

Grace Christian Academy Family Handbook 2024-2025



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FOREWORD

Grace Christian Academy (GCA) is dedicated to providing students with a quality Christian education. Since 1993, we have focused on teaching students the principles of Christian leadership, self-discipline, responsibility, integrity and good citizenship. Your child's time at GCA will be one of both spiritual and academic growth.

The GCA administration has developed this handbook for parents and students. Please take the time to thoroughly review this handbook. During the school year, the administration reserves the right to modify and/or add new rules. Parents will be informed in writing of any changes to the handbook. If after reading the handbook you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the school office.

STATEMENT OF FAITH

Grace Christian Academy maintains the fundamental teaching of God's Word.

We believe in the:

- **Inspiration of the Holy Scriptures.**
- **Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.**
- **Deity of our Lord Jesus Christ and His virgin birth.**
- **Forgiveness of sin only by the blood of Jesus.**
- **Salvation by grace through faith.**
- **Divine healing.**
- **Infilling of the Holy Spirit.**
- **Return of Jesus Christ.**
- **Fellowshipping with all denominations of the Christian faith.**
- **Institution of marriage and family that are ordained by the Lord God Himself.**
- **Institution of marriage that is sacred and is between one man and one woman.**
- **Clear teachings of the Holy Bible and any other definition of marriage is against the expressed will of God.**

VISION STATEMENT

Grace Christian Academy will become a preeminent school that relentlessly pursues excellence from a Biblical worldview where Spirit-led students are fully equipped to confidently fulfill their God-ordained purpose.

MISSION STATEMENT

GCA is a Christ-centered environment that empowers students to pursue academic excellence, ignites a passion for God, strengthens gifts and talents, cultivates a heart for service, and prepares transformational leaders.

PORTRAIT OF A GRADUATE “BEGIN WITH THE END IN MIND” – STEPHEN COVEY

The Grace Christian Board of Trust developed the graduate profile to describe the ideal graduate. With Christ as the foundation, we pray and work toward our graduate leaving with:

- An authentic faith in Christ exhibited by loving and joyfully serving Him and others. (Luke 10:27)
- A Biblical Worldview that discerns truth; able to engage society effectively. (Hebrews 5:14)
- The necessary skills and accompanying discipline to become a life-long learner; able to flourish in a collegiate setting and subsequent vocation. (Hebrews 6:1)
- A desire to pursue healthy, Christ-centered relationships. (2 Timothy 2:22b)
- The moral fiber to persevere through life with integrity and wisdom. (Psalm 1)

PHILOSOPHY OF GRACE CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

The educational philosophy of Grace Christian Academy is that God lovingly planned all of creation with an eternal purpose. God is the center of life. He has revealed Himself through His written Word, His Living Word and His creation. He is the author of all things and desires to be intimately involved with His creation.

God created man in His image, unique and valuable. However, because of one man's sin, all of mankind is separated from fellowship with God. Only through the sacrificial death and resurrection of His Son, Jesus Christ, is the restoration of intimacy with God made available.

The Holy Spirit works to convict man of his sin and reveals to man his need to receive salvation by grace through faith in Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit then guides, teaches and comforts the redeemed man through His indwelling.

The lifelong process of education is the progressive realization of each person's unique God-given physical, social, spiritual and mental potential. Through godly teachers, led by the Holy Spirit, Biblical truths become the framework for all knowledge. By learning to filter all knowledge and experience through the Word of God, the student becomes able to determine God's truth and develop wisdom. The student is led to discover God's presence in all aspects of life and to realize a personal role in God's plan. The student then is equipped to be used by the Holy Spirit to effect positive change in the world.

God has commanded parents to teach their children to love God and honor Him in all they do. The Christian school becomes a partner with the parents in accomplishing this goal.

GRACE CHRISTIAN ACADEMY OBJECTIVES

I. For the Spiritual and Moral Development of the student, the school aims to

1. Teach the Bible is God's inspired Word and to develop attitudes of love and respect toward it.
2. Teach the basic doctrines of the Bible.
3. Lead the student to a personal belief in Christ as Savior and Lord through a confession to God of sin.
4. Develop a desire to know and obey the will of God as revealed in the Scriptures.
5. Equip the student to carry out the will of God on a daily basis.
6. Impart an understanding of each Christian's place in the church and its worldwide task of witnessing, evangelizing and disciplining and to stimulate the student's involvement in this task.
7. Develop the mind of Christ toward godliness and sin and to teach the student how to overcome sin.
8. Encourage the development of self-discipline and responsibility in the student based on respect for and submission to God and all other authorities.
9. Help the student develop a Christian worldview.

II. For the Academic Development of the student, the school endeavors to

1. Promote high academic standards and provide help to the student in realizing full personal potential.
2. Help each student gain a thorough comprehension and command of the fundamental processes used in reading, writing, speaking, listening and mathematics.
3. Teach and encourage the use of good study habits.
4. Teach the student how to do independent research and to reason logically.
5. Motivate the student to pursue independent study in areas of personal interest.
6. Develop creative and critical thinking and proper application of Biblical criteria.
7. Promote good citizenship through developing the understanding and appreciation of our Christian and American heritage of responsible freedom, human dignity and acceptance of authority.
8. Discuss current affairs in all fields and relate them to God's plan for man.
9. Produce an understanding and appreciation for God's world, an awareness of man's role in the environment and the God-given responsibilities to use and preserve it.
10. Encourage an appreciation of fine arts through the development of understanding personal expression.

III. For the Personal and Social Development of the student, the school aims to

1. Help the student develop a proper understanding of being a unique individual, created in the image of God and to help develop individual capabilities to the fullest extent possible.

2. Teach the student to treat everyone with love and respect since all are made in God's image.
3. Make the student a contributing member of society, realizing a mutual dependency on others and the need to be a servant.
4. Promote an understanding of time as a God-given commodity and the individual responsibility for effective use of it.
5. Show a realistic and Biblical view of life and work and to provide skills for personal relationships and future endeavors.
6. Develop both good and proper attitudes toward marriage and family-life and also to gain the understanding and skills needed to establish God-honoring homes.
7. Promote physical fitness, good health habits and wise use of the body as the temple of God.
8. Impart the Biblical attitudes toward material things and to encourage individual responsibility of using them for God's glory.

III. For the Enhancement of the Home Environment of the student, the school desires to

1. Help the family understand its fundamental role in the education of children.
2. Help the parents understand the school's purpose and program.
3. Assist parents in keeping current with the changing culture and its implications and effects on family-life and children.
4. Aid families in Christian growth and to help them develop God-honoring homes by encouraging regular attendance and involvement in a local church.

NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

GCA admits students of any race, color, national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, tuition assistance programs, athletic or other school-administered programs, nor in the hiring of faculty or administrative staff.

GCA ACCREDITATION, MEMBERSHIPS

Grace Christian Academy is accredited by the International Christian Accrediting Association (ICAA), COGNIA Worldwide, and the Texas Private School Accreditation Commission.

ICAA

The International Christian Accrediting Association first awarded accreditation in 1987. ICAA was developed in a pilot program via the Oral Roberts University Educational Fellowship. As of August 2016, more than 100 elementary/secondary schools were involved at some stage of the ICAA accreditation process.

The purpose of ICAA is to assist in continual improvement for Christian schools that exhibit credibility of performance, integrity and quality. ICAA is both evaluative and educational. In the evaluation process, the Association has established standards and criteria by which it reviews its members and determines their advancement to different status levels of accreditation. In the educational process, ICAA provides materials, workshops, seminars and access to Christian professional educators to assist each school develop quality Christian educational programs. ***GCA earned ICAA/Advance ED accreditation in 2000, and re-accreditation in 2005, 2010, 2015 and 2020.***

COGNIA

COGNIA is the unified organization of the North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Council on Accreditation and School Improvement (SACS CASI). COGNIA is dedicated to advancing excellence in education worldwide through accreditation, research, and professional services. COGNIA creates the world's largest education community, representing 27,000 public and private schools and districts across the United States and in 65 countries worldwide, educating 15 million students. NCA CASI and SACS CASI schools share a unified, clear and powerful accreditation process designed to help schools continuously improve. ***GCA is an accredited member of COGNIA.***

TEPSAC

The Texas Private School Accreditation Commission (TEPSAC) helps ensure quality in private schools by monitoring and approving organizations that accredit the various non-public elementary and secondary educational institutions in the state of Texas.

Since 1986, the Texas Education Agency, through the Commissioner of Education, has recognized the accreditation responsibilities of TEPSAC and its affiliated non-public schools and associations. Subsequent to the establishment of TEPSAC in 1989, direct accreditation of non-public schools by the Agency was phased out and discontinued.

The relationship of TEPSAC with the State Commissioner of Education allows for the following activities related to accredited non-public schools:

- Transferability of student credits earned in accredited non-public schools to Texas public schools
- Recognition of teacher service in accredited non-public schools for salary increment purposes in Texas public schools
- TEPSAC meetings held biannually with Agency liaisons to ensure the ongoing integrity and quality of the process

Athletic Organizations-TAPPS, NCAA (see Athletic Handbook)

Chartered in 1978, the Texas Association of Private and Parochial Schools (TAPPS) serves to organize, stimulate, encourage and promote the academic,

athletic and fine arts programs in an effort to foster a spirit of fair play, good fellowship, true sportsmanship and wholesome competition for boys and girls. NCAA's goal is for the student athlete to have success on the field, in the classroom and in life. GCA is unified with these organizations for the benefit of our students striving for excellence in all facets of student life.

International Program- International students must refer to the International Handbook, the GCA Family Handbook, and the Host Family Handbook for standards applicable to all International students.

ACADEMIC POLICY

ACADEMIC PHILOSOPHY

Grace Christian Academy's philosophy is that a quality education requires two fundamental criteria: (1) curriculum that integrates God's truth into all courses, adequately challenging and preparing the student for future educational endeavors and (2) dedicated teachers who are Christian in belief and action. In order to take full advantage of the educational program, every student is expected to use all available school and home resources with the goal of performing at the highest level possible. Diligence in academic work will provide the proper foundation on which God can fashion His plan for a young person's life.

PROMOTION AND RETENTION

Promotion is earned at GCA and will be based on the satisfactory completion of the requirements for each grade level.

For grades nine (9) through twelve (12), credit for high school courses will be awarded on a semester basis. Semester averages are computed by averaging together the two (2) quarterly grades for that semester. Each semester will be evaluated independently. Failure of any semester of a high school course requires the student to make up the credit.

Repeating a grade by any student in grades one (1) through eight (8) may be required when a student fails the core courses of **language arts and math** unless the student successfully completes a summer school program for those courses. Students who fail **science and/or history** may be required to successfully complete a summer school program.

Due to the social consequences associated with retention, GCA generally will only recommend retention in the lower elementary grades. If a student is found to be struggling during the course of a school year, a series of conferences will be held with the parents to attempt to develop a remediation plan to correct the challenges facing the

student. When the parent's and the school's best efforts have not achieved the desired outcome, a thorough discussion will be conducted with the parents and a recommendation for retention may be made.

GRADING SYSTEM

Grades are the primary means of reporting academic performance to students and parents. They represent the objective assessment of learning and identify both accomplishments and areas that need further work.

