupts learning at every level. At the early dismissal time, the parent goes to the office to sign the student out. The office will then notify the teacher that the student is being checked out. If the student returns before the school day is over, the parent must return to the office with the student to sign the student back in.

Student drivers must bring a signed parent note or the office must receive an email from the parents. Once that is completed, students may sign themselves out.

Students should turn in assignments for classes that will be missed before leaving campus. Whenever possible, any missed tests or quizzes should be rescheduled before leaving campus for Wednesdays from 3:15-4:00 pm. Failure to do this may result in zeros for missed work. Early dismissals will not be allowed on EXAM (mid-term or finals) days; please schedule any medical or special appointments for another day.

Except for emergencies, students will not be dismissed to leave during the middle of class. Dismissals will be scheduled between classes. The adult who is picking the student up must come to the school office to sign the student out. **Repeated failure to follow the established procedure will result in a denial of the early dismissal request.**

Emergency Procedures

Periodically, fire, lockdown and tornado drills will be conducted. Teachers and students are instructed as to proper procedures. Your child's safety is of utmost importance. Security measures are in place to protect your child.

Essential Oils

The use of essential oils is a personal choice that is respected by the administration, however that personal choice cannot be broadly applied to every student at school through a diffuser or by any other means. Please know that this matter has been discussed thoroughly, and the best decision that is courteous and respectful to all has been made.

Please observe the following guidelines:

- Essential oils may not be brought to or carried at school by any students.

- Essential oils may not be diffused in any classroom.
- Please be clear that we are not against the use of essential oils. Our position is a neutral one working for the respect and protection of all students.

Immunizations

The State Department of Health requires that the green Tennessee Certificate of Immunization (available in doctors' offices) be on file for each student. A revised form needs to be submitted to the school office each time your child's shots are updated. Students will not be permitted to attend classes until the certificate of immunization, or an exemption letter, is on file.

Inclement Weather

Grace Christian Academy will make its own policies regarding inclement weather. In the event of inclement weather (snow or ice) and/or dangerous traveling conditions, GCA will make announcements as to school closing through local television's Channel 4 Snowbird Reports, Facebook, email, and text alert (using cell number in RenWeb). Parents are advised to listen to broadcasts early in the morning and to listen during the school day.

Head Lice Policy

Head Lice (*Pediculus humanus capitis*) is a parasitic insect that can be found on the head, eyebrows, and eyelashes of people. Head lice are not known to be vectors for illness, and complications are rare, but may involve secondary bacterial skin infection. Head lice are not considered to be a health hazard. However, they are spread easily from person to person and can quickly lead to infestation, which is costly and difficult to eradicate.

To help prevent the spread of head lice the following guidelines will be implemented:

1. Occasional student hair checks for lice at school.
2. If lice or nits are present in a student's hair, the guardian is to be contacted and informed about how to care for head lice.
3. A student found with head lice or nits will immediately be separated from the rest of the students and sent home with their guardian.
4. The student may return to school only after hair has been treated with a pediculicide, and is nit free.
5. Upon return to school the student shall be checked and cleared to return to class by the nurse to assure that all lice and nits were removed.
6. Students with severe or persistent infestation will be referred to their primary care provider for treatment or to social services to assist with treatment.

Confidentiality and sensitivity to you and your child is very important to us as we work together to eliminate this condition.

Lost and Found

All items that get left behind on school property will be turned in to the school Lost and Found. Please label your child's belongings (especially uniform and spirit wear) for easy identification. Unclaimed Lost and Found items will be periodically donated to a local thrift store.

Lunch Ordering

Hot lunch may be ordered in advance for your student. If a student forgets his/her lunch, a sack lunch may be purchased and billed through FACTS or a lunch may be dropped off at the front desk.

Hot lunch - Elementary, Intermediate and Middle School hot lunch is served on Mondays, Thursdays and Fridays. High School hot lunch is served Mondays through Fridays. Please be careful NOT to order lunches on field trip days during the designated lunch ordering period.

Medication Policy

Authorization Forms - Parents must bring their children's medication to school. Students are not allowed to bring their own medication. This includes prescription, non-prescription, and self-administered medications. All medications must be signed in with the school nurse and appropriate forms completed. The first dose of any medication must always be given at home in case of adverse reaction.

Over-the-Counter Medication - May be administered by GCA staff with the following guidelines:

1. The parent or legal guardian must complete the necessary authorization forms.
2. The medication must be in the manufacturer's original container and labeled with the student's name.
3. Over-the-counter medication needed longer than two weeks must have review and approval by the school nurse and may require a physician's order.
4. No medication will be administered past the expiration date.

Prescription Medication - May be administered by GCA staff with the following guidelines:

1. The parent or legal guardian must complete the necessary authorization forms. If the prescription is to be given for less than one week, a physician's signature is not required. If the prescription is to be given for more than one week, a physician's signature is required on the authorization form.
2. The prescription medication must be in the original container, must match the physician's prescription exactly, and must be labeled by the pharmacy.
3. Empty bottles will be given to the student to bring home unless alternate instructions are given.
4. If your child is taking an antibiotic that is prescribed three times per day, doses should be administered before school, after school, and before bed unless otherwise prescribed by the physician.

Self-Carry and Administration of Epi-Pen or Rescue Inhaler - May be administered by student with the following guidelines:

1. The parent or legal guardian and physician must complete the necessary authorization forms.
2. Student must be deemed competent by physician to self-administer, and approved by a school nurse.
3. Medication must be in the original container and labeled with name of student.
4. School staff will permit and assist student as needed, but also reserve the right to withdraw the self-carry privilege if the student shows signs of irresponsible behavior or if there is a safety risk.

End of Year Procedures - It is the responsibility of the parents or legal guardians to pick up any remaining medication belonging to their child. Only empty prescription bottles will be sent home with a student at the end of the school year. If a parent does not pick up remaining medication, medication will be discarded.

IV. ATHLETICS

Mission Statement

The mission of the Grace Christian Academy Athletic Department is to glorify God through the discipleship of student athletes and the pursuit of excellence in athletics with the Bible as the foundation and Jesus Christ as our focus.

Philosophy

Grace Christian Academy Athletics is founded on the teaching and principles of God's Word. Our athletic programs should provide an opportunity for others outside the Grace community to visualize actions and principles that are quite unique in today's society. The GCA athletic program is a wonderful opportunity to minister to the community through exemplary actions, Christ-like attitudes, and a high level of individual and team athletic skill. The challenge for our athletes, parents, and coaches is to adhere to Colossians 3:17. "And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Athletic Handbook

All other information as it pertains to athletics can be found in the Athletics Handbook.

V. FINE ARTS

Mission Statement

The Fine Arts Department of Grace Christian Academy exists to equip students to worship the Lord, and to use their God given talents as a platform to share the Gospel and God's unfailing love in an excellent way.

Philosophy

The Fine Arts Department of Grace Christian Academy desires to deepen and awaken students' understanding of their God-given talents, to expand our audiences, and to enrich and inspire the quality of life within our families, our school, our churches and communities. Our goal is greatness in all we do, so that students will passionately impact cultures in need of Jesus' love and redemption and build on our legacy of excellence with Christ at our center.

Students' involvement in Fine Arts yields great educational benefits in creativity, confidence, problem solving, perseverance, focus, leadership, non-verbal communication, the ability to receive constructive feedback, collaboration, innovation, dedication, accountability and 21st century skills. Studies clearly reveal that involvement in the Arts improves academic performance and more specifically, SAT scoring. Most of all, the Arts moves beyond a grade on your transcript, entertaining school activities, or preparation for future study and career, but becomes a valuable life lesson. Simply put, the Arts build a more solid, well-rounded student who will reach greater academic and life-long lessons and goals.

God's Word is very clear that He cares deeply about the Arts and how they affect people's hearts. The Old and New Testaments are full of verses about the Arts. God's first act was to create and, throughout our own creative endeavors, when God receives the glory, people are filled with

encouragement and a lasting hope. The Arts lift our hearts to a greater understanding of the Lord and His eternal, loving relationship with us!

Our students' work is impressive, but it's actually the process of creativity we value. This process is evident when passion runs alongside excellence in rehearsal and classes are designed to lead your heart as well as train your mind. We want to use music, choir, worship band, the visual arts, media arts, communications and theatre to lead people who don't know Jesus to Him and to lead those who do know Him closer to Him.

Our vision for the Fine Arts is to graduate students who will use their God-given abilities in creative platforms and communicate the love and beauty of their Master Artist. Audience of ONE, to seek to glorify God and serve the audience, not self. To God alone be the glory.

Fine Arts Productions Eligibility

Grace Christian Academy academic standards are high. These standards acknowledge that academic achievement takes precedence over Fine Arts participation. It is a privilege to participate in the Fine Arts programs at GCA. Students on disciplinary or academic probation may not participate in Fine Arts activities until taken off of probation by the administration.

Each student is expected to conduct his/her life in accordance with the standards and principles set forth in God's Word. This includes adhering to all appropriate Grace Christian Academy standards of student conduct. Violations of the Student Honor Code of Conduct will impact participation in Fine Art activities.

Fine Arts Attendance at School

1. Students must be at school for at least half of the day unless it is due to an excused absence. Half of the day at GCA is considered to be **11:30 am**. Students may not participate in a particular practice or performance if they do not attend at least half of the day. However, appointments should be scheduled during after school hours rather than during class time.
2. Students who are absent from part of the school day and are granted a non-illness related excused absence (e.g., a dental appointment) will be allowed to participate in the practice or performance that day.
3. Any unexcused absence from school, regardless if it is only for a partial day, will render them unable to participate in the day's events. This would include in-school suspension or skipping class.

Fine Arts, Sports and After-School Activities

Grace Christian Academy encourages and supports students to participate in as many activities as they can whether that be in-school or out-of-school activity. Coaches, directors and leaders are responsible for making it an enjoyable and successful time for the student. If participating in a sport or after-school activity, this should be relayed by the student to all coaches, directors and leaders. Therefore, all parties will be aware of any conflicts. All conflicts will be resolved by the coach, director or leader and not involve the student. High School is still a time to try different activities and both coaches and directors strongly believe students can be involved in many areas.

Fine Arts Productions Agreement and Conflict Form

For all productions, a Production Agreement and Conflict Form must be filled out and signed by a parent and student to participate. All forms must be given to the director before or at your audition. We understand that some conflict may arise but you must notify your director as soon as possible. If a student misses a rehearsal and does not contact the director for approval, he/

she understands that his/her lack of consideration is enough for him/her to be dismissed from the production.

Fine Arts Participation Fees

Participation fees are essential to help fund the cost of Fine Arts productions: licensing fees for scripts and music, costumes, technical gear and equipment, sets and props and promotional materials.

Production Teams

At Grace Christian Academy we provide a Production Team. It's not just one person overseeing a whole production. It takes a team! The Production Team includes: director, assistant director, choreographer, vocal director, stage manager, and technical director. The Production Team is the "living curriculum" for the cast and crew members. The Production Team are both teachers and active participants. They have the responsibility to model Christ-like behavior and attitudes at all times.

In order to be an effective teacher and role model, Grace Christian Academy Production Team must also be thoroughly knowledgeable in Fine Arts productions, capable of detailed preparation, able to motivate the cast and crew, able to make adjustments during productions, and work effectively under the authority of the Fine Arts Director and School Administration. The Production Team takes seriously the opportunity they have to mold young lives for Christ.

Fine Arts Parent Support

Parents of student cast and crew have a responsibility to both their child and to the production. Without strong parental support, the student will not be able to achieve his/her greatest potential, and the production may suffer. For each production we would like 100% parent volunteer if their child is involved. It is also important that parents provide positive reinforcement and understand their role as being part of the production. Parents, as well as student cast and crew, should be supportive and encourage instructors, cast and crew members at all times.

Parents are not production directors, and learning to trust the directors is a key step to learning the value of the life lessons Fine Arts productions provide. In order for GCA's Fine Arts program to be successful, production directors, student cast/crew, and parents must make a firm commitment to glorify God at all times.

All parents of student cast and crew are required to attend a pre-production meeting with the Production Team. Parents will be informed of all requirements, schedules, expectations, and participation fees involved. An additional meeting may be requested before the show, if needed.

Fine Arts Cast and Crew

Grace Christian Academy student cast and crew should be diligent in preparation, give 100% at all times, demonstrate personal discipline, be respectful in all situations, maintain self-control, show humility, and pursue excellence. The ultimate and final responsibility rests upon the shoulders of the student cast and crew, for it is they who are accountable to their parents, instructors, and the Lord.

Fine Arts Transportation

All cast and crew members are expected to provide their own transportation to and from practices and rehearsals. Students may be released to their parents after practice and rehearsals with verbal consent by the production director. At no time should students ride with a student

driver without written consent from their parent. An email will go out at the beginning of the rehearsal process asking permission for students to ride with student drivers and permission to drive other students. A member from the Production Team is responsible to stay with students until all students have been picked up or talked to the parent.

