



2024-2025  
Student/Parent Handbook

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## 1. Mission and Identity

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### 1.1 Mission Statement

To glorify God by serving parents in providing their children a distinctly Christ-centered, academically excellent, classical education as a foundation for life-long learning.

### 1.2 Motto

Our motto comes from the famous Baroque composer Johann Sebastian Bach. At the bottom of each musical composition he penned the letters “S. D. G.” which stood for *Soli Deo Gloria*. We have adopted that phrase as our motto and the motive for all that we do at Grace Academy: Glory to God alone!

### 1.3 Philosophy and Goals of the School

Grace Academy is a private, Christian school committed to providing a Christ-centered and academically excellent classical education to students in grades K-12. Education at Grace Academy is inherently and markedly different in form and purpose than education offered in public schools. Grace Academy strives to operate as an extension of the family and believes that the education of young people is the responsibility of parents and the immediate family rather than the responsibility of the state. Grace Academy offers a biblically-based curriculum and teaches all subjects as parts of an integrated whole that points toward God as the source of all knowledge.

In the programs and teaching at all levels, as well as through extracurricular activities and examples set by faculty and staff, Grace Academy strives to:

- Develop Christian worldview thinking so that students learn to evaluate their entire range of experience in light of Scripture.
- Encourage every student to begin and develop a relationship with God through the saving work of Jesus Christ.
- Provide a clear model of biblical Christian life and culture through our faculty, staff, and board.
- Teach all subjects in the curriculum as parts of an integrated whole with Scripture at the center.
- Emphasize the tools of learning (grammar, logic, and rhetoric) in all subject matter. (Grammar is to be understood as the fundamental rules and data of each subject. Logic is to be understood as the ordered relationships of particulars in each subject. Rhetoric is to be understood as the means by which the grammar and logic of each subject are expressed clearly.)
- Emphasize the development and flow of western civilization in history, literature, math, science, foreign language, philosophy, theology, logic, rhetoric, and fine arts.
- Encourage every student to develop a love for learning and to achieve maximum academic potential.
- Provide an orderly and secure atmosphere that is conducive to achieving the above goals.

### 1.4 Portrait of a Graduate

*The purpose of this portrait is to concisely encapsulate the key characteristics that we seek to cultivate in our students throughout their education at Grace Academy. While these characteristics are not all objectively measurable, they serve as the end goals that guide the distinctly Christ-centered, academically excellent, classical education we provide. It is our goal that by the end of a Grace Academy education our students will:*

Love the Lord their God with all their heart, soul, and mind

Have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior

Be able to articulate and explain the reasons for their faith

Think and live according to a Christian worldview

Possess a broad knowledge of Scripture and apply it to their lives

Live a lifestyle of prayer and Scripture memorization

Steward wisely their resources of time, talent, and health

Manifest a disposition of gratitude

Participate actively in local and global church ministry

Display the fruit of the Spirit

Demonstrate humility and servant leadership

Identify and compassionately address the needs of others

Love the True, the Good, and the Beautiful

Have broad exposure to the liberal arts and sciences, philosophy, and theology

Understand the historical development of the various academic disciplines

Recognize the interconnectedness between the branches of knowledge

Be academically prepared for success in college

Have the ability to identify, appreciate, and interpret high-quality art and music

Engage in biblically-grounded and well-reasoned public discourse

Demonstrate boldness and courage to stand up for what they believe

Appreciate the ability of written and spoken words to communicate truth, goodness, and beauty

Possess a foundation of classical languages

Speak and write articulately, eloquently, and persuasively

Love learning

Possess the habits, dispositions, and skills of a life-long learner

Be self-motivated to learn independently

Have a strong and disciplined work ethic

Reason soundly with discernment and understanding

Think in a way that is both principled and independently creative

Read avidly and with critical wisdom

## **1.5 Governance and Organizational Structure**

Grace Academy is owned and operated by a board of directors who are elected and serve in accordance with the Articles of Incorporation and the Bylaws of the school. The board consists of appointed members who are selected by the current board after presentation to school families for consideration and discussion. Detailed operational guidelines and responsibilities of the Grace Academy board can be found in the Grace Academy Bylaws and the Board Policy Manual. The board is responsible for appointing and hiring a Head of School who is the sole employee of the board and who oversees all aspects of the school's operations. The Head of School is responsible for appointing and hiring administrators, faculty, and staff who function in their respective roles in order to fulfill the school's mission. Grace Academy is comprised of a Grammar School (grades K-5), Logic School (grades 6-8), and Rhetoric School (grades 9-12). The Logic School and Rhetoric School together are sometimes referred to as the Upper School (grades 6-12).

