



# Student Handbook Grace Christian Academy **2021-2022**

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# Foundational Statements

## Vision Statement

The vision of Grace Christian Academy is to know wisdom and instruction, to understand words of insight, to receive instruction in wise dealing, in righteousness, justice, and equity; to give prudence to the simple, knowledge and discretion to the youth ~Proverbs 1:2-4

## Mission Statement

The mission of GCA is to develop **wise students** through relationships, instruction, and service.

## GCA Core Values

- For students to have a personal relationship with their Lord and Savior Jesus Christ
- For students to acquire and cultivate wisdom (knowledge and skill) which leads to productive, meaningful lives for the glory of God
- For students to discover, nurture, and discipline their God-given talents
- For students to develop habits that lead to righteous living, striving to live honestly and justly

## Expected Student Outcomes

In alignment with our core values, GCA has established the following organization-wide expected student outcomes:

- Development of a personal relationship with Jesus Christ (John 1:12)
- A perspective in the future (1 John 5:13)
- Knowing their calling/purpose and live in a way that helps them develop (1 Timothy 1:16)
- Can filter influences (Matthew 7:16)
- Live by a strong set of convictions that guide their decisions and actions (1 Peter 2:19-21)
- Look to develop and improve others (John 8:31-38)
- Students are humble and willing to do what it takes to get better (Colossians 3:12)
- Are the embodiment of wisdom (Psalms 1)

## Philosophy of Education

GCA is a ministry of Grace Baptist Church (see <https://www.gracebaptist-church.com/> for more information). God has established GCA to impact lives for eternity through biblically-based and Christ-centered education. Grace is committed to the biblical view that all wisdom and knowledge come from the LORD (Colossians 2:2, Proverbs 2:6). We believe that although man was initially created in God's image, it was through the sin of one man, Adam, that spiritual and physical death resulted for all humanity. It is only through the redeeming work of Jesus Christ on the cross that man is capable of knowing God and having the right relationship with him (Romans 5:17). Jesus Christ is the only way to God the Father (John 14:6).

In its original writing, we believe the Bible is inspired by God, without error, and the standard by which all knowledge is judged and taught. (II Timothy 3:16-17). We believe that God's Word contains current wisdom for this generation and that God has revealed Himself through His written word and Creation (Romans 1:20, II Timothy 3:16). A Christian worldview seeks to teach all subjects as part of God's total truth and the revelation of His nature and character. Effective education goes beyond simple head-knowledge and must consider the

student's spiritual, intellectual, social, emotional, and physical aspects. We encourage students to become all that God has created them to be and, in so doing, bring glory to God the Father.

We believe that God has placed on parents the responsibility of training and teaching God's truth. We believe that Grace is here to assist and collaborate with families by equipping students to embrace Biblical truth, strive for academic excellence, and model Christ-like leadership. We also believe that it is scriptural for the family to be committed to a local biblically-based church. Through the partnership of family, church, and school, we train a generation that is "thoroughly equipped for every good work" (II Timothy 3:17).

We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity. (Mark 12:28-31; Luke 6:31.) Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual will be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture or GCA's doctrines. GCA is unbending in its dedication to providing the best educational environment for students entrusted to its care. Its administration, faculty, staff, and curriculum adhere to the precepts and principles of the Holy Scriptures.

The statement of faith does not exhaust the extent of our beliefs. The Bible, as the inspired and infallible Word of God that speaks with final authority concerning truth, morality, and the proper conduct of humanity, is the sole and final source of all that we believe. For purposes of GCA's faith, doctrine, practice, policy, and discipline, Grace Baptist Church's senior pastor and deacon board is our final interpretive authority on the Bible's meaning and application.

## Parents Code

Our parents play a vital part in the total program of GCA. Again and again, the emphasis has been placed on parents cooperating with the school for their child's education. We believe that the following code, when subscribed to by all our parents, will make GCA a school that would truly honor the Lord and produces the finest education possible:

- I will pray regularly for the teachers and administration of GCA.
- I will cooperate fully in GCA's educational functions, doing my best to make Christian education effective in each of my children's lives so that they may love and serve the Lord Jesus Christ all of their lives.
- I will support the school through gifts in addition to my tuition payments as the Lord enables.
- I will undertake volunteer duties and responsibilities for GCA as opportunities arise and as God provides time and strength.
- I will regularly attend meetings and functions of the school.
- I will recommend GCA to others as opportunities arise.
- If I become dissatisfied with the school in any respect, I will seek to resolve the matter with the person or persons involved, rather than seeking to spread criticism or holding a negative attitude in my heart. I will not criticize the school before my children. I will follow the biblical instructions found in Matthew 18:15.
- I will seek the advancement of GCA in all areas: spiritually, academically, and physically.

## Standard of Conduct

GCA holds that the Bible is the infallible, divine Word of God and that salvation by faith in Christ is the initial step in the Christian life. There is an adequate biblical basis for the idea of spiritual growth into the image of Christ (Romans 8:29), which is the work of the Holy Spirit (II Corinthians 2:18). This growth begins with the initial act of saving faith and continues throughout life. The Holy Spirit makes the Christian conscious of the biblical demands for a holy life which fulfills both God's moral law and high law of love (Matthew 22:37-39, Romans 13:8-10, Galatians 5:14). The result is a life consecrated unto God and separated from the world.

Therefore, GCA must provide an environment conducive to the spiritual growth and development of young people who are not yet mature Christians. A standard of conduct based on the following biblical imperatives is necessary to provide such an environment. All activities must be subordinated to the glory of God who indwells us (I Corinthians 8:9, 12-13, 10:32). The Christian will endeavor to avoid practices that cause the loss of sensitivity to the world's spiritual needs and loss of the Christian's physical, mental, or spiritual well-being. (I Corinthians 9:27).

A sense of the need for spiritual growth in the light of these principles has led GCA to adopt the following standards conducive to the environment that will best promote the student's spiritual welfare. Therefore, the school requires each student; whether at home, school, or elsewhere to refrain from swearing, smoking, vaping, drinking alcoholic beverages, the use of illegal drugs, gambling, pornography, premarital sex, or gang involvement as identified by the local law enforcement agencies. The school also requires each student to maintain Christian standards in courtesy, kindness, honesty, and morality.

