

Grace Covenant Academy

GCA

Staff Manual

ALL CONTENT OF THIS HANDBOOK IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITH THE APPROVAL OF
THE
GRACE COVENANT ACADEMY BOARD.

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GUIDING PRINCIPLES

MISSION

Grace Covenant Academy equips Christian families to disciple their children to know God and make Him known through a distinctly Christian education.

DISTINCTIVES

“Grace Covenant Academy is an equipping ministry utilizing a K-12 University Model School (not a co-op). We are the perfect blend of flexibility and structure for families who are looking to be more involved in their children’s education.”

We are committed to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, so we will do our best to love, disciple, and encourage all of our families.

We strive for excellence in all things, so that God will be glorified.

We are innovative, and we focus on preparing our students for their futures in college and life.

EDUCATIONAL PRINCIPLES

We believe our students are both made in God’s image and are sinners in need of a Savior. Many of them have already been transformed as children of the King, while others may meet the Savior during their stay at our school. These things motivate us to be patient with them and encourage them daily.

We view our students, as those made in His image, as individuals with unique gifts and needs. Each one is called to fulfill a role in God’s providential care for the world.

Learning is normal and natural for those made in His image. Though it is a wonderful privilege, it is sometimes difficult.

Learning is an atmosphere we must cultivate, where children are inspired to explore and understand.

Learning is a discipline, which requires hard work and perseverance in order to master skills that make future learning and fruitfulness possible.

Learning is life – normal and natural, with ideas being the food that causes growth in the mind.

Learning consists of making connections – to other learning, to life, and to God.

Students learn most effectively as active participants -- by asking and imitating and doing, not simply hearing.

The goal of learning is to gain wisdom as biblically defined: "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; all those who practice it have a good understanding" (Psalm 111:10).

Whether our graduates continue with formal education or move directly into their vocation, GCA challenges them to be life-long learners who are devoted to serving God, the local church, and God's mission on the earth. Our curriculum is anchored in the authoritative truth of Scripture and seeks to be God-centered in every facet.

STATEMENT OF FAITH

We believe the Bible to be the inspired, infallible, authoritative Word of God.

We believe that there is one God, eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. He is infinite, eternal, almighty, and perfect in holiness, truth, and love.

We believe in God the Father, the Creator of heaven and earth. By his word, he created the world from nothing. Through His Word he daily sustains all his creatures. He is faithful to every promise, works all things together for good to those who love him, and gave his Son, Jesus Christ, for mankind's redemption. He made man for fellowship with himself and intended that all creation should live to the praise of his glory.

We believe God created man—male and female—in his own image, as the crown of creation. Man rebelled against God and became estranged from his Maker. Yet responsible to him, he became subject to divine wrath, inwardly depraved and, apart from a special work of grace, utterly incapable of returning to God.

We believe in the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, in His virgin birth, in His sinless life, in His miracles, in His vicarious and atoning death through His shed blood, in His bodily resurrection, in His ascension to the right hand of the Father, and in His personal return in power and glory. He is the only Savior for the sins of the world. By his death in our place, he revealed the divine love and upheld divine justice, removing our guilt and reconciling us to God.

We believe Jesus Christ is the gospel. The good news is revealed in his birth, life, death, resurrection, and ascension. Christ's crucifixion is the heart of the gospel, his resurrection is the power of the gospel, and his ascension is the glory of the gospel. Christ's death is a substitutionary and propitiatory sacrifice to God for our sins. It demonstrates his mysterious love and reveals his amazing grace. It also satisfies the demands of God's holy justice and appeases his holy wrath. Jesus Christ is the only mediator between God and man.

We believe in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit, who convicts the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment. He persuades men through the gospel to repent of their sins and confess Jesus as Lord. The Holy Spirit unites believers to Jesus Christ in faith, brings about the new birth, and dwells within the regenerate. The Holy Spirit glorifies the Son, and enables the Christian to live a godly life.

We believe in the Body of Christ. God created the Church, calling men into the fellowship of Christ's Body. The Church universal is made up of those who are genuine followers of Jesus Christ and have personally believed the gospel. The Church exists to worship and glorify God.

Upon conversion, newly redeemed people are added to a local church, in which they devote themselves to teaching, fellowship, the Lord's Supper, and prayer. All believers are to be committed to and vitally involved in a local church and are to be nurtured and equipped for the work of ministry.