## **1.6 Parent Partnership**

At Grace Academy, we believe that the school exists to serve and assist parents in their God-given responsibility to bring up their children in the discipline and instruction of the Lord (Ephesians 6:4). As an educational institution, we therefore function *in loco parentis* (in the place of parents) as we partner with parents to educate their children. Parents are encouraged to actively participate in their children's education by communicating regularly with them about what they are learning, attending parent/teacher conferences, participating in Parent Council activities, serving as a home room parent, volunteering in class as a guest speaker or reader, serving as a chaperone on field trips, helping at school functions that take place throughout the year, or volunteering as a teacher's aide.

## **1.7 Statement of Faith**

All members of the Grace Academy faculty and staff are required to affirm in writing that they subscribe to Grace Academy's statement of faith. The following statement of faith is taken directly from the Grace Academy Bylaws:

### God (Theology Proper-Nature of God):

We believe that there is one God who is holy, just, good, loving, eternal, ever-present, all-powerful, all-knowing, and unchanging.

We believe in the Trinity, that the one divine being exists in three distinct but equal persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

### Creation (Theology Proper-Works of God):

We believe that God created all things visible and invisible, speaking the world into existence out of nothing and that His creation was according to His perfect wisdom and was ordered, beautiful, and very good.

### Man (Anthropology):

We believe that man was a special creation of God, finite and dependent along with all of creation, yet made in God's image: rational, moral and endowed with the ability to receive God's revelation, and with authority to rule over creation as God's regents; that life begins at conception; and that because all people bear God's image, human life is precious.

We believe that God created man with the duty to serve and obey his creator-king and called him to build culture as sub-creators; and that mankind accomplishes this calling as two distinct, yet complementary genders – male and female.

We believe that God created man as two distinct genders, male and female, and that a person's gender and gender identity are determined by God; that God ordained marriage as a lifelong union between one man and one woman as the basis for the family which is entrusted with the responsibility for raising and educating children; that God established the sexual union for use exclusively within the bonds of marriage; and therefore that all sexual intimacy outside of heterosexual, monogamous marriage is contrary to God's design and purpose.

We believe that despite man's original creation as morally good, the first man and woman rebelled against God, and that this resulted in the fall of the human race into sin: a lost, disordered, broken state of separation and alienation from God, from one another, and from the world around us; that this fall means all people are born with original sin guilty before God, and with corrupted, rebellious natures; and that the fall also plunged the world into a disordered, broken state, such that both man and the physical world stand under God's curse.

#### Revelation:

We believe that God gives revelation of Himself, of man, and of the created order, and that this revelation comes in two forms, both general and special.

We believe that despite creation's fall, God's general revelation still reveals truth about the nature and purpose of creation, thus making both truth and wisdom possible for man and giving man sufficient knowledge of God to be accountable to and guilty before Him.

We believe that God has specially and specifically revealed Himself in history, both by acts and words; that God's acts include both ordinary works of providence as well as miracles; that God's words came in various forms including direct speech and writings; that the supreme act and word was His taking on humanity in the person of Jesus Christ, who is God with us.

We believe that the perfect record, and thus ultimate expression, of God's special revelation is found in the 66 books of the Bible; and that the human authors were inspired by God such that they truly communicated God's Word.

We believe that the Bible, in its original manuscripts, is the plenary, verbal, infallible, and inerrant Word of God; that its primary purpose is to make known the character of God and His work of saving lost sinners and redeeming creation itself; and that the content of those original manuscripts has been accurately preserved, so that modern versions truly communicate God's Word.

#### Christ (Christology):

We believe that Jesus is the eternal Son of God, the second person of the Trinity, the Logos, fully God and fully man, incarnated in the womb of the virgin Mary by the power of the Holy Spirit, both God and man forever.

We believe that Jesus came to redeem fallen humanity and this fallen world and to establish the kingdom of God on earth; that this purpose is accomplished by His sinless life, miracles, teaching, substitutionary and propitiating death on the cross, bodily resurrection from the dead, ascension into heaven, present reign and ministry from heaven, and future bodily return with power and glory to consummate that kingdom.