Fine Arts Production Offerings

The Fine Arts Productions currently being offered at Grace Christian Academy are:

Elementary Christmas Production
Elementary Spring Concert
1st-8th Grade Talent Show
Middle School Musical
Middle School Fine Arts After School Clubs
8th Grade Choir
High School Musical
High School Open Mic Night
High School Christmas Dinner Theatre and Choral Event
ACSI Choral Competition
ACSI Art Festival

**Additional events may be added to this list.

VI. MISCELLANEOUS

Student Conduct

Once a student decides to attend Grace Christian Academy, certain responsibilities accompany that choice. Attending Grace Christian Academy means that wherever a student goes, the name of Grace Christian Academy goes with him/her. Each student's actions will be judged as an extension of the reputation of Grace Christian Academy. That responsibility must be taken seriously, especially since our name does include the name of Christ. It should be that members of the Grace Christian Academy community would always desire to conduct themselves in a way that brings honor to the name of Christ. All individuals are responsible to conduct themselves in a way that does not dishonor what Grace Christian Academy desires to represent. Bearing a name with honor is a vital responsibility and must be considered at all times. Hence, Grace Christian Academy must care what all its community members do both on and off campus since an honorable reputation is to be highly valued. *"A good name is to be more desired than great riches." Proverbs 22:1a*

Vacation/Summer/Outside of Instructional School Hours

All students are expected to live above reproach and to maintain a strong Christian testimony while out of school, on vacation, or on summer breaks. Any behavior occurring during these times that would normally be considered a major infraction of Grace Christian Academy policy may result in a disciplinary disposition or jeopardize a person's status as a student.

Grievance Policy

These guidelines are to be followed whenever there is a dispute or grievance between any two parties connected in a direct way to the school concerning any aspect of GCA's operations. This includes students, parents, administrative personnel, teaching faculty, and support staff, volunteers, and board. A dispute is any disagreement that results in broken fellowship or trust between the parties, or that disrupts the lines of authority in the school, or which (in the judgment of either disputant) threatens the successful implementation of GCA's objectives and

goals. A grievance is any concern about a decision made by one in authority where the concern is large enough to appeal the decision to the next authority level.

In general, it is understood that if any dispute arises which is not covered by this policy, the board decides what procedure to follow. It is also understood that, especially during the attempted resolution of concerns, the principles of Matthew 18 and James 3 are to be followed.

Students/Parents to Teachers/Administrators:

1. All concerns about the classroom are presented first to the teacher by the parents or, if the student is mature enough, by the student himself. A respectful demeanor is required by all.
2. If the problem is not resolved, the parents or student may bring the concern to the principal or direct supervisor.
3. If there is still no resolution, they should request a hearing from the board.

Parents/Patrons to Head of School:

1. If parents or patrons have a grievance or dispute about the general operation of the school (apart from the operation of the classroom), they are to bring their concerns to the Head of School.
2. If there is still no resolution, they are to request a hearing from the board.
3. This procedure applies to board members who are acting in their capacity as parents/patrons and not as representatives of the board.

Volunteers to Faculty/Staff/Administrative Personnel:

1. If any volunteer has a concern about the volunteer work, he/she presents that concern to the faculty member responsible for his oversight (teacher, development director, etc.).
2. If the problem is not resolved, then the volunteer presents the concern to the principal or direct supervisor in writing to request a meeting.
3. If the problem is still not resolved, the volunteer may request a hearing from the board in writing. The request is passed to the board through the Head of School.

Non-Discrimination Statement

Grace Christian Academy admits and enrolls students of any race, color, sex, ethnic origin and nationality. It does not discriminate regarding student rights, privileges, and programs, or in the process of administering its educational policies, admissions policies or scholarship opportunities, on the basis of race, color, sex, ethnic origin and nationality.

Legal Disclosures

In accordance with Tennessee state law and GCA school policy, school staff is required to report any reasonable suspicion of physical or sexual abuse or child neglect. The school will not contact

parents or legal guardians in advance of making a report to authorities. GCA teachers and staff will make such reports in the best interest of the affected child and do not, if reasonable suspicion is established, have any legal alternative other than to make the report to the appropriate authorities for investigation and adjudication.

Marketing of Products and Services

We encourage sharing with other families, businesses and companies that we work for so that we can support one another as much as possible. As a school, we provide opportunities to advertise (through school sponsored fundraisers), and of course, the sharing of that information occurs naturally through relationships. **However, out of respect to one another, we do ask that business owners refrain from using school time or school contacts (including through RenWeb) as an opportunity to market their products or services.**

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL (Pre-K – Grade 4)

I. PRINCIPAL’S WELCOME

Dear Parents,

At Grace Christian Academy we treasure each child as a gift from the Lord, specially made in His image. We strive to treat students with dignity, love, and respect. We recognize and value the fact that each student is uniquely made and has unique needs, thoughts, and abilities. We encourage each one to grow in their own distinctive gifts, talents, and personalities. At the same time, we know that there are common values, standards of behavior, and character qualities that every student needs to understand and embrace as their own. All of our policies and disciplinary actions are based on these ideals.

In addition to providing academic excellence, we strive to partner with our parents to help each student grow in their own self-discipline and moral character as laid out in Scripture. Please know that it is our desire to have an open and reciprocal relationship with you as we work together to achieve the best for each student.

All students will struggle with character issues like honesty, responsibility, or how they treat others. We are not surprised or disappointed when these things happen. Instead we view it as an opportunity that God has provided to train and shape their habits and thinking alongside you. If and when you get that call from a teacher or principal, please remember that we are all in this together and God is at work in all of our hearts.

I am grateful that God has joined our lives together for this school year. Know that I am here to serve your family and our teachers to the best of my ability. I am available to speak with you about any concerns or questions you may have.

In Christ’s Service,

Rona Branson
Elementary Principal

II. GENERAL SCHOOL POLICIES

Communications

Teachers will either send home or email a weekly informative newsletter about what is going on in your student's class.

Pocket folders are sent home on a regular basis with school work and other important information. Documents for parents to sign are often included in these folders. Teachers may also include information relative to classroom news, activities, homework, or schedules.

Please make it a habit to read your class newsletters and check the pocket folder as soon as it is sent home.

Also, check the GCA school website at www.gcalions.com for school-wide announcements regarding current activities, calendars, sports, and updated information.

A school-wide newsletter, *The Mane Events*, includes current events, information, and news and will be emailed out weekly.

Conferences

Conference days will be scheduled during the fall of each school year and specific dates can be found on the school calendar. Teachers hold conferences with parents on this day, and students do not attend classes.

Parental concerns should always be addressed directly with the teacher first. Open communication is key to partnering together in educating our students. If you have a concern or question, please email, call, or request a conference right away so that issues can be resolved as they arise.

Parents may request and schedule a conference with a teacher at any time during the school year by emailing the teacher and letting them know ahead of time what you need to conference about so they can be prepared.

Teachers can also contact parents for additional conferences if needed.

Please support and respect our teachers' time by not "dropping by" unexpectedly in the morning or afternoon to discuss questions or concerns. Please understand that:

- in the mornings, their focus is to greet their students and set the tone for the day.
- in the afternoons, teachers need to give their full attention to dismissal.

Attendance Policy

Please contact the school office by 9:00 am the day of an absence by calling 615-591-3017 or emailing attendance@gcalions.com.

Research indicates that if a student misses **seven** days a year, his/her academic work suffers. There is also an impact on the community of learners as well as the teacher. Student absences from school for all or part of a day fall into two categories, excused and unexcused. Generally, most unavoidable absences will be excused. An unavoidable absence is

one due to a personal illness, a serious illness in the family, a death in the family, a school sponsored trip, a medical appointment, a court appearance, or a pre-approved family trip.

Absences for any other reason are considered avoidable. An avoidable absence can be either excused or unexcused. An avoidable absence will be excused when it meets all of the following criteria:

- An Approved Absence Form (found on the website) is received in the school office **at least one** full school day prior to the absence. GCA asks that parents submit the form as soon as the absence is planned.
- At the time the form is received, the student has **six or fewer** absences (avoidable or unavoidable).
- The absence is not during standardized testing.
- The total year-to-date absences, plus the planned absences, do not exceed **ten** when requesting a trip absence.

An avoidable absence that **does not meet all** of the above criteria will be unexcused. Whether an absence is excused or unexcused, the student is expected to make up missed work in a timely manner. **Though we understand and appreciate the value of family vacations and mission trips, we ask that such trips not be taken during the school year if at all possible.** We have scheduled our breaks strategically to make this possible for families.

Excessive Absences

Ten absences are the maximum allowable for handwritten excuse notes. After ten absences, each time your child is absent will require a medical excuse note. If a student exceeds ten absences, a parent conference may be required to discuss strategies to eliminate further absences. Exceptions may be granted by the Principal when documentation is provided for prolonged or chronic illnesses or other extenuating circumstances.

Early Dismissal Policy

Procedure for early dismissal (for appointments, etc.):

1. Parent send note or an email to attendance@gcalions.com stating the reason for early dismissal and the date and time the student is to be dismissed. If possible, this note is to be sent to the teacher at least 24 hours prior to the appointment.
2. At the early dismissal time, the parent goes to the office to sign the student out. Students are then called to come to the office.

Procedure regarding dismissal of sick student:

1. Parent or emergency contact is contacted by the school nurse.
2. Parent or emergency contact signs the student out in the office.

Procedure regarding tardiness:

1. **Students should be seated in the classroom and ready to begin work before 8:00 am.**
2. Students who are tardy must report to the office with a parent to be signed in with a reason being given for the tardy itself. If a tardy is excusable due to dental/doctor appointments or illness, please either bring a handwritten note signed by a parent or send an email to the attendance clerk at attendance@gcalions.com.

Before and After School Care

The school cannot assume responsibility for students who arrive prior to 7:30 am or later than 3:00 pm. Parents' cooperation is necessary in this matter for the safety of the students and for the care of the school facilities. Students who arrive between 7:30 and 7:45 am are to report to the cafeteria for supervision. They are released to go to their classrooms at 7:45 am.

Your elementary child will be admitted into After School Care if you do not pick them up by 3:05 pm. The fee is \$5.00 per day, per student and you will be invoiced on a monthly basis. After School Care is available until 5:30 p.m. If you arrive after 5:30, you will be charged \$1.00 per child, per minute, for every minute you are late. Please help us to be respectful of our After Care Director.

Telephone

1. Students will not be called to the telephone at school except in case of an emergency.
2. Parents are requested not to call in a message for a student unless it is urgent.
3. If students have a personal phone, it is to be turned off and put away during school.

III. COMMUNITY EXPECTATIONS

Stewardship of Property

God has provided our school property, facilities, and equipment. Students should consider our school a blessing from Him and should do all in their power to keep the buildings in good order and attractive. Any student known to deface or destroy school property will be assessed the full cost of repair or replacement and will be subject to disciplinary action. Students will be asked to clean and restore the classrooms as needed. We consider our students stewards of our property as well as the faculty and staff.

Conduct Policies

Since our school bears the name of Christ, a high standard of conduct is expected of faculty and students alike. Our conduct should be consistent with the tenets of our faith, and since we profess to love God above all and our neighbor as ourselves, that should be reflected in all of our actions, as well as in our attitudes toward each other.

Students in the Elementary program will receive conduct grades each quarter assessing their efforts at self-control, responsibility, relationship with others, and work habits. Conduct grades will be marked as E - Excellent, G - Good, S - Satisfactory, N - Needs Improvement, so that as parents you can be informed of how they are growing in these areas.

Anti-Bullying Policy

“Bullying” occurs in many forms: verbal, physical, or psychological. Any action which makes a child feel uncomfortable, insecure, or threatened, may be defined as bullying. GCA disapproves of bullying in all its forms and considers it a serious offense. Students are informed that bullying is completely unacceptable and instructed that they must inform the teacher if it happens to them or if they observe it happening to someone else. All members of the school staff are required to report incidents of suspected bullying to the teacher and principal. **If your student reports bullying to you, please contact the Elementary Principal.**

Consequences for Bullying

The following steps may be taken when dealing with incidents of bullying:

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the teacher.
- A clear account of the incident will be recorded by both the teacher and the Principal.
- Parents will be informed.
- Appropriate consequences will be given to those involved by the teacher or Principal.

Technology

Cell phones and other mobile electronic devices, including iPods and iPads, may not be used for any reason during the school day from 7:45 AM-2:45 PM. During these times phones should be put away, out of sight (in backpacks, not on person), and turned off. Electronic devices may on rare occasions be used in the classroom for legitimate educational purposes but only with specific permission and teacher supervision.

Students are not permitted to receive or respond to any message (including parent messages) during class hours. Students are to use school phones located at the front desk to communicate with their parents. No headphones or earbuds should be used during the school day.

Computer Use Policies and Technology

The school's computers provide opportunities to explore and use a varied and exciting set of resources including computer programs, CDs, and the Internet. The use of the computers must be in support of education and research and must be consistent with academic expectations of GCA. The policy is simple and broad:

- 1) Do not cause damage to the computer or change any settings on the computer.
- 2) Use the computer for school-related work only.
- 3) Do not seek to access any areas that would embarrass the school or dishonor the Lord.