Reporting of grades to parents and students follows both a formal and informal format. Tests are graded in a timely fashion and discussed with the class or with an individual student as necessary. Elementary students are required to take their work home for review by parents. Secondary students have the responsibility of communicating test results to their parents. Parents of secondary students are encouraged to regularly discuss academic progress with their children. The Renweb system is used at GCA.

Formal communication of academic and behavioral progress takes the form of Progress Reports and Report Cards. Parents are encouraged to discuss the grade reports with their child and seek further communication from the teacher, if necessary.

Progress Reports can be viewed on Renweb at any time throughout the school year. These reports are designed to communicate academic progress so that if necessary, a timely intervention may result in improvement before Report Card grades are issued.

Report Cards will be viewable on Renweb at the end of each quarter. Report Card grades reflect quarter and/or semester averages for each subject.

7th – 12th Grades

Beginning August 2018, Grace Christian Academy has implemented a 10 point grade scale to better serve its students and allow for more competitive college admissions. The new uniform grading scale and the system for calculating grade point averages (GPA) is effective for all secondary students. For high school students, the quality point weights will provide 1.0 additional quality point for Advanced Placement (AP), community college courses, or four-year university or college courses taken in high school. Under this scale, grades and quality point calculations will be applied as follows:

Grade Average	Letter Grade	Quality points (GPA)	AP/ Dual Credit quality points GPA
90-100	A	4.0	5.0
80-89	B	3.0	4.0
70-79	C	2.0	3.0
60-69	D	1.0	2.0
59 and below	F	0.0	0.0

HOMEWORK

Grace Christian Academy recognizes the educational value and importance of homework for students. Meaningful home study is a necessary part of each pupil's educational program and should be related to the GCA educational philosophy and goals. Homework is intended to be a purposeful extension of the school day that contributes to the student's education through the development of personal responsibility and the establishment of good study habits.

Teachers will assign homework as necessary, considering the grade and ability level of the students and the difficulty of the subject matter. All assignments are due on the assigned date. Every effort will be made to limit assignments with regard to time requirements and eliminate assignments on Wednesdays in order to encourage students to attend mid-week church services and activities. Teachers will determine penalties for late work.

MAKE-UP WORK

Students will be responsible for making up any assignments, tests or quizzes missed due to absences, tardies or early dismissals. Generally, students have one calendar day for each day absent to complete make-up assignments. Teachers will consider extenuating circumstances and make the necessary allowances for the make-up work to be completed.

When a student is absent, the parent should make arrangements to pick up assignments. The school office must be contacted by 10:30 a.m. in order for all the materials to be available in the main office by 3:30 p.m.

COURSE OFFERINGS

Since its inception, Grace Christian Academy has developed a curriculum specifically for our school that leads to continuing academic and spiritual growth. GCA has drawn from several teaching methods to create our school's program of study:

BOB JONES CURRICULUM

Bob Jones is a competitive curriculum resource that combines critical thinking, common core standards and Biblical Worldviews. Bob Jones educational tracks include grades K-12 with an emphasis on secondary Math, History, Science and Foreign Language. This curriculum combines traditional methods with current methods for an effective comprehension program for academic success and measures performance through scheduled testing and reinforcement checkups. Other resources may be used to ensure academic and spiritual growth.

ELEMENTARY COURSE OFFERINGS – GRADES 1 THROUGH 6

Elementary classes are designed to provide the solid foundation necessary for success in secondary classes. The following classes are offered for elementary grades, but may vary depending on the grade level:

Bible	Penmanship	Electives: (may vary)
Geography	Phonics	Art
History	Reading	Computer
Language	Science/Health	STEM
Mathematics	Spelling	Music
		Physical Education
		Spanish
		Beginning Band (4-6 th)

IPads and Chromebooks are used in selected elementary classes for enrichment, reinforcement, and group work.

SECONDARY COURSE OFFERINGS

Secondary course offerings may be modified as necessary to correspond with the Texas Education Code requirements.

Grades 7 through 8

American History (8th)	Drama*	Science
Art	English	Speech*
Band*	Mathematics	Texas History (7th)
Bible	Physical Education	

Grades 9 through 12

Algebra I	Drama*	Pre-Calculus
Algebra II	Economics	Spanish I & II
Art*	English	Speech
Athletic Programs	Geometry	STEM
Band*	Health*	Theater Arts*
Bible	Integrated Physics	US Government
Biology	and Chemistry*	US History
Calculus		World Geography
Chemistry	Physical Education	World History
Consumer Math*	Physics/Anatomy	<i>*based on class load and availability</i>

CRITERIA FOR DIPLOMA

The high school diploma awarded by GCA will be the same for all graduates. Academic accomplishments earned through honors credit will be noted on the transcript (the

official academic achievement record) as well as reflected in the grade point average and class rank.

Students will not receive a diploma prior to the completion of all requirements for graduation. Participation in graduation exercises prior to completion of course requirements will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Grace Christian Academy reserves the right to revoke participation in graduation activities for any student not demonstrating academic or behavioral standards commensurate with GCA guidelines.

Official transcripts will be furnished by the school upon request.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

The graduation requirements for Grace Christian Academy consist of the satisfactory completion of 26 units of credit in the courses listed for the **Recommended High School Program**. Students who satisfactorily complete 26 units of credits will be required to take 4 units of credit in Bible, English, Science, Mathematics, and Social Studies. Foreign language requires 2 credits, P.E. 1 unit of credit, Speech 1/2 unit, Fine Arts 1 unit, and Electives 1-1/2 units.

The Board of GCA has voted to comply with HB5 Texas Legislature concerning graduation requirements. GCA requires a class in Biblical Studies for each year the student attends GCA.

In order to graduate and participate in commencement students must complete all credit requirements. Requirements for graduation are as follows:

SUBJECT	GRADUATION PLAN (Credit Requirements)
Bible	4
English	4
Social Studies	4
Science	4
Mathematics	4
Spanish (Foreign Language)	2
Physical Education	1
Fine Arts	1
Speech	0.5
Other Electives	0.5
Total	26

Recommended Courses for 9th-2th Grade

Ninth Grade

Bible
English I
Algebra I
Biology
World Geography
Spanish I
PE/Elective

Tenth Grade

Bible II
English II
Algebra II
Physical Science
World History
Spanish II
PE/Elective

Eleventh Grade

Bible III
English III
Geometry
Chemistry
U.S. History
*A.R.C.
Elective

Twelfth Grade

Bible IV
English IV
Pre-Calculus or Dual Credit
Physics
Govt. /Economics
*A.R.C.
Elective

- *A.R.C (Additional Required Courses) – Fine Arts, Speech
- Dual Credit Math Options – College Algebra, Pre-Calculus, Calculus, Trigonometry, Statistics
- Electives and Fine Arts – Music, Drama, Art, Journalism, or Online Courses

GRADE POINT AVERAGE AND CLASS RANK

Grade points are earned for courses taken in grades nine (9) through twelve (12). These points are used to determine the grade point average (GPA), which is the basis for determining class rank. Grade points are awarded for satisfactorily completing credit-bearing courses taken at GCA or post-secondary institutions. Courses that are transferred from other schools do not earn grade points for the GPA or GCA class rank. The RENWEB system is used for the grading system at GCA.

GCA does not report a class rank on transcripts. We do, however, determine a Valedictorian and Salutatorian for graduation honors. These designations are intended to connote clear academic leadership for the first and second rank among the graduating seniors. A student must be in good standing to receive the honor. Transfer students must attend GCA for six high school semesters. Valedictorian and Salutatorian will be calculated using overall, cumulative GPA. The valedictorian will receive the Highest Ranking Graduation designation for Texas College admission purposes.

We do not rank (except to determine graduation honors of Valedictorian and Salutatorian).

Class rank does not accurately communicate a student's ability in our selective, college preparatory program. Many quality colleges, universities, and scholarship programs understand this and are used to having "no ranking" for students from strong, college preparatory programs and home school students. If communication of a student's comparison to peers is absolutely necessary, the principal must give approval, and the minimum amount of information possible will be communicated to the organization (for example, saying the student falls in the top 20% is preferable if a comparison is essential).

COURSE WORK ACCEPTED FOR HIGH SCHOOL CREDIT

Grace Christian Academy will award high school credit for courses earned at other schools prior to transfer into GCA. **However, grades for courses not taken at GCA will not be averaged into the student's grade point average or considered in class ranking.**

High school students who fail to pass a semester or more of a course will be required to make up the credit(s). If a course is repeated during the regular school year at GCA, both courses will be recorded on the academic achievement record. **Credit recovery courses will not be included in the GPA or Class Rank.**

Students have the following options for earning make-up credits:

1. Attend a summer school session at GCA or an accredited public or private high school. Grade reports bearing an official signature should be forwarded directly to Grace Christian Academy by the summer school.
2. Enroll in and successfully complete a correspondence course offered by Texas Tech University or the University of Texas. Arrangements must be made with GCA to approve the course selection and designate a testing proctor for tests.
3. Apply for credit by examination through Texas Tech University or the University of Texas. Grades for exams should be reported directly to GCA. Arrangements must be made with GCA to approve the course selection and designate a testing proctor for tests. Credit by exam is accepted for make-up credit only.

Transfer students who are unable to meet graduation requirements at Grace Christian Academy due to scheduling conflicts will be allowed to secure credit through options one and two listed above. These options only may be exercised due to a scheduling conflict and may not be used to substitute for a course available at GCA.

DUAL CREDIT

In association with San Jacinto College, students may take college level courses which allow the student to earn both high school and college credit. Students taking dual credit courses are building two transcripts: the institution of higher education (IHE) transcript and the high school transcript. Students must be granted permission by GCA

administration prior to registering for dual credit courses to earn both a unit for high school credit and college credit. Typically students take two courses in the fall and two courses in the spring. Dual credit is available for any high school student who meets the requirement.

STUDENT TESTING PROGRAM

Iowa Basic Skills Test – Grades K-11: a standards-based system of assessments to monitor progress toward college and career readiness from grade 3 through early high school, connecting each grade level to the next. This test allows for school-wide assessment, data management and reporting functions for all students, aggregated and disaggregated groups of learners, and the individual learner.

PSAT/NMSQT – Grades 8-11: This test is administered in mid-October at GCA. The PSAT/NMSQT measures verbal, mathematical reasoning and writing ability skills. Taking this test enables juniors to compete in the National Merit Scholarship Program, prepare for the SAT or ACT and seek information from colleges.

ACT/SAT: ACT/SAT recommends that juniors and seniors take one or both of these tests. Most colleges and universities require one of these tests for admission. Many schools utilize ACT/SAT scores in scholarship determinations. Students are encouraged to take challenging courses to properly prepare for these tests.

GENERAL INFORMATION

CLUBS AND ORGANIZATIONS

All GCA-sponsored organizations, athletic teams, performing groups, ministries, and clubs must be approved by the Principal. Bylaws and rules of conduct must be consistent with general school rules and must be approved by the Principal and Administrators.

GCA ATHLETIC BOOSTER CLUB

The Athletic Booster Club is established to provide support for the athletic programs. Parents of student athletes and other interested parents and students conduct fund-raisers and assist the athletic department in running the various athletic events.

STUDENT COUNCIL

The executive officers of the Council shall be the president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer and at least one historian and no more than two. The number of representatives allowed in the government will be two members per grade.

HONOR SOCIETY

Students are encouraged to maintain academic excellence and join service clubs that promote leadership, scholarship, character and responsibility. Specific guidelines, standards and invitations are distributed each year. A ceremony is held each year as students are admitted to this group.

