

Family Handbook

2026-27 School Year



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

FOUNDATIONAL INFORMATION, STATEMENTS, & POLICIES	1
MISSION STATEMENT	1
VISION	1
STATEMENT OF FAITH	1
GCS CORE VALUES	2
STATEMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY	2
GRACE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL PARENT-SCHOOL COVENANT	3
EXPECTED STUDENT OUTCOMES	6
SCHOOL HISTORY AND FACILITIES	7
COMMITMENT TO STUDENT SAFETY	7
GUIDELINES AND EXPECTATIONS FOR CONDUCT	7
CHANGES TO FAMILY HANDBOOK	10
FINANCIAL INFORMATION AND POLICIES	10
FAMILY ACCOUNTS PAYMENT POLICY	10
NON-PROFIT STATUS	11
STUDENT INSURANCE	11
TUITION DISCOUNTS	11
TUITION WORK CREDIT PROGRAM	11
SCHOOL-WIDE INFORMATION AND POLICIES	12
ACHIEVEMENT TESTING	12
ADMISSIONS	12
ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL	12
DAILY SCHEDULE FOR ALL SCHOOL	13
ATTENDANCE	13
Tardies	14
BOARD OF TRUSTEES	14
CHROMEBOOKS	14
COMMUNICATIONS	14
EMAILING GCS STAFF	14
PARENT ALERT	14
WARRIOR BULLETIN	14
WARRIOR WEEKLY	15
WARRIOR CHRONICLE	15
CURRICULAR MATERIALS: POLICY FOR ADDRESSING CONCERNS	15
DISCIPLINE/CORRECTION OF STUDENTS	15
Suspensions/Expulsions	15
DISPENSING OF MEDICATIONS	15
ELECTRONIC AND DIGITAL DEVICES	16
ENROLLMENT PRIVILEGE	16
FIELD TRIPS	16

FUNDRAISING	17
IMMUNIZATION/PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS	17
PARENT REQUESTS FOR A PARTICULAR TEACHER	18
PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY	18
PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES	18
PARENT VOLUNTEERS	18
REASONABLE SEARCH	18
SERVICES	18
AFTER-SCHOOL CARE	19
BEFORE-SCHOOL CARE	19
BUS SERVICE	19
CHALLENGE PROGRAM	19
SCHOOL PROPERTY	21
SCHOOL PHONE USAGE	21
SNOW DAYS	21
STEWARDSHIP OF FACILITIES	22
STUDENT ILLNESS	22
STUDENT INFORMATION SYSTEM: FACTS SIS	22
UNCOVERED TOPICS	22
VISITORS	22
WEAPONS	23
WITHDRAWING A STUDENT	23
LOWER SCHOOL INFORMATION AND POLICIES (PS - 6)	23
ATTENDANCE	23
CELL PHONES	23
DISCIPLINE	24
DRESS CODE	24
FINE ARTS	24
GRADING POLICY – Grades 1-6	24
HOMEWORK – Grades K-6	25
LOCKERS	25
LOST AND FOUND	26
LUNCHES AND SNACKS	26
PLANNERS	26
WEEKLY CORRESPONDENCE ENVELOPES	26
WEAPONS	26
UPPER SCHOOL INFORMATION AND POLICIES	27
ACADEMIC INTEGRITY	27
ATTENDANCE POLICIES	27
ABSENCES	27
Loss of Class Credit & Jeopardizing Graduation	28
Parental Communication	28

Virtual Participation	29
Waived Absences	29
ATTENDANCE RECORD	30
TARDIES	30
ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL	31
ATHLETICS	31
PHONES and SMARTWATCHES	32
PHONE CALLS	32
LOCKERS	32
LOST AND FOUND	33
LUNCHES	33
VISITORS	33
WEAPONS	33
HIGH SCHOOL-SPECIFIC INFORMATION & POLICIES	33
(Grades 9-12)	33
ACADEMIC POLICIES	33
GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS	33
DROP/ADD POLICY	35
EXAMS	35
EXTRACURRICULAR ELIGIBILITY	36
FAILING CLASSES	37
GRADE POINT AVERAGE (QUALITY POINTS)	37
GRADING SCALE & REPORT CARDS	37
GUIDANCE AND CAREER PROGRAM	38
HOMEWORK AND CLASS WORK	38
Submitting Assignments	38
Make-up Class/Homework	39
Unresolved Missing Assignments	40
HONOR ROLL	40
HONORS, ADVANCED PLACEMENT, AND DUAL ENROLLMENT CLASSES	40
NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY	41
PASS/FAIL COURSES	41
PERMANENT RECORD	41
PHYSICAL EDUCATION	41
PREREQUISITES FOR HIGH SCHOOL COURSES	42
SCHOLASTIC APTITUDE TESTS	44
STUDY HALLS	45
TRANSCRIPTS	45
VALEDICTORIAN / SALUTATORIAN	45
PREFECTURE (Student Government)	45
STEWARDSHIP	46
MISCELLANEOUS POLICIES	46

CHRISTIAN SERVICE HOURS	46
CHAPELS	48
CHROMEBOOKS	48
COPY MACHINE	48
DRIVING PRIVILEGE	48
ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL GUIDELINES	49
Sign-Out Privileges for Juniors and Seniors	49
FINE ARTS	50
BEHAVIORAL POLICIES	50
CATEGORIES	50
Academic Integrity	50
Controlled Substances	51
Dress Code	52
Honesty & Transparency	52
Internet Activities	52
Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality	52
Property Damage	52
Relational Conduct	53
Weapons	53
CONSEQUENCES	53
Minor Infractions	53
Detentions	54
Academic Detentions	54
Behavioral Detentions	54
Suspensions/Expulsions	55
CHAPELS	56
DISCIPLINE	56
Demerit System	56
DRESS CODE	57
FINE ARTS	57
GRADING POLICY - Grades 7-8	57
Cumulative Tests	58
Homework and Class Assignments	58
LUNCHES AND SNACKS	59
PLANNERS	59

Whenever changes are necessary for the Handbook, families will be notified of these changes as they will be binding.

FOUNDATIONAL INFORMATION, STATEMENTS, & POLICIES

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Grace Christian School is to assist Christian parents by providing a sound academic education in a Christ-centered environment designed to prepare our young people to know God and to live in obedience to His will for their lives.

VISION

To see successive generations of Grace Christian School students living their lives in Christ for the glory of God.

STATEMENT OF FAITH

The following, though not an exhaustive statement of faith, contains key elements of the belief system to which the school subscribes:

- We believe in the infinite, personal God, eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. He is omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent.
- We believe the Bible to be the infallible, authoritative basis for our understanding of doctrine and truth.
- We believe in the deity of the Lord Jesus Christ, His virgin birth, His sinless life, His miracles, His vicarious and atoning death through His shed blood, His bodily resurrection, His ascension to the right hand of the Father, and His personal return in power and glory to judge the living and the dead.
- We believe that regeneration by the Holy Spirit in response to an individual's acceptance of the gospel message is absolutely necessary for the salvation of lost and sinful men.
- We believe salvation is by grace through faith alone.
- We believe the Christian life is possible only by the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit enabling man to live a godly, sanctified life.
- We believe in the resurrection of both the saved and the lost—the saved to a resurrection of life and the lost to a resurrection of damnation.
- We believe in the unity of believers through the sharing of common life in Christ Jesus.
- We believe God offers redemption to all who confess and forsake their sin (Acts 3:19-21; Romans 10:9-10; I Corinthians 6:9-11).
- We believe that God creates each human as uniquely male or female, and that each person is made in God's image (Genesis 1:26-27).
- We believe marriage is the union of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union (Genesis 2:18-25; Mark 10:6-9). We believe God intends sexual intimacy to occur between only a man and woman who are covenanted together in this unique union of marriage (1 Corinthians 6:18; 7:2-5; Hebrews 13:4).
- We believe that any form of sexual immorality (including, but not limited to, adultery, fornication, homosexual behavior, bisexual or transgender conduct, bestiality, incest, polygamy, as well as orientation or identity with these behaviors) is sinful and outside of God's will (Matthew 15:18-20; I Corinthians 6:9-10).
- We believe that all human life is precious as created in God's image. We believe this extends to the fetus, the aged, the physically and mentally challenged, and every other stage of human life from conception through natural death. We are therefore called to defend, protect, and cherish all human life (Psalm 139).
- We believe that, while we cannot condone, endorse or in any way participate in the expression of beliefs or lifestyles that are at odds with this statement of faith, all persons must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect and dignity (Mark 12:28-31). In this context, we do not believe that disagreement with another's beliefs is to be equated with intolerance or a form of "hate speech." While God sets clear ethical standards through His infallible word—the Bible—for which we are to stand without compromise, He loves all men and women, even those who reject His moral imperatives.

- We believe that in order to preserve the ministry values and integrity of Grace Christian School’s mission, and in order to maintain our fundamental convictions as based on the Scripture, it is imperative that all parents who enroll their children and all persons employed by Grace Christian School in any capacity, or who serve as volunteers, must agree to and abide by this Statement of Faith, including specific beliefs regarding marriage, gender, and sexuality (Matthew 5:16; Philippians 2:14-16; 1 Thessalonians 5:22).

GCS CORE VALUES

Grace Christian School is committed to providing a quality education within a learning environment that emphasizes four core values:

- Spiritual - Our highest priority, in all grades, is that of encouraging faith in Jesus Christ and imparting the knowledge and critical thinking skills so vital in preparing our young people to be able to stand for Christ as salt and light in our humanistic culture. We do not recognize the so-called divide between the “sacred and secular.” Therefore, we seek to integrate learning into the “wholistic” context that all of life is to be lived “as unto the Lord.”
- Academic - As a fundamental value of our Christian faith, we believe our students should be given a solid grounding in a core curriculum of language arts, mathematics, the natural sciences, and the social sciences. We believe those students who are best prepared for higher education and various vocational callings are those who have this fundamental and thorough grounding in these core academic areas.
- Character - While we emphasize the development of intellectual capacity and academic skills, we believe a higher goal of Christian education is the cultivation of Christ-like character. The school formulates all policies with the goal of teaching godly respect and honor for staff and fellow students, healthy self-control, personal integrity, and an overall appreciation for the need to live with others in Christian love by preferring others above self.
- Covenant Community - In the context of rapidly increasing cultural pressures that are aggressively coming to bear against our Christian faith and values, we emphasize the priority of Christian community among parents, school, staff, and the larger Christian community as vital in achieving our essential mission as a school.
- Whole Student - In addition to the above core values, Grace Christian School is dedicated to the emotional, social, and physical development of its students in a Christ-centered environment.

STATEMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

Grace Christian School operates on the belief that all meaningful learning takes place in the context of God’s existence as the infinite, personal God who has revealed Himself through the person of Jesus Christ. Proverbs 1:7 indicates that “the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge.” All learning must be integrated from this starting point and is meaningful only in the context of man’s acknowledgement of God’s existence. Learning which takes place outside of this context is what the Apostle Paul calls “empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the lower principles of the world, rather than according to Christ.” Paul further exhorts believers in Christ “to see to it that no one takes you captive” through such philosophy (Col. 2:8). It is the primary mission of Grace Christian School to give its students a Christ-centered orientation in all areas of their learning experience from the time they enter school in kindergarten through their graduation as seniors from high school. Assisting Christian parents in founding their children in the Christian belief and value system is a primary distinctive of Grace Christian School.

GRACE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL PARENT-SCHOOL COVENANT

It is important that parents who wish to enroll their children at Grace Christian School understand and are committed to the following values that make the school distinctive in its philosophy of education. Your signature on this enrollment contract represents your acceptance of the following understandings and terms for the enrollment of your child(ren) at Grace Christian School for the current school year and should be considered a contractual agreement.

GCS fully recognizes the rights of individuals who have become “legal guardians” of children to be equivalent to parents. All references to “parent(s)” in this handbook are therefore applicable to “legal guardians.”

The Purpose of Christian Education

While we emphasize the development of intellectual capacity and academic skills, we believe the higher goal of Christian education is the cultivation of Christ-like character. The development of Christian character is the bedrock that makes the individual who he or she will ultimately become and largely determines the quality of his or her life, both in terms of personal fulfillment as well as serving the will of God. An education that neglects this priority of Christian character development is fundamentally flawed. In this context, the mission of Grace Christian School is “to assist Christian parents by providing a sound academic education in a Christ-centered environment designed to prepare our young people to know God and to live in obedience to His will for their lives.”

The Role of the Parents

We believe the Bible establishes the parents as the primary educators of their children. Furthermore, we believe the Bible places special responsibility on the father to be the initiator and leader in instructing his family in the Christian faith and personal values which flow from it. Parents must be the primary teachers of their children in such basic skills and character qualities as listening attentively, giving prompt obedience to authority, showing respect for others, maintaining personal integrity, exercising appropriate self-control, and completing all assigned work in a timely and quality manner. While the school can do much in working with the parents to help develop these qualities, they are considered primarily in the realm of parental responsibility, and they must be reasonably present in the children if the home/school partnership is to be successful.

The Role of Grace Christian School

We view the role of Grace Christian School as assisting parents by providing an educational program that will reinforce the Christian emphasis of the home as well as providing a formal academic and vocational education from the preschool through secondary school levels. This is a Biblically rooted partnership, in that the Hebrew words for parents (*horim*) and for teachers (*morim*) both pertain to the task of teaching and instruction. Thus, Christian school teachers are seen as coming alongside the parents and working to accomplish the common goals of Christian education.

The Vital Role of the Home, Church, School Community

We believe the Bible emphasizes the importance of community in almost every aspect of Christian practice. Nowhere is this any more important than in the education and training of children, where parents are in need of the support of the larger Christian community consisting of the local church, school, and other like-minded parents. It is therefore expected that parents who enroll their children at Grace Christian School will be active members of a local church (Heb. 10:25; Acts 2:42; Eph. 2:19-22). Furthermore, it is expected that parents will attend parent meetings called by the school and participate in other school activities and efforts that affect and enhance the general school community.

The Principle of Discipline Practiced by Grace Christian School

We believe the Bible establishes that all men and women are personally accountable for their actions and attitudes, and that training our children in responsible self-government is at the heart of Christian education. School policies and practices are designed, as consistently as possible, to provide this kind of reality training for students. By reality training, we mean that the child should be allowed to experience the benefits and rewards resulting from his or her responsible choices as well as the negative consequences resulting from inappropriate decisions. While it is important that parents and teachers provide an environment that is characterized by kindness, love, compassion, and grace, it is equally important that the child be allowed to experience the real consequences of his decisions. The ultimate responsibility for the discipline of the child lies with the parents; the authority of the school is based on, and only as effective as, the authority of the parent in the life of the child. Parents who are unable or unwilling to work on providing this fundamental level of discipline for their child will be asked to withdraw from the school.

The Worldview Nature of Christian Education

We do not believe it is enough to merely fill our students' minds with the content knowledge of our Christian faith by memorizing Scriptures, learning Bible stories, and becoming well-versed in Christian doctrines. In addition to the mastery of such content, we believe a worldview education that helps them understand the reasonable basis for their faith and that also helps them understand the mindset of the larger culture is essential to preparing them to live as effective Christians in this larger culture. To this end, our goal is to work with the parents and local church in producing students who are well-founded in understanding the reasons why Christianity represents the exclusive truth in the midst of a world filled with many conflicting religions and philosophies.

The Principle of Commitment and Trust Between Parents and School

It is expected that there will be a level of relationship between the parents and school based on the 1 Corinthians 13 model of love which ensures straightforward communication when dealing with difficulties and which avoids gossip or involving others not directly involved in a particular matter.

We understand and agree that should any misunderstanding or dissatisfaction arise regarding any of the teaching, philosophy, or practices of the school, we will go to the proper authorities with our concerns rather than discussing them with others (Matt. 18:15-17). Furthermore, we understand our need to not take our child's "side" too quickly until we have thoroughly investigated and talked with the teacher or other school staff involved in the matter. In most cases, the teacher or school principal should be contacted first, and then, if necessary, the Head of School. While the Head of School is vested with final authority by the Board of Trustees for deciding such matters, parents may request that the process in which the administration and the Head of School handled their concern be reviewed by the Board of Trustees Process Review Committee. After hearing the parents' concerns in a timely manner, this committee will share its recommendations with the Head of School, who will then make a final determination concerning the matter.

Should the parents have issue with the school after following the above-referenced Matthew 18 principle, and should the parents feel constrained to pursue the issue further, they and the school agree to be bound by the following mediation and binding arbitration agreement in an attempt to resolve issues and bring reconciliation.

Mediation and Binding Arbitration Agreement

The parties to this commitment are Christians 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 1 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

parent/school relationship, including claims under federal, state, and local statutory or common law, the law of contract, and law of tort shall be settled by biblically-based mediation.

If resolution of the dispute and reconciliation do not result from mediation, the matter shall then be submitted to an independent and objective arbitrator for binding arbitration. The parties agree for the mediation and arbitration process to be conducted in accordance with the “Rules of Procedure for Christian Conciliation” located in the Guidelines for Christian Conciliation, ICC Peace, LLC, located here: [ICC Guidelines](#). Consistent with these “Rules,” each party to the agreement shall agree to the selection of the arbitrator. The parties agree that if there is an impasse in the selection of the arbitrator, the Institute for Christian Conciliation, 301-N West El Norte Parkway #29, Escondido, CA, 92026, shall be asked to provide the name of a qualified person who will serve in that capacity. Consistent with the “Rules,” the arbitrator shall issue a written opinion within a reasonable time.