Network storage areas will be treated like school lockers or cubbies. Network, and/or school administrators and teachers may review files, bookmarks and communications under the same standards set for school lockers/cubbies to insure the integrity of the electronic media. Privacy is not guaranteed for files stored on school servers. Files will not be maintained indefinitely. The use of the electronic networks and Internet is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use will result in cancellations of privileges and possible disciplinary action. Access entails responsibility. School administrators will deem what is inappropriate use, and their decision is final.

Items Not Permitted on School Property

Items that should never be brought to school include cigarettes and other tobacco products, alcoholic beverages, narcotics, knives, guns (including AirSoft, BB, Nerf and Paintball), matches, explosives of any kind, skateboards, radios, magazines, CDs/DVDs not related to class work, toys and other non-school related items.

No books or magazines should be brought to school unless directly related to a specific course of study, and permission has been granted. Lunch boxes, book covers, book bags and backpacks, and other school items should always display good taste and have designs appropriate for a Christian school and in accordance with stated guidelines for these items.

Discipline

The ultimate goal in any attempt to discipline and train a student is to empower the student to be self-disciplined -- centered in a personal commitment to Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord of one's entire life. Of course, not all students have reached this level of discipline in their own lives and sometimes need reminders to guide them. Positive reinforcement is used as an encouragement for following instructions, good conduct, and kindness to others. Disciplinary action can include many factors: a search for understanding what happened, seeking the reason for misbehavior, remedial actions to remove the cause for misbehavior, repentance on the part of the student, and often a consequence.

Consequences are not meant to be punitive but neither are they meant to be enjoyable. They should 'fit the offense' if at all possible. Our desire is to work in partnership with parents and in fact, we are in need of parental support. A discipline notification will be sent home or emailed when any action is taken. The first step in the handling of a discipline problem is between the student and the teacher. It is hoped that any discipline problem will be resolved at this level. The next step is to involve the parents in the discussion and problem solving for the student. If it becomes necessary, the Principal will become involved.

Suspension and Expulsion

Students may be suspended or expelled from GCA by the Principal for activities that warrant such a consequence. This will be a last resort after other attempts have failed.

Dress Code

Current information regarding our dress code guidelines may be obtained in the Uniform Guidelines found on our website. **Label all garments and belongings.**

For PE in Elementary, students are not required to change clothes. We do ask that parents be aware of the days that your students have PE scheduled and send them in appropriate footwear. Tennis shoes are best. Please make sure that their shoes can either tie or be tightened with Velcro and have sufficient support for ankles.

For PE in Intermediate, students will have PE shorts and shirts that can be purchased at the Spirit Store and must be worn for PE.

IV. STUDENT ACTIVITIES AND SERVICES

Grading Procedures

The school year at GCA consists of two semesters made up of four nine week quarters. Grades are issued by report cards at the end of each grading period.

The following scale will be carried out for graded subjects from 2nd through 4th grades for core academic courses:

- A 90-100
- B 80-89
- C 70-79
- D 65-69
- F 64 and below

Progress in the elective subjects in the Elementary School will be marked:

E- Excellent
G- Good
S- Satisfactory
N- Needs Improvement.

Pre-K through 1st grade report cards are skills based. The skills taught and assessed are ranked 1-4 with 4 representing mastery.

Homework and Make-Up Work

Homework assignments are meant to reinforce skills taught, and are never given as busy work. Generally, elementary students are assigned limited homework on Wednesdays and weekends so that families may attend church worship services. Nightly reading is expected at all grade levels in addition to assigned homework. Written assignments should be completed neatly and returned on time. If your student is spending more than an hour in the evening (not including independent reading), please alert the teacher.

Make-Up/Missed Work

If a student misses one day of school due to illness, he/she can catch up upon his/her return to school. He/she is responsible for his/her make-up work. If a student misses two or more days due to illness, a parent or other designated person, with advance notice, may come to pick up his/her assignments after 2:45 PM on the second day of absence.

Devotions and Chapel

All students begin each school day with devotions in their classrooms. This may include the reading of Scripture, prayer, and the singing of a hymn or contemporary Christian song. Once a week, students in grades K through 4th worship together in a chapel service. Parents are invited to attend the weekly services. Students are encouraged to make these worship times meaningful and relevant spiritual experiences. "So that with one heart and mouth you may glorify God." (Romans 15:6) Chapel will be held at 1:45 pm on Tuesdays in the church sanctuary. Each elementary class takes a turn leading chapel each week.

Allergy Policy

Due to the high number of various nut allergies within our student body, some of which are anaphylactic and carry a risk of death with exposure, we have adopted the following procedures:

- **We ask all families to voluntarily choose to not send nuts or nut butters to school**
 - All of our classrooms are nut free zones. The ONLY acceptable snacks to send for your student to eat in class are:
 - deli meat and cheese
 - boiled eggs
 - yogurt
 - fresh fruit/veggies
 - regular Goldfish
 - Cheese Nips
 - Triscuits
 - Wheat Thins
 - Pirates Booty
 - Skinny Pop popcorn

- Goldfish pretzels
- In the lunchroom, families may choose for their student with allergies to either sit at a “nut free table” or to sit at a regular table with a placemat which helps remind him/her, his/her friends and the adults overseeing, to eliminate any nuts or nut-butters at his/her table.
- Parents of students with allergies must communicate with the nurse(s) and provide an Individual Health Plan and Allergy Action Plan concerning the student’s particular food allergy and acceptable/needed treatments. Parents will supply the needed remedies/ treatments such as Benadryl or Epi-pen(s), which will travel with the student to every location.
- All hot lunches are nut free
- All staff and substitutes are educated regarding allergies and trained on proper administration of an Epi-pen in case of an emergency.
- All treats for students must be from the “Acceptable Treats” list and be approved by the front desk before being handed out to students.
- Specific guidelines for all faculty, staff, parents, and students are available, if desired.

Healthy Celebrations/Birthday Party Guidelines

One of the annual milestones of a child is celebrating his or her birthday. Some teachers honor children in the classroom on their special day in a variety of ways and will communicate this to parents. In consideration of the growing health and allergy concerns of our students, we must be extremely mindful of food items brought into the school building and classrooms. Our goal is to help reduce the amount of sugar intake while at school, safely manage student allergies, and protect instructional time. Parents may bring or send a special treat item for a student’s birthdays from our **Acceptable Treats** list to share at the end of lunchtime, but must first check in with the front desk.

Acceptable Treats List:

- Blue Bell chocolate and vanilla ice cream cups
- Skittles
- Tootsie Roll Pops
- Starburst
- Oreos
- Sour Patch Kids
- Organic Swirl Stix (popsicles available at Costco)

Non-Food Treat Suggestions

- Donate a book to the classroom
- Read a book to the class
- Donate a ball, jump rope, etc. for classroom recess
- Make cards for men and women in the military, firefighters, policemen, elderly in the nursing/rest homes, etc.
- Donate a plant for the class or school.
- Other “Give Back” type of activities.

Parents are asked to ALWAYS check with teachers to make sure there are no planned parties on the day of the child’s birthday celebration when additional high

sugar items may be consumed. The teacher may limit the number of treats during a week or month in order to encourage alternatives to sweets.

When sending party invitations to school, we ask that you **invite everyone in the class or all boys/all girls**, or send invitations by mail or email to the child's parents if you wish to invite students to a party outside of school. Home and/or email addresses may be found in the Renweb directory. Realize that we are a small school and hearts are tender about these things at these ages, please be considerate of the student's feelings as you plan events and activities.

INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL (Grades 5 & 6) AND MIDDLE SCHOOL (Grades 7 & 8)

I. PRINCIPAL'S WELCOME

Dear Parents,

At Grace Christian Academy's Intermediate and Middle Schools we are excited to partner with you to disciple, educate, and love your child!

We believe these years are a training ground between Elementary and High School and our desire is to offer intentional and loving support to each student while they navigate these "middle" years. We want our students to be challenged academically and learn valuable study skills. We want to foster organization and time management during this season. We also want to mentor our students in their relationships with their peers for healthy connection. But more than any of these things, we want them to know Jesus in a personal relationship and as a result, know who they are in Him.

C.S.Lewis said, "To be loved but not known is comforting but superficial. To be known and not loved is our greatest fear. But to be fully known and truly loved is, well, a lot like being loved by God. It is what we need more than anything. It liberates us from pretense, humbles us out of our self-righteousness, and fortifies us for any difficulty life can throw at us." By God's grace, we want to "fully know and fully love" your child at GCA.

I am excited to serve your student and family and look forward to all God has for us at Grace Christian Academy.

Thank you for entrusting us with your child!

By His Grace,

Suzanne Bechman

II. **ACADEMIC POLICIES**

The purpose of GCA academics is for students to develop a biblical worldview, college preparedness, for the life skills outside school, and the tools and desire to be lifelong learners.

Grading Scale & Report Cards

The school year at GCA consists of two semesters made up of two nine week quarters each. Report cards will be issued four times a year via email at the conclusion of each grading period.

The grading scale is: A 100-90, B 89-80, C 79-70, D 69-65, F 64 and below.

Homework Policy and Philosophy of Studying

The primary purpose for homework is to develop responsibility and accountability. It is assumed that homework will be a regular part of school life, with increasing time and application required as a student progresses through each grade. In general, homework is for skill practice, enrichment of more in-depth attention to a given unit of study. Some assignments are given days or weeks in advance and students may choose to use weekend time to work on them. Whether or not a student spends less or more time depends on the organization, use of time, homework environment and other factors. For good communication and to avoid late homework, we ask that you review your child's daily assignments in the planner provided.

If at any time there is a question or concern regarding an assignment, please refer to Renweb or email your child's teacher.

Honors Program

Students in grades 7 – 8 will be given individualized schedules based on academic skills grouping in the areas of math, language arts, and science. Placement will be determined using each of the following criteria: ERB Scores, Assessment Average, and Teacher Recommendation. For students new to GCA, information obtained during the admission process will be used for placement.

Honor Roll and Academic Recognition

It is important to recognize students who have achieved outstanding academic success; GCA's A Honor Roll is one of the ways we strive to reward these achievements and at the same time encourage all students to work to their full potential. A Honor Roll students are students who receive all A's in a nine week grading period. These students will be recognized in the quarterly edition of Celebrating Grace.

Late Work

GCA's school-wide policy for late work is an immediate zero in RenWeb as a place marker. The zero is an alert to parents. A student will have one day for each day he/she is absent to make up any assignments provided the absence is excused.

Make-Up Work Policy

- It is the student's responsibility, not the teacher's or parent's, to initiate the make-up work plan. All missed assignments can be found on RenWeb. It is the student and parent's responsibility to check RenWeb for assignments.
- If a student receives an unexcused absence, the student is expected to submit all work

the following day.

Parent-Teacher Conference

Conference days will be scheduled during the fall of each school year. Parents may request and schedule a conference with a teacher any time during the school year by contacting the teacher directly. Unscheduled "drop-in" conferences are not permitted, as they interfere with teaching. Teachers may also contact parents for additional conferences if needed.

Plagiarism

Definition: In an instructional setting, plagiarism occurs when a writer deliberately uses someone else's language, ideas, or other original (not common-knowledge) material without acknowledging its source.

This definition applies to texts published in print or online, to manuscripts, and to the work of other student writers.

Examples:

1. Submitting someone else's text as one's own or attempting to blur the line between one's own ideas or words and those borrowed from another source.
2. Carelessly or inadequately citing ideas and words borrowed from another source.

Rationales

Biblical: Thou shalt not steal.

Consequences

1. Plagiarized work will receive a zero.
2. Students who plagiarize will meet with their teacher and the Principal.

Standardized Testing

In October of each school year, GCA will administer the ERB as the school's standardized achievement test. Results of the assessment will be sent home within a few weeks of testing.

III. INTERMEDIATE AND MIDDLE SCHOOL HONOR CODE

The Grace Christian Academy Middle School community is guided by two documents: The GCA Intermediate and MS Honor Code and GCA Intermediate and MS Student Handbook. Each of these serves a purpose in helping uphold the ideals and Biblical values to which we are committed. These values and documents guide our students as they learn to become citizens of our community and the larger world.

Our Intermediate and Middle School Honor Code promotes trust in our community, helps develop core values, and prepares our students to honor the Lord Jesus Christ in their daily walk.

The Intermediate and Middle School Honor Creed/Prayer reads as follows:

Lord, Help me today

- To be a person of **INTEGRITY** by doing the right thing that honors God

- To show **COMPASSION** and **RESPECT** to my fellow students and the world around me
- To **PERSEVERE** when my circumstances are difficult
- To be **RESPONSIBLE** for my actions and words
- To be **COURAGEOUS** to boldly live according to my faith

Integrity - Doing the right thing that honors God even when no one sees

Compassion - Showing care and concern to all you encounter daily with a desire to make their lives better

Respect - Acting in a way which shows you are aware of the God given value of another person

Perseverance - Finishing what you have started, regardless of the obstacles that stand in the way

Responsibility - Accepting rewards and consequences for your actions and word, without blaming others

Courage - Standing up for your beliefs and what is right, regardless of personal cost

IV. **STUDENT DISCIPLINE**

Philosophy

Our intent in all disciplinary action is to disciple, train and restore students. Intermediate and Middle school is an important age in which students need a safe place to fail. We see student's failures and mistakes as opportunities for discipleship. We want to seize the opportunities that He places in our path to bring learning and restoration. We want to approach these years with hope. Not hope in our teenagers or ourselves, but hope in God who can do more than we could ever ask or imagine. We approach these years with sense of purpose and calling to guide them to God's truth in every area of their life.