We believe Christ will return visibly, personally, and gloriously. There will be a resurrection of the dead and the translation of those alive in Christ, a judgment of the just and the unjust, and the fulfillment of Christ's kingdom in the new heavens and the new earth. All those outside Christ will be separated from the glorious presence of God, enduring eternal punishment, but the righteous, in redeemed bodies, shall live and reign with him forever. The Church will be in the presence of God forever, enjoying, serving, and giving him unending praise and glory.

DOCTRINAL BACKGROUND

Upon its inception, Grace Covenant Academy began with beliefs that are woven into the foundation of our community: a doctrinal perspective that is essentially Reformed, the importance of the local church in God's plan, and a belief in the ongoing work of the Holy Spirit. The School recognizes that not all of the families or staff may fully subscribe to these perspectives, but it forms the backdrop on which many of the decisions on curriculum and community are based. Please read the statements below which explain some of these beliefs:

God's Sovereignty. We do not claim to understand how God's sovereignly works as Lord over His creation, nor how his choices and own work together. But we know that God rules over all and His plans and purposes cannot be thwarted. God is central in the salvation of men, and works his plan with a grace incomprehensible.

The Church. All believers are to be committed to and vitally involved in a local church and are to be nurtured and equipped for the work of ministry.

The Holy Spirit empowers believers for Christian witness and service. All genuine believers are indwelt by the Holy Spirit at conversion, yet there is also an ongoing, empowering of the Spirit subsequent to conversion.

STATEMENT ON MARRIAGE, GENDER, AND SEXUALITY

In order to preserve the biblical community that GCA strives for, we require all members of our community to sign and abide by the following statement. We believe God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male and female. These two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God (Gen. 1:26-27.)

- We believe that rejection of one's biological sex is a rejection of the image of God within that person.
- We believe that the term "marriage" has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture. (Gen. 2:18-25)

- We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other. (1 Cor. 6:18, 7:2-5, Heb. 13:4)
- We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of marriage between a man and a woman. We believe that any form of sexual immorality as outlined in Scripture (including among other things, adultery, fornication, homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, incest, and use of pornography) is sinful and offensive to God. (Matt. 15:18-20, 1 Cor. 6:9-10)
- We believe that in order to preserve the function and integrity of Grace Covenant Academy as a local Christian community, and to provide a biblical role model for Grace Covenant Academy families, it is imperative that all persons employed by Grace Covenant Academy in any capacity, any who serve as volunteers, and any student enrolled in the school agree to and abide by this Statement on Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality. (Matt. 5:16, Phil 2:14-16, 1 Th. 5:22)
- We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ (Acts 3:19-21, Rom. 10:9-10, 1 Cor. 6:9-11.)
- We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity. (Mark 12:28-31, Luke 6:31) Hateful or harassing behavior directed towards any individual, including those living in rebellion to God's standards as outlined in the Bible and including those individuals that are not allowed inclusion in the Grace Covenant Academy community, are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture nor the doctrines of this organization.

GCA STAFF JOB DESCRIPTIONS

TEACHER

The classroom teacher uses effective teaching techniques to achieve curriculum goals and affect student learning, while integrating Biblical principles and utilizing a Christian philosophy of education. The classroom teacher is also expected to use effective classroom management in controlling the behavioral discipline of the students.

Reports to the Headmaster.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Demonstrates a mastery of the subject material assigned.
- Uses effective teaching techniques to achieve curriculum goals and affect student learning.
- Teaches classes assigned and scheduled by the administration.
- Plans a program of study that, as much as possible, meets the individual needs, interests, and abilities of the students, challenging each to do his/her best work.
- Prepares and submits lesson plans and any other classroom materials and documentation by Wednesday at noon of each week for the following week.
- Complies with all GCA policies and procedures and attends all required meetings.
- Employs a variety of instructional aides, methods, and materials that will provide for creative teaching and appeal to a variety of learning styles.

- Prepares weekly homework assignments for the satellite classroom time supervised by parents at home.
- Assesses the learning of students on a regular basis and supplies proper feedback to administration and parents.
- Uses proper classroom management techniques to ensure proper discipline.
- Helps ensure proper discipline on the school premises and at school events.
- Follows established policies and procedures for dealing with students, parents, administration, and staff.
- Demonstrates support for the role of parents as educational partners and supports them in that task.
- Cooperates with administration in implementing all policies, procedures, and directives governing the operation of the school.
- Maintains regular and accurate attendance and grade records to meet the demands for a comprehensive knowledge of each student's progress.
- Keeps students, parents, and the Dean adequately informed of deficiencies and gives sufficient notice of failure.
- Maintains a clean, attractive, well-ordered classroom.
- Performs adjunct perfunctory duties as required by the Administration and as defined in the teacher contract.
- All Upper School teachers will assist with assigned duties such as drop off, pick up, Pulse and lunch leaders.
- Lower School teachers supervise the recess and lunch time for students, and will be present in their classroom for drop off and assist with pick up at the end of the day.
- Communicate with parents on a regular basis via a Weekend Wrap up email in grades Pre-K- 5, if a homeroom teacher, or as needed.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS & ABILITIES:

- Demonstrates basic understanding of a comprehensive field of knowledge *normally* acquired through attainment of a Bachelor's degree or higher in related field; 3-5 years prior related experience *preferred*.