GCA's biblical role is to work in conjunction with the home to mold students to be Christ-like. Of necessity, this involves the school's understanding and belief of what qualities or characteristics exemplify a Christ-like life. The school reserves the right, within its sole discretion, to refuse admission of an applicant or discontinue enrollment of a student if the atmosphere or conduct within a particular home or the student's activities are counter to or are in opposition to the biblical lifestyle the school teaches. This includes, but is not necessarily limited to, participating in, supporting, or condoning sexual immorality, homosexual activity, or bisexual activity; promoting such practices; or being unable to support the school's moral principles. (See Leviticus 20:13 and Romans 1:27)

The selection of the restrictions mentioned in this pledge may appear arbitrary to some. Still, while not condemning others who see differently, GCA believes that the restrictions named are types of conduct that are detrimental to the standards established as its objective.

Students are expected to abide by these standards throughout their enrollment, whether at home, school, or elsewhere. Students found to violate the above mentioned standards **may be asked to withdraw whenever the general welfare demands it.**

## Academic Policy

### Academic Accommodations

Although Grace is not equipped to provide individualized education programs for students with significant physical, cognitive, or emotional disabilities, we are committed to doing everything we can to accommodate learning challenges. While Grace students must meet the school's educational standards for learning in each of their classes, we value working with families so students can grow and succeed despite challenges in their life. We desire to ensure that each student's needs are met and expectations are clear to parents, students, and teachers. When students are appropriately supported in their educational experience, they can often stay on track in meeting their educational and career goals.

Grace is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. While this often takes more time and planning, teachers understand that these accommodations are needed to provide equitable learning opportunities. Because GCA staff does not have the training/resources to adequately assess

students with special needs, we will only modify course work if they have an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) from Kankakee District #111. Modifications we can make if required by the IEP are extended work and test time, reduction in workload, copies of teacher notes, strategic classroom seating, tests read to the student, etc.

## Academic Behavioral Report

To ensure that students' grades reflect the learning is taking place in the classroom, the behaviors listed below are reported apart from academic achievement. We believe that these habits or traits, which often become entangled with subject area proficiency, are also vital and need to be reported separately. Teachers will report on these behaviors four times each year – at the midpoint and end of each semester.

	<b>Outstanding (4)</b>	<b>Proficient (3)</b>	<b>Needs Improvement (2)</b>	<b>Unsatisfactory (1)</b>
<b>Student Timeliness</b> - Responsibility - Timeliness - Assignment Completion	The student always turns in work on time and completes assignments to reflect each assignment's goal and expectation.	The student regularly turns in work on time (less than two assignments late) and completes assignments in a manner that reflects each assignment's goal and expectation.	The student inconsistently turns work in on time (more than two assignments late) and completes assignments in a manner that reflects each assignment's goal and expectation.	The student regularly turns in assignments late and does not complete assignments in a manner that reflects each assignment's goal and expectation.
<b>Student Engagement</b> - Participation - Preparation - Engagement - Focus - Contribution to Learning	Based on classroom guidelines, the student is always correctly engaged in classroom activities and improves the learning environment.	Based on classroom guidelines, the student is regularly appropriately engaged in classroom activities.	Based on classroom guidelines, the student is inconsistently engaged in classroom activities and sometimes distracts the learning environment.	Based on classroom guidelines, the student is rarely engaged in classroom activities and regularly disrupts the learning environment.
<b>Student Academic Habits:</b> - Independence - Motivation - Perseverance - Self-Advocacy - Resourcefulness - Grit	The student is self-motivated and always makes use of resources for learning.	The student is motivated and regularly makes use of resources for learning.	The student requires some external monitoring and motivation from teachers and inconsistently makes use of resources for learning.	The student is difficult to motivate, even externally, and does not use resources for learning.

# Cheating/Plagiarism

## First Offense.

The student will receive a zero on the test or assignment and a level 2 discipline. The teacher will call the parent as soon as possible and explain the matter. The teacher will also make a report of the incident to the principal.

## Second Offense

The student will receive a zero on the test or assignment and a level 3 discipline. The teacher will report the incident in writing to the principal. The principal will call the parents and inform them of the situation and the consequences.

# Class Ranking

High School students are ranked by numeric average each year as colleges request this information when they apply for acceptance. This average is computed by Ren Web at the end of each semester.

1. Only semester grades are used to compute class rank.
2. Class rank is not finalized until all work is completed and graded for the year.
3. Grades earned in dual-enrollment courses receive a higher numeric weight in calculations of class rank.
4. When a student retakes a course due to a failing grade, the failing average will be a part of the GPA and the average earned for the repeated course.

# Graduation Requirements

In grades 9-12, credits are awarded for work done on a semester basis, not yearly. **Students and parents are to assume the responsibility to know and meet the requirements for graduation.** The guidance department will audit graduation plans every year to ensure students remain on track throughout their time at Grace. Below is the list of GCA graduation requirements (students enrolling from outside of GCA will be determined on a case by case basis);

Core Courses		Electives			
<b>BIBLE</b>	Four credits	<b>PHYSICAL EDUCATION</b>		Two credits	
<b>ENGLISH</b>	Four credits	<b>FINE ARTS</b>		One credit	
<b>MATHEMATICS</b>	Three credits	<b>HEALTH</b>		1/2 credit	
<b>SOCIAL STUDIES</b>	Four credits	<b>Grade 9</b>	0-6 Credits	<b>Grade 11</b>	14-20 Credits
<b>SCIENCE</b>	Three credits	<b>Grade 10</b>	7-13 Credits	<b>Grade 12</b>	21-26 Credits

**Note:** All candidates for graduation must pass tests on the Illinois and United States Constitutions. These Constitution tests are taken as part of the Government class during the senior year.

# Exemption of Exams

One of the privileges we provide for students is to earn an exemption for one exam each semester. An exemption means the student's semester grade will be based on an average of the two-quarter grades. The following guidelines must be met to exempt an exam:

- Students may not exempt the same course exam twice in one year.
- Single semester courses may not be exempted.
- The student must have an "A" average for the semester.

Seniors may exempt from any 2nd-semester exam in any class. They will receive an "A" for that semester (average of 3rd and 4th quarters) as long as they also meet all criteria for regular Exemption of Exams.