We believe it is God-ordained that parents bear the primary responsibility for teaching their children right behavior and attitude. Grace Christian Academy provides an atmosphere of order that is essential in allowing a student to lead a Spirit-controlled, Christ-like life. It is the responsibility of the teacher to define behavioral boundaries consistent with biblical principles and developmental capability. Teachers will establish classroom procedures and discuss school-wide rules with students at the beginning of the school year.

Code of Conduct: 24/7/365

Students are expected to represent Grace Christian Academy and more importantly the Lord Jesus Christ in a positive manner even when they are not on school grounds or attending school functions. Student and their parents acknowledge and understand that students are subject to discipline for conduct occurring off-campus or during non-school hours, including weekends, holidays, and summers. The administration will deal directly with any student who violates the Code of Conduct or draws attention to GCA, and ultimately our Lord and Savior, in a negative manner.

Infractions

Minor Infractions - The following is a non-comprehensive list of minor infractions:

1. Eating/drinking (non-water), and/or chewing gum while on school grounds, outside of the cafeteria, is not allowed for students in grades 5-8.
2. Failure to comply with GCA dress code or be in proper GCA uniform. *See Expectations on page 34.*
3. Failure to obey rules given by teachers.
4. Failure to follow the instructions of school adults, including janitors, lunchroom workers, front desk personnel, etc.
5. Carpool - *See Expectations on page 34.*
6. Failure to obey lunchroom rules. - *See Expectations on page 34.*
7. Use of whiteboards, marker boards, iPads, or other school equipment without teacher's permission.
8. If Intermediate or Middle School students bring cellphones to school, they must be kept off (not on silent or vibrate modes) and put away during the school day. (7:50-3:10)
9. Failure to act in a quiet and orderly fashion while in hallways, restrooms, and during carpool.
10. Skipping class or being in areas during class that are not appropriate
11. Being unsupervised in the gymnasium between the hours of 7:30 am and 3:30 pm.
12. Failure to obey outside break rules or instructions of your supervisor
13. Failure to refrain from behavior that inhibits learning in classroom situations.
14. Social Media abuse/misconduct- *See Expectations on page 34.*
15. Playing near or around or in the creek and pond

Major Infractions - Immediate Wednesday detention or disciplinary action

1. Use of Abusive or Profane Language and Disrespect/Insubordination: Using abusive or profane language, and showing disrespect or insolence to teachers and classmates, will not be tolerated.
2. Disruptive Behavior: Repeated classroom disruptions that prohibit learning in all classroom situations will not be tolerated and will result in disciplinary action
3. Bullying: repeated use of ridicule, threats, intimidation, or causing bodily harm to any person will result in disciplinary action. *See also: What is Bullying? Below*
4. Cheating/Dishonesty: Students are responsible for preventing the giving or receiving of assistance (written, oral, or otherwise) on tests, examinations, final evaluation or class assignments that are to be graded as the work of a single individual. This also includes lying, plagiarism, or forgery. In addition, students will receive a "o" on the assignment in question, and a possible Wednesday detention, Saturday School, or suspension.
5. Drug/Substance/Tobacco Abuse: The possession, use or distribution of illegal drugs, controlled substances or alcohol and/or misuse of over-the-counter drugs, is prohibited. Students connected to, or associated with, any drug-related persons or events may be required to submit to drug testing and subject to expulsion. Students in the presence of these substances may be disciplined as well. Violation of this rule will be dealt with whether on or off campus. The possession, use, or distribution of tobacco product(s) such as but not limited to electronic cigarettes, cigars, vapes, chewing tobacco etc. is prohibited. Possible Saturday Schools, suspensions, or expulsions. GCA is considered a drug/alcohol/tobacco-free zone and therefore practices a zero tolerance policy as it

relates to the possession, use and/or distribution of illegal drugs or a controlled substance on campus.

6. Abuse of the GCA Acceptable Use Policy: Students are required to agree to and sign an Acceptable Use Agreement to be able to use technology at school.
7. Fighting: Students are responsible for settling confrontations in a peaceful manner and without the use of violence. Fighting or play fighting will not be tolerated on or near school grounds or at any school-sponsored activity. Students are reminded that fighting may result in discipline.
8. Immorality - Students are expected to maintain moral purity as outlined in God's Word. Unacceptable sexual behavior includes, but is not limited to, inappropriate contact and any issue associated with pornography, whether on or off campus.
9. Public Displays of Affection - Students are not allowed to show public display of romantic affection on campus.
10. Stealing - Knowingly taking items that do not belong to you, with the intent to deprive the owner of its use, constitutes stealing. This includes taking items from backpacks and locker areas or lying on tables or items that have been misplaced. If it's not yours, don't take it.
11. Truancy - Missing school or any part of a school day without parent or teacher permission is truancy. Students must obtain permission before leaving a classroom. This includes being where you are not supposed to be on campus when you are not supposed to be there.
12. Vandalism/Treatment of Church and School Property - Destruction or defacing of property belonging to the school, Grace Chapel, or others, including textbooks, will result in disciplinary action as well as assessing compensatory damages.
13. Possession of Weapons - The possession, use, threat of use, distribution or attempted distribution (by sale, gift, or otherwise) of any type of operable or inoperable weapon such as firearms, knives, switchblades, mace, tear gas, bullets, fireworks and other explosives is expressly forbidden. Whether designed as a weapon or not, an object will be considered a weapon if it is used as a weapon. This includes toys and/or replicas of weapons.
14. Repeated violation of minor infractions will be considered a major infraction.

V. **STUDENT EXPECTATIONS**

General Expectations

- Students are expected to be in classrooms and in their seats when the bell rings.
- Students are expected to have the proper classroom materials for each class. Not only is class time missed, it is a disruption to other students learning.
- Students are expected to treat teachers and adult staff members with respect at all times.
- Students should treat one another with respect and compassion.
- Students are expected to use the restroom between classes, at break and lunch.
- Students are not dismissed from class at the sounding of the bell, but when the teacher dismisses them.

- Students are to conduct themselves appropriately in the hallways, restrooms and all other school/church property. Students should be mindful of treating church property and grounds with respect and care.

Dress Code

- Grace Christian Academy Uniform Policy exists for two purposes:
 - To foster a positive educational environment where students and teachers can focus on learning. We understand that when we are dressed more professionally, we perform at a more professional level.
 - To fulfill the GCA mission of being distinctly Christian in attitude and behavior.
- There are two levels of uniform violations:
 - Being in uniform but out of dress code, i.e. shirt consistently untucked - minor infraction
 - Being out of uniform, i.e. skirt length, absence of belt, inappropriate top
 - Both violations will be dealt with within our discipline policy.

Carpool

- Students are to report to carpool line immediately after being dismissed at 3:00 pm
- Students are to line up by grade on the ground floor of the Grace Chapel family room and remain quiet while names are being called out.
- Students are only to go outside when their name is called and are never to cross traffic without supervision.
- *See Carpool Procedures in handbook.*

Lunchroom

- No excessive wandering from table to table
- Respect those around you
- Students are expected to clean up their trash and belongings and leave the cafeteria nice when leaving.

Social Media

- Parents who allow middle school students to participate in social media during the middle school years, must monitor their child's participation vigilantly.
- Students are to conduct themselves in a godly manner while on any social media platform.
- Students will not participate in bullying behavior or engage in inappropriate conversations while on social media.
- Students should never post inappropriate pictures of themselves or others while on social media.

Cell Phone Use/iPods/Electronic Devices

- Students are to have cell phones turned off during the school hours of 7:50-3:00. Phones cannot be placed on airplane mode or silent during school hours.
 - 1st offense - cell phone collected and can be picked up from MS Director of Discipline by student the following day

- 2nd offense - cell phone collected and can be picked up from MS Director of Discipline by a parent the following day, Wednesday detention assigned
- 3rd offense - the student will not be allowed to have the item at school for the remainder of the school year, Saturday School assigned
- Although we highly discourage group chats, students should always converse in an uplifting and positive manner when participating in group chats through texting.
- Students are not to engage in sending or receiving inappropriate images or texts.

VI. DISCIPLINE METHODS

Grades 5th & 6th

Behavior for Intermediate School students will be recorded in the DoJo app. Parents will be notified through this app and teachers will follow up if needed.

Class **Dojo** is an online behavior management system intended to foster positive student behaviors and classroom culture. Students earn '**Dojo Points**' based on their classroom conduct. Teachers use Class **Dojo** to keep parents up to date on student progress and classroom happenings.

Grades 7th & 8th

This process will normally follow the specific steps as described below:

1. The classroom teacher is the first line of authority on addressing behavior requiring discipline. Students will record their infraction on a classroom clipboard. Teachers will address behavior and communicate with the Intermediate/Middle School Director of Discipline on a daily/weekly basis for documenting behavior.
2. If there is still no resolution or the problem persists, parents will be notified of the discipline problem. A school administrator will become involved. A discipline referral will be given to the student and a copy will be sent to the teacher. Wednesday Detention and/or Saturday School may be given at this step.
3. A conference with the parents, administrator, and/or teacher and child will be held to implement a plan of action to resolve the discipline issue.

Wednesday Detention

Detentions may be given when students fail to comply with school regulations and will be administered on Wednesday mornings starting at 7:00 am. Failure to report to a detention on time or disruptive behavior during detention could result in further disciplinary action. If a student misses a detention, he/she will need to serve two. If more than two are missed, a Saturday School will be assigned. Parents will be notified of a student's detention.

Saturday School

Major behavior infractions may be assigned a Saturday School. Saturday School will run from 8:00 to 11:00 am once a month. Students attending Saturday School must:

- Arrive in school uniform by 7:55 am
- Pay \$15 upon arrival

- Bring supplies (pen, pencil, paper, and school work) for a silent study hall. Students who arrive after 7:55 am, fail to be in proper uniform, or fail to bring their \$15, will not be permitted to stay for Saturday School.
- All Saturday School communication will go through the Middle School Director of Discipline.

Restoration Plan

It is always the intention of Grace Christian Academy to lovingly restore students after disciplinary action. "Loving them back onto the team" is the only Christ-like option.

At the beginning of the disciplinary action, GCA staff and administration will:

- Clearly identify the offense.
- Assist the student in verbalizing the offense and why it was inappropriate/harmful.
- Notify the student's teachers/coaches of the disciplinary action, but not the nature of the offense.

At the end of the disciplinary action, GCA staff and administration will:

- Discuss lessons learned from the disciplinary action.
- Assist the student in identifying a plan to ensure improvement.
- Remind the student of their importance in the GCA community.
- Explain any possible ramifications if the behavior persists.
- Engage in a time of prayer with student

Bullying

In an effort to create a safe environment for all of our students and to facilitate a culture at GCA that honors each student, we have a zero tolerance policy on bullying behaviors. Outlined below will be our school's definition and guide to these types of behaviors. If these behaviors are identified in our student body, swift action will be taken in order to eliminate and restore correct godly relationships.

What is Bullying?

What is the definition of bullying?

(from Dan Olweus, creator of the *Olweus Bullying Prevention Program*)

"A person is bullied when he or she is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more other persons, and he or she has difficulty defending himself or herself."

In everyday language, that means....

You are engaging in bullying behavior if you repeatedly and on purpose say or do mean or hurtful things to another person.

Three Key Components of Bullying Behavior

1. Aggressive behavior that involves negative, unwanted actions
2. Involves a pattern of behavior repeated over time
3. Involves an imbalance of power or strength

What are some types of bullying?

Bullying can take on many forms including, but not limited to, the following:

- Verbal bullying including derogatory comments and bad names

- Bullying through social exclusion or isolation
- Physical bullying such as hitting, kicking, shoving, and spitting
- Bullying through lies and false rumors
- Having money or other things taken or damaged
- Being threatened or being forced to do things
- Racial bullying
- Sexual bullying
- Cyber bullying (via cell phone or Internet)
- Hazing

Bullying is **NOT** teasing. Bullying is **peer abuse** that is not to be tolerated under any circumstances. It might be hard to tell the difference between playful teasing and bullying. Teasing usually involves two or more friends who act together in a way that seems fun to all the people involved. Often they tease each other equally, but it never involves physical or emotional abuse.

VII. ATTENDANCE

Student absences from school for all or part of a day fall into two categories: excused and unexcused. Generally, most unavoidable absences will be excused. An unavoidable absence is one due to a personal illness, a serious illness in the family, a death in the family, a school sponsored trip, a medical appointment, a court appearance, or a pre-planned and pre-approved family trip. Absences for any other reason are considered avoidable and thus unexcused.

The parent must email attendance@gcalions.com or call 615-591-3017 by 9:00 am to notify the school that their student(s) will be absent. If the school is not notified by 9:00 am, an email will be sent to the parent using the email address provided in RenWeb.

