

# PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK 2017-18



## CORE VALUES

Quality Education  
Biblical Worldview  
Fantastic, Approachable, Committed Teachers, (that's a FACT!)  
Family Centered  
Small Classes  
Service Oriented

## Table of Contents

Welcome/Numbers .....	2
School Organization.....	2
Parental Volunteers.....	2
Non-Discrimination Policy .....	2
Mission Statement and Mandate/Purpose.....	3
Doctrinal Statement .....	4-5
Philosophy of Education.....	5-6
Educational Objectives .....	6-7
Parent-School Agreement.....	7-8
Application Procedure/Textbooks & Supplies.....	9
Tuition/Fee Schedule/Discounts/Financial Aid .....	10-11
Grading Standards.....	12
Grading/Reporting Periods .....	13
Academic Probation.....	13
Participation in Extracurricular Events.....	13
Retention Policy.....	13
Homework Policy .....	13
Attendance Regulations .....	14
Early Dismissal .....	14
Planned Excused Absences.....	14
Tardy Student Policy.....	15
Unexcused Absences .....	15
Make-Up Work .....	15
Behavior Expectations & Responsibilities.....	16-17
Discipline Policy.....	18-23
Dress Code .....	24-25
Health and Medicine .....	26
Lunches .....	27
Lockers.....	27
School Closing.....	27
Bus Regulations .....	27-28
Students with Learning Disabilities .....	29
Sexual Harassment.....	30
Biblical Problem Solving.....	30
Birthday/Holiday Celebration Policies .....	31
Chapel .....	32
Library.....	32
School Pictures.....	32
Telephone Use .....	32
Visitors .....	32
Fire Drills.....	32
Emergency Drills .....	32
Pledges .....	33

## **Welcome to Grace Christian School!**

Grace Christian School's desire is to serve the Lord and our school community. Please contact our school office for information if you need help with anything.

School office: 724-543-4019, Option 2

Fax number: 724-545-6738

E-mail: [gcs@comcast.net](mailto:gcs@comcast.net)

Web site: [www.GraceChristianKittanning.com](http://www.GraceChristianKittanning.com)

School office hours are Monday through Friday 8:00 am-3:15 pm when school is in session.

## **School Organization**

The School Board consists of the senior pastor of the Grace Brethren Church and other members-at-large. School board members are:

Mrs. Autumn Vorpe-Seyler, Board Chair

Mrs. Sandy Hankinson

Mrs. Elizabeth Kimmel

Dr. Jim Childs

Pastor Larry Edwards

## **Parental Volunteers**

If you wish to assist the classroom teachers, or volunteer your services to the school, we welcome you to be a part of our school. If you will be with the students unsupervised at any time, criminal check and child abuse clearance forms must be presented to the school. Please see the administrator or school secretary for more information. Parental volunteers are expected to adhere to the school's dress code when helping at the school (see pages 24-25)

## **Non-Discrimination Policy:**

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. It does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, color, nationality, or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admissions, or school administered programs.

### **Mission Statement and Mandate:**

Grace Christian School is an organizational arm of the Grace Brethren Church of West Kittanning, specializing in training young people to be Bible and Christ-centered believers while providing students with a strong academic foundation to instill a lifelong love of Christ and learning.

Staff members model Christian conduct and support the Christian values parents teach in their homes. All academic curriculums are taught from a bibliocentric world view with an emphasis on each individual's personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ since our ultimate purpose is to be like Him. *And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.* Romans 8:28-30

While our mandate to educate children is taken from Scripture and our primary ministry is to assist Christian parents in the education of their children, the school board reserves the right to make an exception to the requirement that one parent be a believer if they believe that there is a strong possibility of evangelizing a family who is not antagonistic toward spiritual matters and is cooperative with its ministry efforts.

### **Purpose:**

It is the purpose of Grace Christian School to provide a sound academic education integrated with a Christian view of God and the world. According to God's Word, Christian parents are responsible for the education of their children. Partnering with parents, Grace Christian School encourages their students to reach their full potential in the areas of spiritual, intellectual, social, and emotional, and physical growth.

The desire of Grace Christian School is for each child to receive Christ as his or her personal Savior and be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ, and to allow each child to go into the world donned in the whole armor of God

## Doctrinal Statement:

1. We believe that the Bible is the infallible, inspired Word of God and that it is our final authority in matters of faith and practice. II Timothy 3:16 *“All scripture is given by inspiration of GOD, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.”* II Peter 1:20-21, *“Knowing this first that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not at any time by the will of man, but holy men of GOD spoke as they were moved by the HOLY SPIRIT.”*
2. We believe in the eternally existing triune God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Psalm 90:2, *“Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art GOD.”* John 17, Acts 5:3-4, Luke 3:22, *“And the HOLY SPIRIT descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased.”*
3. We believe in the Deity of Jesus Christ, John 1:1-2, *“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with GOD, and the Word was GOD. The same was in the beginning with GOD.”* In His virgin birth, Matthew 1:18-23, Luke 1:26-35, In His sinless life, Hebrews 4:15, *“For we have not an high priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.* In His miracles, the gospels record these events. In His vicarious and atoning death through His shed blood, II Corinthians 5:21 *“For He hath made Him, who knew no sin, to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of GOD in Him.”* I Peter 1:18-19, *“Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver and gold, from your vain manner of life received by tradition from your fathers, But with the precious blood of CHRIST, as of a lamb without spot.”* In His resurrection, Luke 24:36-43 and in His ascension to the right hand of the Father where He sits as Mediator and Advocate. Acts 1:9, *“And when He had spoken these things, while they beheld, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight.”* I Timothy 2:5, *“For there is one GOD, and one mediator between GOD and man, the man, CHRIST JESUS.”*
4. We believe that man was created in the image of God, male and female, fell into sin in the Garden of Eden and came under the judgment of God. Acts 1:26-27, *“And GOD said, let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So GOD created man in His own image, male and female created he them.”* Also see Genesis Chapter 3.
5. We believe that regeneration by the Holy Spirit is absolutely essential for the salvation of lost and sinful men and that all who receive the Lord Jesus Christ, by faith alone, are born again and become the children of God. Titus 3:5-7, *“Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the HOLY SPIRIT.”* Ephesians 2:8-9, *“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of GOD, not of works, lest any man should boast.”* Philippians 2:15, *“that ye may be blameless and harmless, child of GOD, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world.”*

6. We believe in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit whose indwelling in all believers enables them to live godly lives. I Corinthians 3:16, *“Know ye not that ye are the temple of GOD, and that the SPIRIT of GOD dwelleth in you?”* I Corinthians 6:19, Romans 8:9, Galatians 5:22-23, *“But the fruit of the SPIRIT is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, self-control.”*
  
7. We believe the Church is God’s unique organization with His authority on earth, established in Scripture, empowered by the Holy Spirit and essential for the believer’s life. Matthew 16:18, *“And I say also unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”* Ephesians 1:22-23, *“And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is the body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all.”* See also Ephesians 5:25-32; Ephesians 3:16.
  