#### Salvation (Soteriology):

We believe that God is gracious toward sinners, and that by grace He bestows blessings on all people and saves His people.

We believe that Christ is the only savior of sinful man, that apart from Christ and His saving work there is no way for sinners to be reconciled with God, and that regeneration by the Holy Spirit is absolutely necessary for the salvation of sinners.

We believe that justification is by grace alone, through faith alone, and based upon the imputation of Christ's righteousness alone; and that faith without works is dead.

We believe that the Holy Spirit is active and ministers to and through God's people; that the indwelling of the Spirit enables Christians to die to sin and to live godly, holy lives; and that Christian lives are characterized by faith in Christ and repentance from sin.

#### Church (Ecclesiology):

We believe that God has instituted the Church with her officers and ordinances as distinct from the divinely established institutions of the family and the state, as well as distinct from the human institution of the school; and that the ordinances of Baptism and the Eucharist are part of the jurisdiction of the church.

We believe that the Christian life is not meant to be lived in isolation but instead is established in community for support and accountability; and that the Church is God's primary instrument for and expression of this community.

We believe that there is ultimately one invisible Church, and that all true believers in Jesus Christ have spiritual unity in the Lord.

#### End Times (Eschatology):

We believe that Christ will return from heaven to consummate God's kingdom with salvation and judgment; and that there will be a bodily resurrection of both the saved and the lost - the saved to eternal life and the lost to eternal condemnation.

We believe that there will be a redemption of this world, a new creation, where God's kingdom will be perfectly manifested on earth as it is in heaven, and where God will dwell with His people for eternity.

### **1.8 Accreditation**

Grace Academy is accredited by the Association of Classical & Christian Schools (ACCS) which is recognized by the Texas Private Schools Association (TEPSAC).

## **2. Academics**

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### **2.1 Homework Guidelines**

#### *Philosophy*

Homework is a normal, usual and required experience for learning at Grace Academy. There is a strong relationship between remembering old learning and/or mastery of new concepts and homework. For a student at Grace Academy to reach their full potential homework is essential. Homework is an important tool for teaching time management, diligence and personal responsibility as well as curricular content. Parents should help students organize their work and budget their time especially in grammar grades to develop proper habits of upper grades. Additional reasons for homework include:

Students often need extra practice in new concepts, skills, or facts. Therefore, after reasonable in-class time is spent on the material, the teacher may assign homework to allow for the necessary practice and

rehearsal of new learning.

1. Repeated, short periods of practice or study of new information are often a better way to learn than one long period study. Daily homework allows for shorter periods of study.
2. Parental involvement is critical to a child's education. Homework may be used as an opportunity for parents to actively assist their children in their studies. This will also keep the parents informed as to the current topics of study in the class and/or if a student is being successful at their work.
3. Homework may also be assigned to students who, having been given adequate time to complete an assignment in class, did not use the time wisely. The homework, in this situation serves a punitive, as well as practical purpose. Students who do not use their time wisely to complete an assignment in class may have homework.
4. Some students may work more slowly than others, so they may have homework in order to complete an assignment. All students should make every attempt to complete all homework on time and complete all the assignments.

***Guidelines for Homework:***

Students will find they go through periods or seasons of peaks and valleys of much or little homework. The time spent in doing homework will vary from grade to grade and even from student to student. The information below is a guideline and should be regarded as estimated times, not as required minimum/maximum times. Teachers will utilize ParentWeb to notify parents of homework assignments in grades K-3. However, beginning in fourth grade, teachers will transition away from the use of ParentsWeb and maintain a heightened expectation on the student to be responsible for knowing what the homework is and when it is due. All students should have daily reading that should be completed at home.

Guidelines for time spent on homework\*

|          |                |
|----------|----------------|
| K        | NONE           |
| 1ST- 2ND | 15-20 MINUTES  |
| 3RD      | 20-30 MINUTES  |
| 4TH- 5TH | 30-45 MINUTES  |
| 6TH      | 45-60 MINUTES  |
| 7TH-8TH  | 60-75 MINUTES  |
| 9TH-12TH | 90-120 MINUTES |

As the student progresses through their academic life the amount of homework and self-initiated study will and must increase. Upper school students should expect increased work requirements around due dates for projects, exams, etc. Friday is a school day and it is reasonable to expect homework assigned on Friday and due Monday. Sunday is the Lord's Day, and therefore we do not expect students or staff to complete work on that day. Students taking AP or HBU courses should expect 30-45 minutes per

course per night.