- The total year-to-date absences plus the planned absences are not to exceed five per semester (5), unless given permission by the Principal.

Too many absences will require a parent conference. Five absences are the maximum allowable for handwritten excuse notes. After five absences are reached during the school year, each additional absence requires a medical excuse note. If a student exceeds five (5) absences, a parent conference is required to discuss strategies to eliminate further problems. Exceptions may be granted by the Principal when documentation is provided for prolonged or chronic illnesses or extenuating circumstances.

All in-school suspensions, out-of-school suspensions, and trancies are unexcused absences. Whether an absence is excused or unexcused, the student is expected to make up missed work in a timely manner. Work not made up in a timely manner will receive a reduced score or a zero.

Though we understand and appreciate the value of family vacations and mission trips, we strongly recommend that such trips not be taken during the school year. Research indicates that if a student misses 7 days a year, his academic work suffers. There is also a negative impact on the community of learners as well as on the teacher.

Classroom Visits

We welcome visitors to our classrooms. However, we want to minimize disruption to classroom instruction. Parents who wish to observe classes must do so within the following guidelines:

1. Contact the teacher or an administrator in advance to schedule your visit to coincide with the class you wish to observe.
2. At the time of your visit, please sign in with the receptionist and obtain a visitor's sticker. You must sign out at the conclusion of your visit.
3. Visitors (other than parents) who wish to visit GCA must get prior written permission from the school administration. This includes lunch visits with current GCA students.

Early Dismissal (For Appointments, etc.)

Early dismissal should be kept to a minimum as it disrupts learning at every level. At the early dismissal time, the parent goes to the office to sign the student out. The office will then notify the teacher that the student is being checked out. If the student returns before the school day is over, the parent must return to the office with the student to sign the student back in.

Students should turn in assignments for classes that will be missed before leaving campus. Whenever possible, any missed tests or quizzes should be rescheduled before leaving campus for Wednesdays from 3:15-4:00 pm. Failure to do this may result in zeroes for missed work.

Except for emergencies, students will not be dismissed to leave during the middle of class. Dismissals will be scheduled between classes. The parent/guardian who is picking the student up must come to the school office to sign the student out. **Repeated failure to follow the established procedure will result in a denial of the early dismissal request.**

VIII. COMPUTER USE PROCEDURES

All GCA students and parents must sign, comply, and submit to Final Forms, and the Acceptable Use Policy. All MS Students will receive a notification from Final Forms requiring their signature.

IX. ALLERGY POLICY

Due to the high number of various nut allergies in our student body, some of which are anaphylactic and carry a risk of death if these students are exposed, we have adopted the following procedures:

- **We ask all families to voluntarily choose to not send nuts or nut butters to school**
- All of our classrooms are nut free zones
- In the lunchroom, families may choose for their student(s) with allergies to either sit at a "nut free table" or to sit at a regular table with a placemat which helps remind them, their friends and the adults overseeing to eliminate any nuts or nut-butters at their table.
- All students with allergies must communicate with the nurse(s) and provide an Individual Health Plan and Allergy Action Plan concerning the student's particular food allergy and acceptable/needed treatments. Parents will supply the needed remedies/treatments such as Benadryl or Epi-pen(s) which will travel with the student to every location.
- All hot lunches are nut free.
- All staff and subs are educated regarding allergies and trained how to administer an Epi-pen in an emergency.

- All treats for students must be on the **Acceptable Treats** list and be approved by the front desk before being handed out to students.
- Specific guidelines for all faculty, staff, parents and students are available if desired.

One of the annual milestones of a child is celebrating his or her birthday. Some teachers honor children in the classroom on their special day in a variety of ways and will communicate this to parents. Parents may bring or send a special treat item for student's birthdays from our **Acceptable Treats** list to share at the end of lunchtime but first must check in with the front desk.

ACCEPTABLE TREATS LIST:

Bluebell chocolate/vanilla ice cream cups
 Skittles
 Tootsie Roll Pops
 Starburst
 Oreos
 Sour Patch Kids
 Organic Swirl Stix (popsicles available at Costco)

X. SPIRITUAL LIFE

Grace Christian Academy offers our Middle School students a unique opportunity to deepen their faith in Jesus Christ while developing academically. Our students' spiritual growth in God's inerrant Word and relationships in Christ are our number one priority. With a combination of faith and reason, our students develop spiritually through daily Bible classes, weekly chapels, and numerous local and international service and mission opportunities.

Bible Class

Every student will take Bible as a part of his or her core curriculum. Bible will be taught from a non-denominational approach, and Scripture will be used as the ultimate authority.

Grace Christian Academy's students take a daily Bible class as part of the school's core curriculum. In these classes, God's Word is the basis for discussion and daily application to life. Curriculum will vary based on the grade of each student. Our teachers lead with their hearts in teaching GCA's students how God is real and has made Himself known in their lives!

Devotions & Chapel

Parents are invited to attend our weekly chapel services. Students are encouraged to make these worship times meaningful and relevant spiritual experiences. "So that with one heart and mouth you may glorify God." (Romans 15:6)

Every week Grace Christian Academy's students will take part in a grade appropriate chapel time. The students are engaged in worship and are encouraged to build a stronger and deeper relationship with the Living God.

The Spiritual Life Director, students, and staff lead the chapels. Ultimately this time is open to the leading of the Holy Spirit, and it does not look the same week to week. We encourage our families to come be a part of this special time of worship!

Service & Missions

Grace Christian Academy wants to be a part of God's work within our local community, the nation, and the world. GCA students take part in missions internationally as well as right around the corner in Franklin.

GCA believes that through our service and mission's program students have the opportunity to say "yes" to God in ways that are outside their personal comfort zones. By stretching themselves into something new, they need to rely more on our Heavenly Father for guidance and understanding.

Previous occasions and locations to serve have been:

- Packing food for the Food Bank
- "Room in the Inn"
- Tennessee Best Buddies Program
- Dominican Republic
- Central Jamaica school and camps
- Spring cleanup for a small church in Maine
- Sending uniforms and supplies to a school in Haiti
- Supporting PR12's mission in Uganda

World Impact Month

This month is dedicated to discussing and praying for the rest of the world. We will take time through chapels, service, and mission opportunities to focus on the world's need for Christ. Our High School students will have the valuable opportunity to travel overseas to go on mission trips to serve and to be the hands and feet of Jesus. These trips include going to Haiti, Mexico, Belize and many other places. Our goal is to get outside of ourselves and into the kingdom work that God is doing around the world. This is a life-changing time!

XI. STUDENT LIFE

Intermediate and MS Student Life

GCA Middle School Student Life includes plans and activities that focus on developing spiritual and social growth while strengthening community. Spiritual growth is rooted in a biblically-saturated environment and developed in weekly middle school chapels, student-led worship, and small group fellowships hosted by families. Social growth occurs as students participate in a back-to-school Deer Run retreat, athletics, drama club, choir, quarterly PEP rallies, and field trips.

Our middle school community is strengthened by celebrating adolescence and engaging in our school's mission to serve others. Structured school days are devoted to serving local communities in our Mini-X program and students build deeper relationships as we join Grace Chapel in outreach ministries such as Shoeboxes for Haiti, Room in the Inn, and food drives. GCA's middle school parents are equipped to cultivate the legacy of Christ's hope in their middle schooler and to spread that hope along every avenue God provides.

Intermediate and Middle School Trips:

Field trips:

5th Grade Field Trip: JABiztown

6th Grade Field Trip: U.S. Space and Rocket Center, Huntsville, AL

7th Grade Field Trip: The Creation Museum and The ARK Encounter, Cincinnati, OH

8th Grade Field Trip: Washington, D.C.

Guidelines for Class Parties and Field Trips

Parents and adult sponsors involved in the planning of and the participation in recreational, social, and educational activities should properly chaperone the students at all times and assume the responsibility of seeing that the students conduct themselves in a manner that honors Christ.

Field Trips

Field trips will be taken during the school year. They are fun and informative learning experiences, primarily designed to enrich the curriculum of GCA. A permission slip must be on file before your child begins school and releases the school from any liability. Any parent who wishes to drive on a field trip must be cleared by GCA to chaperone or drive on field trips and must have a current copy of a driver's license and insurance on file at the front office.

1. GCA activities are for current GCA students only. No other students are allowed to attend.
2. Any student on disciplinary or academic probation may be excluded from the field trip.
3. School rules, regulations, and policies are in effect on all field trips on or off campus.
4. The sponsoring teacher will communicate the dress code.
5. If parents choose not to allow their child to participate in a scheduled field trip, parents should make other arrangements for their child's care and an absence will be documented.
6. If parent chaperones are needed, they will be secured in advance for all field trips. Parents deciding to attend a field trip at the last minute will require approval from the GCA administrative office.

Mini-X

Mini-X is a time of specialized learning for students in grades 5th through 8th outside of the classroom. There is a cost to parents for all Mini-X courses. Parents will be informed in the fall of the course selections, a tentative itinerary for each course, and the payment plan. Since Mini-X is part of the Middle School curriculum, participation is required.

HIGH SCHOOL (Grades 9-12)

I. PRINCIPAL'S WELCOME

Dear High School Students/Families,

HAPPY NEW YEAR!! (School year, that is.) Welcome to the 2019-20 school year! Over the summer, our Administrative team met often planning/preparing for this new year. One of the first questions we asked ourselves was: "What is the 'main thing' God has called us to do at GCA?"

The primary answer is that He has called us to "make disciples," Christ-followers of the students entrusted to us in the High School. We are, indeed, an "equipping" ministry.

Our study yielded three areas in which we are called to make an impact: the Heart, the Mind, and the Hands.

1. It all begins with the Heart. Scripture exhorts us to "guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it." (Proverbs 4:23) We want to engage in training the hearts of our young people. . .molding them. . .giving them examples/role models of what it means to be a lifelong follower of Jesus.
2. Next comes the Mind. Romans 12:2 instructs us: "Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind." The mind is transformed by the Holy Spirit and by the Word of God. . .while simultaneously being educated in "reading, writing, and 'rithmetic." We are, after all, an academic institution.
3. Last, but certainly not least, are the Hands. By "Hands," we mean outreach and service: locally, regionally, and globally. Jesus said: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." (Mark 16:15) One author wrote that God is calling us to "get the salt out of the shaker." We are NOT training our students' hearts and minds only to sit out here self-satisfied in Leiper's Fork. We want to mobilize the hands as well! There is a weary world "out there" needing the Salt and Light our students can offer. . .

Thank you for partnering with us in the 2019-20 school year! We look forward to what God will do in and through the ministry of GCA, as we equip the Hearts, Minds, and Hands of our students.

Soli Deo Gloria. To God Alone be the Glory.

Best regards,

Richard B. Anderson
High School Principal

"The main thing is to keep the main thing the main thing." (Stephen Covey)

"But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus."
(Philippians 3:13-14)

"Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs

up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland.” (Isaiah 43:18-20)

II. **ACADEMIC POLICIES**

The purpose of GCA academics is for students to develop a Biblical worldview, college preparedness, skills for life outside school, and the tools and desire to be life-long learners.

Academic Probation and Ineligibility

Probation

Academic Probation for a student in grades 9-12 will go into effect at the end of a quarter when:

1. The student fails more than one core course (Below 70%)
2. Students may not miss school for a co-curricular activity if they have a grade lower than 70% in an academic course.

A student must have a minimum 2.0 GPA to be eligible for graduation.

Student probation will begin with a conference with the student and parent, relevant staff member(s) and a member of the administration team. The probationary period will last for one quarter, giving the student time to meet with his/her teacher(s) to develop a strategy to recover in the classroom. At the end of the probationary quarter, grades will be evaluated and one of two outcomes will present itself:

- The student will have restored his/her grade(s) to an acceptable level and will be restored as a student in good standing, or
- The student will not have raised his/her grade(s) to an acceptable level and will be placed on the academically ineligible list.

Ineligibility

A student who fails to restore grades to an acceptable level during the probationary period will be placed on the academically ineligible list. Students on this list will meet with their teacher(s), school administrators, coach/sponsor/leader of co-curricular activity, and parents to develop a plan of action to restore the student's academic marks to an acceptable level. Ineligible students will no longer be allowed to participate in co-curricular games/performances until their grades reach 70% or higher, and the requirements agreed upon in the meeting are fulfilled. Students may not miss school for a co-curricular activity if they have a grade lower than 70% in an academic course.

Class Rank

GCA does not provide class rank except for Valedictorian and Salutatorian. These rankings are based on the weighted GPA at the end of the 3rd quarter of senior year. Only courses taken at GCA are used to determine class rank and students must attend GCA their entire junior and senior year to be considered for valedictorian or salutatorian.

Classroom Procedures

1. Upon entering the classroom, students should take their assigned seats promptly and quietly and begin the posted bell ringer assignment.
2. Speaking out or expressing disapproval when another has the floor is both rude and unfair. There is never an excuse for disrespect.