DISTRIBUTION OF MATERIALS

All aspects of school-sponsored newspapers and/or yearbooks are under the supervision of the Principal. Written materials, handbills, photographs, pictures, petitions, films, tapes or other visual or auditory materials may not be sold, circulated or distributed at school by a student or a non-student without the prior approval from the Principal. All materials intended for distribution to students must be submitted to the main office for administrative review and approval. No signs, posters or pictures may be posted without prior approval. Signs are to be posted by school personnel only.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips can be an excellent supplement in the operation of a comprehensive educational program. Teachers and/or the school administration have the option to determine the academic, dress code and/or behavioral qualifications for student participation. All field trips must have written approval from the principal as well as written permission from a parent/guardian before a student can participate in a field trip.

Parents are encouraged to attend field trips whenever possible. It is understood that parents accompanying field trips are to work cooperatively under the teacher's supervision to assist in organizing and monitoring the students. Chaperones also must follow the dress code requirements for the field trip as directed by the teacher and/or school administration. Family friends and siblings or other relatives cannot be accommodated at regular school activities.

LOCKERS AND DESKS

Lockers and desks remain under the jurisdiction of the school even when they are assigned to individual students. The school reserves the right to inspect and/or search all lockers and desks any time there is reasonable cause to do so whether or not the student is present. Locker assignment information is kept on file in the school office and must be accurate.

Students are not to change lockers or enter another student's locker without permission from the school administration. The student has full responsibility for the security of the locker, making certain that the locker is locked and that the combination is not available to others.

School-issued locks are to be used on lockers without lock mechanisms, unless written permission is given by a parent for a student not to use a lock. The school cannot be responsible for items missing or stolen from lockers and desks.

Lockers and desks are to be kept neat, clean and free of writing, stickers and gum, both inside and out. Students are responsible for damage to lockers or desks caused by kicking locker doors, forcing locker doors open, tampering with the lock mechanism, writing or scratching on lockers or desks, etc. Students should report any problems with lockers to the school office.

LOST AND FOUND

Students often misplace articles of clothing, books and other personal property. These items are turned in to the Lost and Found box in the gym or school office for the students to claim. All personal items should be labeled. Every possible effort will be made to return lost items to their owners. Periodically, lost and found items will be displayed in the cafeteria or gym for the students to claim. Unclaimed items may be donated to a charitable organization.

Students should not bring large sums of money or wear expensive jewelry to school. The school cannot assume any responsibility for personal property that is lost or stolen at school.

GCA UPDATE-EAGLE INSIDER

An email (Eblast) will be distributed to parents on a bi-weekly basis and posted on the GCA website regarding important dates and upcoming events. This is our primary method of general school events and communication, so please make sure that the office has your current email address. Additional emails may be initiated with important school information at additional times as deemed necessary by administration.

PARENT-TEACHER/ADMINISTRATOR CONFERENCES

Parents who wish to set up a conference with a teacher and/or administrator may do so by contacting the school office. Teachers only can schedule conferences and return phone calls during their conference periods or before and after school. Parents who want to meet with all of their child's teachers may request a conference before or after school.

Parents should sign in at the school office when arriving for any conference. Visitors should not go directly to a teacher's classroom. To avoid a lengthy wait, parents desiring a conference with an administrator are encouraged to contact the school in advance to schedule an appointment.

SCHOOL CHAPELS

All regular weekly chapels are scheduled on Thursdays and are separated by elementary and secondary. As chapels are worship services, the students' behavior must be reverent and respectful. All students are required to attend chapel, participate in singing, group recitations and other activities conducted during chapel unless dismissed by the Principal/Administration. Parents are invited to attend chapel.

SCHOOL HOURS

Grace Christian Academy office hours are from 7:45 am through 4:00 pm
Classes are in session Monday through Friday, 8:00 am – 3:30 pm

Upon arrival at school, all students should immediately enter the building through the front GCA building entrance. Please do not use the Grace Christian Academy Early Learning Center entrance. Any specific special directions or changes for elementary dismissal will be distributed at the beginning of the school year.

Parents are asked not to bring their children to school before 7:30 am and to pick them up promptly after dismissal time. All students are required to wait in the Auditorium for morning assembly. Students will be dismissed or escorted to their classroom after morning assembly.

After school dismissal, students in kindergarten through fourth grade may be taken to Grace Christian Academy Early Learning Center if previously registered with GCA Early Learning Center. Older students will need to be picked up by 4:00 pm. No student will be permitted to be unsupervised before or after school hours. The gym is closed after school except for school-sponsored events.

Grace Christian Academy Early Learning Center has childcare for children in kindergarten through fifth grade. If parents are not able to pick up a child by 4:00 pm, prior arrangements with the GCA Early Learning Center office must be made. Grace Christian Academy Early Learning Center teachers cannot accept drop-in children from GCA without approval from the GCA Early Learning Center office or Director.

SCHOOL LUNCHES

Students may bring their own lunch to school. There is a hot lunch program available for purchase online. Students who ordered lunch will go through the serving line and will receive the designated lunch of the day. Students may bring their own water bottle. Students may refill their personal water bottle at designated times throughout the day.

Students are not allowed to have food delivered from outside sources (DoorDash, Uber Eats, etc.). Students are not allowed to leave campus for lunch. In the event that a student forgets their lunch, the student will be offered a sandwich lunch and the account will be charged. A parent may bring lunch to the student. However, the parent must notify the school office of their intent to send or bring the student's lunch.

International student's lunches are included in their tuition

SCHOOL PARTIES

Holiday class parties generally are limited to the elementary grades (K-4). Teachers will determine the guidelines and arrangements that best suit these events and will make this information available as needed. When planning birthday celebrations, please do not distribute invitations at school unless all children in the class are included. Any special arrangements for bringing refreshments for celebrations should be coordinated with the classroom teacher.

SCHOOL VISITATION

All visitors should sign in at the main school office and receive a visitor's pass that must be worn in a visible manner at all times while in the school building. All visitors will require a driver license check through the security system. This ensures the safety of our children. Parents who are visiting for lunch must check in at the school office.

We welcome all parents to take advantage of volunteer opportunities at the school. Programs are strengthened even more when parents lend their support and participation. In general, we must ask that younger siblings not accompany volunteers who are working in the classrooms or on field trips.

STUDENT BACKPACKS

In order to allow for adequate safety precautions and floor space in the classrooms, Kindergarten through fourth grade students will need to hang their backpacks on the hooks provided in the classrooms for this purpose. **In order to fit well on the hooks or in the lockers, soft material backpacks should be used rather than "hard case."** Students should plan to use a pencil bag or similar item for taking their school supplies to class. Grades 5-12 will use lockers before class, at their designated lunch time, and after school. School backpacks are not to be left on the floor in the hallways. Students who fail to put their items away will be charged a \$5 fee.

SEVERE WEATHER INFORMATION

Unexpected school closings due to hurricane warnings or inclement weather conditions may follow the decision of the Clear Creek Independent School District. Families will be notified via Parent Alert texts, emails, and messages posted on the GCA website regarding any school closures.

STUDENT DRIVERS

Students are granted on-campus driving privileges only after registering their vehicles with the school office. This procedure will require that the student present a valid Texas

driver's license and proof of insurance, in addition to a signed permission slip from a parent or guardian. Students intending to park on school property must register their car and adhere to the following requirements:

1. Only students 16 years of age or older with a valid driver's license may use the parking lot.
2. Students may not go to their cars during the school day without permission from the school office. Students are not permitted to sit in their vehicles before school or during the school day.
3. Students must drive safely and within the speed limit (10-mph) while on campus.
4. Students who drive in an unsafe manner or misuse their driving privileges may have these privileges suspended.
5. International students are not allowed to drive unless they are seniors living with a family member.

GCA does not assume any financial responsibility for vehicles or personal items left in vehicles while parked in the school parking lot.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

Grace Christian Academy is committed to maintaining an environment in which all individuals treat each other with dignity and respect. All forms of intimidation and harassment are unacceptable and the school is prepared to take action to prevent and correct any violations of this policy.

A student or parent who has a complaint alleging sexual harassment or offensive, intimidating conduct of a sexual nature may request a conference with a school administrator. All complaints will be promptly investigated. Every effort will be made to protect the privacy of the parties involved with regard to any complaint.

TELEPHONES/COMMUNICATION DEVICES

The school telephones are for school business. Students will not be taken out of class to receive a telephone call unless there is an emergency. School personnel will deliver messages to students if necessary. If a student needs to return a call they may go to the school office to return the call via school phone or cell phone. Students must receive permission from the office staff before using the telephone in the school office.

GCA elementary students may not use cell phones/electronic devices during school hours.

There is zero tolerance for the use of cell phones/electronic devices usage during school hours unless directly supervised by GCA administration, otherwise, students must leave cell phones at home or in their backpack.

Students in secondary school will be asked to turn in their cell phones to a designated area in the classroom at the beginning of class-no exceptions. At the end of each class they may collect their phone. Cell phone usage is allowed before 8:00 am, during passing

times, and at lunch. GCA administration reserves the right to amend this rule as necessary to maintain an active learning environment for all students with Board approval.

The following disciplinary action will be issued to students who are found using an unauthorized cell phone/electronic device, regardless of who owns the cell phone/electronic device.

- 1st Offense-Student will have the cell phone/electronic device taken up and a warning will be given and logged in Renweb Disciplinary log
- 2nd Offense- Fine \$15 (cash payment) or \$20.00 (card payment). Payment Options: student/parent will have to pay in person or give verbal permission to administration and pay over the phone. Upon receipt of payment, the cell phone will be released to the owner.
- 3rd Offense- Fine \$30 (cash payment) or \$35 (card payment). Payment options are the same as the 2nd offense.
- 4th-6th Offense- Fine \$45.00 (cash payment) or \$50.00 (card payment) and a detention is assigned. Payment options are the same as the 2nd offense.
- 7th Offense- Fine \$45.00 (cash payment) or \$50.00 (card payment) and a Saturday School is assigned. Alongside the Saturday School, the student's cell phone/electronic device will be prohibited on campus. If the student brings these items to school, they are required to check them into the front office before school starts each morning and may be picked up by the student at the end of the school day. Payment options are the same as the 1st offense.

TEXTBOOKS

Each teacher issues textbooks to students. Each student's name, room number and teacher must be entered in ink on the inside front cover of the textbook. To protect textbooks, the school requires that all hardback textbooks be covered. If a textbook is lost, the student must pay for the book and show the teacher the payment receipt before another book can be issued. Students must pay for hardback textbooks that are damaged or defaced.

Students who change teachers or withdraw from a class for any reason must return the textbook in person to the teacher who issued the book. Students are not to return a textbook by leaving it in a teacher's mailbox or on a teacher's desk. Consumable textbooks are the student's property. Online textbooks may be assigned upon approval.

TECHNOLOGY ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

COMPUTER NETWORK

The following applies to anyone (students/visitors) using the GCA Computer Network (its technology and communications systems including internet, email, social media, web page, computer, communication, cameras, learning, telephone, wireless and mobile devices and software programs used to educate and conduct the school's business). Abuse or misuse of the Computer Network by students is considered a serious offense and will lead to discipline, up to and including termination of employment.

ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

GCA recognizes that as technology effects the manner in which information may be accessed, communicated and transferred by members of society, those changes may also alter instruction and student learning. Telecommunications, electronic information services and networked services significantly alter the information landscape by opening schools, classrooms and library media centers to a broader array of resources. The school generally supports access by students and teachers to rich information resources along with the development of appropriate skills to analyze and evaluate such resources.

In making decisions regarding student and student access to the GCA Computer Network and related resources, GCA considers its own stated educational mission, goals and objectives. This requires that all instructional and library media materials support and enrich the curriculum and represent Christ-like values while taking into account the varied instructional needs, learning styles, abilities and developmental levels of the students.

Telecommunications, including video, audio and text services, because they may be connected to any publicly available source in the world, will open classrooms to electronic information resources which may not have been specifically chosen or previewed for use by students of various ages.

In particular, the internet is a collection of interconnected computer networks around the world that makes it possible to share information almost instantly. The networks are owned by countless commercial, research, governmental and educational organizations. The internet expands classroom and library media center resources by making information, images and even computer software from places otherwise impossible to reach available to students, teachers, librarians and media specialists. Access to these resources can yield individual and group projects, collaboration, curriculum materials and ideas of sharing. Internet access also makes contact with people all over the world, bringing into the classroom experts in every content area.

The GCA Computer Network is the property of the school. GCA maintains the right to monitor and enter into any of its computer network and related resources and to inspect and review any and all activity and data recorded in those systems. In this regard, the students expressly waive any right of privacy in anything they create, store, provide,

send or receive on the computer network and related resources and consent to monitoring. Therefore, students should not assume that any messages or stored information (such as information contained on tablets, computer hard-drives, computer disks or e-mail systems) are private and confidential.

GCA will monitor all activity and history. While GCA will make a concerted effort to filter and supervise online access for appropriate content, methods are far from foolproof and responsibility for acceptable use remains with the student, student, visitor, or any other user.

The following principles guide access to the GCA Computer Network:

The school makes its Computer Network available to students, as appropriate for their education. E-mail and Internet usage is an important communication and learning tool and should be used primarily for school business and instructional purposes. However, limited and incidental personal use of these resources is permissible so long as such use is occasional, of reasonable duration, does not adversely affect student performance, and does not violate state or federal laws or compromise intellectual property rights.

Access is a privilege, not a right. Access entails responsibility.

- GCA expects that Students will integrate thoughtful use of the Computer Network throughout the school's curriculum.
- User access from GCA to the Computer Network shall follow guidelines developed for the selection of appropriate instructional materials as decided upon by the instructional guidelines set forth in the various disciplines.
- Since access could extend beyond evaluated or previewed resources, the Students will supervise and provide developmentally appropriate guidance and instruction to students in the appropriate and effective use of such resources.
- Users are responsible for good behavior on school computer networks, just as in classrooms and other areas of the school. Communications on networks are often public in nature and discretion and prudence should always be used. A simple rule of thumb is: *"Do not transmit any message or information that you would not be comfortable seeing on the front page of tomorrow's newspaper (or being read by your grandmother, your pastor or your spouse)."*

The following are examples of activities that are prohibited and may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of enrollment. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Accessing the files or communications of others without appropriate authorization
- Using online chat rooms or instant messenger programs outside the framework of job responsibilities and in a manner that inhibits job productivity
- Downloading of software or attachments (which have the potential to spread viruses and worms throughout the entire school network)
- Advertising or listings for personal benefit
- Communications that are addressed to another user in any manner that could reasonably cause him or her distress, embarrassment, or unwarranted attention
- Using the computer network or related resources to violate laws or regulations

- Creating, forwarding or sending any offensive or disruptive messages, including but not limited to, messages which contains sexual implications, or other offensive slurs, off-color jokes, or offensive comments related to someone's race, age, gender, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, political beliefs, national origin, disability, status as a cover veteran, or genetic information
- Using the computer network or related resources to solicit for commercial ventures, political candidates, outside organizations, or other non-school related solicitations
- Generating personal attacks, including attacks based on race, color, religion, sex, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, genetic information, age, disability, status as a covered veteran or any other factors prohibited by law
- Browsing, retrieval, display or distribution of vulgar, offensive or inflammatory language, materials or images, including sexually explicit material, languages or pictures
- Engaging in any illegal activity
- Allowing students to have access to the faculty/staff network (by using your computer or plugging in your network connection into a laptop)
- Sending messages that adversely affect the reputation of the school or its students, parents, or community members
- Circumventing the IT security systems and protocols which the school has established
- Other infractions deemed by the school to warrant disciplinary action

Outside of the school, families are responsible for setting and conveying the same standards that their children exercise in the use of television, telephones, radio, movies and other media to the use of telecommunications in network information resources. Therefore, GCA supports and respects each family's decision whether or not to allow student access to the network resources provided by the school.

The educational value of student networked information resources access is the joint responsibility of students, parents, and Students of the School.

The school retains the right to monitor communications in network usage accessed through its own communication and technology devices as well as those owned by individuals while using the GCA communication and network systems. **Students do not have an exception of privacy when utilizing the school Computer Network.** All Students explicitly agree to this condition in consideration for the ability to utilize the school's communication resources and technology.

If you have questions, please contact the Principal. Violation of this policy may lead to student discipline, including termination of enrollment. When appropriate, law enforcement agencies may be involved.

FINANCES

TUITION

Installment tuition plans for U.S. students only are to be paid through the FACTS Account management tuition program. FACTS allows for a monthly direct debit from your bank account or a charge to a credit card. Installment plans are 10 or 11-month based. Parents paying through FACTS must set up a profile on the FACTS accounting system. Set up instructions can be picked up at the GCA office. FACTS will assess late fees if tuition is not paid by the specified due dates.

If a family account is past due (30 or more days), official school documents, progress reports, report cards, or transcripts will not be released, and the student will be ineligible for extracurricular activities unless an approved payment plan has been approved. All balances (or designated payment plans) must be paid at the end of each semester or the child cannot continue. Official documents will not be released due to outstanding charges for library fines, book damage fees or other school-associated fees or charges. In order for diplomas, transcripts and other official documents to be released, the family account, including all tuition payments must be completely paid.

FEES /REFUNDS

Fees are assessed based upon involvement in optional school activities and fundraisers. Students who participate in sports or other extracurricular activities will pay a fee to help offset the operating expenses of the activities. Refunds of tuition will not be given after the first day of class. International students are not governed by the U.S. student refund policy.

OUTSTANDING BALANCES

If a student has any outstanding balance of 30 or more days on his or her record, the student may be required to suspend participation in any GCA athletic program. In addition, all academic records may be held until the balance is paid off. The Finance office in conjunction with the administration will handle all outstanding balances.

FUNDRAISERS

The school will hold fundraisers each year. Individual organizations may hold their own fund-raising activities upon approval from GCA Administration. Each parent will be expected to have their child participate since tuition alone does not sufficiently fund GCA expenses.

TUITION ASSISTANCE/SCHOLARSHIPS

Limited scholarships are awarded as funds become available. Scholarships are based on need and generally cover a percentage of tuition. Fees are not subsidized by scholarship

funds. Decisions regarding scholarships are made during the summer and are based upon a first come first served basis.

STUDENT ACCIDENT INSURANCE

All GCA students are covered by a supplemental student accident insurance policy. The nominal premium covers all injuries sustained at school or school-sponsored events including sports. This is a secondary policy, which covers expenses not covered by the student's primary insurance. For uninsured students, this insurance becomes the primary policy.

Health Insurance-International students only- Health and medical insurance is purchased separately for all international students.

WITHDRAWAL PROCEDURE

The standard withdrawal procedure must be completed through the main office before a student's records can be released. This process is not complete until the necessary forms are signed, outstanding debts are paid and any textbooks, library books or other school property are returned. (Policy for refunds are included in enrollment packets)

HEALTH SERVICES

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

A student who is too ill to function in the classroom or who displays symptoms of a communicable disease will be isolated from the other students. A temperature above 100°, diarrhea and vomiting are common symptoms for which a parent will be asked to pick-up the student. Parents are requested not to bring a student back to school that has had any of these symptoms for 24 hours, during the night or morning before school begins. A student will not be allowed to stay in school if any of these symptoms are present.

A student must have written consent from either a physician or the Texas Department of Health or be subject to school office approval to return to school if any of the following conditions have occurred: chicken pox, measles, mumps, pneumonia, whooping cough, pinworms, scabies, ringworm, impetigo, pink eye or head lice (students must be completely nit free to return to school).

If the following exists, your child should stay home or if illness occurs at school, they will be sent home:

- **Temperature of 100.0 or above:** May return when fever free for 24 hours without any fever reducing medications.

- **Vomiting within the last 24 hours:** May return when vomiting has subsided without any anti-emetic medication for 24 hours and appetite has returned.
- **Diarrhea within the last 24 hours:** May return when diarrhea free without any anti-diarrhea medication for 24 hours.
- **Any unexplained rashes or skin infections:** May return to school with a note from a physician with medical clearance.
- **Live lice or nits:** May return when the student has had treatment, and no active lice or nits are present.
- **Conjunctivitis (pink eye) or any discharge, red and itchy eyes.** May return to school once on medicated eye drops for 24 hours or has a physician note stating when the student may return.
- **Flu:** May return when fever free for 24 hours without medication and feeling well.
- **Strep throat:** May return when fever free for 24 hours without fever reducing medication, has been on antibiotics for 24 hours and/or has a physician note clearing the student to return to school.
- **Suspected contagious diseases:** May return when a physician has cleared the student to return.
- **Covid 19:** May return to school after symptoms have improved and fever free for 24 hours without any fever reducing medications.

FIRST AID/MEDICAL EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

At the beginning of each school year, parents must provide a notarized “Medical Release Form” for each enrolled student. The form includes the name and phone number of the doctor to be notified, as well as the name, address and phone number of the parents and another adult to be notified, if the need should arise.

It is the responsibility of the parent to make certain the information on file is kept current. In case of bad weather, serious illness or other emergencies, we must be able to contact you or the alternative adult indicated on the Medical Release Form. This information may need to be used before consultation with the family is possible.

In case of minor illness, GCA is equipped with an area in the office where students may receive care. Students must obtain a Health Station Pass from a teacher before going to the nurse.

In case of an illness or accident requiring medical attention, the family will be contacted to pick up their child. Parents are responsible to provide transportation for their sick children. Students with on-campus driving privileges may drive themselves home if they are able to do so and if the parent gives the school office permission to release the student.

MEDICATION

If possible, all medication should be administered at home. However, if the student needs to take medication during the school day, the medication will be dispensed according to the following guidelines:

1. All medications must be kept in the nurse's office. The nurse will supervise the storing and dispensing of all prescription and non-prescription medicine. Students must bring medication to the office between 8:00 and 8:30 am. Students should not carry any medication to classrooms or keep any medication in lockers, backpacks or purses. Students who have medication and fail to bring it to the school office will be subject to disciplinary action.
2. Written permission and specific directions for administration of prescription medicine is required. Directions must include the student's name, dates and time to be given, name of medication, strength and dosage of the medication, specific directions for administration and the name of the physician prescribing the medication.
3. ALL medication MUST be in the original container.
4. If non-prescription or prescription medication is to be administered for a period of no longer than 10 days, a written request from a parent or guardian is required.
5. If non-prescription or prescription medication is to be administered longer than ten days, a written request from a physician or dentist is required.