The parties to this contract agree that these methods shall be the *sole remedy* for any controversy or claim arising out of the parent/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. The parties to this agreement have had an opportunity to consult legal counsel before signing this agreement.

Commitment to Prayer

We understand our need to support this school, those responsible for it, and the students through regular prayer, realizing that this ministry is an undertaking of faith and can be successful only to the degree that it is blessed by God. We will be committed to praying regularly to this end. (Luke 18:1; Luke 11:5-10)

The Authority of the Bible as God’s Word

We understand that it is the position of the school that the Bible is God’s authoritative communication to man and that the Biblical imperative is that our children’s education should be based on the Christian worldview and permeated throughout with the Word of God. (Col. 2:8; 3:16; John 8:31-32; 2 Tim. 3:16)

Commitment to Financial Support

In order for the school to meet its financial obligations, we understand our responsibility to pay tuition/fees on time each month. If for any reason we encounter difficulty in making our payments, we will take the initiative to contact the business office or finance committee chairman in order to discuss alternative payment arrangements. We also understand and agree with the school’s expectation that all parents will participate in the school’s two (2) annual fundraisers in order to help cover expenses not funded by tuition. (2 Cor. 9:7-10)

Parental Involvement with Students in Entertainment Choices

We acknowledge the profound impact of popular culture on our Christian young people, especially in the forms of music, television, movies, videos, video games, the Internet, and similar media. We understand and agree that our role as parents is to aggressively intervene in and guide our children with their entertainment choices, seeking to teach them to make godly decisions when it comes to these issues. (Phil. 4:8; Psalm 101:3)

Additional Understandings

We understand that Grace Christian School admits students of any race, color, national, or ethnic origin to all rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally made available to students at the school and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national, or ethnic origin in administering its educational policies, admission policies, and athletic and other school-administered programs. (Prov. 28:21; Gal. 3:28; Rom. 15:7)

We understand that if for any reason the Head of School determines that we are not in compliance with the spirit of this commitment, we may be asked to withdraw our child from enrollment in the school, and we will comply. In addition, we understand that Grace Christian School's Biblical role is to work in conjunction with the home to mold students to be Christ-like in a Biblical context. On occasion, the atmosphere or conduct within a particular home may be counter to the Biblical lifestyle the school teaches. This includes, but is not necessarily limited to, sexual immorality, homosexual orientation, or inability to support the moral and faith principles of the school. (1 Thes. 4:3-5; 2 Tim. 3:16) In such cases, the school reserves the right, within its sole discretion, to refuse admission of an applicant or to discontinue enrollment of a student.

EXPECTED STUDENT OUTCOMES

Grace Christian School implements curriculum and designs programs that support and encourage numerous expected outcomes for student learning at all levels, demonstrating that the school values the development of the whole child. These outcomes are the result of a growth process that takes place over the span of the students' years of education and throughout life. It is the vision of Grace Christian School educators that a maturing GCS student:

Spiritual and Biblical Worldview Development

- commits to a personal and growing relationship with Jesus Christ, seeking to love, understand, and obey His Word.
- evaluates and interprets his or her world through the lens of Scripture, seeking to glorify God in every activity of life.
- understands that there is no sacred/secular divide and that all work done as unto the Lord is an act of worship.
- articulates and defends his or her Christian faith and worldview while having a basic understanding of opposing worldviews.

Social and Emotional Development

- prefers, honors, and respects others as created in the image of God and knows that personal value and worth is established by God's love.
- personally responds to carrying out the Great Commission locally and around the world in a compassionate and culturally sensitive manner.
- understands and appreciates literature, the arts, and cultures of other people, dispelling ungodly prejudice and promoting ethnic unity.

Academic / Intellectual Development

- is well prepared in all academic disciplines and skilled in reading, writing, and mathematics.
- understands God's creation order in the universe, acquires an appreciation for the physical and biological sciences, and demonstrates proficiency in applying the scientific method.
- gains an understanding of history, geography, government, and economics in light of the sovereignty of God and the influence of the past upon the present and future.
- values intellectual inquiry and commits to lifelong learning.

Skills Development

- is a critical thinker and possesses the skills to question, solve problems, and make wise decisions.
- participates in discussions across the academic disciplines, and demonstrates skill in effective communication and expressing ideas clearly.
- demonstrates proficiency in study skills, note-taking, test-taking, research skills, and use of information resources.
- is well prepared in technology skills and committed to using technology in an ethically responsible manner.

Character Development

- cultivates the qualities of moral character and personal integrity, as well as exhibiting exemplary character in the areas of diligence, punctuality, responsibility, respect (for people and property), kindness, self-control, and manners.
- treats his or her body as the temple of the Holy Spirit and makes wise decisions about lifelong nutrition, fitness, purity, and lifestyle choices.
- values balanced participation in sports, extra-curricular, and co-curricular activities as beneficial to overall development and interpersonal health.
- appreciates the natural environment and practices responsible stewardship of God's creation.
- commits to wise financial stewardship.

SCHOOL HISTORY AND FACILITIES

Grace Christian School was founded in 1980 based on the conviction that children from Christian families should receive an education rooted in the Christian worldview. We began with seven students meeting in a parent's home to having six buildings on three campuses, to now having one consolidated campus, the former Beverley Manor Elementary School located at 116 Cedar Green Road, Staunton, VA 24401. Grace Christian School serves over 200 households from a three-county radius and represents over sixty churches. Grace Christian School is accredited through the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI) and COGNIA.

Our first graduating class consisted of five students in 1992. Since then, over 500 graduates have gone on to public or Christian colleges, entered the workforce or military, become homemakers, or gone to mission fields.

GCS teachers and staff are professing Christians who acknowledge Christ as Lord and Savior. They are the "living" curricula whose example and personal faith have far more impact on the students than the formal, written curricula. In this context, it is the goal of the school that each student will be pointed clearly to life's highest priority: a personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ.

Preschool through 12th grade are located at 116 Cedar Green Road, Staunton, VA 24401. The GCS Activities Center, located at 1218 Middlebrook Avenue, provides our students with a home for physical education classes, indoor sporting events, school programs, and other special events. Soccer games are played at the Cedar Green field, and basketball and volleyball practices use the Cedar Green gym.

COMMITMENT TO STUDENT SAFETY

The school has intercom and/or phone systems set up in all offices and classrooms. The campus has electronic keys (FOBs) and outside buzzer (visual and auditory) identification systems at the main entrances to help ensure building security. The outside entrances at the campuses are kept locked at all times. There is also screening software for all visitors using an individual's driver's license for security checks. In addition, an alarm system has been installed in each classroom and hallway that, when activated, sets off an alarm and sends an emergency summons to the local police and fire departments. A camera system is installed in common areas throughout the campus, both inside and outside the building. The web-based school management software program (the Family Portal) also provides a Parent Alert text feature to enable fast and efficient communications to parents in case of an emergency.

GUIDELINES AND EXPECTATIONS FOR CONDUCT

All communities are governed by rules and general guidelines. These help ensure the orderly function of the community. We strongly adhere to the policy of treating others with civility and respect and refusing to tolerate harassment, cyber-bullying, intimidation, hazing, and bullying. In a school environment, these guidelines also help students learn to exercise appropriate deference to God-ordained authority. Students and parents should carefully familiarize themselves with the following rules and guidelines which have been designed for their

benefit as well as that of the larger school community.

GCS students, parents, employees, and volunteers are expected to abide by the following guidelines for conduct:

Love One Another

And he said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. (Matt. 22:37-39)

When one loves God with all his heart, he will do nothing to deliberately sin against Him. When one loves his fellow man as he himself wants to be loved, he will do nothing to deliberately hurt or injure another person, including his fellow students.

Honor and Respect

Let every person be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God. (Romans 13:1)

Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor. (Romans 12:10 ESV)

The qualities of honor and respect are essential aspects of how individual humans relate to God. No man can properly relate to God without deferring in humility to Him. These qualities are developed only as they are practiced within human relationships. In particular, the student learns honor and respect as he is trained in these qualities by his parents and other human authorities. In the context of our culture, which increasingly rejects the notion of honoring and respecting authority, learning to be respectful and giving honor where it is due is an essential lesson to be learned by GCS students. School staff are serving the students by working hard to provide them with godly training and an education to prepare them for adulthood. We should respect them as God's servants by practicing appropriate manners and deference toward them.

Bullying, Cyber-bullying, Harassment, Hazing, and Intimidation

Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men.... (Philippians 2:3-7 ESV)

It is essential that Grace Christian School represent a safe and affirming environment that enhances each student's learning experience characterized by preferring one another in Christian love. Therefore, any forms of harassment, intimidation, and bullying are prohibited in all aspects of the school environment, as well any such behavior that may take place outside of school but which may negatively impact school life.

Harassment, cyber-bullying, intimidation, hazing, and bullying includes *any* personal interaction that may be reasonably perceived as threatening, demeaning, mentally or physically abusive, or that which communicates rejection and exclusion in a hurtful, cruel manner (including various forms of gossip or defamation).

Any student experiencing harassment, cyber-bullying, intimidation, hazing, and bullying should immediately report the incident to his or her Principal or the Middle School Dean.

When becoming aware of such behavior, school leadership will counsel those so engaged with the goal of instructing them at an age-appropriate level as to the inappropriateness of such attitudes and actions in light of the Biblical standard of Christian love. Parents will be notified within 24 hours for confirmed bullying incidents.

If there is retaliation or such behavior persists after initially being confronted, the school administration will use its judgment in taking further corrective actions, including possible suspension or, in more extreme cases, expulsion from the school, per the school's student discipline protocols as articulated in the Family and Employee Handbooks. (Refer to "Suspensions/Expulsions - All Grades.")

Because such behaviors represent a great variety of circumstances and interpersonal dynamics, the administration will use its judgment in each case and in context with handbook policies with how to best deal with the matter.

The "Parent-School Covenant" touches upon various aspects of how our school community is to conduct itself in our interpersonal relations and conflicts in a Biblical manner.

Gossip/Defamation

Whoever goes about slandering reveals secrets; therefore do not associate with a simple babblers. (Proverbs 20:19 ESV)

Speaking about other people in a way that damages their reputation does not reflect the love of Christ to His people. Even when what is said is true, a follower of Christ should be committed to giving good reports about people and speaking about and to them in an encouraging way.

Manners

Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. (Philippians 2:3 ESV)

The practice of good manners is a quality that should distinguish the GCS community. Students are asked to practice good manners toward staff and other adults with whom they come in contact during the school day or at school functions. Adults should be addressed respectfully. Students should defer to adults by holding the doors and allowing them to pass in the hallways. Students should be attentive and ready for class when the bell rings. Students should also practice good manners toward each other by preferring one another above self. In particular, young men are expected to practice traditional manners toward young ladies by holding doors, helping carry burdens, giving up seats, and in similar ways.

Honesty and Integrity

Whoever desires to love life and see good days, let him keep his tongue from evil and his lips from speaking deceit. (1 Peter 3:10 ESV)

God is a God of truth and desires that his children reflect this same virtue. We should be honest in all communication, schoolwork, and relationships. If faced with untruthfulness in others, we should be committed to practicing the Matthew 18 principle of confrontation.

Responsibility

One who is faithful in a very little is also faithful in much, and one who is dishonest in a very little is also dishonest in much. (Luke 16:10 ESV)

Learning responsibility and how to faithfully carry out one's duty is an important lesson in preparation for adulthood. The family should view school assignments, attendance, punctuality, in-class participation and other school-related responsibilities as unto the LORD.

Stewardship of Buildings and Property

Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found faithful. (1 Corinthians 4:2 ESV)

We should view ourselves as God's stewards responsible for the care of facilities, materials, equipment, and technology that He has provided us, often through the sacrificial giving of others.

APPEALS

For to this end Christ died and lived again, that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living. (Romans 14:9 ESV)

There will be times when there is disagreement with a school policy or decision. Instead of arguing or complaining about the conflict, carefully pray through the situation, committing it to the sovereignty of God. After prayer, respectfully discuss this matter with the teacher, administrator, staff member, or coach, realizing that if the matter needs to be corrected, your input may help change things for the better. On the other hand, with additional discussion, you may gain a better understanding of the matter. Parents and students should go directly to the teacher first to discuss suggestions or grievances with the teacher outside of class at a time that is convenient for the teacher. The final decision will be made by the school leadership.

CHANGES TO FAMILY HANDBOOK

Grace Christian School may make changes to the Family Handbook during the school year by notifying parents by email two weeks in advance of the change being implemented.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION AND POLICIES

FAMILY ACCOUNTS PAYMENT POLICY

Grace Christian School uses FACTS Tuition Management for all student billing, and each family is required to complete online enrollment with FACTS during the FACTS SIS enrollment process.

There are two tuition payment options available to parents:

- One-month payment plan: A 2% discount is given if full tuition is paid by July. The full amount of the charge will be due if this payment plan is chosen.
- Twelve-month payment plan: Tuition is paid in monthly installments from June through May.

Payments are made as an automatic draft from a bank account or credit card. Families are given the choice of five monthly due dates for the tuition draft (1st, 10th, 15th, 20th and 25th). If an automatic draft fails, an insufficient funds fee will be applied to the family's account. If paying by credit card, that account will be charged a processing fee.

All accounts must be paid in full prior to the beginning of each new school year for enrollment to continue.

Incidental Charges

Incidental charges will be billed separately as they occur, including, but not limited to, athletics, fine arts, child care, retreats, advanced classes, etc.

A *Senior Fee* is paid by families who have students in the 12th grade. The amount is communicated to families prior to beginning the senior year, and families can choose to pay this as a lump sum or in installments. Payment of the Senior Fee will be added to FACTS-SIS. Scholarships are available to senior families, and interested families should approach the Upper School Principal to discuss this possibility.

Non-Payment

In the event that a family fails to pay their account and fails to initiate contact with the Business Manager to make special payment arrangements; or if the family fails to follow through with their special payment arrangement plan, the school reserves the right to discontinue the family's enrollment at GCS. Grace Christian School student records, transcripts, and diplomas will be held until the account is paid in full.

Special Payment Arrangements

It has always been the policy of the school to work with families in making special payment arrangements when they have extenuating financial circumstances. In such cases, parents should contact our Business Manager to discuss the possibility of making special payment arrangements. A written payment plan will also need to be submitted to the Business Manager.

NON-PROFIT STATUS

GCS is a non-profit organization under the provisions of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Gifts to the school are fully tax-deductible if IRS guidelines are followed.

STUDENT INSURANCE

All students are covered by a student accident insurance plan. If a student incurs any medical expenses as a result of a school-related accident, a parent should request an insurance claim form from the business office within thirty days of injury.

TUITION DISCOUNTS

Our school offers two tuition discounts for qualifying school families: the Multiple Child Discount and the Pastor Discount.

- Multiple-Child Discount: This is an automatically applied discount to families who have two or more students enrolled in grades K-12 (PS/PK students are excluded). This discount cannot be combined with staff and pastor discounts. It may not be available to families receiving a tax-credit scholarship.
- Pastor Discount: A discount is available to families who have a parent employed as a full-time pastor. The family must have at least one student enrolled full-time in grades K-12 (PS/PK students are excluded). This discount may not be available, or only partially available, to a family who is eligible for a tax credit scholarship. If the family is awarded a tax credit scholarship, then the Pastor Discount may be applied after the scholarship amount is awarded, to provide for any unmet tuition assistance needed. If you would like to be considered for the pastor discount, please contact our Business Manager at jbussiere@gcswarriors.org.

TUITION WORK CREDIT PROGRAM

A Tuition Work Credit (TWC) program is available for a limited number of families who may need assistance with their tuition. Tuition work credit allows school families to perform cleaning and maintenance services at the school. Tuition Work Credit duties are performed on a weekly basis throughout the school year, and special projects (i.e. painting, etc.) are assigned over the summer. Tuition Work Credit is considered taxable income and is reported at the end of each calendar year on an IRS Form W-2.

For more information about the TWC program or to request a TWC application, please contact our Facilities Manager at rknight@gcswarriors.org.

SCHOOL-WIDE INFORMATION AND POLICIES

ACHIEVEMENT TESTING

A standardized achievement test and associated school ability test will be given to all students in grades K-11. The tests will be conducted during the months of April or May. Teachers will not assign any test or project due dates on these testing days. Results will be sent to parents during the summer.

ADMISSIONS

Being admitted into the school and continuing as a GCS student are privileges and not rights, and it is expected that new and returning families and students maintain the standards, guidelines, and expectations communicated during the admissions process and within the Family Handbook and other GCS policies.

Grace Christian School seeks to serve families from the larger Christian community who may benefit from the educational program and overall values of the school. It is expected that at least one parent is a professing follower of Jesus Christ and is in regular attendance at a local Christian church. In addition, parents must indicate support for the GCS Statement of Faith.

Grace Christian School admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. GCS does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in the administration of the educational policies, scholarship programs, admission policies, athletics, or other school-administered programs.

More information concerning the application and admissions process is outlined on our website, www.gcswarriors.org.

Refer to [Immunizations](#) and [Withdrawing a Student](#).

ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL

(Please view K-12 traffic flow [here](#). Please view PS & PK traffic flow [here](#).)

Parents are asked to be punctual in arriving to school with their children and in picking them up at dismissal. The school does not assume responsibility for the students until they have entered the school building.