- Maintains an active member of a Christ-centered local church, growing in his/her Christian relationship with God, and actively practicing and exhibiting Christian principles of the Christian faith.
- Possesses the ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with parents, other employees, and the public.
- Maintains a professional appearance.
- Has excellent communication skills, both oral and written.
- Is able to motivate students and parents.
- Is able to handle multiple tasks, energetic, with good organizational skills.
- Is able to deal with a variety of adults and children with a range of personalities and/or problems and maintain confidentiality.
- Committed to Christian principles and teachings both professionally and personally.

BACKGROUND & REFERENCE

Teachers, administrators, and staff must authorize a background check and any screening that GCA desires to conduct at the GCA's own expense. Teachers must also certify and agree that the facts contained in their application are true and complete, and understand that if employed, falsified statements in the application shall be grounds for dismissal. The applicant authorizes investigation of all statements, references and employers in the application. Previous employers may give GCA any and all information concerning previous employment and any pertinent information they may have, or otherwise release the company from all liability for any damage that may result from utilization of such information.

Being a Christian role model in all aspects of life is a major requirement for this position. The Bible is the standard for our staff. It is a bona fide occupational requirement for staff to live by those standards.

Teachers, administrators and staff must agree with and/or abide by the forms and statements included in this manual upon application.

These documents become a part of the employee's HR folder. Any evidence of non-compliance with these forms, positions or any other non-Biblical recognized positions, as determined by the Board, may result in dismissal from GCA.

NOTICE OF NONDISCRIMINATORY POLICY AS TO EMPLOYEES

Grace Covenant Academy will employ individuals of any race, color, national and ethnic origin and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in the administration of its personnel policies or procedures.

FINANCIAL POLICIES

TEACHER SALARY:

Teachers are paid every two weeks (approx.. 20 pay periods per year). Seasonal employees (part time coaches, janitorial, etc.) are paid only through those pay periods in which their work occurs. No insurance, retirement, or other benefits are currently offered.

GETTING A SUBSTITUTE

SICK DAYS AND PERSONAL LEAVE DAYS:

Teachers that teach 2-3 days per week are allowed two (2) paid sick days per school year. Teachers that teach 1 day per week are allowed one (1) paid sick day per school year. If you have to be out due to sickness or have a sick child, then call the administrator no later than 6:30 A.M., and he/she will call a sub for you. Email a copy of your sub plans to the administrator by 7:00 a.m. If you know the day before that you will not be coming in, call the administrator no later than 8:00 p.m.. so that he/she can make arrangements, and email a copy of your sub plans as soon as they are ready the evening before.

When requesting an approved leave day in advance, please fill in the Sub request form on the Faculty Nest. When possible, you may ask a sub in advance and fill in that name/ request on the form.

Teachers that teach 2-3 days per week are allowed two (2) personal leave days per year after approval. Teachers that teach 1 day per week are allowed one (1) personal leave day. Personal days are subject to approval and must be requested by clicking on the link on Faculty Nest at least 7 business days before the date to be taken.

With permission from the academic administration, personal leave days may also be used for mandatory events when there is an unavoidable conflict.

Exceptions for emergency situations will be taken into consideration.

Personal leave days may not be taken on a day adjacent to a school holiday or break or during parent teacher conferences.

Please note that sick days may not be used for personal leave days.

Please make sure that you leave detailed notes for your substitute, including your lesson plans, class schedule, textbooks, and attendance sheets. Remember, the more detailed, the better. Substitutes will thank you for this!

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS RIGHTS

The Board of Directors of Grace Christian Academy reserves the right to disallow entrance or to remove any family or teacher at any time. This would occur only if necessary, and only if the Board deems a student or family is interfering with GCA's ability to achieve its mission effectively. This may include, but not limited to, issues concerning the acceptance or actions or verbalizations that do not appear to comply with Grace Christian Academy's Mission Statement, Philosophy of Education, Statement of Faith, Core Values, Discipline Policy, overall unity, etc.