VISION AND HEARING SCREENINGS

Vision and hearing screenings are conducted on a rotating basis each year. Testing schedules for screening done at GCA will be made available, as this information is determined. If a student has a challenge in this area and is not scheduled for screening, parents may contact the school office and specifically request a screening for that year. Parents who desire to have their student tested by their own physician must provide proof of screening prior to the school's scheduled screening.

ENROLLMENT

Grace Christian Academy's mission includes both the nurturing of the students from Christian homes, as well as the winning of students and families who are without Christ's saving faith. It is for this reason that there will be no requirement on the part of students or parents to acknowledge a personal relationship with Jesus Christ as a condition for admission.

Each family enrolling a student in Grace Christian Academy will be given a clear presentation of the Gospel message during the course of the enrollment process so that they understand the centrality of this message to the educational program of Grace Christian Academy.

It is desired that the values and beliefs taught to our students during the school day be reinforced at home. Prior to enrollment at GCA, the Principal will assess the parent's motivation in seeking the student's enrollment in our school, as well as the student's willingness to attend and adhere to the school's policies and procedures.

If the atmosphere of a particular home is in opposition to the biblical lifestyle the school teaches, the school reserves the right, within its sole discretion, to refuse admission of an applicant or to discontinue enrollment of a student.

GCA PRIORITY RE-ENROLLMENT

Priority re-enrollment is the initial phase of enrollment for the upcoming school year, which offers a substantial discount in the enrollment fee and first consideration in class enrollment. The priority re-enrollment period is reserved for current GCA students, members of Grace Church Houston, preschool students from the Early Learning Center and siblings of GCA students to register for the coming year.

During this time, the required enrollment documents must be completed and processed via the online re-enrollment process along with the enrollment fee. Enrollment will be opened to the general public after the priority enrollment period ends.

KINDERGARTEN ADMISSION REQUIREMENT

All students applying for admission to kindergarten must be five (5) years of age on or before Sept. 1 of the year in which they are to be enrolled. A certified birth certificate verifying the child's birth date must be presented at the time of registration.

IMMUNIZATION POLICY

Texas Law mandates immunization of elementary and high school students against certain communicable diseases. The law requires that students be immunized or vaccinated before the 1st day of school. The law further requires that students be tested for tuberculosis if they attended school or lived in a "high-risk" country in the preceding school year.

The school office will provide information on age-appropriate doses required by the Texas Department of Health. Personal records validated by a licensed physician or public health care clinic may be used as proof of immunization. The nurse will keep an individual immunization record during the period of attendance for each student admitted and the record will be open for inspection at all reasonable times by local health officials.

The immunization program must be complete and on file in the school office no later than the first day that school is in session or the child will be excluded from school until the program is completed. Exemptions are notarized and must be submitted to the Nurse.

International Students- Students must provide translated Immunization records by the first day of school.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

ATTENDANCE PHILOSOPHY

School attendance is one of the factors most closely related to successful academic accomplishment in school. Students who are absent miss valuable instruction. Parents should strive to have their children in school every day.

ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS

In compliance with the Texas Compulsory School Attendance Law, Grace Christian Academy requires students in kindergarten through 12th grade to be in attendance for 90 percent of the entire period of program of instruction in order to be promoted to the next grade and/or to receive credit for academic coursework.

Time spent during chapel, class parties, field trips or other types of special events is counted toward school attendance. Students should remain in attendance until school is dismissed for that day. The Renweb system is used for attendance at GCA.

ABSENCES

Excused Absences

Absences will be excused in the following instances:

- Personal illness: Any student absent more than five (5) consecutive days may be required to bring medical documentation stating the date and time of appointments and/or the nature of the illness.
- Death in the family
- Medical or dental appointments
- School sponsored events
- Absences for “Special Days”

Unexcused Absences

Absences for reasons other than those listed in excused absences will be designated as unexcused, unless the student has written parental and medical permission to be absent from school. Unexcused absences will count toward the limit of maximum allowable absences.

Absences for “Special Days”

It is recognized that family events may not be able to be scheduled during regular school vacations or holidays. “Special days” are established to accommodate such unusual situations.

When students are absent, teachers must allot extra time for tutoring or re-teaching the subject material, assume the additional duties of extended grading and schedule make-up time for quizzes and tests. Absences due to unavoidable circumstances or illnesses are considered routine occurrences.

It is with concern that the GCA administration strongly appeals to parents to consider the added workload for their children's teachers and the school's staff when making decisions about "special days" absences.

Excused absences may be granted for "Special Days" under following conditions.

1. The reason for the absence must be stated in writing and submitted by the parent to the school office.
2. Assignments made prior to the absence must be turned in before the scheduled absence. All missed work, quizzes and tests should be made up in advance, if possible or upon the first day of return. Parents are responsible for providing any instruction that is missed and for ensuring that all make-up work is turned in on time. Work not submitted on time will be graded as a late assignment.
3. A student will not be granted an excused absence for "special days" during semester exams and achievement testing.
4. "Special Day" absences count toward the limit of maximum allowable absences.

EXCESSIVE ABSENCES

A student who is absent more than the 10% limit of allowable absences in a semester (for grades 7-12) or year (for grades K-6) will lose credit for that semester or year. Students may apply for credit restoration if they have excessive absences. Each case presented to the Credit Restoration Committee will be decided based on merit.

TARDIES

Students are tardy to school if they are not present for morning assembly at 8:00 am, unless they are conducting business in one of the school offices. Students arriving late must stop at the main office for a tardy slip before entering the classroom. Students arriving at their classroom door after the designated class start time (see 24-25 Bell schedule), will be considered tardy and will need to go to the school office to receive a pass to enter class.

Students arriving after 10:15 am will be recorded as having a half-day absence for that day. Students leaving the GCA campus prior to 1:30 pm will be recorded as having a half-day absence.

All tardies are unexcused except for Dr. Appointments; unpreventable issues i.e. accidents, traffic, etc. Only the Principal can authorize excused tardiness due to weather or extenuating circumstances. Parents should call the school office.

GCA is placing a greater emphasis on tardiness. A notification email will be sent to parents after each designated tardy. Students may be given an unexcused tardy for late morning drop off and individual class periods.

On the fourth unexcused tardy of a quarter, the student will be assigned a \$15 fee and detention. Students will receive an additional fees and detention for tardies 5 and 6. On the 7th tardy, the student will be assigned Saturday detention, assessed a \$50 fee, and a parent conference will be scheduled to help remedy the situation. This tardy policy only applies for grades 7th – 12th.

Elementary tardies will be handled by the classroom teacher and GCA Administration.

Tardy	Consequence
1-3	Unexcused Tardy Recorded in Renweb
4-6	After School Detention Assigned, \$15 fee
7+	Saturday Detention Assigned, \$50 fee, Parent Conference Scheduled

RETURN PROCEDURES

When returning from an absence, all students must submit a note from their parent or guardian. Kindergarten students returning after an absence or tardy must be accompanied to the main school office and then to their classroom. A note for an excused absence must be submitted to the appropriate school office with the following information:

- Current date and Date of Absence
- Student's name, reason for absence, and signature of parent or guardian
- Verification from health care professional if absence exceeds five (5) consecutive days
- Signature of Parent or Guardian

EARLY RELEASE FROM CLASSES-PERMISSION TO LEAVE CAMPUS

It is best to arrange medical and dental appointments after school or on school vacation days. If it is unavoidable to miss part of a school day for this reason, a partial day's absence will be given depending on the amount of time missed. Parents are encouraged to allow students to remain in class for the complete day. Final Assignments and directives given at the end of the day can be critical reminders affecting the success of each student.

When leaving during the school day and returning the same day, students must submit a signed note from a parent or guardian verifying the need and time necessary for the early dismissal. A parent may also provide a verbal authorization to the school office. The student then must sign out at the main office. If returning from an appointment before the end of the school day, the student also must sign in at the main office and receive an admittance slip.

In all cases of health care appointments scheduled during the school day, a note from the health care provider must be submitted upon the student's return to school in order for the absence to be recorded as excused.

Students are not to leave campus for any reason without written or verbal permission from a parent or guardian. **Students who leave campus without properly signing out will have an unexcused absence. GCA is a closed campus. No student will be allowed to leave for any reason without written/verbal or phone confirmation from a parent or legal guardian. No student will be allowed to leave campus unless accompanied by a legal guardian, parent or approved adult. Only students 18 years old may sign out with parental permission and leave unaccompanied by an adult. Special consideration will be given for students under 18 who have parental permission regarding: health appointments, dual credit classes, funerals, emergencies and early release days.**

DISCIPLINARY POLICY

DISCIPLINARY PHILOSOPHY

The philosophies and programs of Grace Christian Academy are built upon the principles of God's Word and we strive to provide an environment that is conducive to the spiritual growth and development of all our students. One of the prerequisites for success in life is self-discipline. Christian discipline is learned by submitting to the authority of the home, church and school.

As a Christian ministry, the goal of GCA is to maintain order and decency in all things. In addition to obeying Scriptural principles and pleasing the Lord, rules of conduct are necessary for the safe orderly operation of our school. Accountability is a part of growing up and a part of Christian living. GCA students should be noted for their good manners, good citizenship and responsible lifestyles.

Biblical principles used by GCA for guiding children to predetermined discipline goals include 1) instruction, 2) correction, 3) exhortation, 4) rebuke and 5) suspension and expulsion. Our goal is self-discipline.

Both discipline and learning go hand-in-hand to build character and to allow the student to best develop in the dimension of the whole person. It is expected that students at GCA will put forth a quality effort to listen to and obey the voice of their "inner man" (spirit) and exemplify Christ-like character.

Should the nature of the first offense be serious enough for a stricter consequence a student could be suspended for three to five days, a quarter, a semester or for the entire

school year. Suspensions beyond the five-day limit are based on a review of the Administrative Council. Examples of suspensions longer than five days would include the following: alcohol, drugs, vandalism, sexual behavior, sexual and physical harassment, possession of weapons, threatening verbal and written words, to name a few

EXPECTATIONS FOR BEHAVIOR

1. Students at Grace Christian Academy are expected to **seek to live a holy and pure life at all times.** They should refrain from activities that defile the spirit. Galatians 5:16-23 states, “So I say, live by the Spirit and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature. For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissension, factions and envy; drunkenness orgies and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.”
2. **Students should demonstrate a teachable, submissive spirit towards adults in authority over them.** Students are expected to behave courteously and respectfully toward ALL members of the church, day care and GCA faculty and staff. Hebrews 13:17 states, “Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you.”
3. **Students will not lie, cheat or steal nor tolerate this behavior in others.** Students are not only expected to obey this policy, but also to promote and encourage their fellow students to follow it. Psalms 15:1-3 teaches us, “Lord, who may dwell in your sanctuary? Who may live on your holy hill? He whose walk is blameless and who does what is righteous, who speaks the truth from his heart and has no slander on his tongue, who does his neighbor no wrong and casts no slur on his fellowman.”
4. **Students will acknowledge the need to use language or words that uplift and encourage the peers and adults in their life.** Psalms 19:14 declares, “May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, O Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer.”
5. **Courtesy and Respect -True courtesy is an inner spirit that gradually becomes a learned etiquette.** It is expected that all GCA students will show proper courtesy and respect to all adults on campus as well as to their classmates. The school needs the help of parents in training their children in this area.