Arrival

- Before-School Care is available for PS-8th grade between 7:15 and 7:45 a.m. Parents must drop their children off at the main entrance if they have signed up for Before-School Care with its added fee.
- Normal arrival for students is 7:45-8:00 a.m. Parents should drop off their K-12th grade children at the main entrance. PS/PK children should be dropped off at the back entrance. Preschool-6th grade students are not allowed to walk across the parking lots unattended. Students should be in their seats and ready for the day by 8:05 a.m.

Traffic Flow & Disembarking

- Families may disembark their children in one of the 11 designated drop off spots in front of the main entrance to the school.
- PS/PK families should access the school from the back entrance ([see map](#)). *Please do not park and exit your vehicle from the drop-off spots in front of the building.*

Dismissal & Traffic Flow (See traffic flow map [here](#).)

- Consider delaying your arrival to school a few extra minutes to help “spread out” the dismissal process. Your arrival any time between approximately 3:21 and 3:35 p.m. is appropriate.
- A dismissal number will be assigned to each family at the beginning of the year. Parents are asked to display this number on their vehicle’s passenger-side visor and have the number visible during dismissal.
- Students in Preschool and Pre-K will be dismissed at 12:00. During these dismissals, parents of a PS or PK student should park in the back and walk to the back entrance to get their child.
- Students in grades K-12 will be dismissed at 3:20 p.m. Please enter from the main GCS entry off of Cedar Green Rd. Please drive up to the backstop fence and make a U-turn to line up. At 3:40 p.m., remaining K-8th students will be taken to the After-School Care program* and 9th-12th will be excused to the reception area.
- When you enter the pick up zone, GCS personnel will be available to assist you in embarking your student(s). Please carefully follow instructions from GCS personnel in order to help ensure a safe and orderly dismissal process for all.
- The school is responsible for releasing PS-8th grade students only to parents, legal guardians, or other persons designated by parents. The school office should be notified if a student is to be picked up by someone other than those designated in FACTS SIS. Students will not be dismissed to a person unless the parents have given prior notification.
- Parents and/or carpool drivers are to be fully responsible for their students and the students in their carpool once they have been dismissed from the building. The school is not responsible for the students once they are dismissed.

DAILY SCHEDULE FOR ALL SCHOOL

Before-School Care*	7:15 a.m. to 7:45 a.m.
Arrival	7:45 a.m. to 8:05 a.m.
Preschool & Pre-K	8:05 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
Grades K-12	8:05 a.m. to 3:20 p.m.
Grades K-12 half day	8:05 a.m. to 12:20 p.m.
After-School Care*	3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. (12:00 p.m. daily for Preschool and Pre-K students; half days from 12:20 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. for K-8 students, except for days when After-School Care is not offered.)
Office Hours	7:45 a.m. to 3:45 p.m. (Summer hours: M-Th, 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.)
*Additional fees charged for these services.	

ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance, which is legally required by the state of Virginia, is critical for the success of the student. If your student will be absent, please notify the school office by 8:30 a.m. that day. In those instances when your student is ill or needs to miss school due to other important family-related reasons, please communicate those absences. All student attendance and tardy records will be included in the student’s cumulative folder.

Parents are asked to be punctual in arriving to school with their children and in picking them up at dismissal. Tardiness in the mornings causes disruptions to the opening class. Teachers will be on duty in their classrooms by 7:55 a.m. Students are asked to take care of class preparations and be seated before the tardy bell sounds at 8:05 a.m. Students not in their seats at that time will be considered tardy. Students will need to get a pass from the office before being admitted to class. Students grade 3 and below who are tardy must be walked to the Lower School office by a parent or guardian. Please see the [Lower School Attendance Policy](#) and the [Upper School Attendance Policy](#) for further school level-specific details.

Tardies

- If a student has ten tardies to class (excused/unexcused) during the school year, the parents will be contacted by a staff person.
- If a student has fifteen tardies during the year, a notification letter will be sent to the parents.
- If a student has eighteen tardies during the year, a conference will be held with the administration, teacher, and parents. During this conference, a review of the student's academic progress will be conducted, and any academic concerns will be addressed.
- If a student has twenty-five tardies during the year, then a conference will be held with the administration and parents. Prior to the conference, a committee (consisting of the administration and teachers) will review the student's academic status in the affected classes. The student may:
 - be required to repeat the subject or
 - be dismissed from school.

Early/Special Dismissal

If parents need to take their children out of class for a doctor's appointment, trip, etc., a note should be sent to the teacher or the office called. The child will be ready to leave at the designated time in the school office. The parent must come to the office and sign out his/her child. Parents are asked to not go directly to the classroom to pick up their child. If leaving early becomes excessive, it may affect the child's performance or class grade. A conference will be scheduled to review the student's academic status in the affected classes.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Grace Christian School is directed by a Board of Trustees. The trustees are charged primarily with the important task of seeing that Grace remains true to its essential mission distinctives. They also ensure that Grace operates according to sound financial practices. Lastly, they focus on strategic issues in planning for the future of Grace as well as evaluating Grace's effectiveness in accomplishing its stated vision. The trustees do not become involved in the day-to-day administrative functions of Grace.

The board is self-perpetuating, in that trustees are nominated and elected by the Trustees, ratified by the Community Fellowship Church Elders, and serve three-year terms which may be renewed upon the consent of the individual trustee and approval of the larger board and CFC Elders.

CHROMEBOOKS

All students and their parents are required to read and sign the [Student Technology & Internet Usage Guidelines and Agreement](#) prior to the beginning of each school year.

COMMUNICATIONS

EMAILING GCS STAFF

Typically, GCS staff members can be reached by the letter of their first name, followed by their last name, @GCSWarriors.org. (i.e. John Doe would be JDoe@GCSWarriors.org).

PARENT ALERT

A school-wide text will be sent by the school in the instance of important time-sensitive information. The number 31706 can be saved in your phone as "Grace Christian School Text Alert."

WARRIOR BULLETIN

A school-wide email is sent, when needed, to address certain topics that require additional attention.

WARRIOR WEEKLY

A school-wide weekly newsletter is emailed on Thursdays during the school year. This electronic publication relays timely, pertinent information and is divided into five sections: All-School, Lower School, Upper School, Athletics, and Fine Arts. *Note: Gmail “clips” emails. If you do not see the entire email, click “view entire message” at the bottom of the email. ([Learn more here.](#))* On occasion, parents/guardians miss this important email because their server sends it to their “Promotions” tab or to “Spam” and not their “Inbox.” Learn how to fix that problem [here](#). Please reach out if you are not receiving or able to view the entirety of the *Weekly* so that we can help you remain “in-the-know” concerning all of the wonderful things happening at Grace.

GCS@GCSWarriors.org

WARRIOR CHRONICLE

An electronic publication of GCS to parents, alumni, staff, and other supporters. If you have an article or update you would like to share with the greater GCS family, email Development@GCSWarriors.org.

CURRICULAR MATERIALS: POLICY FOR ADDRESSING CONCERNS

If a parent or student has a concern about questionable material (ethical, moral, etc.), he/she should bring it to the attention of the respective principal. The following process will be implemented:

1. The Principal will form a committee comprised of faculty members from the related departments and two parents whose family did not initially raise the concern.
2. The concerned person will meet with the committee to present questionable material and voice concerns.
3. The committee will meet with the Principal to critique and discuss specific concerns. The committee will draft a recommendation as to whether the material will be retained or discarded.
4. The Head of School will review the recommendation and make a final decision.

DISCIPLINE/CORRECTION OF STUDENTS

Our discipline policy is designed to guide students in taking responsibility for their emotions, attitudes, and actions. General guidelines for classroom discipline include providing positive support of a student's appropriate behavior, clearly defining expectations and boundaries, and the application of consequences for inappropriate behavior. The primary goal of our disciplinary policies and processes is to guide the student towards reconciliation with God and others as well as instilling principles for improved decision-making.

Suspensions/Expulsions

The school reserves the right to suspend or expel a student if it is determined that the student's ongoing involvement in the school is having a detrimental impact on the school community or if the administration determines there is a serious breach of a school policy. While the Head of School is vested with final authority by the Board of Trustees for deciding such matters, parents may request that the process in which the administration and Head of School handled the suspension or expulsion be reviewed by the Board of Trustees Process Review Committee. After hearing the parents’ concerns in a timely manner, this committee will share its recommendations with the Head of School, who will then make a final determination concerning the matter.

DISPENSING OF MEDICATIONS

Trained school personnel will dispense non-prescription (over-the-counter) medications to students during the school day, per parental permissions. These will be limited to the authorized dosages of either acetaminophen or ibuprofen. In the event that a student comes to the office with a headache, body aches, or fever, a parent or

guardian will be contacted by phone before any medication is administered. In addition, parents must have the dosage information on file in the school office.

If a physician deems it necessary for a child to take prescription medication during school hours, parents must complete a separate form authorizing the school to administer the prescription. The form may be obtained from the school office. In addition, the prescription must be packaged in the original container with the pharmacy's official label and administration details and kept in the school office during school hours.

Parents should provide prior notification of any diagnosed medical condition that necessitates a student to consume food or a beverage other than water at a time other than lunch or breaks. Refer to Lunches & Snacks within the grade level-specific section.

ELECTRONIC AND DIGITAL DEVICES

In order to enhance learning, cultivate interpersonal skills, minimize distractions, and encourage students to be more fully participatory while at school, GCS students are not permitted to use any unauthorized electronic communication device (ECD) at school. These include smartphones and smartwatches. Students should avoid bringing electronic or digital devices to school. If brought to school, students must turn off the device(s) and place it/them in designated storage holders upon arrival. These storage holders are made available to students and are monitored by cameras. Violations will result in the school's confiscation of the item(s) and additional consequences. The same guidelines for these items apply to all school-sponsored trips, including sports trips. All students and their parents are required to read and sign the [Student Personal Electronic Communications Device Policy and Agreement](#) prior to the beginning of each school year.

ENROLLMENT PRIVILEGE

It is a privilege to attend GCS. Students who demonstrate an attitude or behavior not in compliance with GCS policies for student conduct will have their enrollment status reviewed by the Head of School and, if deemed necessary, dismissed from the school.

FIELD TRIPS

Students in each grade will go on various field trips throughout the year which correspond with their class studies. The cost of field trips has been included in each child's tuition. Field Trip Permission Forms are signed as a part of the enrollment packet. Students without a signed permission form will not be permitted to remain in school during the field trip. The teachers will inform parents of upcoming field trips via the Field Trip Notification Form with the trip details. Students may be asked to wear certain attire, depending on the nature of the field trip. This information will also be noted on the information sent to the parents prior to the trip. Refer to school-level dress code for field trips, as students may be kept from attending the field trip if not dressed appropriately. See <https://www.gcswarriors.org/resources/familyhub.cfm> for more information on the dress code.

Parents may be asked to chaperone or occasionally drive on a field trip. Chaperones should make childcare arrangements for younger siblings for maximum supervision. To ensure the students' safety on the trip, seatbelts are required for each student. All parents who drive for school activities must fill out a Volunteer Driver Application Form and be approved. The form will be kept on file in the school office. Refer to the [Volunteer Driver Application Form](#). Parents must also run their driver's license through our security software at the ES/MS before leaving for the field trip.

FUNDRAISING

As a dynamic part of our covenant community practice, GCS has enjoyed a long history of parent generosity and active involvement in its fundraising activities, which has allowed the school to maintain a relatively low tuition rate and also fund large projects.

Parents, family, friends, and businesses are encouraged to join us in raising needed support for this amazing, local, life-changing ministry.

Grace Christian School is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and all charitable donations are tax-deductible (Federal ID #54-1249847). Online donations can be made at GCSWarriors.org, and cash or check donations by mail or in person to 116 Cedar Green Road, Staunton, VA 24401, Attn: Development Office. Stocks, bonds, company-matching, and gifts-in-kind are also welcome. Reach out to Development@GCSWarriors.org.

Ways to support:

- Fall Fundraiser - [PASS IT ON](#), School-wide, service-focused outreach and fundraiser.
- Spring Fundraiser - [GCS AUCTION](#), School-wide community event and fundraiser with a new and exciting school *Bid for Cause* every year.
- Business Supporters - [LEGACY PARTNERS](#) - Find out how your business can partner with us.
- Tax Credits - Pay state or federal taxes or know someone who does? You can redirect your tax dollars to GCS and save money at the same time. Beginning January 1, 2027, a new federal tax-credit program will be available.
- Shopping Fundraisers - [KROGER COMMUNITY REWARDS](#) and [BOX TOPS FOR EDUCATION](#).
- General fundraisers for sports teams, fine arts, clubs, and electives throughout the year (bake sales, hot lunches, or other products and services where students work to earn money for a school-sponsored cause). [Approval form required](#).

IMMUNIZATION/PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS

Immunization Requirements:

All students must provide documentation showing immunizations are current. Parents of students entering preschool must be up-to-date for their age with the required vaccines or be in the process of receiving the appropriate immunizations based on their age. Requests for faith exemptions will be considered.

Physical Requirements:

In addition, students entering school for the first time must provide:

- Kindergarten: a copy of the Commonwealth of Virginia School Entrance Health Form (which may be obtained from the family physician or health department).
- Grades 1-12: documentation that a school physical was completed by a qualified licensed physician, nurse practitioner, or physician's assistant within 12 months of entering school.
- Students transferring from another school may simply need to transfer the form.

It is important to submit these documents to the school prior to the beginning of the school year. According to state law, students cannot be admitted to school until the above documentation is on file in the school office.

Parents should please check with their physician/health department to verify that their child's immunizations are up to date, as these requirements may change. Also, the Staunton-Augusta Health Department offers free or discounted immunizations to your children if parents prefer utilizing their services rather than their physician's.

PARENT REQUESTS FOR A PARTICULAR TEACHER

Student placement into a class is based on the previous teacher's recommendation and administrative approval. We do not take parent requests for a child to be placed with a particular teacher.

PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

Parents are responsible for the supervision and safety of their children at school activities or on school property unless their child is officially participating under the direct supervision of GCS personnel. They are also responsible for reading and responding to emails in a timely fashion, being present at parent-teacher conferences, and communicating any dismissal or attendance changes.

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parent-teacher conferences are held after the end of the first quarter for all grade levels and during the third quarter as necessary. Parents are invited to attend the third-quarter conference, especially if their students' grades are below a "C." Parents who are unable to attend these conferences are asked to contact the teachers to schedule another time that is convenient.

PARENT VOLUNTEERS

Volunteering has been a long-held tradition of our GCS community, and the success enjoyed by our programs and at our events is dependent upon parents investing time and energy as they are gifted and willing to do. Volunteer opportunities are available throughout the school year for parents, grandparents, alumni, and friends of the school. Some of these opportunities include being a room parent, helping in the classroom, building sets for an upcoming theater production, or providing food or snacks for staff/faculty. Parents may sign up for these various volunteer opportunities through our summer forms which are sent out every summer. Volunteers should sign in at the appropriate school office before proceeding to their volunteer duties. Those interested in volunteering should email GCS@GCSWarriors.org.

REASONABLE SEARCH

GCS retains the right to search any personal property of students and visitors, including, but not limited to, personal clothing, electronic devices, lockers, backpacks, and automobiles.

Additionally, if a student is legitimately suspected to be under the influence of a controlled substance, GCS may require the student to submit to a blood and/or urine test within a specified time period. In such instances it will be the responsibility of the parent(s)/guardian(s) to:

- take the student to the drug testing site,
- pay for any GCS requested test(s), and
- sign any waivers/releases required by the drug-testing site to reveal all results of the test(s) to the Principal and to ensure that these results are submitted directly by the testing site to the Principal within the previously specified time period.

Refusal to fulfill any of these requirements will result in the student being automatically expelled unless the Head of School determines otherwise.

Refer to the School-wide policy on [Suspensions/Expulsions](#) and the policies at each of the school levels. ([ES](#), [MS](#), and [HS](#))

SERVICES

AFTER-SCHOOL CARE

After-School Care is available daily for students in Preschool-8th grade until 5:30 p.m. depending on space availability. A fee is charged for this service, and space is limited. Please call the LS school office for more information.

BEFORE-SCHOOL CARE

Before-School Care is available daily for students in Preschool-8th grade who arrive between 7:15 a.m. and 7:45 a.m. A fee is charged for this service, and space is limited. Please call the LS school office for more information.

BUS SERVICE

Bus service is available to GCS families with K-12 children who live in the Waynesboro and Fishersville areas. There is a monthly fee for using the bus service. If you are interested in participating in this, email admissions@gcswarriors.org.

Conduct of Students on GCS Vehicles

Students represent Grace Christian School when traveling in school vehicles. The following guidelines should be adhered to by students.

- Students should not stand while the vehicle is moving. Students should remain seated at all times, facing the front of the vehicle.
- Students may not put their hands, arms, heads, etc., out of the windows.
- Students may not talk or yell out of the windows.
- Students may not throw any object outside of the window or in the vehicle.
- Students are to enter and exit from the front of a bus only, unless an emergency warrants exiting through the back of the bus.
- Student cell phones should be turned off and be kept in their backpacks while on the vehicle.
- Students should remove all trash when exiting the vehicle.
- Students should keep bus aisles clear of book bags and other items.
- Students must obey driver instructions at all times.

School vehicles are an extension of the classroom and all applicable school rules should be followed. Violations may be referred to the student's principal.

CHALLENGE PROGRAM

The mission of the Challenge Program is to challenge the student's potential in order to create confident and independent exceptional learners while facilitating a growth mindset with teachers/parents in a supportive, Christ-centered environment.

Referrals to evaluate a student for participation in the Challenge Program may be made by teachers, administrators, or parents by contacting the director of the program.