8. We believe in the unity of believers in our Lord Jesus Christ, Ephesians 4:1-6, Romans 12:17-21, *and in the necessity of all His followers to maintain good works as evidence of faith.* Colossians 1:10 *“That ye might walk worthy of the LORD unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of GOD.* Romans 12:1-2, *“I beseech you therefore brethren, by the mercies of GOD, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto GOD, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of GOD.”*

### **Philosophy of Education:**

We recognize that God is the creator of everything. He desires to be involved in every aspect of our lives. Our academic program is taught from a God-centered view. The faculty of Grace Christian School strives to teach biblical principles and promote godly character traits to each student through their example of daily living both in word and deed. We, at Grace Christian School, are concerned with promoting high academic standards while helping our students to develop the ability to think creatively and critically through the use of the best integrated curriculum available.

We believe the concepts of a Christian educational philosophy are as follows:

1. God is the Creator and Sustainer of all things, and the Source of all truth.
2. God maintains control over His entire universe
3. Because of sin, man tends to omit God and thus fails to relate himself and his knowledge to God, the Source of all wisdom.
4. Regeneration is by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ: true meaning and value can be ascertained only in the light of His person, purpose, and work.
5. God has revealed Himself in a general way in His world and universe, and in a specific way in the Bible.
6. As the student beholds the glory of God reflected in the Bible and in the world, the Holy Spirit conforms him/her to the image of Christ.
7. The home, church, and school should compliment each other.

The objective of the instructional program is to enable the students to develop, learn, and mature, reaching maximum achievement in a stimulating and developmentally appropriate learning environment. The focus of Grace Christian School's curriculum is God-centered with a spiritual emphasis in all aspects of it. Teachers are the managers and facilitators of the classroom and provide opportunities for hands-on experiences, group and individual teaching, as well as child-initiated and guided discovery. The different learning styles of children are taken into consideration as lessons are planned and are adapted to meet the needs of our students.

### **Educational Objectives:**

Our main purpose is to honor and glorify our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, in every thought, word, and deed. In keeping with that goal, students at Grace Christian School will be challenged to achieve their highest academic and spiritual potential. Training will target understanding and behavior in four areas of life:

#### Spiritual

- Be able to read, memorize, and understand the Scriptures
- Practice daily Bible reading and prayer
- Know and understand the plan of salvation and how to explain it to others
- Apply scriptural standards and principles, exemplified by the Ten Commandments, to personal everyday living
- Be prepared to use the Bible and other apologetics to give an answer to everyone who asks for the reason for the hope that they have in Jesus Christ, and do it with gentleness and respect

#### Mental

- Fear of God is the beginning of knowledge; therefore, academic training is founded on and does not contradict the Word of God
- Acquire math, language arts, natural science, social science, computer literacy, and fine arts skills with integration of biblical teaching in all areas of instruction
- Read, write, speak, and listen to effectively communicate in and out of the classroom
- Learn to think critically in problem solving to proactively recognize and evaluate consequences in order to make right decisions

#### Social

- Learn to respect and obey God and those serving as authorities under Him, including parents, teachers, church leaders, employers and government officials
- Be people of integrity who are dependable and take responsibility for their actions
- Treat others as they themselves would like to be treated
- Participate cooperatively and collaboratively with others in group activities

#### Physical

- Exercise self-control in what enters the body by any route to avoid bad habits, i.e. substance abuse, sexual immorality, obesity, abusive language, etc.
- Develop good personal hygiene to protect against transmission of disease

- Promote regular exercise to maintain physical fitness
- Guard sexual purity by dressing modestly, practicing abstinence, and recognizing that God reserves sex for marriage

Grace Christian School's biblical role is to work in conjunction with the home to mold students to be Christlike. Of necessity, this involves the school's understanding and belief of what qualities or characteristics exemplify a Christlike life. The school reserves the right, within its sole discretion, to refuse admission of an applicant or to discontinue enrollment of a student if the atmosphere or conduct within a particular home or the activities of the student 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 (including adultery, fornication, homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, and use of pornography); promoting such practices; or being unable to support the moral principles of the school. (See Leviticus 20:13 and Romans 1:27.) We believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God. (Gen 1:26-27.) Rejection of one's biological sex is a rejection of the image of God within that person.

Grace Christian School reserves the right to change policies at any time it is deemed in the best interest of students and the school.

### **Parent-School Agreement**

To maintain harmony with the Christian home, church, and school, as parent you agree to:

1. Attend a back-to-school orientation, scheduled teacher conferences, any other parent meetings scheduled by the school, unless you have extenuating circumstances.
2. Maintain a concerned effort to attend any school activity in which your child is involved, thereby assuring him or her of your loving support.
3. Attend the church of your choice regularly. Realize that Grace Christian School is a supplement, not a substitute, for a Godly home and family, and we cannot effectively partner with those not in agreement with us spiritually. Regular church attendance is biblical (Hebrews 10:23-25.) We all need the encouragement of other believers in the Body of Christ (I Thessalonians 5:11.) GCS works to reinforce the teaching of Christian character and values in partnership with the church and home.
4. Support the school with your prayers, gifts, and volunteer service. The cost of education exceeds tuition, and your help is expected with fundraising and other activities to benefit the school and its programs.
5. Your prayer support of our school is absolutely essential. This is a spiritual battleground and the battle must be fought with spiritual weapons (I Corinthians 10:3-5; Ephesians 6:12, and I Timothy 2:1-4.)



6. Pay your tuition by the first of each month and as outlined in the handbook. Payments after the 10<sup>th</sup> of each month will incur an automatic late fee of \$30 with no exceptions. If payment has not been made by the end of the month, the student will be suspended the first day of the following month until payment has been received. Cases of financial hardship may receive extensions if written permission from the administrator is sought and received, but the administration reserves the right to add a late fee of \$30 a month until the payments are brought up to date outlined here and in the student handbook. Your tuition fees help to pay faculty and staff salaries and must be paid regularly.
7. Support GCS's purposes, goals, philosophy, doctrinal statement, rules, and policies. Understand that while you may not always agree with a rule or policy, per se, your support is still necessary and will be honored by God (Romans 13:1-4; Hebrews 12:9-10 & 13: 17; Deuteronomy 6; Galatians 4:1-2.) We MUST have your heart-felt support in all areas if we are to have an effective ministry with your child. Please pay special attention to handbook pages concerning absences, discipline, the dress code and the school method of resolving conflicts as addressed in Matthew 18.
8. Contact only the person most immediately involved when you have a question involving discipline, school policies, or procedures. Individuals who are complaining and sharing negative comments with others may be asked to remove their child from the school. Agree not to share problems with those not directly involved in the solution such as other parents, students, teachers, or staff members
9. I understand that my child will be dismissed from school if he/she does not respect those in authority or fails to cooperate in the educational process. \_\_\_\_\_ (Initials here)  
*James 3:3-4 Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God. Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be James 3:9-10. See "Biblical Problem Solving," for more details.*
10. Refrain from taking your child out of school unnecessarily. The school cannot assume responsibility for work missed. The faculty is willing to assist the student but you must take the initiative. Advance notice for potential vacations is needed. See "Attendance Regulations" for more details.

We understand the above agreement and our responsibility in partnership with GCS to abide by this agreement.