Respect is an attribute of Christian character that reflects moral restraint of inward and outward behavior. The presence or absence of respect is the best way to evaluate the quality of character. In the New International Version, it says, "Show proper respect for everyone: Love the brotherhood...fear God, honor the King." God calls His people to a divine standard. This higher standard requires action on the part of the individual.

Courtesy and respect to all adults should include the following:

- Using "Mr.," "Mrs.," "Miss," "Ms." or "Pastor" (using last names) when speaking with adults.
- Using "Sir" and "Ma'am" in response.
- Using "excuse me," "please" or other requests for repetition.
- Opening doors for all adults.

Students are expected to use "Please" and "Thank You" in all cases.

Students, staff, and parents at Grace Christian are expected to guard their words. We know that the words we speak are a powerful force Proverbs 18:21 warns, "Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruit." Jesus said, "For by your words you will be justified, and by your words, you will be condemned" (Matthew 12:37). Spoken words get inside a person's spirit. Students then begin to think and act on what is inside them.

Attacking students' self-esteem through yelling, sarcasm, put-downs, embarrassment and belittling their character is not acceptable. Although these types of words may be used in the home, such words spoken in school will result in being suspended from school. Words spoken that are sexual harassment, scoffing, scorning, offensive slang, racial remarks or racial labeling may result in being suspended from school.

Students, who choose to cuss and use profanity, whether it is on campus or off campus at school sponsored activities, including all sports, may be suspended for three days.

EAGLE EXPECTATIONS

- Be Safe
- Be Responsible
- Be Respectful

All faculty and staff will use the common language of the Eagle Expectations to reinforce positive or correct inappropriate behaviors from grades preK-12th grade. Specific behavior guidelines related to each of the expectations are posted throughout the building (restrooms, hallways, chapel, cafeteria, classrooms, etc.) Eagle tickets will be awarded to students who are displaying the Eagle Expectations as a way of reinforcing positive behaviors.

BULLYING

Bullying behavior is a specific type of harassment defined as the repeated and intentional behavior purposefully done to hurt or harm another person who has a hard time defending himself/herself. The harassment may be in written or verbal expression, expression through electronic methods, or physical conduct against another student on school property, at a school- sponsored or related activity, or in a school operated vehicle.

As the definition suggests, bullying behavior involves three key components which distinguish it from rough-and-tumble play and real fighting:

- Intentional, aggressive behavior that results in harm to the student or student's property.
- A pattern of this behavior over a period that creates an intimidating, threatening, or the abusive educational environment.
- An imbalance of power or strength that places a student in reasonable fear of physical harm or of damage to the student's property and if it interferes with a student's education or substantially disrupts the operation of the school.

Any student who perceives they have been subjected to conduct of a harassing or bullying nature or any student who witnesses conduct that is of a harassing or bullying nature should contact a teacher or administrator immediately. All reports of harassment and/or bullying will be investigated by the administration. Failure to report alleged harassment promptly will limit the administration's ability to deal effectively with the issue.

All students, faculty, staff, and parents who are subject to, witness, or know of harassing situations are responsible for contacting school administrators immediately regarding the situation. A student who aligns himself or herself by their presence with a person who is actively harassing someone is also guilty of harassment. Choosing to be a "silent witness" evidence complicity with harassing behavior.

If the results of an investigation indicate that bullying occurred, the administration will take appropriate disciplinary action. Disciplinary or other action may be taken even if the conduct did not rise to the level of bullying. The school administration will also contact the parents of the victim and the student who was found to have engaged in bullying.

Any retaliation against a student who reports an incident of bullying is prohibited. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- pushing, elbowing, poking, tripping, sitting on, kicking, or hitting
- threatening another with physical harm
- taunting others because of their physical traits including, but not limited to, age, voice, height, weight, athletic skill, or any other personal characteristic
- demeaning others intellectual ability, academic performance, or grade level
- taunting others about their social skills, e.g., making jokes at the expense of someone socially awkward

- taunting others either verbally or using gestures about their actual or perceived sexual orientation
- taunting others about their actual or perceived race, color, or national origin
- using derogatory terms to refer to someone's race or ethnic background
- excluding someone from a group or activity purposely to hurt them, e.g., refusing to let someone sit at a particular lunch table
- damaging, hiding, taking of property
- calling someone offensive or demeaning names
- making jokes involving offensive stereotypes
- posting on social media, or through text, mean, offensive, demeaning, embarrassing, or threatening comments or images
- creating fake web pages or fake profiles or assuming another's identity in any social media
- context to create content likely to cause embarrassment or concern
- spreading mean and hurtful rumors verbally or online
- creating offensive graffiti

GCA rules are neither unreasonable nor burdensome. As a condition of enrollment, parents and students agree to uphold and support the school and its rules at all times. Students who are consistently negative toward the standards, rules, faculty or administration of the school will be considered out of harmony with the school. These students will be counseled in Christian love and appropriate action will be taken by the administration.

The school reserves the right to dismiss or refuse to admit any student whose personal conduct and/or attitude, in the judgment of the administration, is inconsistent with the Christian spirit and standards, which the school seeks to maintain.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION - ELEMENTARY GRADES

In order to effectively live in the classroom “society,” certain rules must exist. Standards for classroom behavior will be established by each teacher or by the team-teachers of each grade level. These guidelines will be communicated clearly to the students as well as their parents.

Conduct marks and time-outs during recess will be used to encourage students to follow classroom rules and school policy. Conduct marks, which affect the overall conduct grade, are given on a day-to-day basis and do not carry over to the following day. Parents will be informed on a weekly basis of their child's conduct. Additionally, conduct grades will appear on the Progress Report and Report Card. Extreme discipline problems are handled by the Principal. Standards established through the Code of Conduct in conjunction with parental assistance will be used to achieve desired compliance.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION - SECONDARY GRADES

Detentions will be assigned for misconduct. A Renweb notice will be sent to parents each time a detention is assigned. If a student is assigned a Saturday detention, a \$50.00 fee will be charged to offset the supervising teacher's salary. **After six detentions within a semester, the student will be assigned one day in-school suspension.** Students on suspension will receive no grade for that day.

Expulsion may result from severe misconduct such as:

- Propagation of pornographic literature
- Sexual harassment or acts of immoral behavior
- Possession or use of alcoholic beverages, vapes, tobacco or illegal drugs on campus or at school-related events. None of these items are to be in vehicles brought to school (Medication taken during school hours must be kept in the nurse's office.).
- Carrying or possessing weapons of any kind on campus
- Verbal or physical threats or assaults toward a member of the faculty, staff or student body
- Any behavior that is considered to be criminal activity

GRACE CHRISTIAN ACADEMY CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT

The effective enforcement of the Code of Student Conduct and the School-Based Discipline Management System is essential in keeping a school and/or school-related activities free of disruption.

PARENTS

Support school, classroom rules for the student behavior and ensure their children:

- Conduct themselves according to school standards.
- Provide the school with their current address and, when available, current telephone numbers.
- Ensure students attend school (By state law, student attendance is the responsibility of parents and guardians).
- Provide the appropriate school personnel with any student information that will affect the student's ability to learn and the student's behavior.
- Read, acknowledge, and understand these rules and the rules applicable to their children's conduct while they are at school.
- Ensure their children follow dress code and behavior codes at school related events.

TEACHERS

Establish classroom-management procedures that concentrate on good student conduct, support the school and school procedures.

ADMINISTRATORS

Develop with all members of the school community and effective School-Based Discipline Management System that promotes and maintains the support of good student behavior.

STUDENTS

Adhere to school and classroom rules and regulations for behavior and good conduct.

Revelations 3:19 “Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline.”

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

The student’s responsibilities for achieving a positive learning environment at school and/or school related activities include the following:

- Attending all classes each day and beginning on time.
- Preparing for each class with the appropriate materials and complete assignments.
- Dressing according to the dress code adopted by the school.
- Knowing that the use, possession, and/or sale of illegal or unauthorized drugs, alcohol, and weapons are unlawful and prohibited and the students may be subject to random searches in accordance with school policy, state and federal laws in order to assure a safe school environment.
- Showing respect toward others.
- Conducting oneself in a responsible manner.
- Paying required fees and fines.
- Knowing and obeying all school rules.
- Cooperating with staff members in the investigation of disciplinary matters.
- Seeking changes in school policies and regulation in an orderly and responsible manner, through appropriate channels.
- Reporting threats to the safety of students and staff members as well as misconduct on the part of any other students or staff members to the building principal, a teacher, or another adult.
- Using GCA technology systems for school business purposes only and using school computers and related equipment appropriately.
- Abiding by the technology security procedures developed by GCA, such as never leaving a terminal or workstation unattended or unsecured while logged on to a host computer or network.
- Reporting all observed or suspected technology security problems immediately to a teacher.

In general, all students are entitled to enjoy the basic rights of citizenship recognized and protected by law for persons of their age and maturity. GCA shall foster a climate of mutual respect for the rights of others. Each student is expected to respect the rights and privileges of other students, teachers and other personnel.

Students shall exercise their rights and responsibilities in compliance with the rules established for the orderly conduct of the school educational mission.

The GCA rules of conduct and discipline and the School-Based Discipline Management System are established to achieve and maintain order in the school. Students who violate the rights of others or school rules shall be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with established district policies and procedures.

All students are expected to maintain the highest level of discipline and decorum at all school functions. Failure to comply with administrative directives promoting order and respect including inappropriate dress will result in the students being removed from participation in school activities, including commencement exercises.

STUDENTS AND SCHOOL PROPERTY

- Students are expected to show proper respect for both persons and property.
- Students are responsible for their own actions directed toward school property and for damages to property.
- Repairs to school property will be paid for by parents.

SEARCHES OF PROPERTY AND STUDENTS

- Students are entitled to the guarantees of the Fourth Amendment, and students are subject to reasonable searches and seizures.
- Students have the responsibility not to carry on their person, school property or at school-sponsored events such items as drugs, weapons, alcohol, or paging devices, or other contraband material in violation of school policy or state laws.
- School officials are empowered to conduct reasonable searches of students and school property when there is reasonable cause to believe that students may be in possession of drugs, weapons, alcohol or other materials “(contraband)” in violation of school policy or state law.
- Students who bring contraband onto school grounds may be searched in order to secure the school environment so learning can take place and to protect other students from any potentially harmful effects stemming from the contraband.
- School property such as lockers and desks shall remain under the control of school officials and shall be subject to searches.
- Students do not have a reasonable expectation of privacy in the use of school lockers or school desks.
- Law enforcement will periodically have unannounced Drug Dogs searches on campus.

STUDENT MISCONDUCT/DISCIPLINE POLICY

The Code of Student Conduct provides a description of a broad range of behavior considered to be student misconduct. The behavior described should be viewed as

representative of the misconduct that most frequently causes a disruption to the orderly educational process.

The acts of misconduct listed in Levels I, II, III, are not inclusive. The student who commits an act of misconduct that may be classified into any of the three levels will be subject to disciplinary action by the classroom teacher, assistant principal, and/or principal.

WHEN AND WHERE THESE RULES APPLY

The policies and administrative procedures concerning student conduct apply to actions of students on school property, school buses and in some cases, for conduct occurring off school property or within 300 feet of school property.

Additionally, the rules apply to actions of students at all school-sponsored or school-related activities or events, such as field trips, sporting events, stadium assemblies and fairs or evening school-related activities.