3. Students must bring proper materials and supplies to class: books, notebook, homework, paper, pen, pencil, etc.
4. Class will be dismissed by the teacher. Students should not be discourteous by getting up before they are dismissed.
5. Students should knock before entering a classroom that is in session. Wait to be recognized before making a request.
6. Christian conduct is expected of all GCA students at all times.

College Visits

Juniors and Seniors are granted three excused absences to conduct college visits. Prior to the absence, the College Visit request form available online must be completed. After the visit, the student should bring a letter or other documentation to the College Counselor. If a Senior is invited to a Scholarship Interview in the spring semester, and they have already used their three excused days, permission for the interview day to be excused may be granted at the administration's discretion. If any student has excessive absences, the request for a college visit excused absence may be denied.

All make up work for these absences is the student's responsibility.

Cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA)

A student's cumulative grade point average is calculated on the basis of semester grades only, not quarter grades. The GPA is calculated by weighting the numeric grade from the first and second quarters with the 15% semester (midterm and final) exam score.

Dual Enrollment Courses

11th and 12th grade students may enroll in a dual enrollment course if they meet the following requirements.

- Prior approval by the High School Principal
- Student must have met all current core and all elective requirements.
- If requirements are met, student may be assigned a study hall to work on Dual Enrollment coursework; however, the student may not be excused from any other GCA activities or assemblies during that allotted study hall time.
- Due to the location of our campus, students may not leave campus to take Dual Enrollment courses.
- Dual Enrollment courses will be added to the GCA transcript as only Pass/Fail and will not be calculated in the GPA.
- It is up to the student to have the college transcript sent to GCA for entry on the GCA transcript.
- Taking Dual Enrollment courses is not a guarantee of transferable college credit; it is always the discretion of the college to accept or decline the Dual Enrollment credit.
- It is up to the student to initiate the Dual Enrollment process with any colleges.

Exceptions

- If a student has not met his/her core course or elective requirements, he/she may still take Dual Enrollment courses but may not have a study hall.
- All the above stipulations apply.
- If a student must take a Dual Enrollment course because GCA cannot accommodate the course in the student's schedule, the policy will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

GCA Dual Enrollment Classes

GCA will offer selected Dual Enrollment courses through MTSU. Students will be admitted to

the class based on teacher approval. There is a small MTSU fee (\$25-35). These classes will be a graded entry on the GCA transcript.

Exam Policy

Exams constitute a significant portion of the semester grades and are required. Philosophically, students need to be trained and prepared to study for and effectively take exams at the college level; students also need to prove that they have mastered essential material.

Seniors in good academic standing (a class GPA over 2.0) with acceptable attendance records (fewer than 5 unexcused absences and fewer than 7 tardies for the semester) will be exempted from the following exams:

- Midterm and Final exams for US Government and Economics (students will have end of semester assessments such as tests, papers, and projects)
- Senior Seminar/Capstone will replace midterms and finals with culminating papers and projects

Students taking AP courses are expected to take the AP exam in place of a GCA class final. A \$94 fee will be billed to FACTS for each AP exam a student takes. If students do not take the AP exams, they will take the 12th grade English and/or Math final.

GCA's philosophy in regard to exams for seniors is rooted in the commitment to truly preparing our students for the rigors of college and life after high school.

Exam Policy (Seniors)

Seniors will take midterm exams for all academic subjects that have exams. Seniors will take final exams only for Math and English unless: they have maintained an A average in that subject, have 5 or fewer absences during second semester (excluding co-curricular absences), and have not served more than one Saturday School during second semester or been suspended for any reason.

Failed Courses and Summer Credit Recovery

When a student earns a failing grade in a required course for one or more semesters, he/she must recover the credits before starting the next school year (unless the student is re-taking the entire year-long course).

- Students may recover credits through accredited online courses or special arrangements made through the Academic Dean.
- If a student fails one semester of a two-semester course, the student is required to make up only the semester failed.
- All fees associated with credit recovery are the student's responsibility.
- According to the TSSAA (Tennessee Athletics) policy, students will be ineligible to compete in a sport if they do not earn enough credits during the school year. Please speak to the Athletic Director in regard to this issue.

Grading Scale and Report Cards

The school year at GCA consists of two semesters made up of two nine week quarters each. Report cards will be issued four times a year via email at the conclusion of each grading period.

The grading scale is: A 100-90, B 89-80, C 79-70, D 69-65, F 64 and below.

Grade	Grade Range	Regular/Standard 4.0	Honors + .5	AP/Dual Enrollment +1.0
A+	97-100	4.0	4.5	5.0
A	93-96	4.0	4.5	5.0
A-	90-92	3.7	4.2	4.7
B+	87-89	3.3	3.8	4.3
B	83-86	3.0	3.5	4.0
B-	80-82	2.7	3.2	3.7
C+	77-79	2.3	2.8	3.3
C	73-76	2.0	2.5	3.0
C-	70-72	1.7	2.2	2.7
D	66-69	1.3		
D-	65	1.0		
F	64 and under			

Please note that students are placed into Honors courses based on teacher recommendation, academic performance, and standardized test scores. Honors courses cover the regular course objectives in greater depth, require higher critical thinking, and necessitate more homework and academic commitment.

If a student receives a semester grade of C or lower in an Honors course, the student may be moved to the regular course.

GCA offers AP courses for Calculus, European History, English Literature, and Biology. Students are placed in AP (Advanced Placement) courses only with teacher approval. AP courses usually result in college credit; therefore, students need to commit to performing at the college level with its increased workload.

Tutoring

Teacher office hours end at 3:15 pm. If a student requires additional help, parents may choose to hire a private tutor or arrange further tutoring with the student's classroom teacher at a rate of \$40/hour. Additional services may be arranged by emailing Mr. Anderson at randerson@gcalions.com.

Guidelines for Class Parties and Field Trips

Parents and adult sponsors involved in the planning of and participation in recreational, social, and educational activities should properly chaperone the students at all times and assume the responsibility of seeing that the students conduct themselves in a manner that honors Christ.

Homework Policy and Philosophy of Studying

Definition - The school teaches you something; you practice it at home by doing your homework; the reinforcement you have through homework builds up your knowledge a little more each time. What you have done is improve your mind's ability to deal with this subject in the future as well as helping you deal with other problems in other subjects because your brain will call on the same skills over and over. The more you skip homework, the less practice your mind gets at dealing with problems; you have more trouble retrieving knowledge and remembering what you learned. Studying is reviewing what you have learned and thus storing it in your long-term memory. Helping students adopt positive study habits and a strong work ethic will prepare them in all areas of their lives.

Biblical Rationale

The Bible has much to say about gaining knowledge and wisdom. The key verse for early schools was Proverbs 1:7: "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction." This verse is the key to real knowledge: heeding and giving respect to our great Creator God is necessary to understand truth and knowledge. Those who do not fear, respect, and take notice of what God says are fools and have no grounding in wisdom. In addition, in Deuteronomy 7, we are told to study God's Word, a form of homework and study. As Christians, we should have a strong work ethic and a heart for learning, which includes studying the Bible.

Homework and Studying

Homework assignments are given to reinforce skills taught. Homework should be completed neatly and returned on time; it is a graded part of the curriculum. Studying is reviewing what has been learned in order to store it in long-term memory.

Honor Roll and Academic Recognition

It is important to recognize students who have achieved outstanding academic success; GCA's Principal's List and Honor Roll are two of the ways we strive to reward these achievements and at the same time encourage all students to work to their full potential.

- i. Students who have a weighted GPA of 4.0 or above at the end of each quarter are added to the Honor Roll for that quarter.
- ii. Students who have a weighted GPA of 4.25 or higher at the end of each semester are added to the Principal's List for that semester.
- iii. Students who maintain a weighted GPA of 4.25 or higher for the year will be added to the Head of School's Roll. These students will also be recognized in the quarterly edition of Celebrating Grace.

Independent Study Courses

Independent study courses may only be taken if there is no other way to meet the requirements for graduation and if it is approved by the Principal. Unless exempted by the administration, all associated fees are the student's responsibility.

Late Work

- a. If a student was present when an assignment was given, and does not turn in the assignment on time, a 0 will be recorded in the gradebook. If the student turns it in within three days, update the gradebook according to the Late Work Policy (1 day late – up to 80%; 2 days late – up to 70%; 3 days late – up to 50%; 4 or more days late – permanent 0).
- b. If a student does not turn in an assignment on the due date because they are absent, enter

INC (incomplete) in the gradebook. The INC will count as a 0 which lowers their grade to remind the student to turn it in. When the student turns in the assignment according to the **Absent Policy**, they may receive up to full credit for the assignment.

Make-Up Work for Excused Absences

After a one-day absence, students should be prepared to make up scheduled tests or assignments the day of their return to class. However, students with an excused absence from school for two or more days are generally allowed three days to make up the work they missed. Make-up tests must be scheduled by the student with the teacher once they return to school. They will receive one day for every day missed (unless given special permission from the teacher). Students must make satisfactory arrangements with their teachers as soon as possible following any absence.

If a student misses a class due to a curricular activity (e.g, field trip) or a co-curricular activity (e.g. basketball game), he or she must turn in any assignments or projects due that day before leaving for the activity. Students who will miss quizzes or tests may take them a day early or the next day after returning from the activity (teacher discretion). Students that miss new material will be given two days to complete assignments.

Requests for make-up work or assignments to the office or the teacher should not be made unless a student is absent for more than two days. All requests should be made to the office on the morning of the third day before 10:00 am. Requests after 10:00 am may not be able to be accommodated until the next day.

All students will receive an automatic zero for any missing assignments, quizzes, or tests. The zero serves as a marker for the teacher and a reminder for the parent and student. When work is made up, the zero will be updated.

**It is the student's responsibility, not the teacher's, to initiate the make-up work plan. The student should seek assistance regarding work missed first from classmates, and then if there are further questions, seek out teacher assistance at an appropriate time.

**Zeros will be given for work not made up within the agreed time frame.

**Parents and students should check RenWeb to keep aware of assignments and deadlines.

**If a student receives an unexcused absence, the student is expected to submit all work the following day.

National Honor Society (Juniors and Seniors)

The purpose of this organization is to create enthusiasm for scholarship, promote leadership, stimulate a desire to serve, and build and develop character in secondary school students.

Eligibility

Membership in the Grace Christian Academy Chapter of the National Honor Society is an honor. Selection for membership is by the Faculty Committee and is based on outstanding demonstration of the Four Pillars of the National Honor Society: scholarship, character, leadership, and service. Once selected, members have the responsibility to continue to demonstrate these qualities.

In order to be eligible for membership, candidates should have a genuine desire to serve the school and community and must have attended Grace Christian Academy for **at least one full semester**. Candidates for membership must also meet the following requirements:

Scholarship: Candidates for membership in the National Honor Society must have a minimum cumulative unweighted GPA of at least 3.5 out of 4.0. A list of rising Junior and Senior students who meet this academic requirement will be compiled at the end of third quarter each school year.

Character: Membership in the National Honor Society is a testament to the school as well as the outside community; therefore, students must consistently exhibit the fruit of the Spirit and be in good standing. During the selection process, the disciplinary records of the candidates are checked against membership criteria. Students who have had disciplinary issues will be evaluated on an individual basis by the Faculty Committee.

If a student has been suspended for any reason, he or she may not be inducted into the National Honor Society within one year of the suspension. Once the one year waiting period has passed, the student will be eligible for consideration for membership at the time of the next induction. Candidates must not have been expelled from this or a previous school.

Leadership: In order to be eligible for membership, students must meet at least one of the following criteria:

- held or currently hold a leadership position at the high school level (Student Life Team, Student Leadership Team, Student Council, etc.)
- demonstrated leadership by attending a local, regional, or national conference dealing with contemporary student issues
- demonstrated leadership by initiating and leading a program that benefits GCA students, the local Christian community, or the international community of believers
- demonstrated leadership ability which can be verified by the student's teachers

Service: Service forms the core of National Honor Society activities and supports our school and community. Volunteering allows you to gain empathy, awareness, leadership skills, collaboration with others, and motivation to make a difference in our community. It is the goal of the Grace Christian Academy Chapter of the National Honor Society that participating in these activities will instill values that encourage a lifetime of service.

Candidates must have evidence of previous service in both school and community. Service activities are those that are done for or on the behalf of others (not including family members) for which no direct financial or material compensation, reward, or educational credit is given. Students applying for membership as rising Juniors must have completed a minimum of 20 service hours and rising Seniors must have a minimum of 30 service hours. Students may count hours completed during the summer toward this service requirement.

See appendix for further requirements and application details for National Honor Society. Contact Mrs. Knowles at erinknowles@gcalions.com with questions.

Parent-Teacher Conference

Conference days will be scheduled during the fall of each school year. Parents may request and schedule a conference with a teacher any time during the school year by contacting the teacher directly. Unscheduled "drop-in" conferences are discouraged as they interfere with teaching. Teachers may also contact parents for additional conferences, if needed.

Plagiarism

Definition - In an instructional setting, plagiarism occurs when a writer deliberately uses someone else's language, ideas, or other original (not common-knowledge) material without acknowledging its source.

This definition applies to texts published in print or online, to manuscripts, and to the work of other student writers.