Father \_\_\_\_\_

Mother \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

### **Application Procedure:**

1. Submit completed application fee with application or \*re-enrollment form.
2. Have an interview with the Administrator and/or the members of the School Board. Both parents and the applicant should be present. The interview will include:
  - a. Christian orientation and support of the family
  - b. Health needs
  - c. Parents' commitment to Christian education
  - d. Questions and answers
  - e. Discussion of payment plans
  - f. New student is tested if deemed necessary. (Kindergarten students may be screened if necessary.)
3. The following records must be presented for our files.
  - a. Copy of birth certificate
  - b. Up-to-date immunization and physical examinations. \*\* (See Child's Medical Statement form.) Please have doctor sign and date form.
  - c. Custody papers, if applicable
  - d. School's letter regarding custody matters, signed and returned
  - e. Pastor's Reference
  - f. Signed consent to receive state monies for your child
4. \*\*Registration fee must be paid. This helps to covers daytime insurance, testing, and textbooks.
5. Tuition payment plan is to be selected with financial arrangements made before the student attends classes.
6. Student is assigned to a class.

\*\*Applies to students re-enrolling.

NOTE: Registration is not considered final until the above steps are satisfactorily completed. All new admissions are probationary and subject to review during the first nine weeks.

### **Textbooks/Required Materials:**

Each student in grades 1-10 is required to have a Bible at school. King James, New King James, New American Standard, New International Version, and English Standard Version Bible are all acceptable. Teachers may specify for memorization. Students are provided textbooks for use during the school year. These books are to be returned at the conclusion of the school year. Some soft-back workbooks that students use are disposable and are kept by the student. To help cover the cost of replacing outdated and worn books, a "book fee" is charged to each student when they register for school. Students that lose books will pay for their replacements.

### **Supplies**

Parents are responsible for obtaining their child's classroom and activity supplies. Supply lists for everyday materials may be obtained through the school office.

## Grace Christian School 2017-2018 Tuition/Fee Schedule

### Age/date deadlines:

Preschool students: 3 years old and potty trained  
 Kindergarteners: 5 years old by August 30, 2017  
 First grade: 6 years old by August 30, 2017

### Application fee:

There is a one-time \$35 non-refundable application fee for each new kindergarten-12th grade student and a one-time \$20 non-refundable application fee for each new preschool student.

### Registration/textbook fee for kindergarten-12th grade:

The registration/textbook fee for kindergarten is \$190, for first-12th grade the fee is \$295.

This fee is due by May 15<sup>th</sup> or an additional \$30 per student will be charged due to the increased cost of textbooks after that date.

### Multiple Child Discounts:

If more than one child is enrolled at GCS, the oldest child will be charged the full tuition for the grade in which he/she is enrolled. Each additional child in the family will be charged a discounted amount due their grade level as per the charts below: This discount does not apply to preschool.

**Early payment discount:** A 5% discount for kindergarten through tenth grade is offered to those who pay in full by August 1<sup>st</sup>. This discount applies only to the amount owed after financial aid is received.

### **First Child (Building usage fee is included with tuition for the first child in K-12<sup>th</sup> grade)**

Class	Yearly Tuition	12-Month Payment Plan <i>Starting 5/1/2017</i>	9-Month Payment Plan <i>Starting 8/1/2017</i>
*2 days/week	\$785.00	\$65.50	\$87.25
*3 days/week	\$965.00	\$80.50	\$107.25
**Kindergarten	\$2685.00	\$223.75	\$298.50
***First-12th	\$4030.00	\$336.00	\$448.00

### **Additional Children at the Following Discounts**

**Kindergarten	\$2416.50	\$201.50	\$268.50
***First-12th	\$3627.00	\$302.25	\$403.00

### **\*No rebate for Preschool**

**\*\*\$150 rebate for each kindergarten students when family serves 25 volunteer hours at Grace Christian School.**

**\*\*\*\$300 rebate for each 1st-12<sup>th</sup> grade students when family serves 50 volunteer hours at Grace Christian School for the first student enrolled and 10 additional hours for each student enrolled thereafter.**

### **Additional Discounts**

1. \$50 discount per child on registration if registered by April 15, 2017
2. Any family credited by a new family for their decision to enroll at GCS will receive a \$75 credit for each student enrolled.

**\*\*Monthly tuition payments** are **due the first of each month** and a late fee of \$30.00 per child will be charged when payment is made after the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month. Exceptions to this may be made if unforeseen changes occur in a family's financial situation and **written** permission has been sought and received from the administrator. Even if such permission is given, a late fee of \$30 will be charged each month until payment has been made.

**Payments over 30 days late will result in suspension of the student the first day of the following month until the account is brought up to date.**

### **Financial Aid Available Through Grace Christian School**

Parents with genuine financial need are invited to apply for aid with the following guidelines:

- ✓ Students receiving scholarships must be Pennsylvania residents
- ✓ All applications will be secured to maintain confidentiality
- ✓ Combined scholarships awarded to students will not exceed 100% of tuition
- ✓ Students must stay current with tuition payments to maintain eligibility
- ✓ Students who withdraw must return scholarship monies prorated for a nine-month school year

1. Designated scholarships are requested through the school and awarded as follows:

- Students who come from a family with an annual income or \$76,350 or less can apply to the Children's Tuition Fund. An additional \$15,270 income is permitted for each child in the family.
- Applications for needs assessment are in the school office or online with CFA at [www.cfslogin.com](http://www.cfslogin.com). Our school ID# is 34019. Applications must be received by June 15, and/or

2. The Community Foundation Serving the Heart of Western PA scholarships are awarded as follows:

- Students who come from a family with an annual income less than \$76,350. An additional \$15,270 income is permitted for each child in the family
- Applications are in the school office and must be sent to the Community Foundation by June 15 and/or

3. General scholarships are requested through the school and awarded by ACSI (Association of Christian Schools International) to students as follows:

- First time Christian school students
- Students who meet federal regulations for free or reduced cost of lunch
- Applications are in the school office and must be returned to the office by May 15

**\*\* If your family does not qualify for financial aid and your child is a returning student entering grades 1-12 in 2017-2018, you may contact the school office for information about the GCS Scholarship Fund. Students applying must meet certain academic requirements and write an essay.**

**Please note:** If your child is asked to leave Grace Christian School for any reason, refunds will not be issued. Also, refunds are not issued in the following instances:

1. If the parent removes the child from school because he/she chooses not to follow the rules, policies and procedures of GCS in an instance or decision agreed on by the administration of GCS.
2. If, in any semester, financial aid or a scholarship has been given to the child. (Exception: The parent has paid in full for both semesters and financial aid or a scholarship is given afterward.)

## Grading Standards

The following chart lists the grading standards to be used in the school program:

Grading Scale	
A	100-92%
B	91-83%
C	82-74%
D	73-65%
F	64% and below

\*Plus and minus to be used at the teacher's discretion.

### Specials

The elementary program offers classes that are titled as "specials." These are elementary music, art, computer, and physical education. Grades are given for these classes. Behavior and participation in these classes are factored into the overall grade for the class.