SPIRITUAL EMPHASIS

CHRISTIAN WALK

Grace Covenant Academy is a distinctly Christian organization that attempts to nurture the next generation of disciples. Consequently, it is expected that administrators, teachers, and staff have a fruitful, personal relationship with God, that is, they are spending time with God regularly and living in obedience to His direction. Without this priority, the school cannot reach its purposes.

BIBLICAL WORLDVIEW INTEGRATION

One of the important "ingredients" offered to GCA students is the integration of a Biblical worldview. To instill this effectively, GCA teachers must become deliberate about incorporating the basis of this worldview and about instilling biblical, critical thinking into each lesson. It is also important to communicate to our students that Christ should be central to our thinking, learning, doing, creating, action, etc. The following are ways in which these principles should be regularly communicated to our students:

- Prayer (in the classroom and encouraged in lessons at home)
- Integration of the Scriptures in lessons, lectures, and assignments
- Creating and teaching worldview objectives
- Teaching at all levels of Bloom's taxonomy
- Exemplifying "gentleness and respect" when modeling hypothetical apologetic dialogue

PREFERENCES AND PERSONAL CONVICTIONS

GCA endeavors to be Christ-like in all we do. Each of Jesus' disciples was unique in their educational, social, and economic backgrounds. Each of the parents and children at GCA are created in God's image but may have varied opinions on areas such as movies, television shows, video games, books, music, even varied levels of holiday participation, and other entertainment and social issues.

It would be extremely difficult, and inadvisable, to establish rigid policies and procedures in these areas. Each family is at a different level of Christian maturity and it is important to both show grace and yet not compromise Biblical truth. It is not the teacher's job to approve or disapprove, agree or disagree with these family decisions, especially in light of the co-teaching responsibility of the parent.

Any salient issues or concerns should be raised with the administration, but please be sensitive in addressing these issues publicly.

SPIRITUAL & ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

At Grace Christian Academy, teachers are *passionate* about their calling. We provide *Christ-centered* academic excellence which *challenges* students to achieve *high standards* through *diverse activities* requiring *higher level thinking*.

Each teacher conducts classroom instruction in a unique, creative manner. We encourage creativity! While a teacher is free to conduct class in ways that are most comfortable to them, the following are some guidelines to help create an orderly environment conducive to learning and relating:

- Balance law and gospel with a Christ-like, Spirit-led approach. Speak the truth in love
- Resolve personal feelings or issues toward a student or parent. Pray immediately.
- Regularly assess your teaching style, tape your class, have a colleague observe, ask the students, etc.

- Publish your classroom rules, remind the students of them often, and abide by them.
- Do not let one student dominate or disrupt. Create an atmosphere of learning for all
- Be consistent with the Discipline Policy
- Keep your classroom in order and under control. Talk to the Headmaster if there are issues.
- If a situation arises where you feel a salvation experience is at hand, please communicate with the student's parents your understanding so they can be involved in the joy of this decision.

STANDARDS

STAFF ATTENDANCE POLICY

- Every teacher must be at the school thirty minutes prior to his or her first class. First hour students will enter your room and need supervision 15 before the start of class.
- You are dismissed at the end of your last class/ duty when your room is orderly and all clean up duties have been completed.
- If you teach a last hour class, you will walk your students to the car line and supervise them until they are loaded up.

STAFF DRESS

The guiding principle for staff dress is that all GCA staff will maintain a standard that is at least one step higher than required for the students on that day or event.

The guideline for staff dress is business professional with GCA uniform shirts and slacks/skirts/dress pants, not jeans.

On teacher In-service and out-service days, casual clothes (neat jeans or casual pants without rips. No leggings or yoga pants.) A GCA staff t-shirt may be worn unless parents are expected in the building that day. If parents are expected, please adhere to the uniform guidelines here.

Men: GCA uniform shirts and Dockers style pants or dress slacks.

Women: Appropriate wear includes GCA uniform shirt or blouse with solid color skirt, business capris or pants/pantsuits. No immodestly dressed tops (low cut, tight, etc.) are allowed. The uniform blouse should be fully buttoned.

All: GCA logo shirts are all approved and in the GCA Lands' End and the Land's End Outfitters business online store. The uniform blouse/shirt should be fully buttoned.

T-shirts (unless it is a special day or spirit day,) sweats or leggings shall not be worn. Pants/trousers should be on the dressy side (cotton is fine) and never denim, even colored denim.