Students should be aware that the conviction of any felony offense whether at school or away from school might result in expulsion.

Finally, students should be aware that administrators who are made aware of inappropriate activity/conduct or criminal activity either on or off of campus, will make a report to appropriate law enforcement agencies. In addition to these administrative rules, students may be subject to criminal charges for violations of the law.

GENERAL DISCIPLINE GUIDELINES

ASSESSING PENALTIES

When administering discipline, personnel shall adhere to the following general guidelines:

- Discipline shall be administered when necessary to protect students, school property and to maintain essential order and discipline.
- Students shall be treated fairly and equitably.

Discipline shall be based on a careful assessment of the circumstance of each case and may include such factors as:

- Seriousness of the offense
- Student's age
- Frequency of misconduct
- Student's attitude
- Potential effect of the misconduct on the school environment
- State law requirements for certain disciplinary consequences

Serious offenses are those that substantially disrupt or materially interfere with the orderly process in the classroom, in the school, or any school-related activity and may include persistent misbehavior of Level II or higher misconduct.

Acts of misconduct are categorized into the following three levels of offenses:

- **LEVEL I – Violation of Classroom or Transportation Rules:** Offenses that generally occur in the classroom and can be corrected by the teacher,
- **LEVEL II – Administrative Intervention:** Offenses that are more serious in nature or a continuance of Level I misconduct.
- **LEVEL III – Suspension and/or Optional Removal:** Offenses that seriously disrupt the educational process in the classroom, in the school, and/or at school-related activities, or a continuance of repeated Level I, II, III misconduct. A finding that a student has engaged in a Level III offense may constitute a serious offense.

LEVEL I – VIOLATION OF CLASSROOM OR TRANSPORTATION RULES

Each teacher or staff member establishes the rules for the classroom and for the school-related activities. Much behavior is managed by the classroom teacher. The teacher may use any of the disciplinary options listed below in maintaining classroom discipline.

Acts of misconduct may include such behavior as:

- Violations of rules or procedures established by the teacher.
- Refusal to participate in classroom activities.
- Unexcused tardiness to class.
- Failure to bring required classroom materials or assigned work to class.
- General misbehavior, such as eating in class, horseplay, making excessive noise, or violating campus dress codes.
- Disruptive or non-compliant behavior on a school bus.
- Failure to protect individual computer passwords from disclosure.
- Any other act that disrupts the classroom or interrupts the operation of the class/activity.
- Failure to deliver or return written communications between home and school.

Disciplinary Options Responses for LEVEL I

- Oral Correction
- Teacher-student conference
- Loss of classroom privileges or recess time
- Parent contact: Note or telephone call to parent
- Detention after school
- Other appropriate in-class disciplinary actions
- Removal of classroom computer privileges

Procedure for Level I:

1. Any staff member who observes a student violating classroom rules may correct the student(s).
2. A record of the offenses and disciplinary actions will be maintained in the behavioral portal on Renweb and parents will be notified via email.
3. The teacher should discuss the misbehavior with the parent, an administrator, or support personnel.
4. Level I behavior violations and Discipline Options/Responses are not limited to those provided. Serious or repeated violations may result in a severe response or referral to Level II.

LEVEL II – ADMINISTRATOR INTERVENTION

Some infractions will result in a referral to an administrator. The disciplinary response depends on the offense, previous actions, and the seriousness of the misbehavior. Level II acts of misconduct include those student acts that interfere with the orderly educational process in the classroom or in the school.

A teacher who observes a student engaged in Level II or higher misconduct will fill out a discipline/referral form for the principal or other appropriate administrator. The principal will forward a report to the parents within 24 hours.

Acts of misconduct include such behavior as:

- Repeated violation of classroom or transportation rules under Level I
- Leaving the classroom or school grounds without permission of school personnel
- Possession of matches or other flammable materials
- Inappropriate display of affection
- Any verbal abuse of others, including name-calling or derogatory statements.
- Posting or distributing unauthorized materials in school grounds
- Failure to abide by rules, regulations, and dress code at extracurricular activities or at co-curricular activities such as field trips (including dress code.
- Loitering in unauthorized areas
- Changing school records or documents or signing parents' names on school documents
- Cafeteria disturbance
- Violations of a school's mandatory school-uniform policy
- Any other acts that interfere with the orderly educational process in the classroom or the school
- Accessing materials and sites on the internet that are deemed to be inappropriate by GCA
- Sending or forwarding inappropriate email, including email containing offensive language, statements, junk email chain letters or jokes
- Logging on to a computer, sending email, or accessing the internet using a name or password other than the student's own

- Posting unauthorized web pages, graphic images, or offensive language or comments on a school web page, internet, Facebook, Instagram, SnapChat, TikTok, or any social media site

Disciplinary Options Responses for Level II:

- Parent contact by phone and written notification to parent or guardian within 24 hours. Required administration student/parental conference.
- Exclusion from extracurricular activities, such as field trips, and commencement exercises and award ceremonies.
- After school or Saturday Detention
- Any other appropriate disciplinary actions determined by the administration.

Procedure for Level II:

1. Referral to administrator by way of a written report not to exceed one page in length.
2. Administrator confers with student and/or teacher to establish appropriate action.
3. Written notification is sent to parents within 24 hours of report. Notification is sent to the teacher indicating action taken.
4. Discipline Referral Form is retained by the administrator.
5. Level II behavior violations and Discipline Options/Responses are not limited to those provided.
6. Repeated violations shall result in a more severe response and/or referral to Level III.

LEVEL III – SUSPENSION

Acts include conduct for which an administrator may suspend the student or place the student into in-school suspension. The period of the suspension is limited to three days per occurrence.

Suspension Options

Suspension is limited to three days per occurrence and is authorized for conduct listed below. Additionally, the principal or other appropriate administrator may suspend a student for up to three days.

A decision to suspend a student is final and may not be appealed. A student may be suspended, placed into in-school suspension. If serious or persistent behavior occurs, the student may be removed from the regular classroom for engaging in the following conduct at school or at school-related events.

Acts of misconduct include such behavior as:

- **Chronic or repeated disciplinary infractions of Level I and Level II offenses.**
- Cheating or copying the work of other students.
- Profane language or gestures.
- Fighting
- Gambling

- Misdemeanor stealing/theft of property; including computers and related equipment, in an amount under \$750.00.
- More than one instance of cutting class or other forms of truancy.
- Discharging or calling in a false alarm will result in police being called and is a felony offense.
- Possession of a knife.
- Smoking, vaping, using or possessing tobacco products.
- Interfering with school authorities.
- Aggressive, disruptive action or group demonstration that substantially disrupts or materially interferes with school activities. (This includes such acts as boycotts, sit-ins, trespassing, and walkouts).
- Failure to comply with reasonable requests of school personnel and/or defiance of the authority of school personnel.
- Failure to adhere to terms of behavior contracts.
- Indecent/unsolicited sexual proposal/sexual harassment.
- Selling or soliciting for sale any merchandise on school campus without the authorization of the building principal.
- Display of disrespect toward school personnel or campus visitors.
- Participation in activities by groups such as gangs and cults.
- Wearing dress or attire signifying gang affiliations, profanity, vulgar language, or obscene gestures.
- Possession or use of fireworks, “poppers”, smoke or stink bombs, or any other pyrotechnic device that may be used to disrupt the educational process.
- Possession of laser pens/pointers.
- Possession of live ammunition or bullets.
- Any ethnic or racial slurs that seriously disrupt the educational process.
- Engaging in threats of other acts of intimidation that interfere with another student’s desire or willingness to participate in the educational process.
- Misdemeanor criminal mischief (vandalism) resulting in the destruction or defacing of any property, including computers and related equipment, in an amount greater than \$20.00 but less than \$1,500.00. This includes rendering computers or related equipment inoperable or damaging them by erasing data with magnets; intentionally introducing viruses, worms, or tampering with programs or other data without authority.
- “Hacking” or other use of computers to gain unauthorized access to school or other databases, including student, faculty, or district data files, without permission. In addition to any criminal penalties, students may have their computer privileges suspended.
- Use of school computers, facsimile equipment, cell phones or other electronic devices to transmit, review, view, or display obscene, vulgar, sexually explicit, or racist media or to display information that advocates unlawful activities or provides guidance on the construction or production of weapons, illegal devices, or controlled substances.
- Use of the school computer network, equipment or cell phones, or translator, with the intent to incite violence or aggressive and/or disruptive action on the part of

the student body, use of slanderous language, or use of language that promotes racial disorder or sexual harassment and is disruptive to the school environment.

- Use of the school computer network or cell phones for soliciting or purchasing commercial materials and/or services of any kind.
- Use of the school computer network, cell phones to engage in participation in hate groups.
- Misdemeanor extortion, which is defined as obtaining money or information from another by coercion or intimidation of a value less than \$1,500.00.
- Possession or use of any prescription or nonprescription drug, medicine, vitamins, or other chemicals in violation of the Guidelines for Dispensing Medications at School.
- Any other acts of serious misconduct that disrupts the school environment in the classroom and/or school.
- Hazing, which means any intentional, knowing, or reckless act directed against a student by one person alone or acting with others that endangers the mental or physical health or the safety of a student (for the purpose of being initiated into, affiliating with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in any organization or general classification of students whose members are or includes other students).
- Assisting (directly or indirectly) with the promotion of any behavior prohibited by this *Code of Student Conduct*.

Disciplinary Options Responses for Level III

- Required administrator, student, and parental conference.
- Restitution or restoration, as applicable, for vandalism to property.
- Exclusion from extracurricular activities such as field trips and commencement exercises and award ceremonies.
- Placement of the student into in-school suspension.
- Suspension for up to three days per occurrence.
- Removal of transportation services for up to one year.
- Restrictive or removal of computer-use privileges for up to one year
- Teacher's removal of the student from the classroom.
- Any other appropriate disciplinary actions determined by the administration.
- Fine for Level III offense will be \$275.00 as determined by the administrator
- For fighting, Class C Misdemeanor, the police will be called.

Procedure for Level III

1. Referral to administrator by way of discipline sheet, with report sent to the parent within 24 hours.
2. Administrator confers with the student and parent about the misconduct. The student is given an opportunity to explain the incident. The administrator determines misconduct.
3. Administrator decides whether to suspend. Written notice of the offenses and the action taken are given to the parent and teacher.
4. Any "activity" within 300 feet of the school is considered on school premises and is under the authority of the school administrator.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE POLICY

Grace Christian Academy will not tolerate substance abuse. A student is subject to expulsion based upon the following guidelines:

1. A student will be expelled if the student while on or within 300 feet of school property—as measured from any point on the school’s real property boundary line—or while attending a school-sponsored or school-related activity on or off school property:
 - a. Sells, gives or delivers to another person or possesses, uses or is under the influence of marijuana, a controlled substance in an amount not constituting a felony offense or a simulated controlled substance constituting a felony offense.
 - b. Sells, gives or delivers to another person or possesses, or uses an electronic cigarette or vaping device, a controlled substance in an amount not constituting a felony offense or a simulated controlled substance constituting a felony offense.
 - c. Sells, gives or delivers to another person or possesses, uses or is under the influence of any amount of a dangerous drug in an amount not punishable as a felony offense.
 - d. Sells, gives or delivers to another person an alcoholic beverage; commits a serious act or offense while under the influence of alcohol; or possesses, uses or is under the influence of alcohol, if punishable as less than that of a felony.
 - e. Engages in conduct that contains the elements of deadly conduct under Section 22.05 of the Penal Code.
2. If there is an indication that drugs or drug paraphernalia are being concealed on the person of the student, the administrator is permitted to have the student searched in the presence of another witness. Suspected students may be required to have drug testing.