To be admitted to the Challenge Program, a student must meet one of the following criteria and provide GCS with the supporting documentation.

- The student has been diagnosed with a condition which negatively impacts his or her academic performance (such as, but not limited to, ADHD or Autism Spectrum Disorder).
- The student qualified for special education services or 504 Plan prior to coming to GCS.
- The student would qualify for a 504 Plan if attending public school.

- The student obtained a psychoeducational evaluation through Staunton City Public Schools or an independent testing center while attending Grace Christian School and meets the criteria for special education services.

Students who meet the above criteria are eligible for accommodations within the general education classroom. Accommodations are individualized according to the student's need and the ability of Grace Christian School to provide the accommodations. Depending on the impact of a student's diagnosis on his or her academic performance, some students may receive instructional or support services. Modifications to the general education curriculum will be made only for students with an identified disability that prevents them from participating in grade-level instruction. Any modifications made to the curriculum will be noted on the student's transcripts. Parents will be asked to provide required therapeutic equipment for students.

Students who do not meet the above criteria but have extenuating circumstances which negatively impact their academic performance may be considered for participation in the Challenge Program. Students without a qualifying diagnosis may have access to instructional and/or support services, but do not qualify for accommodations or modifications. Students who enter the program in this manner must complete the Woodcock-Johnson Test of Academic Achievement, which is administered by a Challenge instructor. Parents are responsible for the cost of this testing. Participation in the program by these students will be determined annually by the Challenge director, the student's principal, and the Head of School.

Space is limited within the program, so enrollment is not guaranteed.

A "Student Academic Plan" will be created and updated annually for each student in the Challenge Program. All students who receive accommodations, modifications, instructional services, and/or support services will be charged a Challenge fee in addition to their school tuition. These fees will be determined by the level of service provided. See the "Challenge Program Tiers of Service" document for additional information and fees. Services and their cost will be determined annually and will be detailed in a "Challenge Parental Agreement," which will be signed by the student's parent or guardian and is considered a binding contract.

Challenge Program Tiers

Challenge Tier	Description of Services	Approximate minutes/week	Sessions/week
Tier 0	Management of accommodations and monitoring of academic progress.	15	0
Tier 1 Individual	Search & Teach (S&T) or one period of individualized academic instruction or support.	30-40	1
Tier 1 Group	One period of group academic instruction or support.	30-40	1
Tier 2 Individual	Orton-Gillingham (OG) or two periods of individualized academic instruction or support.	60-80	2

Tier 2 Group	Two periods of group academic instruction or support.	60-80	2
Tier 3 Individual	OG or three periods of individualized academic instruction or support.	90-120	3
Tier 3 Group	Three periods of group academic instruction or support.	90-120	3
Tier 4 Individual	OG or four periods of individualized academic instruction or support.	120-160	4
Tier 4 Group	Four periods of group academic instruction or support.	120-160	4
Tier 5 Individual	Educational Therapy or OG or five periods of individualized academic instruction or support.	150-200	5
Tier 5 Group	Five periods of group academic instruction or support.	150-200	5

Search & Teach (Grade K-1): A program designed to detect children vulnerable to learning difficulties and offer educational intervention. A prescriptive approach that builds the neuropsychological skills necessary for progress in reading, writing, and spelling. This program is provided by a trained Search & Teach instructor.

Orton-Gillingham (Grades K-6): A direct, explicit, multisensory, structured, sequential, diagnostic, and prescriptive approach to teaching literacy to students who have been identified as needing additional support. Students will work with an instructor who has been trained in the *Orton-Gillingham* approach.

Educational Therapy (Grades 3-8): "NILD Educational Therapy® offers weekly 1-on-1 or small group interventions focused on cognitive development. These research-based sessions use dynamic interactive language and diverse materials to enhance thinking and information processing. Tailored to individual student needs, this unique therapy strengthens core academic abilities, independent thought, reasoning, questioning, and self-regulation" (National Institute for Learning Development). This service is provided by a trained Educational Therapist.

SCHOOL PROPERTY

Students are expected to take special care of textbooks, library books, or other school property. The student will be charged for any lost or damaged items.

SCHOOL PHONE USAGE

Students must receive explicit permission from school staff before using GCS or personal phones. Refer to [Student Personal Electronic Communication Device Policy & Agreement](#).

SNOW DAYS

For school closings/delays, check [WHSV-TV3](#). Parents/guardians and staff will receive a text message via the FACTS SIS Parent Alert System.

In the event that school closes early due to inclement weather, parents/guardians and staff will receive a text message on their cell phone via the alert system. The Waynesboro bus route will not run on early closure days for weather.

STEWARDSHIP OF FACILITIES

Students are required to help maintain GCS facilities and participate with the cleaning of the school facility for a short period of time each day.

STUDENT ILLNESS

In the event a student becomes ill at school, every effort will be made to give the appropriate care until the parents are contacted and able to take the student home. Parents are expected to make arrangements to pick up their child when he or she becomes unexpectedly ill while at school. Parents should not send their children to school if they have an oral temperature of 100 degrees or higher. Children should have a temperature of less than 100 degrees and be symptom-free without medication for twenty-four hours before returning to school. In all cases, the best interests of not only the individual student, but also the health, safety, and welfare of the larger school community should be considered.

STUDENT INFORMATION SYSTEM: FACTS SIS

FACTS SIS is an internet-based school management system used at GCS. Teachers are able to share lesson plans, homework and grades, under password protection, on FACTS SIS. Parents should check their student's academic progress and attendance record from any location via the web.

Through the FACTS SIS Family Portal, parents and students have instant access to school and academic information, attendance, homework (grades 4-12), and more.

UNCOVERED TOPICS

Any number of issues may arise which are not covered in the above policies and guidelines. When this is the case, students should ask appropriate questions of the faculty, staff, and administration. In all cases, it is the spirit of these policies and guidelines and not merely their technical fulfillment which is important. It is hoped that staff and students will all be motivated by Christian love as they seek to relate together in community in a manner which will glorify the Lord Jesus.

VISITORS

While parents and visitors are welcome at the school, it is generally advisable to check ahead of time with the teacher to make sure that the visit will not interfere with a previously scheduled activity. All visitors are required to check in the school office. All visitors will be required to obtain a pass from the Raptor visitor system prior to exiting the lobby.

Lunches, homework, books, and other items are to be left in the entrance lobby to be delivered to your student. If parents wish to talk to their student's teacher, they should arrange a private conference. Please do not detain the teacher while he or she is performing his or her responsibilities.

Visitors must be over 18, unless accompanied by an adult, or previous permission from the principal has been secured. Students who are currently attending other schools, who are homeschooled, or graduates of other schools are welcome to visit students at school athletic or social events (if open to the public) but are asked not to visit GCS during school hours. Exceptions to this policy must be approved in advance by the principal.

WEAPONS

Weapons of any kind (firearms, knives, etc.) are strictly prohibited on school property and at all school events. Violation of this prohibition will result in confiscation of the weapon, the infraction being recorded in the student's permanent record, and may result in a suspension, expulsion, or possible legal prosecution.

WITHDRAWING A STUDENT

Once accepted and enrolled, the family of each student who withdraws any time after enrollment and prior to the last day of school will...

- (1) be charged the full tuition rate through the end of the month of withdrawal.
- (2) be charged an additional withdrawal fee of \$350 unless the GCS Finance Committee approves an exception based on extenuating circumstances.
- (3) complete an online exit survey submitted to them by the GCS administration.
- (4) return all GCS property, including textbooks, technology, athletic uniforms, etc.

The school reserves the option of withholding school records, transcripts, and diplomas until all balances are paid in full and withdrawal processes are completed.

Please feel free to contact our Business Manager at jbussiere@gcswarriors.org with any questions you may have. It is the goal of the school to accommodate our families in a responsible and gracious manner concerning all finance-related issues.

LOWER SCHOOL INFORMATION AND POLICIES (PS - 6)

ATTENDANCE

Tardies

Students grade 3 and below who are tardy must be walked to the Lower School office by a parent or guardian. See [school-wide policy on tardies](#).

Absences

- Students must attend school for a minimum of 162 school days during each academic year (which is typically 180 days) in order to meet promotion requirements.
- Students in grades K-6 may not be promoted to the next grade if they are absent for 18 or more school days.
- Day attendance is taken for lower school students.
- Students and parents should keep close track of all absences and tardies through the FACTS Family Portal and notify the school of any discrepancies to the attendance record.
- Parent/Administration meetings will be held when students' absences exceed 15.
- All student attendance and tardy records will be included in the student's cumulative folder.

CELL PHONES

Lower School students may not have cell phones or smartwatches at school.

CHAPELS

Chapels, prayer groups, and outreach activities are held weekly for students in the lower school. Local-area pastors, Christian leaders, missionaries, and special guests are periodically invited to share with the students. Our chapels frequently include worship music, devotionals, or short skits prepared by our students or teachers.

Parents and visitors are welcome to attend.

DISCIPLINE

- Positive reinforcement and a clip system to motivate is utilized with students in Kindergarten through 2nd grade. In all grades, expectations are reviewed at the beginning of each school year by the teacher.
- If the student habitually violates a reasonable and defined class or school standard and the problem is not resolved as a result of lesser forms of correction/discipline, the student will attend a conference with the school principal. In this meeting, the standard being violated will be discussed and a warning issued of the consequences of continued offenses. The parents will be notified as soon as is reasonably possible of the content of this conference and encouraged to reinforce with the student the school's position in the manner in which the parents feel will be most effective.
- In the event the student continues to violate the standard, the teacher will again bring that student to the office for a conference with the Principal. If the Principal determines that the student has been adequately warned previously, contact will be made as soon as possible with one of the parents and the situation adequately explained. In some cases, the parent/guardian may be asked to take the child home. The student may not be readmitted to the school until he/she and at least one of the parents has a conference with the Principal.
- The Principal may require a conference to discuss a strategy with the parents to resolve the problem.

Refer to the School-Wide policy on [Suspensions/Expulsions](#).

DRESS CODE

The emphasis of the Grace Christian Lower School dress code is modesty, appropriateness, neatness, and cleanliness. We rely on our partnership with families to reinforce these guidelines and to help our students make wise decisions about their appearance at school. If students arrive dressed inappropriately, they will be instructed to correct the situation. If unable to comply, they will be asked to call a parent to bring clothing to the school or wear alternative clothing provided by the school. The school administration will serve as the final authority in interpreting and enforcing the dress code. Refer to [LS Grade Dress Code](#).

FINE ARTS

Students in the Lower School will have weekly classes in music and art as a part of their curriculum. In addition to these classes, students in grades 2-6 have the opportunity to participate in After-School Art or Chorus. Details of these after-school programs can be found in the *Warrior Weekly*. Students in the Lower School have the opportunity to be enrolled in private music lessons during the school day. Lessons are offered in a variety of instruments by qualified instructors on a first-come basis as space and scheduling allows. These details are outlined in the summer forms. Students taking lessons are expected to perform in an annual music recital.

GRADING POLICY – Grades 1-6

Students in grades 1-6 will be graded with letter grades based on the following numeric scale:

- A: 90-100
- B: 80-89
- C: 70-79
- D: 60-69
- F: 0-59
- I: Incomplete

Grading terms will consist of four nine-week periods for students in grades 1-6. Kindergarten students will receive evaluations each January and May. Parents of Preschool through 6th grade students will have conferences with the teacher in the fall and spring.

Grades from the previous week will be posted on the FACTS SIS Family Portal. There will be exceptions for large projects and tests. Parents may access the Family Portal through the link on the school website. Parents are asked to review their child's grades on the Family Portal on a regular basis.

HOMEWORK – Grades K-6

In all grades, the students are given regular homework assignments appropriate to their age. A primary reason for assigning homework is to train the children to become responsible in completing assigned tasks as well as to reinforce through practice the concepts taught in the classroom. We request that parents actively supervise their child's homework and sign their child's homework assignment sheet/planner each night. In order to maintain good communication with parents, any work that the teacher considers unsatisfactory work (assignments, tests, etc.) may be sent home for the parents to sign and return the following day.

Students will be given a reasonable amount of time to make up work when they are absent from school.

Homework Policy When a Student is Absent Due to Illness:

- If the child is in Kindergarten through 3rd grade, the student will make up their work when they return to school. However, if a student is absent for an extended amount of time, the teacher will use his or her discretion and send home what they feel is appropriate.
- If the child is in 4th through 6th grade, parents should refer to the Family Portal for the assignments. Parents can make arrangements to pick up books for the assignments on the Family Portal or ask that they be sent home with a sibling, if they desire. Additional work will be sent home the day the student returns to school, and the student will have a reasonable amount of time to make up the work. Assistance will be given to make sure the student understands the material. This may include working during recess and study hall upon their return. If a student is out for an extended number of days and a parent requests work, the teacher will use his or her discretion and send home what he or she feels is appropriate.

Homework Policy When a Student Knows in Advance He/She Will be Absent:

- Students will be given a reasonable amount of time to make up work when they return to school following a vacation. Students in grades 4-6 may choose to take their books, check their assignments on the Family Portal, and complete any work while on vacation. Any additional work will be given upon their return. If a student has difficulty with the material, they will have time upon their return to receive assistance. This may include working during study halls or recess.

LOCKERS

Each student in grades 5 and 6 will be assigned a locker at the beginning of the year. The student will be responsible for maintaining his or her locker in a neat and orderly manner. Students are not to change lockers unless they have first received permission from the administration.

Students are not to post pictures or slogans, etc. in their lockers which are inconsistent with Biblical values. No stickers are permitted on the interior or exterior of lockers, but magnets are. Exterior postings are limited to school messages from the staff and notes, etc. as posted by the sports committee and other school organizations.

Students may not place locks on their individual lockers.

Locker inspections will be conducted on a regular basis.

LOST AND FOUND

All items left on the playground or other common areas will be placed in the Lost and Found area maintained at the school. After a reasonable time, unclaimed items will be donated to a local charity.

Parents are asked to label (with the student's name) all clothing and personal items (lunch box, backpack, etc.).

LUNCHES AND SNACKS

Students in grades K-12 are to bring their lunches, bottle of water, and a snack every day. Microwaves are available for student use. Students may not trade food during the school day. All students in Preschool through sixth grade are encouraged to bring snacks to eat during a break. We request that parents send food that is nutritious and healthy. Some suggestions are fresh fruit, raw vegetables, cheese, etc. Please do not send sugary snacks.

Ice cream may be purchased periodically during lunchtime. All proceeds from ice cream sales will benefit a designated mission.

PLANNERS

Students in grades 2-6 will be issued planners. Since daily changes may be made by the teaching staff, students are encouraged to write down assignments on a daily basis and to not rely solely on FACTS SIS Family Portal. Parents are asked to check over the homework and sign planners per teacher's instructions.

SCHOOL SPORTS

Our youth sports program is very popular with the Lower School students. We offer soccer and basketball, emphasizing the teaching of fundamentals and having fun. Co-ed soccer for grades K-2 and 3-5 begins in the fall. Information will be sent via the *Warrior Weekly*. Seasons last approximately six weeks. Basketball is available for grades 3-5 during the winter. There is a fee for participation.

WEEKLY CORRESPONDENCE ENVELOPES

Students will be given a specially-designated envelope containing correspondence for parents each Monday and at other times as deemed necessary by the teacher or school office. Students are requested to deliver this correspondence to their parents the same day it is distributed, have it signed, and return it the following day. Correspondence envelopes are to be used for school purposes only. Weekly classroom newsletters will be emailed. These classroom newsletters will keep parents informed as to specific class events, prayer requests, needs, and Bible memory work for the particular grade. School communications are generally sent out by email and/or posted on our school website.

Weekly correspondence envelopes will be used only for school-related communication.

WEAPONS

Refer to the [School-Wide Policy on Weapons](#).

UPPER SCHOOL INFORMATION AND POLICIES

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Artificial Intelligence (AI)

While this relatively new technology can be a valid tool in academic settings, students should not use AI to complete any academic assignment. The use of AI by a student on any written assignment will be considered a serious infraction of our academic integrity policies. It is a form of cheating requiring appropriate discipline as such (earned zero for that assignment and possible suspension). Repeated offenses could jeopardize a student's enrollment at Grace.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a serious offense which we begin teaching our students to avoid in lower school. By the time a student is in upper school (US), he/she will be held responsible for their actions.

If a student is found to have willfully plagiarized an assignment or exam, he or she will be disciplined, based on the Principal's assessment of culpability.

*Plagiarism is representing the words and ideas of others as one's own without acknowledging their source(s). As such, it is considered a form of cheating. Plagiarism is often the result simply of carelessness on the part of the student; nevertheless, it is still a serious offense. Whenever a student uses someone else's idea or a direct quotation, the student should acknowledge this in his or her written or verbal presentation. Teachers will instruct students in how to properly cite sources and how to avoid plagiarism.

ATTENDANCE POLICIES

Before continuing to read about the below policies, please also refer to the [School-Wide Policy on Attendance](#).

It is extremely important for students and parents to regularly access the FACTS Family Portal to check not only their student's grades, but also his/her attendance record. This is especially true, as too many absences from a class can result in the loss of class credits and ultimately jeopardize a student's ability to earn a GCS diploma and too many tardies or absences can result in behavioral consequences being assigned.

(Refer to [Loss of Class Credit and Jeopardizing Receiving a Diploma](#).)

ABSENCES

Criteria for Determining Absences

A student who misses at least 50% of a class period will be assigned an absence (A) in his or her attendance record, but if he or she misses less than 50%, a tardy (T) or an early dismissal (ED) code will be entered.