Shoes: We want our staff to be comfortable but at the same time present a professional appearance. Business casual styles are acceptable. Teachers may wear loafers, flats, etc. Teachers should not wear flip flops or crocs or athletic styled jogging shoes. Teacher should not wear sandals (unless dressy and professional.) *On formal day, Upper School teachers must follow the shoe guidelines for students, which specify that they may only wear black tennis shoes with black soles or dress shoes.*

Students must wear flats, dress shoes, or black tennis shoes on the GCA formal day in upper school- so we ask upper school teachers to follow suit and wear similar shoes on that day.

Sweaters: any solid colored cardigan (opens in the front) sweater is acceptable with logo blouse or logo shirt underneath. GCA Logo sweaters are preferred.

Formal uniform days (Upper School staff only): No canvas tennis shoes or non dress shoes should be worn with the formal uniform, EXCEPT black tennis shoes with black laces and black soles are acceptable.

Ladies may wear a GCA blouse instead of a polo, if they own one. This is not required. A skirt is not required.

Men should wear a tie that coordinates with the GCA uniform in color, style, and professional appearance. We suggest a navy tie or a tie in a solid neutral color.

ELECTRONIC DEVICE USAGE

We encourage all teachers to have a cell phone where administration can contact you if there is an emergency.

However, cell phones may not be used during class time for personal calls or texts. This is a distraction and interruption to your students' learning environment. Teachers may use them freely in the teacher's workroom or work area as long as they don't disrupt other classes.

REQUIRED MEETINGS & CONFERENCES

All regularly scheduled faculty meetings and in-services are mandatory. There will be occasional faculty meetings (one per quarter) scheduled on a non school day for professional development purposes. Parent/Teacher conferences are held once per semester and these events are mandatory. Personal leave days may not be taken during Parent-Teacher conferences. Other GCA mandatory events include all school concerts, the Back to School picnic, and fundraising events. GCA Upper School teachers are required to attend the Back to School Mini Day and student retreat.

RECRUITING

Staff will not recruit students for participation or membership in organizations outside the authority of GCA Administration.

ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENTS / COMMUNICATIONS

SYLLABUS/ FIRST WEEKLY ASSIGNMENT SHEET

A syllabus must be turned in to the office 2 weeks prior to Parent U/Back to School Mini Day orientation for all middle and high school academic classes (due dates are set and will be communicated to teachers.) The syllabus should follow the GCA template which includes the following:

1. A brief course description.
2. Expectations for parents and students.
3. General course objectives.
4. The text and materials used in your class.
5. Policies including grading/weightings, classroom behavior expectations, rules, etc.
6. Any other pertinent information

7. Contact information- phone, e-mail, best hours and method to communicate- some teachers recommend contacting another student/parent before contacting the teacher
8. GCA Mission- we constantly want to keep this in front of all of us

You will also include/provide to administration a welcome letter to add a personal touch that can be sent before school starts. (This will also be turned in/ sent 2 weeks prior to Parent U/ Back to School Mini Day.

ONLINE HOMEWORK (FACTS)

Your weekly homework assignments on FACTS are the single most important document the student and the parent will see. Your homework assignments should be clear and easy to understand and follow the GCA template.

Each Teacher is required to post their assignments on Curriculum Trak on Wednesday by noon before the week begins. The department head will review the assignments on Wednesday afternoon. If there is an exceptional reason your assignments are not posted on Wednesday, please contact the Headmaster to work out a time when they will be available. In no circumstance may the assignments be posted later than Friday evening before the week begins. Families are instructed to view and print by Saturday mornings.

Please do not change assignments during the week, unless you are removing work for the student. Parents have difficulty maintaining the flow of their week if there are additional assignments posted after the week begins. If you do need to remove work from a previously posted assignment, make the change in CT, sync it to Facts, then email your students AND parents and copy your administrator or department head.

This is your "co-teaching" document with the student/parent that assists in communicating what is covered in class, the expectations for satellite instruction, and your expectations from the student/parent for the next week's work.

If your homework assignments are clear and easily understood, you will have happy students and parents. If they aren't, you will get calls from confused and confounded parents.

Ensure clarity in your homework instructions. You cannot be too clear! Ensure all homework includes the book, page, exercise numbers, etc. "If in doubt, spell it out!"

HOMWORK GUIDELINES

Due Dates: Homework assigned on a home day is due in class the next school day or at 7:45 a.m. of the next school day when that class meets.

Guidelines: Assignments should not exceed time limits shown in the chart below for an average student. Teachers will need to work closely with each other to ensure homework guidelines are not exceeded. In general, we want to have our students done with homework and able to engage with their families in the evenings.