Examples:

1. Submitting someone else's text as one's own or attempting to blur the line between one's own ideas or words and those borrowed from another source.
2. Carelessly or inadequately citing ideas and words borrowed from another source.

Biblical Rationale

Biblical: You shall not steal. Exodus 20:15

Consequences

1. Plagiarized work will receive a zero.
2. Students who plagiarize will meet with their teacher and the Dean of Students to determine additional consequences.

Retention

A student may be retained if the student does not have a passing final grade in any of the core subject areas of math, history, English, Bible, or science. A final decision will be made on an individual basis by the academic team for High School, which includes the classroom teacher, Academic Dean, Principal, and Guidance Counselor.

Standardized Testing

In April of each school year, Freshman and Sophomore students will take the Pre-ACT. In October, Freshman, Sophomore, and Junior students will take the PSAT. The ACT should be taken Sophomore, Junior, and Senior years. As results of these assessments become available to GCA, reports will be sent home.

III. DISCIPLINE POLICIES

Grace Christian Academy must have a set of rules for behavior that promotes self-control, character and an environment where learning can take place. Students are expected to behave in a manner which demonstrates a respect for self, others, and recognition of the responsibilities of being part of a Christian educational community.

Discipline

1. Discipline Guidelines/Introduction

The Bible is quite clear on the issue of discipline. Hebrews 12:11 states "No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it" (NIV). Our approach to discipline at GCA is influenced by this spiritual truth. When consequences are necessary

for a student's actions or behavior, it should not be considered as purely negative, but as part of the training process that the Lord has instilled to produce desirable qualities in each student. By providing clear expectations, guidelines, and consequences, the expected result is first response obedience on the part of all GCA students.

The first and usually the only person to deal with student misconduct is the teacher present, whether in or out of the classroom. Faculty members may also consult with other teachers and, according to the seriousness of the situation, with the Dean of Students, and, if necessary, with the Principal. When discipline is necessary, parents may rely upon the teachers and administration to correct behavior in ways that affirm biblical standards of fairness and justice, the dignity of each child, and the need for damaged relationships to be appropriately restored. Discipline will be determined and parents will be informed, but the goal is to get to the heart of the actions with each student.

2. Discipline Policies

a. Classroom Behavior

- i. Classroom behavior is primarily overseen by the classroom teacher. Each classroom teacher will have a classroom management plan/set of rules, and will cover them with the students at the beginning of each term. If behavior cannot be corrected by the classroom teacher according to the plan, the student will be sent to the office with a detention slip and will have a meeting with the Dean of Students.

b. Cell/Electronics phone use

i. Allowed usage

1. Students are allowed to use their phones during break, lunch and transitions.
2. Phones are not allowed during class and must be on silent and in the classroom cell phone holder for the duration of class.
3. If students need to contact a parent during the day outside of break and lunch, students must go to the office and text/call in front of a front office staffer.
4. Students may not use entertainment-oriented electronic items such as electronic games, music, iPods, etc. during the school day.
5. Audio or video recording during school requires teacher permission and is only allowed for educational purposes.

The school is not liable for loss or damage to phones/electronics brought to school.

ii. Consequences -

1. First offense - phone will be confiscated for 24 hours. Student may get the phone back. A parent will be notified of the offense via email.
2. Second offense - phone will be confiscated for 48 hours. Student may get the phone back. A parent will be notified of the offense via email.
3. Third offense - phone will be confiscated for 24 hours. Parent must come to the school to pick up the phone. A parent will be notified of the offense via email.

c. Building Stewardship

- i. General care and cleanliness of all GCA facilities must be practiced. This includes, but is not limited to, picking up after themselves, using trash cans to dispose of trash, and properly storing personal items in lockers.
 - ii. Pranks, vandalism, graffiti, and destruction of property will be treated as major offenses and disciplined as such.
- d. Bullying - (definition source is from www.stopbullying.gov)
- i. Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior among school aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. In order to be considered bullying, the behavior must be aggressive and include:
 - 1. An Imbalance of Power: Kids who bully use their power—such as physical strength, access to embarrassing information, or popularity—to control or harm others.
 - 2. Repetition: Bullying behaviors happen more than once or have the potential to happen more than once.
 - ii. Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumors, attacking someone physically or verbally, excluding someone from a group on purpose, or cyberbullying.
 - iii. Rude and mean behavior, while not Christ-like, is not necessarily bullying and will be treated as an honor code violation.
 - iv. If administration deems behavior as bullying, it will be handled as such and consequences will be based on the severity of the offense. Refer to the **Disciplinary Options** section for consequences.

GCA uses the STOPit app at the high school campus in order to help our students feel that they always have a voice, even when they are not comfortable coming forward in person. This app allows a trained team of faculty members to interact with the student and continue dialogue without sacrificing anonymity. The app can be downloaded onto a cellular device or the user can go to the STOPit website. We are very excited about offering this tool to our families as we continue to partner with them to make our school as safe and healthy environment as possible.

“STOPit is transforming the way the world reports and prevents inappropriate behavior. Everyone from business to government to schools, depends upon the individuals within a community to speak up in order to keep people safe and mitigate risk. But legacy reporting systems – paper, hotlines, even web reporting – no longer meet the needs of our modern connected society. In order to get the kind of insight that can make a difference, you need to meet people where they are.”

- e. Dress Code
- i. The Grace Christian Academy Uniform Policy exists for two purposes:
 - 1. To foster a positive educational environment where students and teachers can focus on learning. We understand that when we are dressed more professionally, we perform at a more professional level.
 - 2. To fulfill the GCA mission of being distinctly Christian in attitude and behavior.
 - ii. Consequences for being in uniform but out of dress code, i.e. shirt consistently untucked
 - 1. First offense - warning
 - 2. Second offense -loss of Spirit Day on Friday; parent and teachers notified

3. Third offense - detention/Saturday School
 4. Repeat offenders of the same issue will move into the consequences for the **Out of Uniform** section, and the item that is the issue will need to be replaced.
- iii. Consequences for being out of uniform, i.e. skirt length, absence of belt, inappropriate top. No warnings will be given. Students will have three options:
1. Students will call parents to bring the appropriate item, or
 2. Students will go to the spirit store to purchase the appropriate item, or
 3. Students will be sent home.
- f. Off Campus Behavior
- i. Our behavioral guidelines apply to students while they are on campus, in GCA operated school vehicles or at recognized school functions.
 - ii. Off campus and outside of school, a student is still recognized as a GCA student and representative of GCA, and more importantly as a representative of Christ. Therefore, all students should conduct themselves as Christ-followers and are accountable to the school for outside behavior.
 1. Social media accounts should be representative of a Christ-follower and a student of GCA. Offensive posts, language and behavior on social media are not acceptable and will be addressed under the GCA discipline policy.
 2. Other examples include the consumption of alcohol, use of tobacco products, acts of sexual immorality and exhibition of violent behavior.
 - iii. Consequences will be based on the severity of the offense, who reports the offense (self-reporting will be honored differently). Refer to the **Disciplinary Options** section for consequences.
- g. Personal Property
- i. Students are liable for the personal property they bring to school.
 - ii. Misuse of such items will result in confiscation.
 - iii. Students should avoid keeping large sums of money in their purses, wallets or pockets.
 - iv. Backpacks/book bags/cinch sacks will not be allowed in the classroom. Students will be expected to keep all materials in their lockers and only bring necessary items to class. Girls may carry a reasonable size purse, and all students may carry a reasonable pencil pouch. Reasonableness will be determined by faculty.
- h. Prohibited Items
- i. Tobacco products, alcoholic beverages, electronic cigarettes, vaping, juuling, any drugs/narcotics, knives, guns (including hunting, airsoft, paintball, etc.), matches, explosives of any kind and other non-school items that harm or distract students are not permitted on school property. Any over-the-counter or prescription medication **MUST** go to the nurse.
 - ii. Consequences will be based on the severity of the offense, who reports the offense (self-reporting will be honored differently). Refer to the **Disciplinary Options** section for consequences.

- i. Sexual Purity
 - i. Students will not engage in or condone inappropriate sexual conduct including, but not limited to, such behaviors as:
 - 1. sexual activity outside of marriage (including premarital sex, and cohabitation)
 - 2. homosexual, lesbian, transgender behavior
 - 3. sexual harassment, including inappropriate jokes and comments
 - 4. viewing of pornographic material or websites
 - 5. sexual abuse or any other sexual misconduct or impropriety toward others students or faculty as defined by Scripture and federal or state law.
 - ii. Students will not engage in Public Displays of Affection—or PDA—includes physical contact including, but not limited to,
 - 1. Hand holding
 - 2. Cuddling
 - 3. Kissing
 - 4. Inappropriate touching
 - 5. Excessive hugging
 - iii. PDA on campus or at a school-sponsored activity, while innocent on some levels, can quickly devolve into a distraction for the students engaging in the practice, as well as other students who witness these public displays of affection, and will not be tolerated.
 - iv. Consequences will be based on the severity of the offense, who reports the offense (self-reporting will be honored differently). Refer to the disciplinary options section for consequences.

- j. Student Drivers
 - i. Students in grades 9-12 will have the opportunity to apply for permission to use the GCA parking lot when they have been given legal permission to drive by the state of Tennessee.
 - ii. The administration of GCA reserves the right to deny or retract permission to drive or park on campus based on student behavior.
 - iii. The **Application and Acceptable Use Policy** can be found on the school website.
 - iv. Any violation of this user agreement will be addressed by the Dean of Students.

- k. Tardiness
 - i. The expectation at GCA is for students to be on time to school and classes throughout the day.
 - ii. Students who are late to 1st period need to sign in at the front desk before going to class. Teachers will not admit these students without a note from the front desk.
 - iii. Consequences
 - 1. Tardies to classes other than 1st period will be handled as follows:
 - a. First offense - warning
 - b. Second and Third offense - after school detention and parent notification
 - c. Fourth offense - Saturday School and parent notification
 - d. Fifth offense - behavioral contract meeting
 - iv. Absences

If a student exceeds five (5) absences, a parent conference is required with Mr. Anderson to discuss strategies to get the student caught up on work and to eliminate further problems.

- l. General School Rules (in addition to the specifics stated above)
 - i. A designated phone for student use is available in the school office. Students must obtain an office pass from the teacher to make a phone call during class.
 - ii. We are a closed campus. Students will not be allowed to go to the parking lot or a car for any reason without a pass from the front office.
 - iii. All visitors to campus must check in at the front office regardless of alumni status.

3. **Disciplinary Options**

- a. The following methodologies are options available to teachers and administrators as they work with students concerning problematic behaviors. During detentions and in-school suspensions, students may be required to serve the school by performing tasks that may include cleaning, sweeping, pulling weeds, etc.
 - i. Parent Communication - all of the following options can include parent notification and communication when necessary. This communication may come from the teacher, Dean of Students and/or the Principal.
 - ii. Detention - detention may be used as a consequence for a variety of offenses. A detention notice will be emailed to the student to inform him/her about the date of detention. The teacher will receive an email as a follow-up that action was taken, and an email will be sent home to inform the parent. Detentions will be every Thursday - one at 7:00am and one at 2:55pm; this will allow for students to serve their detentions regardless of work, sports, and fine arts commitments. Rescheduling an assigned detention must be approved by the administration. Failure to arrive on time, not serving a scheduled detention on the appropriate date, or excessive detentions accumulated will result in Saturday School.
 1. When a student receives a 3rd detention they will automatically be assigned a Saturday School.
 2. Detentions will be the first level of punitive action for things such as Tardies, Classroom disruption, Parking Lot violations, etc.
 - iii. Saturday School - Saturday School will meet on the high school campus from 8:00 am - noon once a month. Parents will be notified if students are assigned Saturday School, and all communication regarding Saturday School must go through the Dean of Students. Rescheduling an assigned Saturday School must be approved by the Dean of Students. Failure to arrive on time or not serving a scheduled Saturday School may result in suspension.
 - iv. Behavioral Contract - GCA students in violation of GCA policies may receive a behavioral contract. The behavioral contract will spell out in detail the expectations of student and teacher, and sometimes parents, in carrying out the behavioral contract. The partnership with parents and communication of the completion of the plan steps is crucial for a successful behavioral contract and will be insisted upon by the administration. This may include contact with outside parties who are also assisting the student in the completion of the behavioral contract. Failure to properly follow the behavioral contract may result in suspension or expulsion.