# Grading Policies

Grades 6-8                      Quarter grade (45%), Quarter grade (45%), Semester exam grade (10%)  
Grades 9-12                    Quarter grade (40%), Quarter grade (40%), Semester exam grade (20%)

## Grading System

1<sup>st</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade students use the following grading scale in their classrooms.

Grading Scale	Letter Grade	GPA Value	Weighted GPA
100-98	A+	4.0	4.4
97-94	A	4.0	4.4
93-90	A-	3.67	4.04
89-87	B+	3.33	3.66
86-84	B	3.0	3.3
83-80	B-	2.67	2.94
79-77	C+	2.33	2.56
76-74	C	2.0	2.2
73-70	C-	1.67	1.85
69-67	D+	1.33	1.46
66-64	D	1.0	1.1
63-60	D-	.67	.73
Below 60	F	0	0

## Homework

Homework is a necessary part of the educational process. It reinforces what is being taught in the classroom and teaches the student responsibility. We **expect** and **inspect** your child's homework. If your child is not in the habit of having homework or has never developed proper study habits, assistance at home will be needed. The teacher will not give unreasonable amounts of homework. If your child is spending excessive amounts of time doing homework, proper study habits may need to be developed and a schedule that will allow school and home responsibilities to be fulfilled with sufficient personal time remaining.

Homework assignments should adhere to the following time standards: Grades 6-8 around 90 minutes and Grades 9-12 around 120 minutes. Homework time will vary among students. Factors include: the amount of work finished during the school day, speed student works and comprehension of assignment, and make-up work from being absent. Please contact your child's teacher if you have any concerns about the amount of homework having to be completed each evening.

## Honor Roll

To recognize and encourage academic achievement, an honor roll is published at the end of each quarter. To be included on the "A" Honor Roll, one must have a 3.5 GPA or higher. To be included on the Dean's List, you must have a 3.0 GPA or higher.

## Late and Make-Up Work

Students who miss class because of **excused absences** will be entitled to one additional day to make-up work. The exception to this policy would be long-term assignments made before the student's absence (for example, tests, recitations, research papers, class projects, etc.). Students will need to make arrangements for such assignments to ensure they are turned in on time.

In the instance of an approved family trip, or college trip, the student must make arrangements with the teacher to gather their assignments and complete them within a week of their return. Athletes or students involved in other extracurricular activities are responsible for work missed by **the next day**. Students who miss class because of **unexcused absences** will not be entitled to make-up work missed.

## Retention Criteria

**Secondary** – Failing Math and Language Arts grades for the year will be sufficient cause to retain a student in the 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grades. 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade students earn credits towards graduation for successful completion of courses. To be considered for promotion to the next grade level, a student must have earned an increment of six credit hours.

## Schedule Changes

Students who want to make changes in their schedule must first talk with the classroom teacher they want to change. All official drops and withdrawals are approved and coordinated with the parent, teacher, and administrator. In most instances, students may drop a class only after all other options for success have been exhausted. The request for dropping a class must be made by the Friday of the second week after the semester starts.

## Summer School

Summer academic work may be required to restore academic credits. GCA uses an online credit recovery service to help keep students on track to graduate. The fees may vary but will range from \$200-\$500 (actual cost of the class) depending on the types of credits that need to be recovered. Summer school fees are nonrefundable. A registration release form must be signed and documented before enrollment in summer classes.

Students are responsible for their progress. Each course has specific time limits. These limits are usually the same length as a typical semester. A GCA school representative can track progress, but students should contact their course teacher for all questions and concerns.

## Valedictorian and Salutatorian

GCA chooses to name Valedictorian and Salutatorian's honorary positions based on overall GPA, character, extracurricular involvement, and service. The announcement of Valedictorian and Salutatorian is made in April of their senior year.

Students that meet the following criteria will be considered:

- They attended GCA, their junior and senior year.
- Complete the Distinguished Graduation Plan (minimum of four years of Math through pre-calculus, Science, and English) with a class rank in the top 20%.
- Have maintained at least a 3.5 Grade Point Average.
- They have not been on disciplinary probation during their senior year.

# Appearance Code

There must be order to encourage concentrated study in a school setting and avoid as much distraction as possible from the learning experience. At GCA, our goal is for our students' appearance to reflect biblical principles and values. Those principles and values encourage one's focus on one's inner self (I Sam. 16:7). We want our students to glorify God in all they do, including how they dress for school and school activities.

## Responsibility

Parents are responsible for making sure their children dress according to the appearance code during the school day and at school functions. Parental responsibilities are as follows:

- Fostering an attitude that recognizes and upholds the school's authority in setting a dress code.
- Purchasing clothing to be worn to school that is appropriate and meets the code.
- Making sure that the child is dressed appropriately before leaving for school.
- Upholding the consequences outlined in this handbook if the code is broken.

If a student or parent has a question of whether a specific garment or style is appropriate, please check with the school before it is worn. **Appearance standards apply when students are on campus or at any school activity unless otherwise directed by the administration.** We want students to be comfortable, to learn to make correct choices, and to be able to have a sense of "fashion" or "style" within the acceptable boundaries of being neat, clean, modest, appropriate, and non-distracting. Grace strives to maintain a positive and professional learning environment, reflecting God's call to modesty and purity. Consequently, our appearance should encourage concentrated study and should in no way distract from the learning process. Therefore, our appearance code is defined by two specific standards: modesty and professionalism.

### Modest

First and foremost, a student's appearance should reflect his/her identity as a follower of Christ. Everything we do is an expression of our relationship with God, and in His Word, God makes it clear that we are to be modest and treat our bodies with the utmost respect. Students' appearance should also reflect the Christian value of encouraging the focus on the inner self, not the outer. It is also important to note that what is "in style" is not always in accordance with the standards we seek to reflect. However, as Christians, we are called to be "different than the world." The standards of modesty should be reflected in a student's dress at all times.

### Professional

We want students to be comfortable, but we also expect that a student's appearance should meet basic standards. As a learning community committed to excellence, we desire to wear appropriate clothes and create a professional learning environment. It is important to note that these standards do not involve morality; instead, they are preferences that Grace seeks to uphold in our school community. This is also in place to prepare our students for their future when they may have various appearance codes at their employment or other venues.