Core Classes

K-1st	15 – 45 minutes per class on non-class day: (2-4 hrs. total)
2 nd - 3 rd	30 -45 minutes per class on non class days (3-5 hrs. total)
4 th - 5 th	30 - 60 minutes per class on non class days (3.5 – 6 hrs. total)
6 th - 7 th	1-1.5 hours per class on non class days (5-8 hrs. total)
8 th - 12 th	Please see the Parent/Student Handbook Homework Guidelines for each class.

Electives

K-2 nd	15-45 min/ day
3 rd -4 th	30 - 45 min/ day
5 th -6 th	30 -60 min/ day
7 th -8 th	30 -60 min/ day
9 th -12 th	30-60 min/ day

* These guidelines are an overall average for the year. There may be weeks that are lighter or heavier. Keep in mind that if your class meets only one day per week, your homework load should be reduced.

DISCIPLINE REPORT

Teachers will need to document misconduct on FACTS which should include a record for each student that includes all misconduct and actions taken. If there is minor classroom correction, no record is needed. Please contact parents and the headmaster with details of significant issues.

FAMILY/ TEACHER FEEDBACK

We believe in continually improving GCA. Each semester GCA may request feedback from families and teachers regarding the school, vision, academic excellence, teacher and dean performance, board performance, etc. The headmaster will use feedback to improve family and teacher interaction, teacher performance, etc. The board will use teacher and family feedback to improve all areas of GCA.

MATERIALS/ SUPPLY REQUESTS

If you need supplies or additions to your curriculum, you must fill out a Material / Supplies request form located on the Faculty Nest. If approved the office will complete the purchase. campus

Please carefully review the materials and texts your students have been assigned to purchase for your class so you can use them most effectively.

SECURITY AND HEALTH

Supervision. Students must be supervised at all times. Teachers may not leave the class without finding an alternate to supervise on their behalf.

School Monitor/ Presence. GCA will provide a staff member to be in close proximity to classroom teachers in cases of everyday need, but also for emergency contact.

Cell Phone. Since the school does not have an intercom system, teachers should have their cell phones with them at all times.

Locked Campus. The doors to the school shall be locked during school hours. No staff member is to prop open a door unless they are monitoring the exit.

Crisis Plan. Staff will be trained during inservice on procedures for fire, tornado, and active shooter drills. Each staff member is expected to be ready to act in the case of an emergency.

Medications. Students may not be given medication by the staff without verbal or written consent of the parent or guardian. Only the designated staff member may give medications. Students may not possess medications or self-administer medications at school or during school supervision. These medications may be given to the front desk for safekeeping and administration.

Universal Procedures. Staff shall use universal procedures when bodily fluids are present.

Drop off and Pick up. Staff members may only hand students off to the parents and individuals that have been approved by the parents.

COURSE OFFERINGS / PROGRESS

COURSE OFFERINGS/ CURRICULUM

Parents are expected to be “co-instructors” in the satellite classroom at home in early elementary and tutors/ assistants in most upper level classes. Parents will receive instructions from the classroom teacher each week via FACTS. This instruction will outline home assignments, review/discussion areas, drill practice, follow-up study over covered material, and preparation for the next class. Some electives may require that the parent have more of a “course monitor” role. See Parent/Student Handbook for specific parental roles for classes you instruct.

Teacher curriculum /guides will remain the property of GCA for subsequent semesters. Please do not write in the curriculum.

TESTS & TEST/PROJECT SCHEDULE

For non-self contained classrooms, all anticipated test dates and upcoming projects MUST be recorded on the internal calendar at least 2 weeks in advance. No more than 2 tests are allowed for any grade level on the same day and no more than 1 project is due within the same week. Exceptions may be made by prior approval from the administration.

Tests due to excused absence (whether planned or unplanned) must be make up by the 3rd day back.

Tests given on the day of an unexcused absence may be made up by the student with a penalty of 20%..

PROGRESS REPORTS/ REPORT CARDS

Teachers are responsible to update their grade book on a weekly basis in upper school. Grades for typical daily work must be posted by the next class period. Larger assignments such as papers may take up to, but not more than 10 days for the grades to be posted.

In lower school, work should be graded and returned no later than the following Tuesday. (So whether turned in Tuesday or Thursday, teachers should get it back to the students by the next Tuesday at the latest.)

In the case of incomplete work or a missing assignment, a grade "M" (missing) or "I" must be entered immediately. This grade is calculated as a zero and alerts the parents immediately that their student is missing an assignment. The grade can be changed in agreement with the late work policy, after the assignment is turned in. "E" may be used for an excused assignment.

Grading Codes

Codes allow you to grade assignments using non-numerical characters, and create missing, pending, excused, and other assignment statuses. In the example below, **M** (Missing) calculates as a zero, but **P** (Pending) and **Ab** (Absent) do not calculate.