AWARDS

All students are given opportunities to earn academic awards. While some of the awards are distributed one per grade, a number of these awards are available to all students who choose to complete the requirements.

At the end of the year, the following awards are given to all elementary students who have met the following requirements:

- **Bible – Bible Certificate:** Students in grades K–4 who memorize the required scriptures each month
- **Bible Medal:** Students in all grades who memorize the entire school scriptures each month
- **Principal’s List –** All A’s in all academic subjects each quarter.

- **Honor Roll** – A or B in all academic subjects during each quarter.
- **Excellent Conduct** – “E” in conduct in all classes for each grading quarter.
- **AR or Reading Award** – Met the required reading goal for the year

In addition to the above awards, each classroom teacher will choose students to receive awards in the following subject areas:

- **Eagle Award** – This is one of the school's most important awards. Each teacher will choose one student from the class who has exhibited exemplary Christian leadership, attitude and commitment throughout the year. Citizenship, Christian character, Social interaction, Classroom Behavior, and Academic Commitment are all considered.
- **Art** – one student per class who has exhibited outstanding achievement in art.
- **History** – one student per class who has exhibited excellence in history.
- **Language Arts** – one student per class who has exhibited excellence in language arts.
- **Math** – one student per class who has exhibited excellence in math.
- **Music** – one student per class who has exhibited outstanding achievement in music.
- **Penmanship/Handwriting** – one student per class with the best handwriting.
- **Physical Fitness** – The PE teachers will award certificates to students who have met the requirements for the President’s Physical Fitness program.
- **Reading** – one student per class who has exhibited excellence in reading.
- **Science** – one student per class who has exhibited excellence in science.
- **Spanish** – one student per class who has exhibited outstanding achievement in Spanish
- **Spelling** – one student per class who has exhibited excellence in spelling
- **STEM** – one student per class who has exhibited outstanding achievement in STEM

At the end of the year, the following awards are given to Secondary students who have met the following requirements:

- **Honor Roll** – given quarterly- Student achieved a 3.5 GPA with no grade lower than an 80
- **Honor Roll All Year** - _Student achieved a 3.25 GPA with no grade lower than an 80 for 3 consecutive quarters
- **Eagle Scholar** – student earned at least a 3.75 GPA in each of 3 consecutive quarters with no grade below an 80
- **Principal’s List** - student earned at least a 3.50 GPA in each of 3 consecutive quarters with no grade below an 80

In addition to the above awards, each Secondary teacher will choose students to receive awards in the following subject areas:

- **Eagle Award** – This is one of the school's most important awards. Each teacher will choose one student from the class who has exhibited exemplary Christian leadership, attitude and commitment throughout the year. Citizenship, Christian

character, Social interaction, Classroom Behavior, and Academic Commitment are all considered.

- **Certificate of Academic Excellence** – one student per subject area who has exhibited outstanding achievement

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Grace Christian Academy is a member of TAPPS. This association provides district, regional and state competitions in a number of sports, fine arts and academic areas. A fee schedule for each sport and extracurricular event will be assessed as the costs for each event are determined. The fees will be billed to the parent's account unless other payment arrangements are requested.

ELIGIBILITY POLICY

Since the inception of the "No-Pass/No-Play" Rule in Texas, public and private schools have implemented an academic and behavioral standard to determine the eligibility of participants in athletics and extracurricular activities. Additionally, the Texas Association of Private and Parochial Schools (TAPPS) specifies students who participate in extracurricular activities must be enrolled in at least four (4) classes and be failing no more than one (1) course during a grading period.

Schoolwork takes precedence over all extracurricular activities. At each grading period, students must maintain a 70+ average in all subjects, attend practices and comply with the terms agreed upon by the coach and/or sponsor and the school administration. Students with a grade between 60 to 69 will be placed on academic probation for 1 month. After the 1-month probation period, the Athletic Academic Compliance Committee will determine ongoing eligibility based on academic progression. A student must be passing all courses and show significant academic progression at the end of the probation period. Any student not meeting these criteria will not be eligible to participate in games for the next three (3) weeks.

Students who have failed at least one course will be placed on a three (3) week evaluation where they will be allowed to practice but not participate in games. After the three week evaluation period, the Athletic Academic Compliance Committee will review the student's grades and further eligibility will be determined.

Students also must maintain appropriate behavioral standards. The specifics of the eligibility policy will be given to all students participating in events that require eligibility consideration.

Note: Students who are not eligible to play may practice with the team, sit on the bench during home games, and/or travel to away games. However, ineligible students will be

required to wear a school uniform and/or GCA spirit apparel (no team uniform allowed). In addition, no student will be allowed to travel with the team if travel requires them to miss the course they are failing.

ATHLETICS

The GCA athletic program holds a two-fold purpose. It provides an outlet for the energy, excitement and competitiveness held by many teenagers. More importantly, athletics provide a unique platform for the application of biblical truths. Athletic competition is an excellent opportunity to learn the lessons of diligence, sacrifice and submission, which are crucial to success in life. ***The Sports Handbook is available for all athletes from the Athletic department. The Sports Handbook includes schedules, fees and expectations and may also be viewed online.**

The Goals of the GCA Athletic Program are to:

- Help develop Christ-like character in our students, both athletes and spectators.
- Help provide an opportunity for athletes and coaches to be a witness of the transforming power of Christ.
- Promote excellence in competition.
- Encourage maximum participation of students and parents in the athletic program.
- Promote the value of teamwork.

DRESS CODE REQUIREMENTS

See 2024-25 Dress Code Policy

GUIDELINES FOR GENERAL GROOMING ARE AS FOLLOWS:

Students must be appropriately groomed for school when entering the school in the mornings before 7:55 am or going upstairs if arriving after 7:55 am. Do not get dressed at school.

- All garments should fit properly—not over-sized or too tight.
- All garments are to be clean, pressed and maintained in good condition.
- Shoes must have closed toes and closed heels – sandals, flip-flops, house shoes or croc type shoes or slide-on shoes are NOT allowed. High heels higher than 1 ½ are NOT allowed. Canvas shoes or sneakers are recommended.
- Students' hair must be clean and well-groomed at all times. Boys' hair length should not hang over the eyes, or below the collar. Artificial hair color should be a natural hair color. Extreme hair colors and hair fashions are NOT acceptable. Students violating this code will be required to change their hair color/style to meet the dress code standard. Acceptable hair color and style determinations are the sole discretion of the GCA Administration.

- Boys must be clean-shaven. Sideburns may not be longer than the bottom of the ear lobe. Please be aware that your student will be supplied with a razor and shave gel to shave on campus if they are in violation.
- Tattoos are not permitted. If a student enrolls and already has a tattoo, the tattoo must be covered.
- Earrings are not permitted for boys. Girls are permitted to wear no more than two earrings in the same ear. Extravagant jewelry and excessive make-up are not permitted.
- Fingernail polish, make-up or any garments or adornments of traditionally feminine use are not permitted for boys.
- No caps, hats, bandanas, sunglasses, feathers or any other “headwear” are to be worn by students during class time.
- Body piercing is not permitted.

SPECIAL EVENT DRESS CODE

There are occasions when students go on field trips, attend special events or may not be required to “be in uniform.” A modified dress code must be approved by school administration as proposed by the teacher or sponsor for the event. As a rule, the standard guidelines will be the general rule for allowing modifications. The following dress code guidelines for “special events” also must be followed:

- Shirts must be long enough to cover the midriff when stretching up or bending over.
- Necklines, armholes of sleeveless tops must not be oversized or reveal undergarments.
- Pants must be appropriately sized and worn at the waist.
- Clothing with tears, holes or ragged hems are not permissible.
- Clothing or jewelry that depict pictures or slogans, representing the occult, violence, pornography, gangs, superheroes, rock groups, alcohol, drugs, tobacco or other items dishonoring to God is not permissible.
- Students who are not dressed in compliance with the special event dress code may not be allowed to participate in the event.
- A photo of the student in their attire, including shoes, will be requested days prior to certain events: Prom, Homecoming, National Honor Society, etc. There are no exceptions.

FRIDAY JEAN DAY

School approved Friday spirit shirts or standard uniform shirts are the only shirts allowed on Friday Jean day. Jeans must be PLAIN standard jeans with no holes, tears, cut sides, frayed hems, excessive beading or decorations.

PE UNIFORMS

Secondary students participating in a PE course must participate and are required to dress out. Failure to comply will result in disciplinary action.

DRESS CODE INFRACTIONS

Each morning, first-period teachers will ensure that each student is wearing his or her uniform. If a student is out of uniform, he or she will be sent to the office where a phone call home will be done. The student will remain in the office until they are in the correct school uniform. Class time lost due to addressing dress code infractions may be counted as an unexcused absence.

- 1-3 Violations—Warning, Recorded in Renweb
- 3-5 Violations—Recorded in Renweb, Assigned detention
- 6+ violations—Recorded in Renweb, Saturday Detention, \$45 fine (\$50 credit card)

It cannot be overstated how imperative it is for parents to ensure their child is dressed in compliance with the published GCA Dress Code. The school administration views this as a parental commitment and responsibility and believes that dress code issues should be addressed and corrected at home rather than being left as dress code infractions that have to be addressed and corrected at school.

*Grace Christian Academy Administration reserves the right to have complete discretion on a case-by-case basis of all dress code issues.

MATTHEW 18 PRINCIPLE

The Matthew 18 Principle states the following:

If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over. But if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses. Matthew 18:15-16

Issues between parents and teachers will arise from time to time. As a Christian School, we believe that issues and concerns should be resolved biblically. We recognize that Matthew 18 requires open and fair discussion of potentially difficult matters. We believe that the Matthew 18 principle is essential for maintaining good relationships. Therefore, we respectfully request that parents meet with the teacher first in order to clearly communicate the issue in question. The manner and tone of such meetings must be carried out in a Christ-like way-truth tempered with kindness.

If those individuals directly involved are unable to resolve the problems, administrative assistance from the principal should be requested. Administrative conferences will be scheduled with the Administrative Assistant in the Principal's Office. Please read the following steps that we have outlined for GCA procedures for Parent/Administrator Conferences and be prepared to follow these guidelines.

GCA Procedures for Parent/Administrator Conference

1. Fill out the appropriate form documenting the concern (may be turned in beforehand or presented at the time of conference). Please refer to the appendix in the back of the handbook for the form to be used or you may email the Principal with your concern using the form as a guide.
2. Make an appointment through the Administrative Assistant to see the Principal.
3. Be aware that conference time will be opened in prayer and limited to a 30-minute session.
4. Be aware that the conference time will be conducted in a biblical, gracious manner (See Colossians 4:6). The results will be documented in a memo. The memo will be distributed to the parents and the teacher/administrator involved.
5. Administrator will agree to respond to the concern within 3 working days.

The Board has delegated to the Administration the authority to operate the school on a day to day basis. The Board does not involve itself in resolving conflicts, and we respectfully ask parents **not** to call Board members into school related issues. By practicing problem resolution in this manner, relationships develop between teacher, students and parents and future problems are minimized and are more easily remedied.