### Grading Scale for 1<sup>st</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Specials

O+	98-100%
O	97—93%
O-	92-90%
S+	89—85 %
S	84—80%
S-	79—76%
H	75-65%
U	64% and below

Distinguished Honors 4.0 with no "B"s or lower  
Honor Roll 3.9-3.5 with no "C"s or lower

### Grading:

To be consistent and to foster good habits, points will be deducted from papers that are handed in without name or date according to the following:

1<sup>st</sup> Grade: one point per assignment beginning in the third quarter

2<sup>nd</sup> Grade: one point per assignment beginning in the second quarter

3<sup>rd</sup> through 10<sup>th</sup> Grade: one point per assignment from October to December;

Two points from January to end of school year

## **Grading/Reporting Periods**

Each semester will be divided into two nine-week grade reporting periods.

**\*\*Please note:** Final report cards will not be issued until all accounts are paid in full. If a student misses the last day of school, the report card will be mailed to his or her home.

## **Academic Probation:**

Academic probation is invoked when a student's grades fall below a 2.0 grade point average "C" average. A letter will be sent home when a child's grades fall below a "C" average. It is intended to give notice to both the parents and student so a mutual effort on the part of both the school and home may be made to correct the academic deficiency. If the deficiency is not improved, the teacher and parents will meet to decide what course of action is best for the student.

## **Participation in Extracurricular Events:**

In order to maintain eligibility to participate in extracurricular events, a student must maintain a "C" average in all subjects (and no D's or F's in any subject area) and not have a "U" on his/her report card for unsatisfactory behavior. The student must be in attendance for the entire day of the event, and is expected to be on time for school the next day. Exceptions will be made for legitimate excused absences.

## **Retention Policy:**

A student in grades 1, 2 or 3 may be retained if he/she receives a final grade of "F" or "U" in reading or math. A student in grades 4 through 10 may be retained if he/she receives a final grade of "F" or "U" in reading and at least one other subject OR math and at least one other subject.

A teacher's recommendation may result in a child being retained in the same grade for the next school year. Factors that influence this decision are the student's age, maturity, class work, grades, and results of standardized achievement tests and skill mastery.

## **Homework Policy:**

The purpose of homework is to reinforce concepts taught in class. Homework is valuable and is subject to the grading process at the teacher's discretion

## **Attendance Regulations**

School for grades 1 through 10 begins at 8:15 a.m. and ends at 3:15 p.m. Monday through Friday. School hours for kindergarten are 12:00 p.m. to 3:15 p.m. Preschool for four year olds meets Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 8:30-11:00 a.m. while the three-year old program meets Tuesday and Thursday from 8:30-11:00 a.m.

Since school attendance is a vital component of each child's education, Grace Christian School requires written excuses for each absence. If a child exceeds 10 days of excused absences, all subsequent excuses must be signed by a doctor in order to be excused. When your child reaches 20 days of absenteeism, the school board will review your child's record. If there is no pre-approved vacation or medical reason for the extreme leave of absence, your child could possibly be retained for the next school year. If your child reaches 30 days or more with no justifiable reason, your child may be asked to leave the school. This is an indication to the school that the student does not want to be at our school. There will be no refund. Also, the excessive amount of absence takes time away from other students when the teacher has to spend extra time helping makeup work and tests that were missed.

Note: According to regulations set by the foundations that provide scholarships and aid, those who receive financial aid cannot miss more than 10 days of school per school year or aid must be returned.

Excused Absences are as follows:

1. illness (see requirements below)
2. death in the family
3. vacation\*
4. doctor's or dentist appointments\*

Please do not send your child to school if he/she has the following:

1. A temperature 100 degrees or higher
2. Vomiting
3. Contagious disease (See the health page for the complete list.)

\*Although we understand that sometimes vacations and doctor's or dentist appointments are necessary, please make every effort to schedule these appointments during non-school hours or normal vacation times for students to minimize the amount of teacher – student instruction time lost. Thank you.

### **Early Dismissal:**

Students may be permitted to leave school before regular dismissal time under the following conditions:

1. A signed excuse must be presented to the teacher before school begins.
2. The parent or legal guardians of the student leaving must come to the office to sign out the student.

**Planned Excused Absences:**

Requests for all days or part of the day off will need to be presented in writing to the teacher at least 5 days prior to the event for approval.

Requests for a family or educational trip over 2 days in length must be presented to the Administrator in writing for approval at least 5 days prior to the event. It is recommended that every attempt be made to schedule family vacations or educational trips during normal vacation times for students. All work must be made up during your child/children's absence(s).

Planned Excused Absences (cont.):

In requesting a family vacation or educational trip, the student must meet these requirements.

1. The student shall not have been absent or tardy from school for more than 10 days prior to the trip.
2. The student shall not have a failing grade in any subject for a nine-week grading period in the current school year prior to the trip.

The Administrator may review and approve requests for family vacations or educational trips that do not comply with these criteria only under special, extenuating circumstances.

**Tardiness:**

Understandably, unforeseen circumstances may cause your child to arrive late to school. If such an event occurs, please sign your child in at the office when he/she arrives after 8:20 a.m. (for elementary) or 12:05 p.m. (for kindergarten). Students arriving more than 20 minutes late without a doctor's excuse or confirmed bus related problem will be considered as an unexcused tardy. Tardiness causes a classroom disruption and causes students to miss valuable teacher instruction.

**Unexcused Absences:**

After five times of unexcused tardiness, a student will receive 1 unexcused absence. If the excessive tardiness becomes a pattern, the parents will be asked to meet with the Administrator to work together to create a solution.

An absence will be considered "unexcused" if the written explanation of it is not turned into the office on the 5<sup>th</sup> day of your child's return to school. If a student accrues more than 10 unexcused absences, the Administrator will notify the proper authorities. Continued violation of this will result in the removal of the student from the school.

\*\*\*Please note that credit will not be given for work missed during unexcused days.

**Make-Up Work**

A student who misses or anticipates missing two or more consecutive days may request homework assignments through the teacher. Students who are in attendance the day before an announced examination will take the examination upon returning within the time period prescribed by the teacher. Students must complete missed work within the number of days set by the teacher. Credit will not be given for work which has not been made up.

The GCS staff will do everything possible to help your child when he/she is absent to make-up and understand any work that was missed.



## **Behavior Expectations and Responsibilities:**

Respect for the rights of others:

Every right we have has an obligation attached to it. Individual rights must be balanced against the rights of others and the good of the community. The principles of God's word and the purpose of the school dictate here who has the right to do what, and what kind of behavior is acceptable. That is why society must have laws and our school must have rules. Students who refuse to respect the rules and the rights of others will forfeit the right to attend GCS.

Responsibility for personal actions:

Each student will be held accountable for his or her own actions. What others do or do not do is of little consequence to determining whether or not a student has accepted personal responsibilities as a student and member of the Christian community of GCS. How students conduct themselves at GCS is a choice, and they must expect to bear the consequences of their choices.

Students are expected to use common courtesy with each other, all faculty members, and guest visitors. Children are to say "please" and "thank you" when requesting or receiving goods or services. When addressed by an adult, the student should answer politely, "Yes" or "No." For example, "What" or "Whatever" are not acceptable responses. Students who habitually demonstrate a lack of common courtesy when interacting with adults will be given verbal coaching, reprimands, and possibly disciplinary action including suspension from school.