*\*Normally homework is not to be assigned over holidays and vacation periods (Thanksgiving, Christmas, Spring, and Easter breaks). This does not apply to the case of a student procrastinating on an assignment made well ahead of a due date. Please monitor your student's time or task and help them learn to plan and develop clear, consistent routines for homework and a routine for your own review of completed work. Your positive participation in the homework process reinforces learning, habits of learning, and study for the rest of their life. Failure to complete homework on time and or incomplete work could become a violation of the code of conduct if the student demonstrates clear patterns of refusing to complete their work. If for any reason a parent has a concern for the amount of homework assigned to their student, the parent should contact the teacher who assigned the work and express their concerns.*

## **2.2 Make-up Work in the Event of an Absence**

In the case of an absence (planned or unplanned), a student may have one day for each day absent plus one additional day to turn in the missed work.

For example, if a student misses Monday and Tuesday (2 days), the student may have Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday (3 days) to make-up missed assignments, which would be due the next school day.

The student should collect make-up work from his teacher(s) upon his return to school. Arrangements to pick up missed work early may be made with the teacher at her discretion. After the absence grace period has expired, the policies for late work will apply.

Work that was assigned prior to the absence is due on the day that the student returns from the absence, unless prior arrangements have been made with the teacher at her discretion.

## **2.3 Late Work**

When major assignments (papers, projects, etc.) are turned in late without an excused absence, a penalty of 10% will be incurred for each partial or whole 24-hour period that has passed since the assignment was due. For example, an assignment due Monday morning at 10:00 and turned in Tuesday afternoon at 2:00 would receive a 20% deduction.

Policies regarding the grading of late daily work (i.e., not major assignments) are made at the teacher's discretion and defined in the course syllabus. A teacher might have, for example, a policy that gives no credit for late daily work or a policy that allows late daily work to be turned in for a 10%/day penalty like major assignments.

## **2.4 60% Rule**

If a student scores below a 60% on a test or major assignment (e.g. project or composition which assesses work over a period of days), not including any late penalty assessed, the student may make corrections or redo the assignment (at the teacher's discretion) for a maximum score of 60%. If the student scores below 60% on the second attempt, the higher of the two grades becomes his or her grade.

*The intent of allowing corrections and redos is for students to learn the material better. Grades should be viewed as a tool for motivating students to learn the material.*

## **2.5 Standardized Testing**

Each year students in grades 3-8 take the ERB CTP 5 test, sophomores will take the PSAT 10 and juniors will take the PSAT. These tests assist the school in assessing academic progress, and the PSAT also is used by the National Merit Scholarship Corporation as the basis by which students qualify for the National Merit Program. Students in 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade are strongly encouraged to take the SAT and/or ACT multiple times in preparation for the college admissions process.

## **2.6 Report Cards**

In the Grammar School report cards are issued at the end of each quarter, and in the Upper School report cards are issued at the end of each semester. Report cards, along with progress reports, FACTS/RenWeb, and direct communication with teachers, provide a means by which parents can monitor their child's academic progress. Report cards will be released only when the family's financial accounts with Grace Academy are current and any outstanding charges have been paid in full.

## **2.7 Transcripts**

Transcripts are generated by the Guidance Counselor for students in the Rhetoric School. Official transcripts may be requested by parents or students with at least one week's notice and will be released only when the family's financial accounts with Grace Academy are current and any outstanding charges have been paid in full.

## **2.8 School Profile**

The Grace Academy School Profile is a document that succinctly describes the school's mission, key distinguishing characteristics, curriculum, standardized test scores, graduation requirements, and scope and sequence. The School Profile is sent along with student transcripts as part of the college admissions process in order that admissions departments might understand the nature and rigor of a Grace Academy education.

## **2.9 Student Records**

Student records are confidential and will be accessible only with administrative permission. Information from a student's record will not be released to any party other than the parents (colleges, universities, prospective employers, etc.) without written permission from the parents.