## Secondary and Special Event Dress Code

### Chapel Dress

- For Girls
  - Dresses and Skirts – Knee length. If wearing long dresses or skirts, slits should be no higher than the top of the knees.

- Dress Shoes or Sandals.
- An appropriate shirt or blouse with no designer logo visible. – No hooded sweatshirts.
- Dress Pants (No jeans or cargo pants).
- For Boys
  - A clean, pressed collared shirt that is tucked in or a nice sweater. Polo shirts must be plain with no designer logo and long enough to remain tucked into the trousers.
  - Dress trousers or khakis; cargo pants with pockets are not acceptable.
  - A belt.
  - Leather shoes. Tennis shoes (even dress tennis shoes) are not allowed.

### **Special Occasion Dress (Fall Fling, Junior/Senior Banquet, Graduation)**

- For Girls
  - Dress tops, blouses, or dresses must have a shoulder or halter strap and reveal no undergarments. They must also cover enough of the chest that when the student's hand is placed horizontally at the neck's base, no skin is visible below the hand.
  - Dresses with straight skirts must fall straight from the waist to avoid a form-fitting appearance.
  - Dresses should be no lower in the back than a normal bra line and cover all undergarments.
  - Dresses and skirts must not exceed two inches from the floor when in an upright kneeling position. Slits should be no higher than the top of the knee.
  - All dresses must be approved before the occasion.
- For Boys
  - Tuxedos or coat and tie, belt, and pressed collared shirt.
  - Leather dress shoes and colored socks.

## **Prohibited Attire for School & School Functions**

- Anything tight-fitting, revealing, sheer, or allowing the undergarments or their outlines to be seen through the outer layer of clothing.
- Stretch pants (yoga/leggings/spandex material).
- Athletic pants/shorts of any kind.
- Flannel or pajama pants.
- Any pants with wording across the back.
- Any shirts that reveal midriff when arms are raised, or students bend over.
- Any clothing that promotes fighting, alcohol, tobacco, drugs. Shirts that are obscene, suggestive, or have inappropriate slogans and insults are not permitted. Additionally, clothing exhibiting symbols not keeping with biblical standards to include skull and crossbones, the yin and yang, the ankh, and other pagan or new age images must not be worn.
- Slipper-like shoes.
- Hats, hoods, or sunglasses may not be worn inside the school.

## **Process for Dress Code Accountability**

- No clothing that is tight-fitting, revealing, sheer, or allowing the undergarments or their outlines to be seen through the outer layer of clothing.
- Skirts, dresses, and shorts should be knee-length.
- Tank tops should have straps with a width of at least three fingers.
- Shirts should not reveal midriff when arms are raised or when the student bends over.

- Shirts must also cover enough of the chest that when the student's hand is placed horizontally at the neck's base, no skin is visible below the hand.
- Hair should be neat and clean, out of the face and eyes—no unnatural hair colors.
- Piercings should be limited to ears. No gauges.
- Tattoos should be covered.

# Attendance Policy

Punctual and daily attendance at school for the entire regular school term is the law and shared responsibility between the student and the parents(s) or guardian(s) to ensure their academic integrity. If a student is absent from school, **please call the office before 9:00 am** so that the absence can be marked excused. Excused absences are allowed for sickness, medical appointments, or a death in the family.

A student who is absent more than seven days (excused or unexcused) in one semester **from school** will receive no credit for any class during that semester. *Exceptions to this policy can be made with a doctor verified extended illness, a death in the immediate family (father, mother, sibling), or where travel may be necessary for a funeral.*

## Pre-arranged Absence

- Parents should contact the school at least **two weeks in advance** of the absence.
- Students assume full responsibility for all missed classes and assignments. All assignments are due on the day designated by the teacher. Assignments not completed on time will not be awarded credit. Tests and quizzes must be made up within one week of the student's return to school and at the teacher's convenience.

## Tardiness

GCA does not distinguish between an excused tardy and an unexcused tardy. Students are allowed to be tardy to school three times per quarter. After this initial grace period, three days of being tardy will equal an unexcused absence in any one grading period. Tardy for periods 2-8 does not have the same grace period and will result in a detention.

**Elementary** begins school at 8:15 am. Students are considered tardy after 8:30 am and must report to the office to receive an admit slip.

**Secondary** begins school at 8:30 am. Any student arriving after 8:30 but before 8:50 is considered tardy to school. Students who arrive at school after 8:50 will be considered absent from 1st hour and will need to bring in a note from home the next day. At that point, the absence will be considered either excused or unexcused. When a student is tardy the 4th time in a quarter, a Level 1 discipline is given. It will continue to be given for each subsequent tardy to school infraction during the semester (If three Level 1 detentions are accumulated in any 15 school day period, the next tardy will result in a Level 2 discipline.)

# Discipline Policy

"No discipline seems pleasant at the time but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained *by it*." ~ *Hebrews 12:11*

Through cooperation with the home and church, part of GCA's mission is to help equip students to model Christ-like character. The home has been given the primary responsibility for developing character (*Deut. 6:6-9*), and the school acts as a delegated authority to reinforce values and principles being taught at home. Not all of our students come from homes where biblical standards are strongly emphasized. However, students are expected to follow our standards of conduct willingly and with a good spirit. Effective classroom discipline is a necessary ingredient for a good learning environment. To maintain this environment, we expect students to conduct themselves appropriately. It is the purpose of the disciplinary system to aid young people in the development of Christian character. The Scripture says that all things should be done "decently and in order" (I Corinthians 14:40). Thus at GCA, discipline is maintained, firm and consistent, yet tempered with love.

## Elementary

In elementary, most of the behavioral discipline is conducted by the classroom teacher. This is often done within individual classroom discipline models. The following list constitutes a general progression that teachers will use in addressing behavioral problems within their classroom.

- 1st Violation: Warning.
- 2nd Violation: 5 minutes of a privilege denied or merits removed.
- 3rd Violation: 10 minutes of a privilege denied or merits removed.
- 4th Violation: The student is removed to another room, and parents are contacted.
- 5th Violation: the student is sent to Administration, parents are contacted, and discipline is administered.

Although the elementary does not utilize detentions like the secondary, the secondary discipline model acts as a guide for the administration when deciding discipline.