Administrative Responsibilities:

The administration is charged with the responsibility of creating and maintaining an environment in which teachers can teach and students can learn. Whenever a student disrupts that learning process by his or her behavior, the first goal is to see the student's behavior change. Whenever the student is unwilling to change his or her behavior, he/she must be removed from the environment so the learning process can continue. Our greatest concern is to assure the maximum educational benefit to the students who desire to live in harmony with Biblical principles.

### Administrative Responsibilities Continued:

The faculty and administration of GCS are united in their commitment to the Biblical pattern for discipline found in Matthew 18:15-17. The goal of all discipline is the forgiveness and restoration of the student to a place of productive participation in the Christian community. The Biblical pattern clearly demonstrates that such restoration must be preceded by a recognition and admission of the wrong done and a clear commitment to a change in behavior (I John 1:9; Matthew 5:23-24; II Corinthians 2:5-11.)

The administrator will see that discipline problems are handled at the lowest level possible. As a situation becomes more severe, a greater number of people will become involved.

### Chain of Command for Discipline Issues:

Level I:

Student--Teacher

Level II:

Student—Teacher—Parents

Level III:

Student—Teacher—Administrator--Parents

Level IV:

Student—Teacher—Administrator--Parents—School Board

The severity of the problem will dictate who becomes involved. Most situations will be handled at the teacher/student level, but some require immediate involvement of the administration and/or school board. The administrator will see that discipline issues are handled at the lowest level possible.

### Teacher Responsibility:

Teachers are charged by the administration to maintain the standards of GCS in their own classroom as well as in their other contacts with students. Each teacher is required to have a clearly stated set of guidelines for classroom conduct that has been approved by the administration and will include:

1. Follow the teacher's directions.
2. No talking in classroom or hallways without permission
3. No leaving one's seat or classroom without permission
4. Completing work as assigned
5. Treating all with respect; no name calling
6. Respecting and protecting property of school or other persons.
7. Hands and feet and objects must be kept to oneself; no airborne objects unless under the direction of the teacher.

## **DISCIPLINE POLICY**

### **Philosophy of Discipline**

Discipline is “training which corrects, molds, strengthens or perfects.” According to Proverbs 22:6, parents are admonished to “Train up a child in the way in which he should go” and when he is old, he will not depart from it.”

### **Discipline Process:**

Each teacher has his/her own discipline system. The classroom expectations will be verbally explained to the parents/guardians during parent-teacher open house and during the first day of school to the children. Written classroom policies will be sent home within the first week of school.

### **Misbehavior outside the Homeroom:**

Every staff member and volunteer at GCS is to be accorded the same respect and obedience as a student’s regular classroom teacher. Discipline therefore is the responsibility of the teacher, staff member or volunteer in charge of the student at the time.

\*\*Please note that the Administration reserves the right to determine appropriate discipline on case by case bases. Parents will be notified of consequences upon rendering a decision for appropriate punishment.

### **Disciplinary Referrals:**

Notation will be made of students with behavioral problems and copies of disciplinary measures and referrals will be kept on file and sent home for parent’s signature.

**NOTE:** All school-owned equipment—such as lockers, desks, and computers—are subject to random or individualized search at any time. If a student is suspected of specific wrongdoing, the student may be required to empty his or her pockets, handbag, wallet, or book bag for school personnel. If the suspicion involves a substance or object that may injure the student or other students, the search may include a bodily search of the student in the presence of an appropriate adult and the student’s parents.

## Suspension and Expulsion:

In certain cases, when it is deemed appropriate, a student may be suspended for a definite period of time by the Administrator with counsel of the School Board. This will be a time for the student to consider his/her behavior and for parents to counsel and pray with the student.

The student will not be able to make up work or tests missed due to his/her suspension. This is a very serious step of discipline and it is a time for the student to consider whether he/she wishes to continue attending GCS and obey the school's rules and staff. If Grace Christian School does not have the support of parents, continued enrollment is not possible. The School Administration reserves the right to dismiss or not readmit students at their discretion. It is a privilege to attend GCS. If a student receives an in-school suspension, a conference will be arranged with the student's parents, teacher, and administrator to discuss appropriate action to be taken. If a student receives an out-of-school suspension, a conference will be arranged with the student's parents, the teacher(s) involved, and the Administrator, after consulting the School Board. Students who remain uncooperative, unrepentant of their actions, or unresponsive to discipline will be asked to leave the school.

## Exit Interview

When a student leaves Grace Christian School, the parents will be asked to fill out a questionnaire concerning the reason for leaving the school. Answers and comments on the questionnaire are helpful to the school board and administration.

## Reapplying to Grace Christian School

If a parent decides to re-enroll his/her child at Grace Christian School, the school board will review each case individually. Past performance and attendance will be reviewed. Grades and attendance at the present school and the reason for leaving that school will also be reviewed.

The following Student Code of Christian Conduct at GCS includes four levels. The following examples listed below are undesirable behaviors that students should strive to avoid. Any student in violation of the school rules will receive appropriate disciplinary action.

Please note: the age of the child involved in the incident as well as the circumstances and frequency that the offense has occurred are factored into the disciplinary action.

Level 1 offense is defined as misbehavior on the part of the student that impedes orderly classroom procedures or interferes with the orderly operation of the school. The misbehaviors are usually handled by the supervising adult, but may require intervention by the Administrator. Teachers will deal with most level I offenses in the classroom with **no** notice to the parents or administrative staff (except when an after-school detention is assigned). Children are in the process of maturing and will, on occasion, make mistakes. The teacher will discipline the student as he or she deems appropriate.

- \*Improper use of class time, wasting time, or sleeping in class (first grade and above.)
- \*Unprepared for class without a valid excuse.
- \*Consuming food or drink outside the lunch room—teachers may give special permission to consume refreshments in the classroom.
- \*Disturbing a class in session.
- \*Tardiness to school or class.
- \*Failure to return forms requiring parental signatures
- \*Being out of class without permission
- \*Line jumping
- \*Dress code violation
- \*Littering
- \*Running in the church or school building at ANY TIME
- \*\*Using any electronic devices at school including, but not limited to: electronic games, CD players/music, ipods, palm pilots, cell phones. These items will be confiscated and may be examined.
- \*Bringing playing cards, collector cards or other non-classroom related property to school.
- \*Gum is not permitted to be chewed during school hours including the time to and from school (if the student is riding the bus.)

#### Disciplinary Options for Level I:

Verbal or written reprimand

Special writing assignment

Denial of recess or special activity

Silent Lunch

Denial of privileges

Detention

Confiscation and examination of prohibited items

Level II offense requires intervention of the Administrator.