Early dismissals resulting from a GCS-sponsored activity will be waived. (Refer to [Waived Absences](#) and "Attendance Record.")

When a student leaves a class period between the halfway point and the last 5 minutes of class, the student's attendance will be entered with an "ED" code, which stands for "Early Dismissal."

Refer to [Extracurricular Eligibility](#) to understand how an absence will likely cause a student to be ineligible to participate in extracurricular activities.

Loss of Class Credit & Jeopardizing Graduation¹

While it is the responsibility of the parent(s) and student to track the student's attendance record, GCS will attempt to partner with the family to work against the undesired consequence of being absent from a specific class too often.

GCS Administration will on at least a quarterly basis review the attendance data for all HS students and then communicate with students and their parents/guardians about any concerns. Please refer to the below chart regarding how many absences (excluding [waived absences](#)) can result in a loss of credit.

# of absences (excluding waived absences) can result in a loss of credit.				
5-periods per week classes	4-periods per week classes	3-periods per week classes	2-periods per week classes	1-period per week classes
21	17	13	9	5

Parental Communication

When proper communication from a parent occurs, then an "AC" code, which stands for "absence communicated," will be entered. It is important for students and parents to realize that an "absence communicated" is not the same as it being "waived," as additional criteria and steps are needed for such designations. Refer to [Waived Absences](#).

When no prior communication has been received from a parent or guardian, an "AU" ("Absence Uncommunicated") code will be entered, and the school will attempt to contact the parents/guardians. If the parent/guardian is unaware of an absence, or never gave the student permission to be absent, the student may be assigned behavioral consequences for being truant.

Predetermined Absences

Unless a GCS event causes an absence, a parent must communicate to the school about predetermined absences via an email sent to usattendance@gcswarriors.org or a written note sent to the GCS receptionist as soon as possible. This communication should contain the date(s) to be missed and a succinct description of the cause(s) of the absence(s). Such prior notification will enable the student, teachers, and parents to create an action plan to address the missed instructional time and how best to handle missed assignments, quizzes, and tests.

Special School Events

Throughout the school year, special events such as retreats, Great Escapes, the D.C. Trip, Pass It On, Job Shadowing Day, etc. are organized as means to develop the whole student. Participation in these events is expected, but when a student is unable to attend, the normal process of communicating and documenting such absences is needed.

Unexpected Absences

Unexpected absences should be communicated by a parent to the school office via a phone message prior to 7:30 a.m. on the day of the absence. This enables the school to more effectively account for the whereabouts and security of each student. After initially notifying the school, parents should also immediately send an email

¹ Credits are based upon the VA Department of Education's "140 clock hours of instruction" standard.
<https://www.doe.virginia.gov/parents-students/for-students/graduation/diploma-options/standard-diploma-graduation-requirements>.
Last accessed 06/13/24.

succinctly describing the cause(s) of the absence to usattendance@gcswarriors.org.

When proper communication occurs, even after the fact, the attendance code will be entered or changed to “AC.” Refer to [Parental Communication](#).

Virtual Participation

As technology permits and exceptional circumstances warrant, students may be able to join their class(es) virtually via Google Meet. Families interested in this occurring should first approach the US Principal.

If the principal is agreeable to permitting this, he/she will approach the teachers of the student to ascertain whether they also agree. If they do, the attendance code “PV” will be entered.

The US Principal, when the school has to be closed during a school day or on other appropriate occasions, will announce via broadcast emails that students are expected to participate virtually.

When there is an expectation that a student will participate virtually, but technology prevents such from occurring, parents need to use the above-described communication protocol to inform GCS of such, and then the normal absent codes and processes will apply. Refer to [Parental Communication](#).

Waived Absences

While GCS recognizes that there are many legitimate reasons for parents to determine a student should not attend school, we are able to designate only some of these as “waived,” based upon the guidelines provided by the *Virginia State Board of Education*.

According to the VSBoE, such designation may be assigned if the parent(s) has/have followed the above-described communication protocol, and the absence is related to a/an:

- religious observance or event
- legal obligation
- medical appointment, injury, or illness
- military obligation
- funeral
- exploratory visits (college/military/career)*
- GCS event
- GCS suspension

*Up to two school days per school year.

Waived absences will be entered into the attendance record as “W,” and no academic or behavioral consequences will be assigned. Parents should email USattendance@gcswarriors.org and call the school office before 8:30 a.m. with a “Communicated Absence” for the day (such as with an illness, etc.). This helps the school account for the whereabouts and security of each child.

In the event that the parents do not contact the school, students must present to the teacher or school secretary a note from a parent explaining the reason for the absence upon their return to school. Lack of a parental note or phone call will result in the student’s absence being considered an “Uncommunicated Absence.” After 10 absences, the teacher and US Principal will confer in order to design an appropriate strategy intended to help the student master the missed classwork.

A trend of excessive absenteeism and/or tardiness will be addressed as follows:

- If a student has ten absences during the year, the parents will be contacted by a staff person.
- If a student has fifteen absences during the year, a notification letter will be sent to the parents.
- If a student has eighteen or more absences during the year, a conference will be held with the administration, teacher, and parents. During this conference, a review of the student's academic progress will be conducted and any academic concerns will be addressed. Retention or dismissal are always of concern with excessive absences (18 or more).

Early/Special Dismissal

If parents need to take their children out of class for a doctor's appointment, trip, etc., an email should be sent to USattendance@gcswarriors.org or the office called. The student will be ready to leave at the designated time in the lobby. The parent must come to the lobby and sign out his/her student. If leaving early becomes excessive, it may affect the child's performance or class credit. A conference will be scheduled to review the student's academic status in the affected classes.

Tardies

See [school-wide policy on tardies](#).

ATTENDANCE RECORD

Attendance is entered into FACTS SIS by our faculty and staff and is monitored by the Principal. It is the student's and parent(s)' responsibilities to keep track of their student's attendance records in the Family Portal and to notify GCS if any irregularities are discovered.

Attendance records can be viewed in "Attendance" under "Student" in the FACTS Family Portal.

Initially, faculty will enter a "P" for Present, "A" for absent, or "T" for tardy into FACTS SIS. When appropriate, a teacher may also enter a "PV" = Participated/Participating Present Virtually (Refer to Absences: Virtual Participating.)

Later, the Principal or his/her designee may change those to one of the following codes:

"AC" = Communicated (Refer to Absences: [Parental Communication](#).)

"W" = Waived (Refer to Absences: [Waived Absences](#).)

"AU" = Uncommunicated (Refer to Absences: [Parental Communication](#).)

"PV" = Participated/Participating Virtually (Refer to Absences: [Virtual Participating](#).)

TARDIES

Arriving on time is critical for the success of the student, as tardies are disruptive to classes and result in the student losing valuable instructional time.

Communication to School

Parents should notify the school office by phone prior to 7:30 a.m when their student will be tardy to school. This helps the school account for the whereabouts and security of each student. After initially notifying the school, parents should also immediately send an email describing the cause(s) of the tardy to usattendance@gcswarriors.org.

- Students who arrive late to school are to receive a pass from the office before being admitted to their

class, and the tardy will be recorded for the period occurring upon their arrival, and an absence (refer to “Absences”) marked within whatever period(s) they may have missed.

- Students must also submit to the GCS staff member who processes their late arrival any hard-copy homework that was due in classes which have already occurred, and the staff member will forward such to the respective teacher(s).

Types of Tardies

Excused Tardies

The Principal has the authority to designate a tardy as “excused” if he/she deems the cause(s) for such to be beyond the control of the student/parent(s).

Unexcused Tardies

The following process and consequences will be used to deal with an accumulation of unexcused tardies to school or a specific class/study hall within a semester:

- 5 Tardies = The student and parent(s) will be notified by email.
- 10 Tardies = A notification email and letter will be sent to the student and parent(s), and the student will be assigned one Behavioral Detention.
- 15 Tardies = A notification email and letter will be sent to the student and parent(s), and the student will be assigned a second Behavioral Detention.
- 20 Tardies = The Principal will make phone or personal contact with at least one parent and send a notification email and letter to the student and parent(s). Additionally, the Principal will convene a meeting between the student, parent(s) and Principal to generate an Attendance Action Plan which will be signed by all attending parties. This plan will contain the following:
 - steps to be taken by the student/parent(s) to break the cycle of habitual tardiness.
 - the below-listed consequences may be applied immediately and also upon being tardy 25 times within a semester:
 - additional Behavioral Detentions being assigned,
 - loss of student privileges (extracurricular activities, early dismissal, etc.),
 - loss of credit for course(s) impacted by the tardies,
 - In-School Suspension(s)

Each student’s semester tally for tardies will reset at the end of the semester unless the Principal deems doing such is not in the best interest of the student and/or GCS.

If a student’s unexcused tardies within multiple class periods stem from being tardy from school on the same day, those tardies will be tallied as 1 tardy when applying the above consequences.

Any student with more than five unexcused tardies during the school year will not be eligible for the Perfect Attendance Award.

ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL

Please see the school-wide [Arrival/Dismissal policy](#). The school does not assume responsibility for the students until they have entered the school building.

ATHLETICS

GCS generally offers the following interscholastic sports programs:

Boys/Girls Soccer
Girls Volleyball
Boys Wrestling
Boys/Girls Cross-Country

Boys Baseball
Boys/Girls Basketball
Co-ed Golf

Interscholastic sports are viewed by the school as an important part of the overall educational program. However, they are also viewed as a privilege for students who are responsible, with the higher priority of their academic class work. Student athletes are expected to maintain reasonable academic performance in order to maintain eligibility for sports participation. Refer to [Extracurricular Eligibility](#)

Refer to the *Parent-Student Athletic Handbook* on the school [website](#) for additional details about the overall Athletic Program.

PHONES and SMARTWATCHES

Student cell phones must be registered with the school via the online enrollment packet. The Upper School will provide cell phone/smartwatch pouches for all students. When a student arrives on campus, they should turn off their cell phone and place it and/or their smartwatch in their assigned pouch. If the student does not have a smartphone/smartwatch or did not bring either to school, they should place a 3x5 card in their pouch that states they did not bring a smartphone/smartwatch to school. Every pouch should have a phone/watch or a card in it. Random inspections will be made for compliance. Any student who does not have a phone/watch or card in their pouch will receive a warning. Repeated violations will result in a disciplinary consequence.

PHONE CALLS

Use of school landlines during the school day is generally limited to essential calls (sickness, etc.). All such calls via landline or cell phone must be approved by a GCS employee (typically the receptionist).

Alternately, students may make essential calls or texts, but must first get permission from a GCS US employee.

DRESS CODE

Please see the upper school dress code linked [here](#). Please see the formal and semi-formal attire guidelines [here](#).

LOCKERS

Each student in the Upper School will be assigned a locker at the beginning of the year. The student will be responsible for maintaining his or her locker in a neat and orderly manner. Students are not to change lockers unless first receiving permission from the administration.

Students are not to post pictures or slogans, etc. in their lockers which are inconsistent with Biblical values. No stickers are permitted on the interior or exterior of lockers, but magnets may be used. Exterior postings are limited to school messages from the staff and notes, etc. as posted by the sports committee and other school organizations.

Students may not place locks on their individual lockers.

Locker inspections will be conducted on a regular basis. Locker inspections may be conducted (also, refer to [Reasonable Search](#)). Students whose lockers are not maintained in a clean, neat manner may at the least be assigned a work detention by the principal.

All items left on the floor will be removed and placed in the Lost and Found. In addition, items left on the top of the lockers on Fridays will also be placed in Lost and Found.

LOST AND FOUND

The Lost and Found bin is located in the gym.

LUNCHES

Students in grades 7-12 should bring their lunches every day, unless they intend to order pizza on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Orders are placed via *Family Portal* ([Instructions Here](#)).

Microwaves are available for student use in the lunchroom.

Students are expected to assist in helping to clean the lunch area after lunch along with other areas of the building, (Refer to Stewardship.)

SNACKS

Students are encouraged to bring food that is healthy and nutritious for snacking at appropriate times and to bring water bottles that they may keep with them in the classrooms.

Students may also consume snacks only in the lunchroom during lunch, class breaks, or study halls.

Food should not be brought into classrooms unless a diagnosed medical condition necessitates such or the teacher of that classroom has given explicit permission to bring food to a specific class period. Refer to [Dispensing of Medications](#).

Snacks can be secured from the vending machine; however, use of the vending machine should only be done before or after the school day, towards the beginning of lunch, and during the long class break. Having complications with securing a snack from a vending machine is never an excuse for being tardy to class, as students should inform the receptionist later during a break from classes.

VISITORS

See school-wide policy [linked here](#). Exceptions to this policy may be approved by the Principal, but requests for such exceptions should be made at least three days prior to a visit.

WEAPONS

Refer to the [School-Wide Policy on Weapons](#).

HIGH SCHOOL-SPECIFIC INFORMATION & POLICIES (Grades 9-12)

ACADEMIC POLICIES

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Students are required to earn the following *minimum* credits before qualifying for graduation. By meeting additional requirements, students have the opportunity to graduate with honor distinctions in any or all of the following disciplines: English, Foreign Language, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies.

Courses	Credits ¹
Bible ²	4
English	4
- English 9 – (1) (regular or honors) - English 10 – (1) (regular or honors) - English 11 – (1) (regular, honors, or AP) - English 12 – (1) (regular, honors, or AP) <i>Honors Distinction: At least one year of AP English.</i>	
Foreign Language ³	
- Spanish I – (1) - Spanish II – (1) - Spanish III – (1) (honors) - Spanish IV – (1) (honors) - Latin I - 9th Grade (.4) - Latin I - 10th Grade (.6) <i>Honors Distinction: Spanish I, II, and III.</i>	
Logic	.8
- Logic 9 (.5) - Logic 10 (.5)	
Mathematics	3
- Algebra I – (1) - Geometry – (1) - Bridge to Algebra II – (1) - Algebra II – (1) - Algebra II/Trig – (1) - Precalculus – (1) (honors) - Calculus – (1) (honors) <i>Honors Distinction: 4 math credits, including at least Precalculus.</i>	
Sciences (including labs)	3
- Physical Science – (1) - Biology – (1) - Environmental Science – (1) - Chemistry – (1) - Physics – (1) (honors) - D.E. Advanced Biology – (1) <i>Honors Distinction: 4 science credits—one year of chemistry and one advanced science.</i>	
Social Studies	5
- World Geography – (1) (regular or honors) - World History – (1) (regular or honors) - United States/Virginia History – (1) (regular, honors, or DE)	

- United States/Virginia Govt. – (1) (regular, honors, or DE)
 - Personal Finance - (.5)
 - Economics - (.5)
- Honors Distinction: Two years of honors/DE-level social studies.*

Guidance	.2
Health and Physical Education	2
Electives	3
Total Minimum Credits	25

Graduates must also have completed at least 20 hours of Christian Service Hours expectations during each year they were enrolled as a GCS HS student. Refer to [Christian Service Hours](#).

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- ¹ Credits are based upon the VA Department of Education’s “140 clock hours of instruction” standard.
<https://www.doe.virginia.gov/parents-students/for-students/graduation/diploma-options/standard-diploma-graduation-requirements>. Last accessed 06/13/24.
 For each period in a yearlong class, .2 credits are earned.
- ² For each year a student is enrolled in the GCS HS, a Bible class must be taken. If enrolled for fewer than 4 years, then the “Total Minimum Credits” credits requirement must still be met via other courses.
- ³ While Foreign Language credits are not required for graduation, it is highly recommended that students aspiring to enter college earn at least 2.0 Foreign Language credits which are tallied as elective credits.

DROP/ADD POLICY

If a student wishes to add an academic course to a class schedule, he/she will need to obtain and complete a Drop/Add form from the Guidance Counselor. This form must be filled in and then signed by a parent, the teacher of the course being dropped/added, and the Guidance Counselor. The completed form should be turned in to the Guidance Counselor, at which time the student's name will be removed from or added to the class roster, and textbook(s) will be collected from/distributed to the student. The student is not to be considered officially removed from or enrolled in the class until this procedure is completed and the teacher and student subsequently receive confirmation from the Guidance Counselor.

If a course is dropped prior to the communicated deadline, no record of this course will show on the student's transcript. Any class dropped after the deadline will be noted with a "WP" (withdrawn-passing) for a grade average of 60 or above. No credit will be given for the class. If the grade is below a 60.0, it will be noted as a "WF" (withdrawn-failing), be assigned a 0 GPA value, and averaged into the student's overall GPA.

EXAMS

Exams will be administered at the end of each semester in each core class (except Bible). Exams will be calculated as 15% of the semester grade for freshmen and sophomores and 20% for juniors and seniors.

Freshmen and sophomores taking classes along with juniors or seniors will have the higher percentage applied for those exams.

Algebra 2 exam grades, regardless of whether a sophomore takes the class, will be calculated as 20% of the semester grade.

Accommodations for individual students to take their exams before or after this week must be coordinated with the respective teacher(s), Guidance Counselor, and principal.

Students who do not have scheduled exams are not required to be at the school during the scheduled time; however, a study hall will be arranged for those who do come. Parents who prefer that their student remain home during this time need to communicate that they prefer their HS student to be granted special sign-in/out privileges during the exams.

Semester II Senior Exams will be administered sooner to accommodate the Senior Trip.