Persistent problems may result in an in-school or out-of-school suspension, the length of which will be determined by the administration based on the severity of the conduct. Serious offenses, such as lying, cheating, fighting, direct disobedience, disrespect, stealing, use of profanity, etc., will be dealt with immediately, and the parents will be contacted. A student who has continual problems in these areas will be evaluated by the administration and school board and may be dismissed or refused re-enrollment the following year.

## Secondary

With increased independence for secondary students, some actions requiring disciplinary intervention are character development issues, while others are heart issues. Character development issues (Level 1) tend to be accidental/careless and indicate the students' need for self-discipline. On the other hand, more severe disciplinary issues (Level 2) are those actions that are deliberate and reveal a heart issue. The resulting policy shows GCA's efforts to encourage students toward self-discipline while providing consequences for deliberate behaviors of insubordination.

### Level 1: Matter of Character Development

Violations will result in appropriate classroom consequences and or a suitable level of restitution for restorative purposes. Repetitious offenses may indicate a heart issue and result in Level Two consequences.

## **Level 2: Matter of the Heart**

One-hour detentions are given to students who choose to disregard the authorities placed in their lives. Repetitious offenses may indicate a heart issue and result in Level Three consequences.

## **Level 3: In-School Suspension**

Students who receive a Level 3 discipline will serve a day of in-school suspension, resulting in a fee of \$55.00 per day to cover the cost of hiring someone to supervise the student. Violations that will result in Level 3 discipline include (but may be expanded by the administration):

- Cheating (results in a zero on the assignment)
- Forgery
- Leaving campus/building without permission or Skipping school
- Bullying or harassment
- Stealing
- Vandalism (restitution must also be made)

## **Level 4: Out-of-School Suspension**

Level 4 discipline is an out-of-school suspension (OSS) and is a very serious matter. Parents will be contacted before the suspension is to be served. When a student is suspended, he/she must complete all missed work and take all tests and quizzes missed according to the absence policy. Only the tests will count towards the quarter grade. Homework and quizzes will receive a zero for a grade. A Level 4 discipline will be given if the student's conduct is grave enough to merit immediate, serious consequences. Out of school suspension will be given for the following prohibited conduct:

- Use or possession of alcohol, tobacco, or vaping devices on or off campus: Up to 10 days of OSS. Repeated offenses will subject the student to expulsion.
- Use or possession of pornographic material on or off-campus (this includes sexting defined as texting or taking pictures of a sexual or lewd nature): Up to 10 days of OSS. Repeated offenses will subject the student to expulsion.
- Involvement in immorality on or off campus: Up to 10 days of OSS or immediate expulsion depending on the principal and the school committee's decision after reviewing the situation.
- Involvement with gangs or gang activity on or off campus: Immediate expulsion.
- Use, possession, or distribution of illegal drugs on or off campus: Immediate expulsion.
- Possession of a weapon (gun, knives, blades, etc.): Police will be called immediately. The student will receive up to 10 days of OSS or immediate expulsion depending on the principal's decision after a review of the situation. (Depending on the circumstances, possession of a look-alike weapon could result in the same consequences.)
- Fighting – up to 10 days of Out of School Suspension (Defending oneself will, in most cases, be considered fighting.)
- Violence against school personnel will not be tolerated. Police will be called immediately. The student will receive up to 10 days of OSS or immediate expulsion depending on the principal and the school board's decision after reviewing the situation.

## **Level 5: Indefinite Suspension**

As we strongly believe in restorative discipline, GCA will utilize indefinite suspension with a subsequent restoration plan when appropriate. In this event, students will be suspended until they meet the requirements outlined in the **restoration plan**. The restoration plan is written by the administration and will be geared toward addressing the significant issues before the student is welcome back to regular attendance.

## **Expulsion**

If at any time the principal and the school board determine that a student's presence in school is detrimental or harmful to the overall life and mission of the school, that student will be asked to withdraw or will be expelled. GCA retains the right to amend, discontinue, or vary from these procedures without prior notice.

## **Detention Room**

Serving time in detention is the primary penalty for routine rule infractions among students in secondary school. Level 1 and Level 2 detentions will be served on Wednesday mornings. Level 1 students will be served from 8:00–8:30 am. Level 2 detentions will be served from 7:30 am - 8:30 am. Detentions will always be assigned for the following Wednesday. If a violation occurs on a Wednesday, the detention will be served the following week. Detention attendance is mandatory. It will take precedence over athletic practices, games, and work. Additional penalty detentions may be given if the student does not report to detention when assigned with the detention form's required parental signature.

## **Disciplinary Probation**

If necessary, the school will put a student on disciplinary probation as a last resort before being dismissed from school. The administration will review probation situations periodically. Students who have failed to meet the behavioral probation conditions will be asked to withdraw from the school.

## **Readmission After Disciplinary Action**

To be considered for re-enrollment after being dismissed from the school (or for enrollment after dismissal from any other school), the student and his parent(s) or guardian must meet with the administrator to determine if the discipline has accomplished the desired development in spiritual maturity. Usually, the school's administration will only consider a student for re-enrollment after one semester has elapsed.

## **Additional Reasons for Dismissal**

- Parent(s) who will not cooperate with the administration of the school.
- A student's negative influence makes it inadvisable for the student to remain in GCA.
- Continual failure to achieve academically or continual lack of effort.
- Threats to teachers or staff members.
- Destruction of school property.
- Forcible entry into the building or a bus after school hours.
- Obscene gestures and language directed at the faculty or staff.

## **Biblical Response to Questionable Situations**

We understand that students are frequently faced with the dilemma of how to confront morally questionable situations. Students are frequently faced with conflict dealing with friends who have broken or are breaking school rules. We desire that students learn to confront one another in the spirit and instruction of Matthew 18. Therefore, a student should confront other students who are involved in actions contrary to biblical principles and institutional standards. If repentance is not achieved, Matthew's Gospel instructs us to take another Christian to confront again. We suggest that the student invite a teacher with whom they have a positive relationship to intercede with them. If repentance is still not achieved, the student, along with the one he has invited to intercede, should go to the administration. In this way, we seek to encourage students to stand for righteousness.



# General Information

## Abuse

GCA falls under the Illinois Mandated Reporter requirements to report suspected child abuse and neglect. Faculty and administration will call the Illinois Child Abuse Hotline if we have reasonable cause to believe that a child may be going through instances of abuse (either physical or sexual) or neglect.