	Code	Status	% Value	Calc
✕	P	Pending		
✕	M	Missing	0	✓
✕	I	Incomplete	0	✓
✕	E	Excused		
✕	Ab	Absent		

[Add Grading Code](#) [Clear Grading Codes](#)

Chapter 3 Quiz

TEACHER REQUESTS

Teachers and other staff members are not allowed to make a special request for a teacher for his/her own child(ren).

HANDBOOK REVIEW

Each family has signed a form acknowledging their agreement with the GCA Parent/Student Handbook. More importantly they have had discussions with their children (students) regarding certain critical areas. You may need to remind parents of the Handbook policies, thus it is important for our staff to be familiar with these policies. Each teacher will be required to review the Parent/Student Handbook and Teacher Handbook prior to Day 1 of classes.

CLASSROOM DISMISSAL

Please make sure you dismiss your students on time, when the class ends. This is critical as a courtesy to the next class teacher and to waiting parents. Please supervise the students to their backpacks and straight to the car lines at the end of the day.

Teachers are not off duty until they have checked their students in to the teacher on duty at car lines.

If you are the last teacher for a student, the student must be escorted to the car line if it is the last class of the day.

CLASSROOM APPEARANCE

The appearance of your classroom should always be a reflection of your best work. We are in borrowed space and need to be wise stewards with what God has given us. Our goal is to be a blessing to the church, and leave the classroom in better condition than we found it.

- At the end of each class, we ask that you not rearrange the setup of tables, chairs and desks in the classrooms. Return it to the "standard" setup.
- At the end of each class, please make sure: (1) Chairs are pushed in, (2) Trash is off the floor and floors are vacuumed if needed, (3) Dry erase boards are clean.
- At the end of the day, make sure: The lights are turned off.
- If your trash can is full, please empty it and replace the liner. Full bags can be taken to the dumpster.

HONOR AND RELATIONSHIPS

Expect the best manners always from your students and yourself. (Yes Ma'am, Excuse me, etc.) Do not let them respond with "yeah".

Never allow a student to be the brunt of other people's laughter. We exist to "build up" and "encourage" our children. We should act upon incidents that allow a child to be torn down. Ensure we give praise when students do build one another up. We want the students to experience God's love through the GCA family!

Gossip is never appropriate and not allowed at GCA. Even though our culture accepts "teen-age talk" as normal, it is the cause of many broken relationships and heartache. Always stop such speech.

Romantic relationships between students are not encouraged at school, including physical affection, notes, and discussions on who likes whom.

SUPERVISION OF STUDENTS

Never, never, never, leave a child unsupervised.

Never be alone with a student. If a student enters a room when you are by yourself, open the door or move to another site.

Never leave your classroom to go to the office, etc. unless another approved, background-checked adult is in the room.

- Volunteers with a "guest" name badge have NOT had a background check.
- Volunteers with a "volunteer" name badge HAVE had a background check.

If a parent comes and talks to you, do not turn your back to the students. If the parent needs more time, ask the parent for a conference or tell them you will call them on your break. During class time the students must have 100% of the teacher's attention. Especially be aware of this while supervising students for drop off and pick up.

STUDENT DISCIPLINE

All GCA administration, faculty, and staff are expected to foster strong character development in the student body. It is therefore imperative that teachers be familiar with the student code of conduct and disciplinary guidelines as stated in the Parent/Student Handbook. All administrators, teachers, coaches, and staff have the authority and responsibility to prevent behavioral misconduct, refer disciplinary issues, and maintain school decorum.

- GCA teachers are expected to know and enforce student dress code issues during each class. If the dress code concern is about length of skirt or any other area of a subjective judgment call or you are not sure, do not address the student, but alert the staff member assigned to dress code violations.

The following issues would be expected to be addressed and enforced in class:

Upper School: GCA sweaters or fleeces must have the logo. Students with other outerwear on in class should be sent to the front desk for a dress code violation. GCA dress up day requires students to wear a tie with formal wear uniform and dress shoes (or black on black tennis shoes.)

Lower School: Generally, dress code violations should be addressed quickly and directly with the parent via email. We do not send home a violation sheet unless the infraction is repeated or intentional. The typical violations would be: non GCA logo outerwear worn in class, unapproved pants or leggings, short skirts, ripped or torn garments, etc.