Individual teachers may exempt seniors from the second semester exam if they so choose. In such cases, seniors must meet the exemption criteria as follows:

- Take the average of the third and fourth quarter grades and average with the first semester grade. If the average is an unrounded 93 or above, the student may be exempted.
- Juniors may be exempt from second semester exams in classes which have a combination of juniors and seniors if the teacher is choosing to exempt the seniors. If the teacher approves the general exemption for the second semester, only those with an unrounded average of 93% or higher and are not ineligible due to absences (refer to next point) are eligible for exemption.
- A junior or senior who has more than twelve absences of any type in any class for the year may not be exempted from the exam in that class.

EXTRACURRICULAR ELIGIBILITY

GCS provides various extracurricular experiences in the areas of athletics, fine arts, ministry, service, and fellowship. Students should avail themselves of opportunities that match their interests, but only if doing so will not jeopardize their overall health, church participation, family life, and academic performance.

Students who are unable to maintain minimum grade averages in each class that they take will be ruled ineligible to participate in extracurricular activities until officially reinstated.

HS students must maintain at least a 60% yearly average.

MS students must maintain at least a 70% quarterly average.

Refer to [Grading Scale](#).

The US administration will review all grades every 4.5 weeks to determine if any students have become ineligible. Upon determining that a student is below the minimum grade average, the student, his/her parents/guardians, and the supervisor of any extracurricular department/group/team within which the student is participating will be notified the student will become ineligible on the seventh calendar day after notification was sent unless all grades are at a passing level. On the seventh calendar day the student, if the grade(s) is/are still too low, is not permitted to participate or attend any extracurricular activities until the US administration is able to confirm that all of the student's grades in each class are acceptable. For MS students a committee will determine whether or not it is in the best interest of MS students to continue athletic participation if the student is earning poor grades. The committee will have the authority to place the student on athletic probation or to suspend the student from sports participation if they feel it appropriate.

Students should refer to the *Parent-Student Athletic Handbook* on the school [website](#) for information on academic eligibility and other sports policies.

Any students who are frequently deemed to be ineligible may be ruled ineligible by the US Principal for lengthier durations.

Students who repeatedly, frequently, or egregiously violate GCS expectations for student behavior may also be declared ineligible to participate in or attend extracurricular activities by the US Principal. Refer to [Behavioral Consequences](#).

When a student misses at least 50% of a school day (four or more periods), he/she is not permitted to attend or participate in any extracurricular activities during that day. An exception to this standard may be applied in instances when a waived absence is granted. Refer to [Waived Absences](#) and the *Athletic Handbook*.

Refer to [HS Athletics](#), [HS Fine Arts](#), and [HS Prefecture](#) and [National Honor Society](#) for additional information about these extracurricular experiences.

FAILING CLASSES

HS credits can only be awarded when a student has earned a passing grade (refer to [Grading Scale & Report Cards](#)) and has fulfilled all attendance requirements (refer to [Loss of Class Credit & Jeopardizing Graduation](#)). When a student does not earn a passing grade, remediation can involve completing missing assignments, completing an independent study over all or a portion of that class, or retaking the class in a subsequent year. When remediation involves a student retaking a class (independent study or at GCS), the transcript will include two entries for that class reflecting the grades earned in each.

GRADE POINT AVERAGE (QUALITY POINTS)

Grade Point Average (GPA) is calculated by assigning a number to each letter grade and computing the average.

A ⁺ = 4.33	A = 4.00	A ⁻ = 3.67
B ⁺ = 3.33	B = 3.00	B ⁻ = 2.67
C ⁺ = 2.33	C = 2.00	C ⁻ = 1.67
D ⁺ = 1.33	D = 1.00	D ⁻ = 0.67
F = 0.00		

For HS classes, an additional 0.5 point is added to Honors courses, and an additional 1.0 point is added for AP and DE courses in calculating GPA and rank. The GPA is used for determining honor roll, class rank, and eligibility for good student driver insurance discounts. In cases of a tie when determining class rank, the numeric grade averages will be used.

GRADING SCALE & REPORT CARDS

Letter grades are given as a measure of academic achievement according to the following scale (numeric grades are not rounded when assigning letter grades):

A ⁺ = 98-100	A = 93-97	A ⁻ = 90-92
B ⁺ = 87-89	B = 83-86	B ⁻ = 80-82
C ⁺ = 77-79	C = 73-76	C ⁻ = 70-72
D ⁺ = 67-69	D = 63-66	D ⁻ = 60-62
F = 0-59		

Grading terms will consist of four nine-week periods (“Quarters”), and these are divided into two “Semesters.”

Report cards will be available on the Family Portal at the end of these. (Refer to the School Calendar.)

GUIDANCE AND CAREER PROGRAM

We are pleased to offer a career/guidance program for students in grades 9-12:

- Job Shadowing once a year for grades 9-12
- Theology of Work event once a year, school-wide
- Career Fairs
- Mentorship program for grades 11 and 12
- Guidance & Calling class for 11th grade students
- Individual career counseling
- Parent-guidance conferences

Please refer to the *GCS Path to Career and Calling* resource for more specific information about the Guidance and Career program. This can be obtained from the Guidance Counselor.

HOMEWORK AND CLASS WORK

Homework and classwork, collectively referred to as “assignments,” are a vital part of the learning process and course requirements. Therefore, significant emphasis is placed on such work being turned in on time and in an appropriate form.

Appropriate Form

If an assignment is handwritten, students should use cursive handwriting with blue or black ink.

Assignments determined by the teacher to be of substandard neatness or inappropriate form will be returned to the student to be redone, per teacher specifications, and such will be considered late, unless the student is able to resubmit it before the due date or the teacher grants an extension. Refer to [Make-Up Class/Homework](#).

When the student re-submits an assignment (which must meet the communicated standards) after the due date, then the deductions for lateness will be applied. Refer to [Make-Up Class/Homework](#).

When students create essays or reports, they should follow the “Modern Language Association (MLA)” format guidelines. One exception to this is that students will follow the “Turabian” or “Chicago Style” when submitting papers for their social studies classes.

Submitting Assignments

Homework must be handed in at a time determined by the teacher to be considered “on time” unless an extension has been granted by the teacher or in cases involving an absence or a tardy that the administration has deemed to be “excused.” Refer to [Make-Up Class/Homework](#).

When submitted on time, the teacher will enter a “P” for *Pending* grade code.

Students who are away from a class on a GCS-sponsored event or other pre-planned trip on the day an assignment is due are responsible to submit that assignment in advance unless otherwise directed by the teacher so as to avoid deductions for lateness.

If a student was absent (excused/unexcused) from class because he or she was tardy to school, the homework due that day in any classes missed that day must be submitted to the GCS receptionist upon the student's arrival. The receptionist will then forward the assignment(s) to the respective teacher(s), and no deduction for lateness will be assigned.

If a student was absent for the entire day or was absent due to an early dismissal, the homework must be submitted to the GCS receptionist the first day the student is back to school. The receptionist will then forward the assignment(s) to the respective teacher(s), and no deductions for lateness will be assigned.

If an assignment is not submitted on time, the teacher will;

Enter in FACTS SIS an "M" grade code for *Missing*, which calculates as a zero.

Apply the following deductions once the assignment is submitted in its proper form:

One School Day Late = Grade assigned is 90% of the earned grade.

Two School Days Late = Grade assigned is 70% of the earned grade.

Three School Days Late = Grade assigned is 50% of the earned grade.

If an assignment is not turned in on time in a block class, it will be considered to be an additional day late if it is not submitted to the teacher before 3:20 p.m. on the next school day, regardless of whether that blocked class was scheduled on that day.

If an assignment is more than three school days late, the teacher will notify the US Principal, who may assign academic detention(s). (Refer to [Academic Detentions](#).)

If a student has a pattern of being tardy or absent from school to postpone the taking of quizzes/tests or submitting projects/major assignments, he/she may be assigned an academic detention (Refer to [Academic Detentions](#).)

Make-up Class/Homework

Make-up work will be limited only to that which the teacher believes is necessary for the student to complete in order to master skills or the material.

When a teacher chooses to revise a due date for missing work, once the due date is communicated to the student, it becomes the date that will be used to determine potential reduction in grades for lateness.

When a student has missed a class, or will miss a class because of an absence, the student should take the initiative to contact the teacher to make up an assignment, and to refer to the FACTS Family Portal to keep track of assignments and possible revisions of due dates or expectations posted during the absence.

All make-up work upon the student's return to school from any absence should be turned in to the front desk personnel, who will then forward it to the respective teacher(s).

Make-up Tests/Quizzes

A student who misses taking a test/quiz because he/she arrived at school later in the day must take the test/quiz

during study hall or after school or by a revised deadline established by the teacher.

Making up tests/quizzes may be done during a supervised study hall, after school as supervised by an administrator or designee, or at a different time and manner to be determined by the teacher.

An “A” for *Absent* will be initially entered by the teacher for such tests/quizzes; however, this will be changed to an “M” for *Missing* in once the deadline for making up the test/quiz expires.

While no grade deductions will be applied for not completing a test or quiz on or before a due date, if it is not completed upon the due date newly established by the teacher, an academic detention may be assigned by the US Principal. (Refer to “Academic Detentions” in the "US Behavioral Policies" of this handbook.)

Unresolved Missing Assignments

Students who persist in not submitting assigned academic work may be required to attend [academic detentions](#) or come to school on a Saturday morning or during the summer until all assignments are properly completed and submitted.

Additionally, such students may lose their privilege to sign out early or to participate in extracurricular activities; however, notification of such a possibility will be sent at least 7 weekdays prior to the student being ruled ineligible to the student, parent(s)/guardian(s), and the supervisor of any extracurricular department/group/team in which the student is participating.

Seniors who have missing assignments in multiple classes may lose the privilege of participating in year-end senior events (Senior Trip, Garden Party, Graduation Ceremony, etc.).

HONOR ROLL

A quarterly honor roll is established to recognize and honor those students who achieve a B or better grade average in school courses. To be recognized, students must maintain at least a:

“B” Honor Roll - 3.0 GPA and receive no grade less than a C- on his/her quarter grade report.

“A” Honor Roll - 3.5 GPA and receive no grade less than a B- on his/her quarter grade report.

Principal's List - 4.0 GPA and receive no less than an A- on his/her quarter grade report.

In order to recognize honor roll students, a list is published in the *Warrior Weekly* newsletter. Part-time students (those with fewer than four (4.0) credits in a school year) are not eligible for the honor roll or for cumulative academic awards. Students with one or more Incomplete report card grades at the time of report card posting are not eligible for the honor roll for that quarter.

HONORS, ADVANCED PLACEMENT, AND DUAL ENROLLMENT CLASSES

Language Arts - English 9, English 10, Honors English 11/12, Advanced Placement English Literature and English Language 11/12

Foreign Language - Honors Spanish 3; Honors Spanish 4 (beginning in 2025-26)

Math - Honors Calculus

Science - Honors Physics, Dual Enrollment or Honors Advanced Biology

Social Studies - Honors World Geography, Honors World History, Honors U.S. History, Dual Enrollment U.S. History, Honors Government, Dual Enrollment Government

An additional weight of 0.5 quality points is added to Honors courses, and an additional 1.0 quality point is added to AP and DE courses in calculating course GPA and class rank.

NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY

The National Honor Society is an organization that endeavors to create enthusiasm for scholarship, stimulate community service, promote leadership, and develop character in high school students. Students who excel in these four areas may be selected to participate in Grace Christian School's local chapter. Chapter activities include, but are not limited to, service projects, field trips, book studies, and bi-monthly administrative meetings. NHS members are able to apply for certain college scholarships designed by the national organization.

To be eligible for membership, the successful candidate must be a junior or senior, have and maintain at least a 3.75 GPA, demonstrate leadership within the school and community, complete twenty hours of community service (not associated with CSH) prior to selection, and display Christ-like character, maturity, trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, kindness, fairness, and citizenship.

Participating in National Honor Society is viewed to be a privilege to be enjoyed by students whose behavior and academic performance merits participation. (Refer to [Extracurricular Eligibility](#)) Also, the NHS has standards for maintaining membership.

PASS/FAIL COURSES

Some of the high school courses that are designated as Pass/Fail courses are listed below. Refer to course syllabi for additional details:

- Physical Education (Athletics Seasons and/or Personal Workout Hours)
- Guidance and Calling
- Applied Music Lessons

If a student passes such courses, a "P" will be entered into report cards and transcripts; however, his/her GPA is not impacted.

If a student fails such courses, an "F" will be entered into report cards and transcripts, and his/her GPA will be impacted (the class credit is equal to a zero).

If a student fails a Pass/Fail course and then later retakes the course and passes, both the failed course and the passed course will be included on his/her official transcript.

PERMANENT RECORD

A cumulative record of courses and the GPA will be added to each student's permanent record on a yearly basis. A transcript will be available in case of transfer to another school or to accompany collegiate applications. The GPA is recorded for high school-level courses only.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Students are required to earn 2.0 credits in Health & Physical Education (P.E.). In addition to the required 0.5-credit Health class, in lieu of a Physical Education course taught on campus, students earn the remaining credit by participating in one or more GCS-sponsored athletics seasons and/or* by completing and logging

parent/guardian-verified personal workout hours with activities approved by the administration. Students should complete this credit requirement by the end of their sophomore year unless extenuating circumstances necessitate otherwise. P.E. experiences are designated as Pass/Fail courses, and grades are entered only at the end of the school year as final grades.

GCS-Sponsored Athletics

Earning Credit: Students earn 0.5 credits for participating on a GCS Junior Varsity or Varsity team. Credit decisions for students who complete only part of a season are evaluated on a case-by-case basis by administration.

Personal Workout

Earning Credit: Students earn 0.5 credits per 70 hours of documented pre-approved personal workout experiences. Since Health class is typically taken in the freshman year and, if passed, a student earns 0.5 credits, freshmen choosing to not participate in GCS Athletics are advised to document 70 hours, as this enables them to earn 0.5 credits, and thus 1.0 credits in the freshmen year. Students would need to document 140 hours to earn 1.0 P.E. credit during their sophomore year.

Tracking Hours: Students participating in personal workout hours will be enrolled in a P.E. Google Classroom. Through this digital classroom, an administrator communicates with students when needed and students have access to a spreadsheet in which they log their workout hours throughout the semester/year.

Preapproval of Hours: Students must submit a personal workout proposal at the beginning of the school year for consideration via a Google Form posted in Google Classroom and modify the plan, if necessary, in follow up communication from an administrator.

Submission of Hours: After completion of 70 hours, students submit the spreadsheet to the Guidance Counselor through Google Classroom. In addition, a parent must email the Guidance Counselor to certify that the workout hours are accurate.

Submission Deadlines: Students must submit their completed personal workout hours one week before the end of the school year, and a parent/guardian must validate the completion via email to the Guidance Counselor.

*Options: 1. One Athletics Season + One semester of Personal Workout, 2. Two Athletics Seasons, 3. Two semesters of Personal Workout

PREREQUISITES FOR HIGH SCHOOL COURSES

English:

9th Grade English, Honors: Eligibility for Honors English 9 is contingent upon the student maintaining a minimum of an unrounded 90% average in 8th Grade Language Arts classes and having English teacher recommendation and principal approval.

The quality points for this course grade are weighted by 0.5.

10th Grade English, Honors: Student must have an unrounded 90% or above in the previous English class and have English teacher recommendation and principal approval.

The quality points for this course grade are weighted by 0.5.

11th/12th Grade English, Honors: In addition to meeting the following applicable grade prerequisite the previous year, placement depends upon English teacher recommendation and principal approval:

Rising 11th and 12th graders: Unrounded 90% final grade in Regular English, minimum

Rising 11th and 12th graders: Unrounded 86% final grade in Honors English, minimum

Rising 12th graders: Unrounded 82% final grade in AP English, minimum

The quality points for this course grade are weighted by 0.5.

11th/12th Grade English, AP: In addition to meeting the following applicable grade prerequisite the previous year, placement depends upon English teacher recommendation and principal approval, along with demonstration of proficiency on a timed essay administered by the AP English teacher:

Rising 11th and 12th graders: Unrounded 92% in Regular English, minimum

Rising 11th and 12th graders: Unrounded 89% in Honors English, minimum

Rising 12th graders: Unrounded 86% in AP English, minimum

The quality points for this course grade are weighted by 1.0. In addition, the student will take a College Board AP English exam in May.

Math:

Geometry: Student must pass Algebra I.

Bridge to Algebra II: Student must pass Algebra I and Geometry.

Algebra II: Student must have an unrounded 80% in Algebra I and pass Geometry. Otherwise, the student must take the Bridge class before advancing to Algebra II. *If students do not meet the requirements for Algebra II, they may complete an approved online Algebra I course during the summer before taking Algebra II and receive an 80% or better.*

Precalculus (Honors): Student must have an unrounded 82% or above in Algebra II to advance to Precalculus. Otherwise, students must complete a summer review packet and have math teacher recommendation and principal approval.

The quality points for this course grade are weighted by 0.5

Calculus (Honors): Student must have completed Precalculus and have teacher recommendation and principal approval.

The quality points for this course grade are weighted by 0.5.

Statistics: Student must have passed Precalculus. This class is offered as a college course or high school course. The college course is completed online under the supervision of the Precalculus teacher. The student is required to come to class to work on the online course.

If taken as a high school course, the quality points for the course grade are weighted by 0.5.

If taken as an online dual-enrollment course, the quality points for the course grade are weighted by 1.0.

Science:

Chemistry: Student must be concurrently taking or have passed Algebra II or Bridge to Algebra II.

Anatomy and Physiology (Honors): Student must have earned an unrounded 80% or above in Biology and Chemistry.