## Accident Insurance

All students will be covered during school hours, involved in any school activity, by a blanket student accident insurance policy. This insurance is **secondary** to your personal insurance. There is no charge for this service. No additional insurance will be available through the school.

## Achievement Tests

Tests are administered each spring in grade levels 3-12 to measure academic progress and compare that progress with public and private school students from all over the United States. This testing provides parents, students, and GCA with precise evaluations of strengths and weaknesses that can be used to improve GCA's academic progress and help each student individually. Grades 3 – 7 will take the ACT Aspire tests. ACT Aspire tests give data on how ready students are to take the ACT. Grades 8 - 9 will take the Pre-ACT, and Grades 10 – 12 (12<sup>th</sup> is optional) will take the ACT. The ACT is a test that colleges use to determine eligibility for admission, scholarship awards, and often placement in general education courses.

## After School Care

- At 3:30 pm, students will be taken to "After School Care." All students must be picked up by 5:30 pm. There is a \$3.00 per hour charge for this service. Students not picked up by 5:30 pm will be assessed a \$1.00 per minute late pickup fee.
- Any Junior High student that is not picked up by 3:45 pm will be taken to a supervised study hall. There will be a \$3/hour charge for this. Students need to be picked up by 5:30 pm.
- Secondary students not involved in a school-sponsored/supervised activity must leave GCA grounds by 3:45 pm. If the student stays to watch an athletic contest, the student must remain at the game venue and not wander around the building.

## Arrival & Departure

**Arrival:** K3-5<sup>th</sup> graders arriving will report directly to before-school care. At 7:50, their teacher will pick up K3-kindergarten students. The supervising teacher will lead 1st-5th graders to the gym until the school day starts. Secondary students will report directly to the cafeteria until they are released for class at 8:25.

**Departure:** K3-1<sup>st</sup> parents may wait for children outside of their classroom. 2<sup>nd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> parents may pick up their children at the doors by the church. Secondary students will be released at the end of school and may depart through the front entrance of school.

## Bullying/Harassment Policy

- Students (and faculty) should realize that their commitment to living a life of integrity and following the standards outlined in God's Word (the Bible) is ongoing, not limited to the school day.

- Grace does not condone or allow harassment of others by teachers, administrators, support staff, students, or other persons either at school, during school events, or online, mainly related to social media and text messaging.
  - Any person who believes he/she has been subjected to harassment should report it immediately to an appropriate superior. Students may report to a teacher, administrator, or counselor. Teachers should report an offense to his/her administrator, or if it is the administrator he/she is reporting to the Head of School, or if it is the Head of School he/she is reporting, then and only then to the President of the School Board.
  - Each report will be given serious consideration and investigated appropriately.
- Reports of harassment and subsequent investigations will be handled as discreetly as possible to avoid the embarrassment of the person making the report or a person who may be unjustly accused.
- Any person who is determined to have violated this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, including the possibility of employment termination (for staff members) or expulsion (for students).
- Harassment includes, but is not limited to:
  - Making unwelcome sexual advances.
  - Cyberbullying, which includes intimidating harassment or creating a false profile on social media outlets.
  - Engaging in improper physical contact.
  - Making improper sexual comments.
  - Writing a note to someone else, either electronically, by hand, through social digital, or social media, with content that may be construed as sexual, or "unwholesome," as defined in Ephesians 4:29.
  - Using words (written or spoken), pictures, objects, gestures, or actions relating to sexual activity (or sexting) to create a sexually intimidating, hostile, or offensive learning or working environment. This can be intentional or unintentional.
  - Any other form of ridicule of others based on race, physical characteristics, ability, family background, or similar feature is harassment.
  - Intimidation/bullying of any kind intentionally or unintentionally through joking. Joking is not an excuse for harassment or bullying.
  - Destruction of personal property.
- Any suspected cases of child abuse or neglect are required by law to be reported to the appropriate state agency, which protects individuals' rights in such cases.
- All students and all school employees are expected to conduct themselves with respect for the dignity of others.
- If a student or parent feels any part of this policy has been violated, they should immediately report it to the administration of Grace to ensure correction can take place.

## **Career Center Option**

GCA extends students' opportunity to attend the Kankakee Area Career Center (KACC) their junior and senior years. The student's parents must submit written permission, and students must receive administration approval to be scheduled to attend the Career Center. The requirement for students to enroll and remain enrolled in KACC is as follows:

- It is the students' and parents' responsibility to enroll and pay all fees through their local school district.
- Junior and Senior Bible classes are required and cannot be made up online. Additionally, required core GCA classes take precedence over KACC enrollment. If there is a conflict with the KACC schedule, the student may not enroll in the Career Center.
- It is the student's responsibility, with the Guidance Counselor's assistance, to ensure he/she meets all minimum graduation requirements.

- All required GCA activities take precedence over KACC scheduling. It is the student's responsibility to check ahead of time if this will affect their KACC grade. Examples of such activities are community service day, chapel, achievement testing, or rearranged GCA scheduling.
- GCA is more than just an academic institution. Our mission is to educate the whole student. It is essential, therefore, that students are engaged in activities at GCA beyond the classroom. It is the Career Center students' responsibility to be involved regularly with class and school activities. Failure to do so could result in losing KACC enrollment.
- It is the student's responsibility to procure transportation to KACC. Students may only ride with another non-sibling student with written parent permission, and the student may only ride with the specified student on the form.
- To remain enrolled in KACC, students must meet the same eligibility requirements as GCA athletes. The guidance counselor will make periodic eligibility checks. Failure to remain eligible will result in losing KACC enrollment privileges.

## **Crisis Management Policy**

In the event of a crisis on the Grace campus, parents will be notified of events when it is safe for Grace Staff to do so. For further details and information, please refer to the GCA Crisis Handbook.

## **Dual Enrollment**

For high school students (10th-12th) interested in more advanced courses or wanting to get a "jump on" college requirements, dual enrollment classes may provide a good solution. Dual enrollment, or concurrent enrollment as it is also known, is the practice of allowing a student to be enrolled in two academic institutions (high school & college) at the same time. The credits apply both to high school diploma requirements and college graduation requisites.