- v. In-School Suspension - Students involved in serious misconduct, consistent disruptive behavior or showing disregard for GCA policies may be given an in-school suspension. Although isolated from students during the day of suspension, suspended students will be expected to complete all assignments on time. A letter will be placed in a student's file concerning the incident. Generally one, two or three days will be assigned depending on the seriousness or the repetitive nature of the offense. At administrative discretion, extracurricular activities may be in jeopardy for those serving in-school suspension. Students must make up missed school work and submit it on the day of their return unless a different arrangement was made with a teacher.
 - vi. Out-of-school Suspension - Students involved in a serious violation of school policy may be given an out-of-school suspension. Out-of-school suspension is an unexcused absence. Work missed on this day cannot be made up for credit, and any work due on this day will be given a zero. (Project finals and tests will be taken under consideration by the administration based on the severity of the incident.) A letter will be placed in the student's file concerning the incident, and the student will not be readmitted without a parent conference. A student may not participate in extracurricular activities (sports, fine arts, missions, field trips, etc) during this time.
 - vii. Voluntary Withdrawal from School - occasionally, in severe cases, it may be in a student's best interest for the parent(s) to take action before the school does and withdraw their student voluntarily. If a student who has voluntarily withdrawn wishes to rejoin the GCA community, the student must re-apply through the admissions office and complete the admissions process. The GCA administration reserves the right to refuse re-admission. Students who voluntarily withdraw due to disciplinary actions will not be allowed at home events such as games, productions, chapels, etc. without prior administrative approval.
 - viii. Expulsion - Sometimes, in extreme cases, it becomes apparent that it would be best for the school and that student that he/she leave the GCA student body. Acts of non-tolerance such as bringing weapons, drugs, alcohol or pornography to school or coming to school under the influence of drugs or alcohol or offenses that would warrant expulsion. The GCA administration reserves the right to refuse re-admission. Depending on the issue that resulted in the student being expelled from GCA, the student may not be allowed to attend GCA extra-curricular events. They will need approval from the administration to attend GCA events. If a student who has been expelled wishes to rejoin the GCA community, the student must re-apply through the admissions office and complete the admissions process.
- b. Discipline Tiers
- i. Minor Offenses, in most cases, can and should be addressed by the teacher/staff member present in a swift and logical manner. Each teacher will have a classroom management structure to address problems in their areas of influence. When minor offenses become habitual or excessive, then the behavior will be considered a major offense and the Dean of Students will determine the next step.
 - ii. Major Offenses are behaviors and actions that deserve a more severe address than the minor offense level. These offenses will be sent to the

Dean of Students and will be handled on a case by case basis. Examples of major offenses include but are not limited to habitual rule breaking, theft, physical violence, bullying, extreme profanity, possession of weapons, use/possession of banned substances (drugs, tobacco, alcohol, pornography).

4. Honor Code and Discipleship

- a. See the appendix to read the honor code of GCA.
- b. Students will discuss the honor code in Bible
- c. It will then be sent home and signed by the parent/guardian and the student and returned to class.
- d. This is WHO we are and what we desire for our students. Please pray for this with us.

IV. SPIRITUAL LIFE

Grace Christian Academy offers our High School students a unique opportunity to deepen their faith in Jesus Christ while developing academically. Our students' spiritual growth in God's inerrant Word and relationships in Christ are our number one priority. With a combination of faith and reason, our students develop spiritually through daily Bible classes, weekly chapels, and numerous local and international service and mission opportunities.

Bible Class

Grace Christian Academy students take a daily Bible class as part of the school's core curriculum. Bible will be taught from a non-denominational approach, and Scripture will be used as the ultimate authority. In these classes, God's Word is the basis for discussion and daily application to life. Curriculum will vary based on the grade of each student. Our teachers lead with their hearts in teaching GCA students how God is real and has made Himself known in their lives!

Devotions & Chapel

Parents are invited to attend our weekly chapel services. Students are encouraged to make these worship times meaningful and relevant spiritual experiences. "So that with one heart and mouth you may glorify God." (Romans 15:6)

Every week Grace Christian Academy students will take part in a grade appropriate chapel time. The students are engaged in worship and are encouraged to build a stronger and deeper relationship with the Living God.

The Spiritual Life Director, students, and staff lead the chapels. Ultimately this time is open to the leading of the Holy Spirit, and it does not look the same week to week. We encourage our families to come be a part of this special time of worship!

Retreat

At the beginning of the school year, High School students will attend a retreat at Deer Run. The retreat will have worship time, guest speakers and team building. The aim for this week is to

engage our students in topics and issues that they face, and to resource them with the truth of God's wisdom.

Service & Missions

Grace Christian Academy wants to be a part of God's work within our local community, the nation, and the world. GCA students have taken part in missions internationally as well as right around the corner in Franklin.

GCA believes that through our service and missions program students have the opportunity to say "yes" to God in ways that are outside their personal comfort zones. By stretching themselves into something new, they need to rely more on our Heavenly Father for guidance and understanding.

Previous occasions and locations to serve have been:

- Packing food for the Food Bank
- Room in the Inn
- Tennessee Best Buddies Program
- Mexico
- Bahamas
- Central Jamaica school and camps
- Spring clean up for a small church in Maine
- Sending uniforms and supplies to a school in Haiti
- Belize
- Supporting PR12's mission in Uganda
- Bridge Ministry
- Brightstone
- Cincinnati

World Impact Month

This month is dedicated to discussing and praying for the rest of the world. We will take time through chapels, service, and mission opportunities to focus on the world's need for Christ. Our High School students will have the valuable opportunity to travel overseas to go on mission trips to serve and to be the hands and feet of Jesus. These trips include going to Haiti, Mexico, Belize and many other places. Our goal is to get outside of ourselves and into the kingdom work that God is doing around the world. This is a life-changing time!

V. STUDENT FEES

In order to meet the needs and requests of our High School student body, we have established a student life fee that will allow us to provide these activities and events for your High School student. Rather than being billed for every event throughout the year, we are making this much easier for parents as we will be charging parents two payments. This fee will be billed via FACTS in the months of September and February. The student life fee includes the back to school retreat, House t-shirt, homecoming festivities, a fall and winter dance (prom is not included), other fall and spring events, and many other high school activities that will help build and provide a rich high school experience and community for your student.

Freshmen Student Life Fee: Two payments of \$60 (\$120 total)

Sophomore Student Life Fee: Two payments of \$60 (\$120 total)

Junior Student Life Fee: Two payments of \$65 (\$130 total)

Senior Student Life Fee: Two payments of \$180 (\$360 total)

*The senior fee includes the overnight at Deer Run, cap and gown, and other senior expenses.

APPENDIX

National Honor Society Grace Christian Academy Chapter Bylaws

Selection Procedures

Rising Juniors and Seniors who meet the academic requirement at the end of third quarter each year will be given an application packet in early April. Candidates must fully complete the application and turn it in by the due date in order to be considered for membership. Due dates for applications are to be determined by the Adviser each year and will be clearly communicated to each candidate. **No late applications will be accepted.**

Once applications have been received, candidates will be evaluated by the GCA High School faculty based on service, leadership, and character. The final selection of each member to the Chapter shall be by a majority vote of the Faculty Committee. Prior to notification of any candidates, the Chapter Adviser shall review with the Principal the results of the Faculty Committee's deliberations.

New inductees will be advised of the Faculty Committee's decision by email and will be inducted into the National Honor Society. Candidates not selected will be notified by letter. Official membership is confirmed only after the official induction ceremony held in May of each year.

New/Transfer Students

NHS members in good standing who transfer to Grace Christian Academy from another school may bring a letter from his/her Principal or Chapter Adviser to his/her new Chapter Adviser at the beginning of the school year and be automatically accepted as a member of the GCA NHS. Transfer members must meet the standards of the Grace Christian Academy Chapter within one semester in order to retain membership.

Membership and Dues

If selected as a member of the National Honor Society, students must maintain the standards for scholarship, character, leadership, and service by which they were selected. In addition, members are required to attend monthly meetings, and to participate in both individual and Chapter service projects totaling **at least 25 hours** for each academic school year. They are to serve as exemplary role models in the areas of scholarship, character, leadership, and service to their fellow students as members of the National Honor Society.

Annual membership dues of \$25 per member, per year, will be billed through FACTS within the first 5 weeks of the fall semester. This will offset the cost for the annual affiliation for the Grace Christian Academy Chapter of the National Honor Society and help cover the cost for service projects during the year.

Monthly Meetings

Students are required to attend the monthly meetings of the National Honor Society. If a student is not able to attend a meeting, he or she must provide a written excuse in order to avoid

penalty. Students who arrive late or do not attend a meeting without a written excuse will be required to complete 1 extra hour of service per offense. Members who miss 3 meetings during one academic year without a legitimate reason for their absences will be dismissed from NHS.

Service Requirements

Each member of the National Honor Society must complete a minimum of 25 hours of service for each academic school year. **Service projects must be completed between the first day of school in August and a predetermined date in May (to be announced at the first Chapter meeting each year).** Service activities are those that are done for or on the behalf of others (not including family members) for which no direct financial or material compensation, reward, or educational credit is given. These service hours are to be a combination of individual and Chapter service projects and must be completed outside of school hours, unless otherwise communicated by the Adviser.

In order to encourage our students' hearts for service as well as provide maximum impact to the surrounding community, service hours may not be associated with any activity sponsored by GCA unless the student receives approval prior to completing the activity.

Service activities must be approved by the NHS Adviser at least 24 hours prior to the date on which the activity is to be performed to ensure that the activity will count toward the service hour requirement. These requirements must be followed:

- **At least 5 hours** out of the annual requirement must be completed through GCA Chapter service projects. The Chapter Adviser will notify students when approved service projects are available, and the NHS Leadership Team will plan at least three Chapter service projects each year. These projects may be individual or group activities and shall have the following characteristics: fulfill a need within the school or community; have the support of the administration and the faculty; be appropriate and educationally defensible; be well planned, organized and executed.
- Each member is also required to choose and participate in one or more individual service projects that reflect his or her specific talents and interests. **A maximum of 8 hours of service can be claimed per organization per academic year.**
- Students who participate in mission trips may count **a maximum of 8 hours** toward their service hour requirement. These hours should include only the time spent completing service-related and volunteer activities.

Service hours must be turned in during the semester in which they were completed. Members are required to document and turn in at least 12 hours of service no later than the last day of midterm exams. **Any activities that are not documented and turned in at this time will no longer count toward the service hour requirement.** Students who do not turn in at least 12 hours will be penalized 1 hour for each hour they lack. (For example, if a student turns in 11 hours, he or she will need to complete 1 extra hour of service for a total of 14 hours during the spring semester.)

The remaining 13 hours are due in May on the predetermined date that will be announced at the first Chapter meeting each year. Members who do not turn in their remaining hours without prior approval from the Faculty Committee will have failed to meet the service requirement and will be dismissed from NHS.

Membership Discipline and Dismissal

Members who fall below the standards that were the basis for their selection shall be promptly warned in writing by the Chapter Adviser and given a reasonable amount of time to correct the deficiency; however, in the case of flagrant violation of school rules or the law, a member does not have to be warned. The Faculty Committee shall determine when an individual has exceeded a reasonable number of warnings. Members who resign or are dismissed are no longer eligible for membership or its benefits and are not eligible to rejoin GCA NHS in the future. There is no refund for membership dues.



Grace Christian Academy Honor Code

We believe these characteristics and behaviors are representative of students who are working to be distinctively Christian, biblically saturated, Christ glorifying, academically excellent, service and mission oriented and prepared to spread the hope of Christ along every avenue God provides them.

We are GRACE.

G - Grace. Receiving grace from Christ enables us to then extend grace to those we encounter. Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy. Matthew 5:7

R - Respect others.
Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, Philippians 2:3

A - Accept personal responsibility.
When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put the ways of childhood behind me. 1 Corinthians 13:11

Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters. Colossians 3:23

C - Conduct ourselves as Christ-followers.
Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will. Romans 12:1-2

Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ. 1 Corinthians 11:1

E - Everyone matters.
Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it. 1 Corinthians 12:27

UNIFIED STATEMENT

We give grace, respect others, accept personal responsibility, conduct ourselves as Christ-followers, and believe everyone matters. We are GRACE.

Student's name (printed) _____
Date _____

Student's signature _____ Parent's signature _____

Sequence of Courses

9th Sem 1	9th Sem 2	10th Sem 1	10th Sem 2	11th Sem 1	11th Sem 2	12th Sem 1	12th Sem 2
English 1	English 1	English 2	English 2	English 3	English 3	English 4	English 4
Bible 1	Bible 1	Bible 2	Bible 2	Bible 3	Bible 3	Bible 4	Bible 4
Algebra 1 or Geometry	Algebra 1 or Geometry	Geometry or Algebra 2	Geometry or Algebra 2	Algebra 2 or Pre-Calculus	Algebra 2 or Pre-Calculus	Advanced Math/Trig or Calculus	Advanced Math/Trig or Calculus
Biology	Biology	Chemistry	Chemistry	Anatomy	Anatomy	Capstone	Capstone
World History	World History	US History	US History	ACT Prep	Personal Finance	Government	Economics
Freshman Seminar	Health	Elective	Elective	Elective	Elective	Elective	Elective
Elective	Elective	Elective	Elective	Elective	Elective	Elective	Elective
Study Hall	Study Hall	Study Hall	Study Hall				

**Electives Required for Graduation:
12th grade**

*** AP courses offered in the 11th and 12th grade**

2 semesters Fine Arts

1 semester Health & Wellness

2 semesters PE (playing a school sport for 2 seasons fulfills this requirement OR may log 120 hours of physical fitness hours on their own)

2 semesters Spanish 1

2 Semesters Spanish 2

6 Semester electives (not Study Hall or Advanced Strength & Conditioning)