The quality points for this course grade are weighted by 0.5

Dual Enrollment Advanced Biology: Student must have earned an unrounded 80% or above in Biology and Chemistry.

The quality points for this course grade are weighted by 0.5.

Physics (Honors): Student must be concurrently taking or have passed Precalculus.

The quality points for this course grade are weighted by 1.0.

Social Studies:

9th Grade World Geography, Honors: Eligibility for Honors World Geography is contingent upon the student maintaining a minimum of an unrounded 90% in 8th Grade History and having World Geography teacher recommendation and principal approval.

The quality points for this course grade are weighted by 0.5.

10th Grade World History, Honors: Student must have an unrounded 86% or above in World Geography, as well as World Geography teacher recommendation and principal approval.

The quality points for this course grade are weighted by 0.5.

11th/12th Grade U.S. History and Government, Honors: In addition to meeting the following applicable grade prerequisite the previous year, placement depends upon Social Studies teacher recommendation and principal approval:

Rising 11th and 12th graders: Unrounded 90% final grade in Regular World or U.S. History, minimum

Rising 11th and 12th graders: Unrounded 86% final grade in Honors World or U.S. History, minimum

Rising 12th graders: Unrounded 82% final grade in DE U.S. History, minimum

The quality points for this course grade are weighted by 0.5

11th/12th Grade U.S. History and Government, Dual Enrollment: In addition to meeting the following applicable grade prerequisite the previous year, placement depends upon Social Studies teacher recommendation and principal approval. Students may also need to take the Math and English placement tests at Blue Ridge Community College:

Rising 11th and 12th graders: Unrounded 92% in Regular World or U.S. History, minimum

Rising 11th and 12th graders: Unrounded 89% in Honors World or U.S. History, minimum

Rising 12th graders: Unrounded 86% in DE U.S. History, minimum

The quality points for this course grade are weighted by 1.0. The student will earn college credit.

Spanish:

Spanish III: Students must have completed Spanish I and II and have Spanish teacher recommendation and principal approval. *The quality points for this course grade are weighted by 0.5.*

Spanish IV: Students must have completed Spanish I, II, and III and have Spanish teacher recommendation and principal approval. *The quality points for this course grade are weighted by 0.5.*

*Please note: Fees for honors, AP, and DE classes will be published during the spring semester.

Significant attendance and behavioral issues may also be factors for denying student placement in Honors, Dual Enrollment, and AP courses.

SCHOLASTIC APTITUDE TESTS

Students considering attending college will be encouraged to take the College Board Scholastic Aptitude Test

(SAT) at the end of their junior year or the beginning of their senior year. All sophomores and juniors will take the College Board PSAT (proctored by GCS personnel). Finally, all freshmen, sophomores, and juniors will take the Iowa Standardized Tests in-house each April.

Details concerning testing schedules will be made available to students and parents at least one week prior to testing.

Homework due on dates that such standardized tests are given will be significantly reduced by teachers. The reduction in AP or Dual Enrollment classes may be less significant.

STUDY HALLS

Study halls are scheduled during periods students do not have a scheduled class. Students are strongly advised to make the most of such opportunities and to fully cooperate with the behavioral expectations in study halls so they and their peers can maximize studying and completing homework.

TRANSCRIPTS

Requests for transcripts should be submitted by email to hsregistrar@gcswarriors.org and will be processed within three to five (3-5) school days of the date they are received, if all payments are up to date.

VALEDICTORIAN / SALUTATORIAN

The senior with the highest overall GPA rank in the senior class by the end of the senior year will be recognized as that year's valedictorian and the senior with the second-highest overall GPA ranked as the salutatorian.

To qualify to be valedictorian or salutatorian a student must have attended at least four semesters at GCS and must have a behavioral record that includes no egregious violations of GCS policies.

The valedictorian and salutatorian will:

- receive a platter and certificate at the HS Awards Assembly.
- present an address at the Graduation Ceremony.

The HS administration will identify the two seniors with the highest GPA ranks at the end of the third quarter and will notify the student and parents of this possibility so they can begin to prepare to potentially deliver the aforementioned graduation address(es).

Additional students (and their parents) who have a mathematical possibility of being either will also be notified.

A second check will be done at the midway point of the fourth quarter.

If a determination of who will be valedictorian and salutatorian cannot be finalized, then all possible candidates will be asked to submit an address that they will possibly present.

The final check will be done one week prior to the graduation ceremony.

Refer to [Grade Point Average](#) in this document.

PREFECTURE (Student Government)

The Student Prefecture is tasked with organizing and running many areas of student life at GCS. All of this

occurs under the guidance of the US Principal or his/her designee. The Prefecture is organized under the GCS Prefecture Constitution and led by the Head Prefect and several other prefects who serve under the Head Prefect. All Prefects are chosen by the US Principal in a process defined in the constitution, and class representatives are elected by the respective classes.

Participating in the HS Prefecture is viewed to be a privilege to be enjoyed by students whose behavior and academic performance merits participation. (Refer to [Extracurricular Eligibility](#).) Also, the Prefecture has standards for maintaining membership.

STEWARDSHIP

All HS students are placed onto Stewardship Teams that are led by seniors, and, at times, juniors. During each month these teams are assigned to specific areas with specific tasks related to keeping our campus clean. Students should cooperate with these student leaders by fulfilling the tasks that are assigned to them. Students who fail to do their part may receive behavioral consequences as assigned by the US Principal. Points are awarded or deducted from teams who do well or who do not fulfill their assigned duties. The team with the highest amount of points each semester and for the entire school year receive awards as determined by the Principal.

MISCELLANEOUS POLICIES

CHRISTIAN SERVICE HOURS

Biblical Worldview on Serving Others

As followers of Christ, Christians cannot escape His earthly example of being a servant-leader (Mark 10:45) who exemplified compassion, grace, and mercy. Additionally, His revealed Word includes many imperatives. In describing the future judgment, Jesus explains that feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, welcoming strangers, clothing the naked, ministering to the sick and imprisoned, and doing these to “the least of these” were all ways to serve our King (Matthew 25:34 – 40). Similarly, James 1:7 describes “pure religion” as a ministry to orphans and widows in their affliction.

Thus, GCS seeks opportunities to train our younger brothers and sisters in Christ to take action (James 1:22 and 2:17), be “examples of the believers” even in their youth (I Timothy 4:12), “do good to everyone” (Galatians 6:10), and thus learn and apply the eternal principle that “it is more blessed to give than to receive” (Acts 20:35).

Guidelines

GCS prepares the next generation of kingdom-building servant-leaders in many ways, including an expectation that GCS HS students complete Christian Service Hours (CSH) from May-April.

Fulfilling each school year’s CSH expectation is required to graduate from the GCS HS, and, at a minimum, the final transcript of a student who does not complete this will be withheld until the total required hours are served and documented. (Refer to [Graduation Requirements](#).)

Students do not receive academic credits or grades for CSH. Students and parents will be notified if insufficient progress has been made towards completing the annual total or concerns have been raised about the quality of service rendered by the student.

Students or parents may not receive financial compensation for any aspect of CSH.

How and when students serve may not conflict with any GCS policies or curricular activities/events, nor may they conflict with any extracurricular activities/events to which they have previously committed.

Freshmen and sophomores are expected to complete 10 CSHs, while juniors and seniors are expected to complete 20 CSHs.

25% to 50% of their CSH must be served in, for, or with a church (preferably their own).

No more than 25% of CSH can be served at GCS.

Hours served in GCS-organized service projects or community outreach endeavors (i.e., Pass It On) cannot be claimed to fulfill CSH.

Exceptions to this will only occur when it is expressly communicated.

To encourage families to serve together, when at least one parent or guardian serves alongside his or her HS student(s), the hours accrued by the individual student(s) will be multiplied by a factor of 1.5.

Thus, four hours served may be claimed as six hours.

This bonus is not awarded when the service opportunity is related ongoing volunteering by the parent or to his/her job.

“Double-dipping” will not be permitted; however, if a student splits up hours served in one opportunity to fulfill CSH and other service responsibilities (NHS, Prefecture, etc.), this will not be considered “double-dipping.”

Scheduling Considerations

Service rendered from May through the end of the calendar year must be assessed by the supervisor and submitted by him or her on or before January 7.

Service rendered from January through April must be assessed by the supervisor and submitted by him or her on or before May 7.

Insurance Considerations

GCS insurance does not cover any injuries incurred while fulfilling Christian Service Hours.

Service Ideas

This is not an exhaustive list, and students may propose other ideas.

Within Your Family

- Assisting with caring for sick or feeble family members (beyond everyday household chores).
- Tutoring/mentoring a family member.

Within GCS

- Tutoring a GCS student (any grade level).
- Assisting a faculty or staff member before or after school hours.

- Assisting with a building or grounds project or task before or after school hours. (Tasks may not include those typically assigned to Stewardship Teams.)
- Volunteering at GCS-sponsored events (picnics, the auction, etc.)

Within Your Church

- Playing on a worship team or assisting with a portion of the church service.
- Serving as an usher, parking lot attendant, etc.
- Leading or assisting with a Sunday School class or the nursery.
- Leading or assisting with the youth ministry.
- Participating in a short-term mission trip or outreach endeavor.
- Participating in evangelistic endeavors.

Within Your Community

While organizations that students serve do not need to be Evangelical or even religious institutions, they may not have actions or messaging that oppose any part of the GCS Statement of Faith or our Statement of Marriage and Sex.

CHAPELS

Chapels are held weekly. Occasionally, local area pastors, Christian leaders, missionaries, and special guests are invited to share with the students. Sometimes, chapels are led by GCS employees in order to strengthen the school community and relationships. Parents and visitors are welcome to attend the weekly chapels, but notification should be received by the US Principal at least two school days prior to the chapel. Refer to [Visitors](#).

CHROMEBOOKS

HS Students are assigned a Chromebook to use during school hours for school assignments only and are to leave the Chromebook where designated on school premises at the end of the school day. Students must email the US Principal with requests to take a Chromebook home for a short period of time for academic purposes. [Student Technology & Internet Usage Guidelines and Agreement](#)

COPY MACHINE

Students are not permitted to use the copy machine but may request copies be made or digital files be printed by office staff. Such requests must be submitted to the GCS receptionist via email.

If wanting the file to be printed in time for the first two periods of the day, students must submit the job by 7:30 a.m. Print job requests for later in the school day must be submitted at least 2 class periods prior.

Once submitted, students are responsible to pay the full amount for the print job even if they forget to pick it up or change their mind.

Cost per page:

Black & White: 10 cents

Color: 25 cents

DRIVING PRIVILEGE

Authorization

Students with a valid license may drive to school once a *Driving Authorization Form* has been submitted to the US Principal for approval.

In addition to providing information about the vehicle/driver, a copy of the student's license and proof of insurance for any vehicle(s) he/she will be driving must be provided.

The authorization form is part of the *Summer Google Form* and thereafter as its own *Google Form*.

Parking for Students

When parking on our property, please be aware of and comply with any posted signs or any traffic cones.

Student drivers are not permitted to park in the staff/visitor parking spots until after 4:00 PM unless previous permission has been granted by the administration.

Student drivers who have submitted their *Driving Authorization Form* should park only in spots designated as student parking.

ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL GUIDELINES

Please see the school-wide [Arrival/Dismissal policy](#). The school does not assume responsibility for the students until they have entered the school building.

Leaving School Premises

Students may not leave the school premises other than at regular dismissal time or for a scheduled school event, without permission from the school office, junior/senior has earned sign-out privileges. A phone call, email, or signed note from a parent is required for an early dismissal.

Sign-Out Privileges for Juniors and Seniors

As a special privilege, seniors and juniors may sign out and leave school following their last scheduled class of the day. Seniors may also sign out during their lunch and/or study hall period(s). Seniors who employ a sign-out privilege prior to lunch time must sign in 10 minutes prior to the end of lunch so that they can effectively lead their stewardship teams.

The school is not responsible or liable for the seniors or juniors who are signed out. In order to sign out, they must have permission from their parent(s) on file in the school office and be in good academic and behavior standing.

The following guidelines apply:

- Students must sign out via the laptop in the lobby, exit through the front lobby door, and leave the school premises.
- Students who are returning from this privilege on the same school day must enter through the front lobby door, sign in via the laptop in the lobby, and then go directly to the class/meeting.
- Students are not permitted to enter and exit the building multiple times during their privilege unless prior permission from the Principal is obtained.
- Seniors may sign in late to a study hall, but then must remain for the duration; however, they may not sign out of a study hall once attendance is taken.
- Sign-out privileges may not be used to miss a class, stewardship, chapels, or assemblies.

A junior or senior may lose his or her privilege and remain in a study hall for the following reasons:

- Falling behind in schoolwork (outstanding makeup work, incomplete schoolwork, or having a grade average dropping below an unrounded 70 in any class).
- Not completing assigned stewardship responsibilities.

- Students must not have any late work or outstanding makeup work that is three or more days late.
- Returning late from the privilege or violating any other privilege guideline.
- As a result of a consequence assigned by the Principal for poor attendance or behavior.
- The Principal may also, on occasion, require students to remain at the school for special events or meetings.

Refer to “Student Parking” in the “Driving Privileges” section of the “HS General Policies” of this handbook.

Times, Doors, and Waiting Areas

The school day will end at 3:20 p.m., at which point the dismissal tone will sound. Students whose parents have so indicated on the Dismissal Form may leave the school upon the 3:20 p.m. tone. Students whose parents have not given permission to leave the school at dismissal time are to report to the designated dismissal area and wait until their parents or carpool arrive. They must not leave the dismissal area until that time.

FINE ARTS

Grace Christian School's Fine Arts Program encourages and assists students in developing their God-given gifts and talents through music, visual arts, and theater as a way of honoring and worshiping God, the Master Artist.

It is our goal to nurture student-artists from preschool through graduation and beyond. Students will develop artistic thought and skill, be challenged to articulate effectively through various artistic media, and practice their skills to engage the culture and redeem it for Christ and His kingdom.

High school students may participate in the Worship Ministry, Chorus, Art, Advanced Art, Acting, and Theater classes. Our students perform throughout the year in chapel services, concerts, festivals, and competitions, one-act plays, and a spring musical. Students can be seen serving our community by sharing their gifts and talents at area nursing homes and blessing our own school community by leading worship and caroling around the lower school each Christmas.

Participating in the HS Fine Arts Program is viewed to be a privilege to be enjoyed by students whose behavior and academic performance merits participation. Refer to [Extracurricular Eligibility](#).

Applied Music

Depending upon teacher availability, students have the opportunity to enroll in Applied Music Lessons. This consists of taking music lessons during the school day for .20 of elective credit for a year-long weekly lesson during one full class period scheduled during a student's free period. Lessons are offered in guitar, piano, strings, and voice. Students enrolled in Applied Music are required, along with their parents, to sign a commitment form at the beginning of the school year, agreeing to participate as required by the Fine Arts Department. Grades are Pass/Fail and are based on the student's adherence to instructor and department guidelines.

Students taking Applied Music lessons are expected to perform in the end-of-year recital.

Payment for these lessons is paid directly to the instructor, per the commitment form.

BEHAVIORAL POLICIES

CATEGORIES

Academic Integrity

GCS HS students are expected to exhibit honesty in all facets of their lives, including their academic efforts.

Academic integrity infractions (academic cheating, inappropriate use of artificial intelligence (AI)², or plagiarism³) have academic and behavioral consequences:

1. Academic Consequences

- a. Initially, the assignment grade will be entered as “incomplete” (“I”).
 - i. If the infraction only involved 10% or less of an assignment, the teacher will proportionately reduce the grade.
 - ii. If the infraction involved more than 10%:
 1. The student must redo and resubmit the entire assignment without additional academic integrity concerns by a due date and in a manner determined by the teacher.
 2. The earned grade on the resubmission will be reduced by 50% (i.e. If the resubmitted assignment is graded as a 40%, then the entered grade would be 20%).
 3. Before the 50% grade reduction is assigned, the student’s grade on the resubmitted assignment must be 70% or better. Failure to do so will result in additional behavioral consequences.
 4. If the assignment was a quiz or test, the student must retake the quiz/test within one week’s time. Upon grading the retaken quiz/test, the teacher will enter the grade after reducing it by a mandatory 30%.
 - a. The teacher may decide whether the student has to retake a portion of the quiz/test, the entire quiz/test, or a different version of these options.

2. Behavior

- a. A behavioral incident record in FACTS SIS will be entered.
- b. Depending upon the egregiousness of the infraction, whether there was a previous academic integrity infraction, or the cooperation and attitude of the student when confronted, the Principal may also assign behavioral consequences ranging from after-school detentions to possible expulsion (Refer to “Suspensions/Expulsions - All Grades” and the “Suspensions/Expulsions” in “Behavioral Consequences” for the HS.)

Academic integrity violations are cumulative throughout the student’s enrollment at GCS in grades nine through twelve, and are typically a part of the student’s permanent record.

Controlled Substances

Student use or possession of drugs/medications,* alcohol, vaping, or tobacco products on or off campus at any time *is strictly prohibited*.

Violations of this prohibition may result in:

² While this relatively new technology can be a valid tool in academic settings, students should not use AI to complete any academic assignment unless the teacher explicitly permits such. Regardless of intention or percentage of an assignment impacted by the use of AI, if done without explicit permission, this will be considered an infraction of our academic integrity policies.

³ Plagiarism is representing the words and ideas of others as one’s own without acknowledging their source. Plagiarism is often the result of carelessness on the part of the student; nevertheless, it is still a serious offense. Whenever a student uses someone else’s idea or a direct quotation, the student should acknowledge this within a written or verbal presentation. Teachers will instruct students in how to properly cite sources and how to avoid plagiarism.