**Continuation of or extreme example of Level I offense or any of the following:**

- \*Using forged notes or excuses
- \*Unsafe bus conduct—standing while bus is operating, eating/drinking on bus, **not wearing the seatbelt**, etc.
- \*Violation of school attendance policies
- \*Possession of cell phones, beepers, pagers, or unnecessary electronic equipment
- \*Plagiarism/cheating (Automatic failure on test or paper)
- \*Misbehavior during field trips or school programs
- \*Repeated violation of the dress code (Grades 3 and up)
- \*Habitual repetition of minor offenses indicates disrespect for rules and authority and lack of cooperation and change in behavior.
- \*Use of disrespectful, profane, or obscene language or gestures, written, spoken or unspoken, which include facial expressions such as eye rolling, pouting, sighing, or refusing to make eye contact with the adult supervising, and other inappropriate body language.
- \*Leaving school grounds without permission and proper checkout procedures (signing out with the office)
- \***ANY ACTION** (although may be unintentional) **THAT CAUSES OR HAS A POTENTIAL TO CAUSE PHYSICAL HARM TO ANOTHER\*\***(exception physical education or recess game related unintentional accidents.)
- \*Taking or using the personal property of others without their permission.
- \*Failure to report for a detention or an appointment required by a teacher or administrator
- \*Critical or derogatory statements to or about an individual or the school.
- \***DEFIANCE OR DISRESPECT TOWARD ANY SCHOOL PERSONNEL.**
- \*Inappropriate physical contact or public display of affection.
- \*Cheating
- \*Destruction or defacing school/church property (building or materials).
- \*Verbal abuse, intimidation or threatening another student or staff member.
- \*Lying.
- \*Continued display of disrespect to any adult in authority and or insubordination (includes refusal to participate, refusal to turn in homework repeatedly, refusal to do as asked)

Level II Discipline Options:

Silent Lunch

Detention

Denial of recess, privileges or extra curricular activities

Alternative Learning Center

Confiscation and examination of prohibited items

Suspension from school up to 10 days

### Level III offenses

Examples include but are not limited to:

- \*Continuation of or extreme Level II
- \*Truancy
- \*Petty theft
- \*Fighting or physical abuse of anyone
- \*Spitting on or at someone
- \*Any action that results in physical or mental harm to another (such as throwing a hard object at another student, continual teasing or isolation)
- \*Unbiblical conduct that could damage, either spiritually or physically the student, fellow student, members of the school, local church or community.
- \*Possession of items forbidden by the school (Pokeman cards, Harry Potter books, or anything dealing with witchcraft and occult, obscene or sexually graphic material, music such as secular hard rock and rap having a graphic nature or based on discrimination).

### Disciplinary Options for Level III

Detention

Confiscation

Alternative Learning Center

Temporary suspension up to 10 days

Full suspension of 10 days or more at the discretion of the Administration and School Board

Expulsion

## Level IV Immediate Action

Examples but not limited to:

- \*Continuation of or extreme example of Level III infractions
- \*Possession/use/transfer of dangerous weapons i.e. gun or knife
- \*Lighted or ignited objects
- \*Unauthorized possession or use of drugs, alcohol, or drug paraphernalia
- \*Bomb threats or threatening phone calls
- \*Intimidation/threatening/bullying/harassment
- \*Making terrorist threats
- \*Committing a criminal offense/threats involving a weapon of any kind

## Disciplinary Options for Level IV

Confiscation and possible examination of prohibited items

Temporary Suspension

Restitution of property or damages

Expulsion: immediate or after temporary suspension

Referral to police or district magistrate

Referral to outside agency

A Level IV suspension will result in a School Board Hearing for further disciplinary action and may include permanent expulsion.

## **Parental Support:**

If your child comes home complaining about a policy, discipline, or staff member, please follow this procedure:

1. Give the school staff the benefit of the doubt. A child will not be punished unless the staff member knows the child has committed an offense.
2. Realize your child's reporting is often emotionally biased and based on incomplete information.
3. Realize that there are reasons for all rules and they are enforced without favor.
4. Support the staff if discipline has been received, and do not undermine the school's authority by criticizing it while your child is within earshot of the conversation. If you have any questions about the situation, please call the staff member involved first and discuss it with him/her out of the hearing of your child. Since the basic responsibility for discipline resides with the home, the parents will be informed when unusual circumstances needing disciplinary action arise. It is expected that there will be Godly parental follow-through should this occur. It is impossible for our disciplinary efforts to be effective unless you are in active support with our disciplinary policies. (Proverbs 10:8; I Timothy 3:4, 5, & 12).
5. **At no time should you interrupt a class or activity to confront an individual with whom you have a grievance.** Failure to follow these procedures can result in a child's expulsion. Read and follow the "Biblical Problem Solving" guide of the Parent/Student Handbook.



## Dress Code:

While Grace Christian School recognizes that clothing and grooming styles do not make a person become a Christian or more “spiritual” than another person, we, as Christians, are judged and evaluated by our appearance. Furthermore, we are commanded in the Bible to do **all** things for the honor and glory of God as found in I Corinthians 10:31. Therefore, our attire should reflect our Christian beliefs. It is also important that clothing be safe, comfortable, and modest as students participate in a variety of activities. The following guidelines define what is and is not acceptable attire:

The general rule is that students must wear clothing that is modest, not tight fitting or revealing in nature. (No spandex)

All boys and girls in Kindergarten to High school must wear some combination of the following as school approved apparel.

1. Shirts – Styles: polo or button-down oxford style dress shirts only, long or short sleeve. Color: navy, white, light blue, light pink. Undershirts and camis must be solid color, white, navy, light blue or light pink. Shirts must not be too revealing or too form-fitting and should be appropriately buttoned. Ties may be worn with dress shirts. Oxford dress shirts should be tucked in. Belts should be worn with tucked in shirts.

2. Pants/Shorts –Styles: dress, *Docker* style, office casual, corduroy, pleated or plain front, Capri  
Colors: black, navy or tan/khaki. No denim or jean material, no knit, nylon or other sweat pants material. Tights and legging may only be worn under DRESS CODE shorts/skirts/jumpers – No open foot leggings. Pants must not be too baggy, too tight, too flared, or too narrow, no “skinny” pants (the administration will determine what is appropriate). Shorts must be at least knee-length for boys and girls (shorts must touch the top of the kneecap) Shorts may be worn during these months only: April May, August and September.

3. Skirts/Skort/Jumpers – (Girls, if desired) Style: pleated, plain front, walking shorts, Capri  
Colors: tan/khaki, navy or black. Skirts and jumpers must be knee-length (skirts/jumper must touch the top of the kneecap) and must be worn with dress code shirt. **PLEASE NOTE: All preschool and kindergarten girls must wear shorts under their dresses or skirts.**

4. Footwear – Most all types of footwear are acceptable with the following stipulations:  
Socks (or stockings for girls) must be worn Socks/ knee socks solid colors: navy, black or white.  
Shoes must fit securely on the foot (for safety). Flip-flops and beachwear are not acceptable.  
Boots may be worn to school but changed into appropriate footwear. All footwear must be neat and clean.

5. Sweaters – Cardigan, sweater vests or pullover. Colors: navy, white, light blue or light pink.  
Only GCS school hoodies are approved. Colors: Black, navy and gray. Dress code shirts must be worn beneath sweaters or GCS hoodies. No hooded sweaters.

6. **Excessive** makeup and **excessive** jewelry are not appropriate for school.

7. For safety reasons, girls are permitted to wear one pair of single stud earrings.

Dress Code Continued:

8. Boys are not permitted to wear earrings. They may wear only one necklace. Pocket chains are not to be visible.

9. For safety and health reasons, students are not permitted to have pierced body part jewelry such as nose and tongue rings, etc.