Currently, GCA has entered into dual enrollment agreements with Olivet Nazarene University, Grand Canyon University, and Kankakee Community College. Information and specific academic requirements for each dual enrollment course should be discussed with the Guidance Counselor. The requirement for students to enroll and remain enrolled in dual enrollment is as follows:

- It is the students' and parents' responsibility to enroll and pay all fees for each course.
- Junior and Senior Bible classes are required and cannot be made up online. Additionally, required core GCA classes take precedence over dual enrollment.
- It is the student's responsibility, with the Guidance Counselor's assistance, to ensure he/she meets all minimum graduation requirements.
- All required GCA activities take precedence over dual enrollment. Examples of such activities are community service day, chapel, achievement testing, or rearranged GCA scheduling.
- GCA is more than just an academic institution. Our mission is to educate the whole student. It is essential, therefore, that students are engaged in activities at GCA beyond the classroom. It is the students' responsibility to be involved regularly with class and school activities.
- It is the student's responsibility to procure transportation to classes if necessary. Students may only ride with another non-sibling student with written parent permission, and the student may only ride with the specified student on the form.
- To maintain dual enrollment, students must meet the same eligibility requirements as GCA athletes. The guidance counselor will make periodic eligibility checks. Failure to remain eligible may result in losing dual enrollment privileges.

## Drugs and Other Prohibited Substances

Use of drugs, alcohol, tobacco, or vaping substances will in no way be allowed on or off school grounds or before, during, or after a school event. The administration is required to immediately notify both local and state police if a student is found to have a drug. Subsequently, parents/guardians will be made aware of the incident.

## Emergency Closing of School

GCA is committed to providing in-person academic instruction for your student. In the case of winter conditions, the school's default will be to keep the school open. Parents who believe it is not safe to transport their children in winter conditions will not be penalized. For reasons of extreme inclement weather, the school may be called off. Announcements are made as early as possible over Facebook, the school website, and the PARENT ALERT text/email system.

## Gum, Food & Drink

Gum is a nightmare for our cleaning staff and is therefore not allowed in school. Food and drink in the classroom is a distraction and also becomes a problem for our cleaning staff. Therefore, food and drink other than water outside of the cafeteria is prohibited. Consumption of food and drink is also prohibited in the hallways and at student lockers.

## Illness & Communicable Diseases

If a child shows signs of illness (fever of 100.4 degrees or higher, vomiting, or diarrhea), do not bring them to school. **A child must be free of these symptoms for 24 hours before they return to school.** Children with a contagious condition should be kept at home until there is no danger of passing the condition on to others. If a child becomes ill at school, the parent will be called to pick up the child at the school office. For more information regarding what to do in the case of COVID-19, please refer to the school COVID guidance.

## Lunches and Lunch Periods

GCA does not provide a hot lunch program for students. Some vending snacks are available for purchase and a variety of soft drinks, juices, and milk. Otherwise, students can bring sack lunches from home. Jr. High and High School students may purchase a la carte items from the Student Council during the lunch period (hot pockets, pizza rolls, chips, cookies, etc.)

## Medical Forms & Medication Policy

The State of Illinois requires physical examinations for students entering the 6<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grades. The state also now requires a dental examination or waiver for students entering 6<sup>th</sup> grade. Illinois also requires that each student has an immunization record on file in the academy office that shows the student is current with all immunization requirements. An eye exam or waiver is required for any student entering an Illinois school for the first time. **The Academy is required to suspend any student who does not comply with these state requirements by October 15th!**

Each student participating in interscholastic sports must have a physical exam form on file each year before the student-athlete is permitted to practice or play. This requirement also applies to out-of-state students enrolling in an Illinois school system for the first time.

When it becomes necessary for a student to take prescribed medication during the school day, the following procedures apply:

- The student **MUST** bring the medicine to the office immediately upon entering the building. Instructions should be included as to the frequency and quantity prescribed.
- The office must have written parental permission before it will be given.
- The medication must be in the original package – loose or bagged pills will not be accepted or administered.
- No student may, at any time, give medication to another student.
- The school office will **NOT** provide aspirin/acetaminophen/ibuprofen/Pepto Bismol or other over-the-counter drugs.
- The school allows for the self-administration and self-carry of **diabetes medication** or **asthma medication** upon receipt of a signed parent permission form and a physician and parent signed plan/prescription, both of which will be maintained in the school files.
- **ONLY** the office personnel will dispense prescribed student medication.

Please note that GCA is not responsible for an injury while school personnel helps a child administer asthma medication.

## Non-Discriminatory Policy

GCA admits students of any race, color, nationality, and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to GCA students. We do not discriminate based on sex, race, color, national or ethnic origin in administering our educational policies, admissions procedures, tuition assistance awards, athletic and other school-administered programs. However, we do reserve the right to deny admission to any individual who cannot benefit from enrollment based on past academic achievement, disqualifying disability, or whose personal lifestyle is not in harmony with GCA's stated philosophy and purpose. The school will be in general compliance with the applicable sections of the Illinois School Code, with relevant case law (including Plyler v Doe), and with 23 Illinois Administrative Code Part 425.

## Senior Trip

The Senior Trip is also regarded as a significant educational experience, and each senior is encouraged to participate. The cost for the senior trip is the responsibility of the senior. Many seniors lower the total cost of their trip by active participation in senior fundraising projects. The administration reserves the right to exclude seniors from the senior trip due to academic or disciplinary situations. Graduating seniors must be in attendance for the Graduation service as scheduled by GCA.

## Skipping Class / School

A student will be considered to have skipped a class if they are more than 10 minutes late to class without a valid excuse from a teacher or the administration. In addition to discipline, homework, projects, quizzes, or tests scheduled for the class period skipped will receive a zero. Students will be considered to have skipped school if they miss more than one class period during the day without a valid excuse from a teacher or the administration. In addition to the discipline, any homework, projects, quizzes, or tests scheduled for that day in all classes will receive a zero.

## Stealing

We require our students to respect each other's property and the property of their teachers and the Academy. The taking or use of another's property without their permission will be considered stealing and will receive discipline following the GCA policy. We encourage students not to bring valuable items to school. If they are brought to school, they should be kept locked in a locker or given to a teacher for safekeeping.

## Student Drivers

Students who drive must complete a Student Driver Vehicle Use Form and have it approved by the school before they are authorized to drive. Retention of the Student Vehicle Use Permit will depend on the student's observance of the school's vehicle regulations.