1. confiscation of the controlled substance(s),
2. automatic three-day suspension and automatic consideration by the Head of School for expulsion, even if it is the first offense, (Refer to the school-wide policy on [Suspensions/Expulsions](#) and the HS policy on [Suspensions/Expulsions](#).)
3. the infraction being recorded in the student's permanent record, and
4. constituted legal authorities being notified.

Attempts to sell or distribute controlled substances to others, especially those within the covenant GCS family, will make the probability of expulsion more likely.

*This policy does not apply to situations involving GCS receiving prior notification from a parent that a student will be bringing in a specified medication for that student or a sibling and the medication it is given to a GCS employee to supervise its on-site use.

Dress Code

Grace Christian School gives high school students the privilege of a dress code rather than requiring uniforms. Cooperation with these standards reflects maturity, accountability and respect for authority, traits that are important in developing young adults of character and followers of Christ. We rely on our partnership with families to reinforce these guidelines and to help our students make wise decisions about their appearance at school.

The emphasis of the dress code focuses on modesty, appropriateness, neatness, and cleanliness.

The US Principal will serve as the final authority in interpreting and enforcing this dress code. Violations of the dress code will be monitored and recorded in the FACTS Family Portal. If students arrive dressed inappropriately, they will be instructed to correct the situation. If unable to comply, they will be asked to call a parent to bring clothing to the school or wear alternative clothing provided by the school.

Please refer to our [MS/HS Dress Code](#) and [HS Formal/Semi-Formal Dress Code](#).

Honesty & Transparency

Students are to be honest, even when doing so may negatively impact themselves or others. Additionally, being transparent and open, especially when confronted about their or others' actions/communication, is expected.

Internet Activities

Students are held responsible for the content of their internet-based postings, and any inappropriate content as defined by general school policies is subject to school disciplinary actions as outlined in these various policies, up to and including expulsion.

The application of this policy is not limited to only when the student is on school property, using school technology, or during the school day.

Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality

Immoral behavior in direct contradiction of content about marriage, gender, and sexuality in the *GCS Statement of Faith*, or other GCS policies, regardless of when and where, in the form of communication or action, may result in a suspension and automatic consideration by the Head of School for expulsion, even if it is the first offense. (Refer to "Suspensions/Expulsions—All Grades" and "Suspensions/Expulsions" in "Behavioral Consequences" for the HS.)

Property Damage

Any student who damages or destroys school property or the property of someone else will be expected to pay for the repair or replacement costs. If the damage or destruction is of a malicious nature, the student will be immediately suspended from school for up to three days and the Head of School will consider whether expulsion is warranted. (Refer to “Suspensions/Expulsions - All Grades” and the “Suspensions/Expulsions” in “Behavioral Consequences” for the HS.) (Refer to the school-wide policy on [Suspensions/Expulsions](#) and the [US](#) policy.)

Relational Conduct

All relationships, including those between females and males, should bring honor to God and never cause anyone to feel unsafe or disrespected. Thus, sharing affection for others must be appropriate, and sharing dislike for others is to be avoided.

When communicating affection for another student, the student should be thoughtful about whether the feelings are reciprocal, and if not, should only communicate with his/her own parents about their feelings. Even when affection is reciprocated, students must refrain from inappropriate displays of affection, whether through words or actions while on school property, at school-sponsored events, or in vehicles transporting students to or from school or events. Some examples of displays of affection that are to be avoided include kissing, hugging, holding hands, and being in physical contact with one another. Additionally, a male and a female should not separate themselves from the presence of others nor be in a room by themselves.

When others anger, frustrate, irritate or cause one to dislike them, we should remember the Biblical mandate to “love others more than ourselves,” as this will inherently result in our not communicating or acting upon those emotions in harmful or inappropriate ways, regardless of these legitimate feelings. Even so, to simply avoid that person and not deal with the root causes is also undesirable. Loving and humble confrontation is instead mandated by Scripture (Matthew 18:15–20), and students are expected to appropriately apply the applicable GCS policies even as they wrestle with such relational challenges.

Assigned consequences for violating these standards can range from warnings to being recommended for expulsion, depending upon the egregiousness of the violation, frequency of violations, etc. (Refer to the school-wide policy on [Suspensions/Expulsions](#) and the HS policy on [Suspensions/Expulsions](#).)

Weapons

Refer to the [School-Wide Policy on Weapons](#).

CONSEQUENCES

Minor Infractions

In the spirit of love and grace, when a student violates a school or classroom policy or directive, a teacher, administrator, or staff member will speak with the student and give them guidance on correcting his/her action. This is known as a “quiet word” of instruction, and this may or may not be entered into FACTS SIS as a behavioral incident.

If the student fails to heed the advice given and repeats the infraction, when warranted, additional “quiet words” of instruction may be given or possible additional measures will be taken. Regardless, a behavioral incident will be entered into FACTS SIS, and an email notification will be sent to the parent(s)/guardian(s).

Though not an exhaustive list, samples of minor infractions include:

- chewing gum in the building

- dress code violations
- disruptive behaviors (i.e., talking in class, horseplay, passing notes, etc.)
- failure to return uniforms, etc. in a timely manner
- failure to be in an assigned area
- unsatisfactory stewardship performance
- leaving personal belongings in common areas
- inappropriate language
- other inappropriate behaviors identified by the administration, faculty, or staff
- similarly or less egregious infractions

*Disrespectful behavior, may be treated as a “minor infraction” or the Principal may determine that the egregiousness of the disrespect warrants more serious consequences being assigned. (Refer to “Honor and Respect”.)

Repeated violations of minor infractions may result in detentions being assigned.

Detentions

Academic and behavioral detentions are completed after school from 3:20 to 4:20 p.m. and supervised by school staff. Failure to report to assigned detentions without prior arrangement with the administration will result in the original detention being rescheduled and assignment of an additional detention.

When a detention is assigned, the incident will be entered into FACTS SIS, and the parent(s) will be sent a written description of the infraction and the scheduled date(s) of the detention.

The Principal may choose to reschedule detentions due to direct conflicts with part-time jobs, athletic competitions (not practices), and family commitments. If the Principal does not reschedule, the student and family must adjust their plans.

Academic Detentions

These may be assigned by the Principal when students fail to submit an assignment on time for three successive school days. (Refer to Unresolved Missing Assignments.)

The student will spend most of this time completing the assignment related to being assigned a detention and is expected to submit it in good form to the supervisor of the detention who will then forward it to the respective teacher.

If a student completes the related assignment prior to serving the detention, he/she still must submit to the detention supervisor the assignment (if a teacher expects a hard copy submission) or show that the digital copy has been submitted to the teacher, and then he/she will spend the remaining time in detention actively working on other assignments or studying for upcoming quizzes/tests/exams.

Also, during this time the Principal may seek opportunities to provide additional counseling and encouragement to the student and may assign menial tasks for the student to complete.

Behavioral Detentions

For repeated violations of minor infractions or more serious infractions of GCS policies, behavioral detentions will be assigned.

Typically, menial tasks are assigned to students, and the student is expected to complete such in good fashion.

Also during this time the Principal will seek opportunities to provide additional counseling and encouragement to students.

Suspensions/Expulsions

If a student chooses to violate more serious GCS standards or repeatedly violates less serious ones, a suspension may result, and in such instances, the following processes and expectations will be fulfilled:

1. The Principal will make phone contact with a parent to inform him or her of the specific infraction(s) and when the suspension will occur, and a follow-up email will be sent to the parent(s) and student.
2. Serving the suspension:
 - a. The student may not participate in or attend any GCS programs, activities, or events nor enter GCS property unless specifically authorized by the Principal or Head of School.
 - b. The student will write a paper pertaining to the reason(s) for the suspension and specific steps he or she will take to reconcile relationships, restore damaged property, and avoid repeating the infraction(s). This report must be submitted to the Principal prior to 2:00 p.m. on the first day of the suspension unless the student secures the Principal's acceptance of a different deadline.
3. A suspension will be entered into FACTS SIS and recorded in the student's permanent record.
4. The student and parent(s) must meet with the Principal before being readmitted to school for the primary purpose of generating a Behavioral Action Plan that must be signed by the student, the parent(s), and Principal.
 - a. This will document the agreed-upon steps that will be taken by the student, the parent(s), and GCS.
 - i. Among other provisions this plan *may* include:
 1. a requirement to secure spiritual and/or professional counseling from within GCS or other sources approved of by GCS,
 2. a requirement that the student perform a community service project, as approved by the Principal before returning to school or by some other agreed-upon deadline.
 3. a probation period during which the student's enjoyment of privileges or ability to participate in extracurricular activities may be limited,
 4. limitations upon or guidance about how the student will interact with GCS students and/or personnel, and/or
 5. a requirement to secure a drug or alcohol test(s) (regardless of any previous similar requirement or whether the infraction involved a controlled substance).
 - ii. If an agreed-upon plan is not signed by all parties, the matter will be referred to the Head of School, who will determine whether an expulsion is warranted.
 - iii. If an agreed-upon plan is later violated by the student, then additional disciplinary measures may be assigned by the principal, and the matter will be referred to the Head of School, who will determine whether an expulsion is warranted.

For the most egregious violations of GCS Behavioral Standards, or repeated violations for which a student has already been suspended, the GCS Head of School may determine that an expulsion is warranted.

All suspensions and expulsions will be entered into FACTS SIS and recorded in the student's permanent record.

Refer to School-Wide Policy on [Suspensions/Expulsions](#).

MIDDLE SCHOOL SPECIFIC INFORMATION & POLICIES (Grades 7-8)

CHAPELS

Chapels will be held periodically throughout the year. Local-area pastors, Christian leaders, missionaries, and special guests are invited to share with the students. Parents and visitors are welcome to attend.

DISCIPLINE

Demerit System

Discipline and structure play an essential role in the development and training of a young Christian's character, self-esteem, and security. In an environment that is distinctively Christian, students are taught to exercise a God-given responsibility to "walk honorably before all men" (Galatians 6:1). Discipline is maintained in a firm and consistent manner, yet tempered with love.

With an emphasis on the development of Christ-like character, disciplinary action may become necessary when unacceptable behavior occurs.

It is the school's desire to be fully supportive of whatever discipline measures are being taken at home and trust that parents will be equally supportive of the measures taken at school; the school stands in the place of the parents during the school hours.

In the spirit of being a constructive, corrective policy, single demerits will be issued to students for the following behaviors:

- chewing gum in classes
- unexcused class tardiness
- unsatisfactory stewardship performance
- leaving personal belongings in common areas
- failed locker inspections

Teachers will have access to demerit slips in each classroom. Students will be asked to sign the demerit slip. The teacher will give the demerit slip to the office, and it will be recorded on the Family Portal. The consequences for the demerits at the middle school are as follows:

4 demerits = TACT time and noted on the Family Portal.

8 demerits = TACT time and noted on the Family Portal.

12 demerits = Work detention and noted on the Family Portal.

14 demerits = Work detention and noted on the Family Portal.

16 demerits = Work detention and noted on the Family Portal.

TACT time (Think and Choose Time) will be held during lunch time. Parents may view demerit consequences under the Behavior tab on the FACTS Family Portal.

In the same spirit of being a constructive, corrective policy, students will be sent to an administrator for the following behaviors:

- Inappropriate language
- IDA (Inappropriate Display of Affection)
- Computer usage violation
- Direct disobedience
- Failure to be in assigned area
- Fighting
- Leaving the building without permission
- Disrespect
- Excessive talking (with warnings)
- Bringing weapons or dangerous objects to school
- Defacing school property
- Unresolved disciplinary issues

The administration will determine the course of action following any offense. The severity of the misbehavior will help determine the consequences. Students must meet with the teacher and administrator and possibly the parent, have all missed class work completed, and have satisfactory reparation before readmittance to class. A student may be given a work detention (supervised by a parent after school or on weekends), be suspended, or even be expelled from school, depending on the offense.

Refer to School-Wide policy on [Suspensions/Expulsions](#).

DRESS CODE

Please refer to our [US Dress Code](#).

FINE ARTS

GCS Middle School students are required to take fine arts classes as part of their curriculum. These class options may include Art, Advanced Art, Music Appreciation, Chorus, and Theater. Students participating in Chorus and Theater will have the opportunity to participate in performances, festivals, and competitions throughout the school year. Numeric grades will be given in these classes at the Middle School level.

Middle School Art students may also choose to participate in our After-School Art program. These details are found in the *Warrior Weekly*. Students may choose to take private music lessons during the school day. Lessons are offered in a variety of instruments by qualified instructors on a first-come basis as space and scheduling allows. These details are outlined in the summer mailing. Students taking lessons are expected to perform in an annual music recital.

GRADING POLICY - Grades 7-8

Before students in grades seven and eight may advance to a higher grade, they must pass core academic subjects (English and Math). Any student who fails a subject for a quarter will need to show proficiency in that subject before passing to the next grade. Requirements are designed by the teacher and approved by the administration.

System of Grading

Letter grades are given as a measure of academic achievement according to the following scale:

A ⁺ = 98-100	A = 93-97	A ⁻ = 90-92
B ⁺ = 87-89	B = 83-86	B ⁻ = 80-82
C ⁺ = 77-79	C = 73-76	C ⁻ = 70-72

D⁺ = 67-69

D = 63-66

D⁻ = 60-62

F = 0-59

Grading terms will consist of four nine-week periods. Report cards will be available on the Family Portal at the end of each nine-week term (Refer to school calendar).

Some elective classes may be graded as Outstanding/Satisfactory/Needs Improvement.

Grades will be posted on the FACTS Family Portal by Wednesday at 4:00 p.m. from the previous week. There will be exceptions for large projects and tests. Parents may access the Family Portal via the school website.

Cumulative Tests

Students in grades 7-8 will not take semester exams but will be given cumulative tests at the end of each nine-week term. Cumulative tests will be weighted more heavily than a regular test. These are announced and parents are sent a schedule in advance.

- **7th grade - (Note: All math and grammar tests are cumulative.)**
 - 1st nine weeks - No cumulative tests.
 - 2nd nine weeks - vocabulary, science
 - 3rd nine weeks - vocabulary, history, and science
 - 4th nine weeks - vocabulary, literature, history, and science
- **8th grade - (Note: All math and grammar tests are cumulative.)**
 - Each nine weeks - vocabulary, literature, history, and science

Homework and Class Assignments

Homework and special class assignments are a vital part of the learning process and course requirements at Grace. Therefore, significant emphasis is placed on such work being turned in on time and in an appropriate form. The following policy is in effect for all classes:

1. Work determined by the teacher to be of substandard neatness or inappropriate form will be returned to the student to be redone, per teacher specifications. Such work will be considered tardy (Refer to #6 below.).
2. Homework/class assignments not turned in on time will be considered tardy unless an extension has been granted by the teacher as a result of the student taking the initiative to make alternative arrangements or in cases of illness resulting in absences. Adequate time will be given to make up the work. Makeup work will be limited only to that which the teacher feels is necessary for the student to complete in order to master the material. When a student misses class because of an absence or tardy, the student should take the initiative to contact the teacher to make up assignments.
3. Students who miss a test because of morning tardiness but who come to school later in the day will be expected to take the test they missed based on the discretion of the teacher whose class was missed. It is the student's responsibility to make test arrangements directly with the teacher. Students who arrive late to school should turn in any assignments due in the classes that they missed to the teacher or teacher's box when they arrive at school.
4. If a student is absent from school, he/she may check the Family Portal for assignments. All assignments

will be posted on the Family Portal. Parents may call the school office to arrange for books to be picked up. The student is responsible for obtaining all homework and class assignments, as well as any missed classroom notes, handouts, or discussion material from the teacher or from another student. All missed work must be turned in within the time period given by the teacher. (If a specific date is not given, each assignment is due as follows: 1 day absent, due the 2nd day back; 2 days absent, due the 3rd day back; 3 days absent, due the 4th day back.) Any long-term work that is due the week of the student's planned absence must be turned in ahead of time for any credit. Work not handed in before a break results in a zero.

5. Students who will be away from a class on an athletic trip or other pre-planned, excused basis on the day an assignment is due are responsible to communicate beforehand with the teacher to determine when the assignment is to be turned in. The student may choose to take his/her books, check assignments on the Family Portal, and complete any work during their time away. At the teacher's discretion, additional time may be given. Any additional work will be given upon their return.
6. Daily grade deductions will apply to the late assignments turned in during the week—5 points per school day for 7th grade and 10 points per school day for 8th grade. If not turned in within 5 school days after the assignment is due, the student will receive a zero for the assignment.
7. Bible verses are to be recited or written on the due date, or the student will receive a zero.

Incomplete Assignments

On the final day of the nine weeks, all assignments are due. If there is an outstanding assignment in a subject, the grade on that assignment will be a zero.

LUNCHES AND SNACKS

Students in grades 7-8 bring their lunches every day. Microwaves are available for student use. All students are encouraged to bring snacks to eat during a morning break (TAB: Take A Break). We request that parents send food which is nutritious and healthy. Some suggestions are fresh fruit, raw vegetables, cheese, etc. Please do not send sugary snacks.

Ice cream may be purchased periodically during lunchtime. All proceeds from the sale of ice cream will benefit a designated cause.

PLANNERS

Students in grades 7-8 will be issued school planners. Since daily changes may be made by the teaching staff, students are encouraged to write down assignments on a daily basis and to not rely solely on the Family Portal. Parents are asked to check over the homework.