10. Students are not permitted to wear visible tattoos, temporary or permanent.

11. Hair styles must be neat in appearance, natural in color (no pink, green, blue, etc.), and should not fall below the eyebrows.

12. Gym Day: All students must wear athletic shoes for gym class. Students in 1<sup>st</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> grade do not have to change into gym clothes. They will wear what they wore to school. Students in 7<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> must change into gym clothing (this is part of their participation grade). Gym clothes: white or navy t-shirt and knee length navy or black shorts.

All removable items of clothing (shoes, boots, coats, hats, mittens, scarves, etc.) should be clearly labeled with the child's name.

The Administration has final authority as to any additional or “gray” areas of the dress code.

Dress Code Enforcement:

Parents are asked to see that their children are dressed properly for school according to the dress code. The issue will be addressed with the student unless they are in Pre-K through 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, and then a note will be sent home to express our concern and to clarify the Dress Code.

A verbal warning may be appropriate for grades 3<sup>rd</sup> through 9<sup>th</sup>; however, we may deem it necessary to ask a parent to bring a change of clothing from home. In some cases, GCS may have to issue a detention/in-school suspension for intentional or repeated infractions.

## **Health and Medicine:**

**ILLNESS:** If your child has a fever or any other symptoms of illness, he/she should NOT be sent to school. If your child is able to be at school, he/she is expected to go outside for recess or participate in all activities. In such cases where activity must be restricted, a note from a parent is necessary. If activity must be restricted for more than 3 days, a doctor's note is necessary.

**Communicable Diseases:** After having the following diseases, a child must have written consent from a doctor to return to school: mumps, measles, whooping cough, pneumonia, pinworms, scabies, ringworm, impetigo, pink eye and head lice.

**Required Immunization and Examinations:** The school follows the PA Department of Health's guidelines in regard to immunizations and physical exams. Children entering first or sixth grade must have a physical exam. Your child's doctor should sign the physical form and all students' immunization records must be up-to-date. In general, required immunizations are:

DPT, DT, Td-3 doses + booster

Oral Polio—3 doses or 4 of inactivated (Salk) vaccine

MMR—Measles, Mumps, Rubella—2 doses of measles and mumps; 1 dose of rubella (German measles)

TB test

Hepatitis B series—3 doses to enter school for the first time

Varicella (chickenpox vaccine)—2 doses or notation of the date your child had chickenpox

Dental exams are required at kindergarten and third grade. These can be done by the school district's dentist, if you wish. If you want your own dentist to do the exam, include his/her report of the exam with your application.

Vision, hearing, and speech screening will be available during the school year and will be done by Armstrong School District personnel. You will be informed when this will be done.

## **Medicines:**

The school does not dispense medications, even aspirin, without written permission from parents. Students are not permitted to keep medication with them, but must turn it into the school secretary. An administrator or teacher will administer the medicine. The school secretary is not permitted to administer any medications.

The school office must have a prescription container specifically for the child and the medication involved; it must be labeled with the student's name, name of medication, time to be given, proper dosage, and doctor's name. Medications left for emergencies i.e. bee sting kit, or asthma medication, must be properly labeled and must include complete instructions provided by a physician.

The School Office cannot:

1. Treat old wounds, cuts, remove splinters, etc.
2. Treat skin diseases, i.e. poison ivy, etc.
3. Treat Pink Eye.
4. Administer any remedy, i.e. Tylenol, aspirin
5. Diagnose illness.

## **LUNCHES**

Grace Christian School offers a hot lunch program through the Food Service Department of Armstrong School District. Free lunches and reduced price lunches are available to those who qualify and submit the required application.

A lunch menu is sent home at the end of each month. Please checkmark each day that your child would like to purchase lunch and return the order blank with payment to the school office.

When sending a lunch with your child, be sure the lunch is “ready-to-eat”. The cafeteria staff and monitors are unable to heat any child’s lunch in the microwave.

We do not allow students to purchase soft drinks from the school during school hours; however, they may drink them during lunch if they bring them from home.

For your child’s safety and because of health regulations, he/she may not go into the school kitchen for any reason unless directly supervised by a teacher or cafeteria staff member.

## **LOCKERS**

Lockers are provided for the use of the older students. The lockers are property of Grace Christian School; it is understood that GCS reserves the right to inspect them at any time without notification.

## **SCHOOL CLOSING DUE TO BAD WEATHER**

When there is a two-hour delay, morning preschool is canceled. Afternoon kindergarten will meet as regularly scheduled.

If it should become necessary to cancel school due to inclement weather, Grace Christian School will follow the local school district’s decision which is announced on KDKA (1020 AM), WTYM (1380 AM), WISR (680 AM), the Pittsburgh TV stations and posted on the school district’s web site at [www.asd.k12.pa.us](http://www.asd.k12.pa.us). You can also call 724-545-4839 to hear the school district’s recording of delays, closing, or early dismissals.

On days the local district does not have school but Grace Christian School does, and weather demands cancellation or late opening, you will be called. An emergency snow chain has been created and will be activated by the Administration.

## **BUS REGULATIONS**

All riders shall be under the authority of and responsible to the driver of the bus. Continued disorderly conduct or persistent refusal to submit to the authority of the driver shall be sufficient reason for the rider to be referred to the Administrator which may result in denied transportation for a time deemed appropriate for the misbehavior. A student may be denied transportation for a period of time for his/her first offense on the bus if his/her actions are serious in nature i.e. deliberately causing bodily harm to another student.

In cases involving withdrawal of the bus-riding privilege, transportation to and from school will be the parents' responsibility. Additional instances of bus misconduct may result in the student losing his/her bus privileges for the remainder of the school year.

### Responsibility of the Parent

The responsibility of parents whose children are transported at public expense:

1. To insure that their children arrive at the bus stop five (5) minutes prior to their scheduled departure time.
2. To accept joint responsibility with the school authorities for proper conduct of their children.
3. To make reasonable effort to understand and cooperate with those responsible for pupil transportation.

### Responsibility of Transported Students

1. To fasten his/her safety belt.
2. To occupy the seat assigned by the bus driver and to refrain from moving around while the bus is in motion at all times.
3. To practice classroom conduct (except for ordinary conversation) while using the school bus.
4. To obey the bus driver and to report promptly to the school official when instructed to do so by the driver.
5. To be in the place designated, ready to board the bus at the time shown on the schedule. The bus driver is responsible for the maintenance of the schedule and cannot wait for tardy students.

### Personal Safety

1. Stay off the roadways at all times while waiting for a bus.
2. Wait until the bus has come to a complete stop before attempting to get on or off.
3. Leave the bus only at the consent of the driver.
4. Enter or leave the bus only at the front door after the bus has come to a complete stop, except in case of an emergency. Emergency doors are to be used in emergency situations.
5. Cross the traveled highway if necessary after leaving the bus in the follow manner:
  - a. Make certain the bus is completely stopped
  - b. When unloading, stay a distance of ten feet in front of the bus within the sight of the driver, wait for the proper signal for crossing.
  - c. Upon signal from the driver, look both to the right and the left and proceed to cross the highway in front of the bus.
  - d. Walk (not run) in front of the bus when crossing the highway.
6. Keep hands and head inside the bus at all times.
7. Report any damage done to the bus to the driver at once.
8. Help keep the bus clean, sanitary, and orderly.
9. Board the bus at assigned stop only.