- All students authorized by the school to drive must park in the outer parking lot.
- Loitering is not permitted at any time in the parking area. When students arrive, they park their cars in the designated parking area and report inside the building immediately.
- No cars may be removed from the parking area during the school day except by special permission from the administration.
- The speed limit in the parking lot is 5 miles per hour. In addition to detention, the student who drives carelessly or recklessly may forfeit his permit to drive to school. The school reserves the right to terminate driving to school privileges.
- Any need to leave school before regular school dismissal must be authorized by the parent and approved by the office.

## Technology/Cell Phone Policy

Technology and the Internet are incredible resources that can significantly expand the learning and educational process. Still, they can have significant repercussions as they also open the door to access information that would not be consistent with a life of righteousness. Therefore, as Christians with the privilege of computer access, there comes responsibility and accountability. Grace expects that all students using the school's network and computer services will:

- Have the permission of their parent or guardian,
- Agree to abide by Grace's policies.

### Technology Goals

- We want students to master the basics of managing their electronic resources to achieve their learning goals.
- Students need to use technology to interact with people through social media to foster collaboration and draw people closer to the Christian community.
- We want students to use technology to develop the ability to discern relevant, valid information to use in their academic pursuits.
- We want to help students develop "technology discipline" so as not become a distraction that detracts from relationships and productivity.

### Use is a Privilege

The use of the Internet and the school network is a privilege, not a right. Students who violate rules of conduct, the acceptable use policy, or Internet use will be subject to revocation of privileges and potential disciplinary or appropriate legal action. Please note that revocation of privileges may cause failure in classes where network access is necessary.

### Liability

Grace makes no assurances or warranties of any kind, whether expressed or implied, regarding any Internet services provided. The use of any information obtained via the Internet is at the user's own risk. The school will not be responsible for any damages users suffer, including, but not limited to, loss of data resulting from delays

or interruptions in service. The school will not be responsible for the accuracy, nature, or quality of information gathered through school-provided Internet access.

### **Parental Responsibility / Social Networking Sites**

Ultimately, students' parents and guardians are responsible for setting and conveying the standards that their children should follow when using media and information sources. We encourage parents to monitor student activity on social networking sites, such as Facebook®, Snapchat®, Instagram®, Twitter®, etc. Students are not permitted to access personal social networking sites from Grace's network.

### **Acceptable Use**

The educational value of student Internet access is the joint responsibility of students, teachers, and parents. Taking up valuable network resources for non-educational pursuits, or activities not consistent with the mission of Grace, is prohibited. All use must be lawful, non-commercial, and consistent with the school's educational mission and goals. Students are not permitted to try to access information blocked by the school's filtering software or to attempt to alter the network configuration in any way. Grace prohibits using a cell phone "hot spots," tethering, VPNs, or any other use of a shared personal Internet connection, including nearby Wi-Fi networks. Students must respect the privacy of others and may only access resources they are permitted to use. Students must use only their username and password; using any other account is prohibited.

### **Electronic Devices**

Students are responsible for the electronic devices they bring to school (including cell phones, iPads, laptops, etc.). Grace is not responsible if they are lost, broken, or stolen. Electronic devices connected to a cellular network should be secured in the student's locker throughout the day. Electronic devices (those that cannot connect to a cellular network) may only be used with teacher permission during class time. Students who utilize these items inappropriately during class time will be disciplined appropriately. The use of electronic devices during passing periods, lunch, or other free time should be limited.

### **Student Privacy**

- The school may not request or require a student to provide a password or other related account information to gain access to the student's account or profile on a social networking website;
- The school may conduct an investigation or require a student to cooperate in an investigation if there is sufficient evidence to suggest the student's social network account violates the school's disciplinary policy; and,
- The school may require the student to share content in the course of such an investigation.

## **Telephone Use**

During regular school hours, the school office or administration's permission to use the phone must be given only. Secondary students must have a pass from their teacher to go to the office.

## **Textbooks**

Textbooks will be issued by and returned to the Academy Office. The textbook condition will be determined at the beginning and end of each year. Students are responsible for maintaining their textbooks. This information describes the process:

- Level A (New/Very Good): Book is either new or in very good condition with no damage. A well-cared-for item that has seen limited use and remains in very good condition.

- Level B (Used – Good/Acceptable): The item shows some wear from consistent use, but it remains in good condition and functions properly. It may be marked, have identifying markings on it, or have minor damage. Signs of wear can also include aesthetic issues such as scratches, dents, tape, and worn corners. The book may have identifying markings on it or show other signs of previous use.
- Level C (Used – Unacceptable): This item has missing covers, pages or has been marked up or destroyed by water or liquids beyond normal wear and tear.

Book Issued:	Book Returned:	Charges:
Level A	Level A	None
Level A	Level B	None
Level A	Level C	\$30.00
Level B	Level B	None
Level B	Level C	\$15.00

## Visitors

All visitors and parents are required to report to the office when visiting GCA. Items such as lunches and gym clothes that need to be delivered to students should be brought to the office where the office staff will see that they are delivered. Office hours are from 7:30 am to 3:30 pm when school is in session.

**Prospective students** may visit GCA as long as they secure a visitor's pass from the office. This must be approved by the principal at least a day in advance. Visiting students will be expected to dress following the dress code. Student shadowing is also allowed as long as the appropriate form has been completed and returned to the GCA office for administrative approval one week before the shadow date.

## Withdrawals

Student withdrawals from GCA are handled through the school office. GCA will transfer academic records when all fees must have been paid, all books and other school belongings returned, and the proper forms completed. **Students who withdraw during the semester will be financially responsible for the entire semester.** Students who withdraw may not re-enroll within the same semester or a ninety-day probationary period.

## Weapons

To maintain a safe environment for all at Grace, no weapons (guns, knives, etc.) or any other potentially dangerous items (lighters, combustible materials, lasers, shock-causing devices, etc.) shall be brought to school, to any school event/trip, or onto school property. The administration is required to notify both local and state police immediately if a student is found to be in possession of a firearm. Subsequently, parents/guardians will be made aware of the incident. Because we care deeply about everyone's safety in our community, we will have very little tolerance for inappropriate behavior in this area of safety.