- GCA Teachers are expected to maintain a disciplined classroom environment that is conducive to learning.
- GCA Teachers should not spend more than 60 seconds in a class period involved in a discipline issue with a given student. Once a disciplinary focus exceeds this time period, the student should be referred to an administrator (Dean, or Headmaster in the absence of the Dean).
- GCA Administrators, Teachers, and Staff should never discipline a student in a way that communicates disrespect or intentionally embarrasses the student.
- Discipline issues should be documented in writing (on FACTS.) . This includes consistent dress code violations, consistent classroom distractions, misconduct that is destructive or detracts from the learning environment, behavior that threatens the safety or wellbeing of the facility or another person. The Dean should be informed when any disciplinary issue is documented in writing.
- The disciplinary policy is to be enforced during all school hours (including before and after school), while on GCA property, and during GCA sponsored events.
- Teachers should always be careful about the way they speak about students to other teachers or staff. Destructive language, gossip, or “venting” about a student is

inappropriate. Repetitive behavioral issues should be brought to the attention of and discussed with the Dean (and subsequently, the Headmaster, if necessary).

NON-DISCRIMINATORY POLICY AS TO STUDENTS

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

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

DISPUTES & RECONCILIATION

GCA abides by the following statements from the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI) concerning Christian conciliation to include Teacher/GCA disputes and reconciliation.

"The parties to this agreement are Christian and believe that the Bible commands them to make every effort to live at peace and to resolve disputes with each other in private or within the Christian community in conformity with the Biblical injunctions of I Corinthians 6:1-8, Matthew 5:23-24, and Matthew 18:15-20. Therefore, the parties agree that any claim or dispute arising out of, or related to, this agreement or to any aspect of the school relationship, including any claim or statutory claims, shall be settled by Biblically-based mediation.

If resolution of the dispute and reconciliation do not result from such efforts, the matter shall then be submitted to a panel of three arbitrators for binding arbitration.

The parties agree that these methods shall be the sole remedy for any controversy or claim arising out of the school relationship or this agreement and expressly waive their right to file a lawsuit against one another in any civil court for such disputes, except to enforce a legally binding arbitration decision.

Each party, regardless of the outcome of the matter, agrees to bear the cost of their own arbitrator and one-half of the fees and costs of the neutral arbitrator and any other arbitration expenses."

COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

If you have a complaint or a suggestion for school improvement, please express it in a way that reflects Christian maturity and meekness. Keep in mind the following guidelines:

- Pray about it. As in any difficulty or potential conflict, make sure your heart is right before God in a humble place, seeking to glorify God and serve the ministry of the school.
- Express it to the right person in an attitude of collaboration and support.
- Do not gossip or broadcast any information that will stimulate animosity.
- If the complaint is about you, please use it as an opportunity for growth.
- Treat all others with gentleness and respect.

FIELD TRIP GUIDELINES

The following guidelines should be followed when planning and taking a daytime field trip. Overnight trips must be planned in advance (preferably one year in advance,) approved, and placed on the school calendar before the school year begins.

- All field trips or outside coursework shall be authorized in advance by the GCA Administration.
- Details of the field trip should be communicated and approved first by the Administration and secondly be communicated to the parents via the Weekly Homework plans and Special Hand-out notification with details of the field trip. This event should be submitted using the proper form on The Nest for inclusion in the Eagle Update and on The Nest.
- At least two chaperones and drivers shall be authorized for such activity by the GCA Administration.
- Each student shall be in the company of an adult chaperone at ALL times on a GCA field trip. No restroom breaks or other separations from the group shall occur with one chaperone.
- Each field trip coordinator shall have on its person a GCA Medical Release Form for each child participating in the field trip.
- All field trip members when occupying a vehicle will use seat belts.
- Medications of any kind shall be given to and administered under the supervision of the field trip sponsor.

- Ensure a Field Trip Release form is signed and received for each student participating.
- GCA phone use and dress code applies to field trips.

STUDY HALL MONITORS

Study Hall is just that -- a time to study and accomplish assignments. Parents at home are counting on that time for their child to get their work done. If the work is not getting done at study hall, that causes undue stress at home. If they do not have anything to do, the students need to be reading a book and not distracting others. Please encourage them to get all their work done. If they are not diligently working, communicate with the parent through a phone call or a progress report.

TEACHER EVALUATION AND OBSERVATION

Teachers will be formally evaluated each semester by a supervisor, with the goal of celebrating God's work in the class and identifying areas of improvement with the faculty member. The evaluator will follow up after the evaluation to discuss and identify next steps.

Teachers will be observed on occasion by the Administration. Teachers may be required, but also are encouraged to observe each other from time to time for the purpose of helping improve instructional skills. Teachers must first obtain approval from the Administrator.