The following are strictly forbidden on the bus:

Eating, drinking, use of foul, abusive, threatening, intimidating language, bullying, hitting/fighting, possession or use of water guns or containers of water or weapons of any kind.

### **Students with Learning Disabilities:**

Grace Christian School does not have a trained school psychologist or counselor on staff and must rely on those provided by the state. Should the school have reason to believe a student has a learning disability, parents will be asked to give written permission for their child to be tested by qualified personnel from ARIN. We cannot treat something that has not been diagnosed.

If a student's disabilities can be handled by GCS staff or with additional ARIN provided help, such students will be accepted. Should a student's disabilities exceed a teacher's ability to provide a quality education for him/her, the parents will need to pay the additional expenses to provide adequate help or the school will have to deny the student's enrollment.

As a private school, GCS is not required to follow or develop IEP's for students with disabilities. Children that prove a continual disruption to regular classroom instruction will be subject to expulsion.

### **Custody Documentation at GCS**

The splitting of a family is traumatic for parents and particularly for students. Consequently, the focus of Grace Christian School is on the safety and well-being of your student, and our instituted policies are to further those goals.

**Custody documentation:** At the time of enrollment, parents shall provide all relevant documents concerning custody or visitation of each student enrolled at Grace Christian School. Parents of enrolled students shall have an ongoing duty to provide any documents and information relevant to a change in current custody or visitation rights to Grace Christian School within seven days of change or at the time of reenrollment if the school has dismissed for summer break.

**School records:** A noncustodial parent shall have the right to access school records related to his or her student unless prohibited by a legally binding instrument.

**Dismissal and early releases:** No student shall be released to any individual other than a custodial parent unless express written permission is first given to Grace Christian School by a custodial parent or a valid legally binding instrument granting release is on file with Grace Christian School. All early dismissal requests shall go through the principal's office. A parent cannot ask the school to withhold release of his or her student to the other parent or parent's representative without a legally binding instrument.

**Parent-teacher meetings:** It is Grace Christian School's policy to provide separate parent-teacher meetings if the need arises and if the school is informed in a reasonable time.

**School communications:** It is the custodial parent's duty to communicate with the noncustodial parent regarding school announcements and notes.

## **Sexual Harassment**

The Grace Christian School Administration will not tolerate any form of sexual harassment (Ephesians 5:3) on the part of any adult or student.

Sexual harassment includes unwanted or offensive sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and any other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature such as uninvited touching or sexually related comments.

Any person who believes he/she is being subjected to sexual harassment of any kind by anyone connected with Grace Christian School is encouraged to follow the scriptural guidelines found in Matthew 18:15-16 for resolving the conflict.

Complaints of such behavior should also be made as soon as possible to the Administrator. All complaints will be investigated and immediate action will be taken to halt the offensive behavior.

There will be no retaliation for reporting such behavior. Violating of this policy by anyone can result in discipline up to and including discharge or expulsion. We want to maintain a pleasant working and classroom atmosphere where all employees and students are treated with mutual consideration and respect (1 Thessalonians 4:3-6).

Given the nature of this type of illegal activity, the School Board recognizes that false accusations of sexual harassment can have serious effects on innocent men, women, and children; therefore, false accusation will result in the same severe disciplinary action applicable to one found guilty of sexual harassment.

### **Biblical Problem Solving:**

A Christian School, in order to operate effectively, must operate as a community of believers that respect and practice Biblical principles. Whenever each member of that community is living in obedience to God and His work, true harmony and unity of purpose can be achieved. Whenever even a few members of that community consistently violate Biblical principles, the result can be confusion, anger, strife, and the destruction of God's work in the lives of many individuals. This is precisely what Satan wants to achieve.

One of the areas where Christians and Christian organizations are particularly vulnerable to failure is the area of problem solving and the resolution of differences and concerns. The Bible lays down clear principles for the Christian as he/she seeks to resolve his/her differences with others. Matthew 18:15-17 states:

*Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglects to hear the church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican.*

## **Birthdays:**

### Invitations:

In order to avoid hurt feelings, individuals are not permitted to pass out party invitations for his/her birthday (or any other event) to his/her classmates while on school property unless all classmates are included. A directory of GCS families is distributed at the beginning of school. Please utilize the list to contact your child's classmates if you wish to invite them to an event.

### Snacks:

Students are permitted to bring a snack to school for their birthdays. Please inform the teacher 2 days in advance that you would like to provide a snack. The teacher will inform you of the number of students in his/her class as well as any pertinent allergy information. Please make arrangements with your child's teacher to drop off the snack as well as any necessary plastic utensils such forks, plates, napkins, etc. before school begins or during the student's lunch time. If you are sending in a birthday cake or cookie, the teacher will supply a sharp knife to cut it. **Please note: due to safety concerns, the staff is not permitted to light candles.**

## **Holidays:**

The following are a list of recognized Administrator-approved holiday celebrations:  
All other parties not mentioned below must first be approved by the Administrator.

1. Grandparents' Day
2. Thanksgiving "Friendship" Feast
3. Christmas Party\*
4. 100<sup>th</sup> Day of School
5. Valentine's Day
6. Easter\*
7. End-of-the-Year

\*We believe that Christmas is the celebration of Jesus Christ's birth, and Easter is the celebration of His death on the cross to pay the penalty for our sins and Christ's resurrection from the grave three days later. Therefore, secular items such as **the Easter Bunny, Santa Claus, etc. are NOT permitted in the school. Due to its controversial nature, Halloween is not recognized as a school-celebrated holiday.**



**Chapel**

Chapel services are held weekly for students in 1<sup>st</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> grades. Each service gives opportunity for worship through Scripture, singing, prayer and praise, and may include a variety of other activities. Parents are welcome and are encouraged to attend.

**School Pictures**

Pictures are taken shortly after school begins. Details and procedures are sent home prior to the scheduled sitting. Class pictures are taken at the same time.

**Telephone Use**

The telephone in the foyer is available (with permission) for student use in the event of a cancellation of a school event and to return parent calls. The office telephone is for emergency use and can be used only with permission. Office personnel will contact a parent if a student becomes ill during the day.

**Visitors**

Persons on school property other than registered students, their parents, faculty, staff or board members must sign in at the school office. Parents desiring to observe their child's class must give twenty-four (24) advance notice of their intent to visit and obtain permission from the administrator and the teacher that they would like to observe.

**Fire Drills**

These period drills are serious exercises requiring total cooperation. They will be conducted as required by Armstrong's County Fire Department.

**Emergency Drills**

As a result of 9/11 and other possible threatening situations, periodic emergency drills will be conducted. As with fire drills, students will be expected to go to the designated areas in a quiet and orderly fashion and follow all instructions of the supervising adult.

## Pledge to the American Flag

I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible with liberty and justice for all.

## Pledge to the Christian Flag

I pledge allegiance to the Christian flag and to the Savior for whose kingdom it stands, one Savior, crucified, risen and coming again with eternal life for all who believe.

## Pledge to the Bible

I pledge allegiance to the Bible, God's Holy Word. I will make it a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path. I will hide its words in my heart that I might not sin against God.