## **2.10 Study Hall**

When students have study hall they are expected to come to class with the materials they will need and to use the time diligently to work on their assignments. All study halls should be QIA: quiet, individual, and academic. Group study is allowed only with the approval of the teacher and if approved must be done in a way that is not distracting to other students. Study hall is treated like any other class with regard to tardiness and absences, and students are expected to use their time wisely and in a way that does not disturb other students' ability to focus and study.

## **2.11 Exams**

6<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade students take comprehensive semester exams at the end of each semester in a number of subjects. In 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade exams are given during the normal class meeting time and count as a major test grade in that semester's grade book. In 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade students take two-hour exams in the final three academic days of the semester. These exams count as 20% of the semester grade.

Seniors may choose to exempt the second semester exam for any class in which their second semester grade for that class without the exam will be an “A” or “A-.” In order to exempt an exam the senior must not have more than 10 absences from that class second semester and the Head of the Upper School must approve the exemption. Exceptions may be made by the administration under certain circumstances.

Students will be given at least two days immediately prior to exams at the end of the semester that are dedicated to reviewing for exams. During these “study” days no assignments will be due and no tests will be given in classes with exams.

## **2.12 Grading Guidelines**

In kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> grade students receive report cards with skill assessments as follows:

E: excellent

S: satisfactory

N: needs improvement

U: unsatisfactory

In grades 2-12 students receive academic grades as a reflection of the quality of their academic work. Grades reflect a combination of quantitative and qualitative indicators that are weighted according to the teacher’s discretion. Grades may be given for many different types of items including daily homework, quizzes, tests, projects, papers, in-class assignments, group work, in-class presentations, class participation, etc. A minimum of one grade per week should be given each quarter for each subject/course.

Grades on report cards and transcripts are listed as letter grades which indicate the following level of academic work:

A: excellent

B: good

C: satisfactory

D: unsatisfactory

F: failing

Letter grades correspond to numerical percentages as follows: A: 93%-100%; A-: 90%-92%; B+: 87%-89%; B: 83%-86%; B-: 80%-82%; C+: 77%-79%; C: 73%-76%; C-: 70%-72%; D+: 67%-69%; D: 63%-66%; D-: 60%-62%; F: <60%

## **2.13 Grade Point Average**

A grade point average (GPA) is calculated for students in the Rhetoric School and appears on their transcript. GPAs are based on final course grades at the end of each academic year. Given that all courses in the Rhetoric School are taught at an honors level, Grace Academy uses a flat (unweighted) five-point GPA scale. Final course grades correspond to GPA points as follows: A: 5.0; A-: 4.67; B+: 4.33; B: 4.0; B-: 3.67; C+: 3.33; C: 3.0; C-: 2.67; D+: 2.33; D: 2.0; D-: 1.67; F: 0.

## **2.14 Class Rank and Valedictorian**

Due to selective admissions and rigorous curriculum and grading standards, Grace Academy generally does not rank students. However, the top ten percent of each class are ranked at the end of their junior

year for the purpose of admission to Texas public universities. The valedictorian of each senior class is determined on the basis of cumulative GPA at the end of the senior year.

## **2.15 Graduation Requirements**

In order to graduate from Grace Academy, students must earn at least 26 credits while enrolled in 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade in accordance with the following minimum requirements:

History: 4

Literature: 4

Math: 4

Science: 3

Foreign Language: 3

Theology and Philosophy: 1.5

Logic and Rhetoric: 2.5

Fine Arts: 2

HBU Dual Credit/ AP: 2

Athletic Requirement: 1

Total: 27

+ All students are required to take at least three high school credits of a classical language (Latin or Greek).

Students earn the required athletic credit by participating in two seasons of a junior varsity or varsity sport while enrolled in 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade. With prior approval from the athletic director, a student may count an athletic season of training and conditioning or an equivalent non-Grace athletic season (of, for example, ballet or martial arts) toward the athletic requirement.

Each year-long history, literature, math, science, and foreign language course counts as one GPA credit. Each semester-long theology/philosophy and logic/rhetoric course counts as one-half GPA credit. Senior Thesis Seminar is a year-long course and counts as one GPA credit.

8<sup>th</sup>-grade Algebra I is given one non-GPA credit on the transcript and counts toward the math graduation requirements. 7<sup>th</sup>- and 8<sup>th</sup>-grade Latin are given one non-GPA credit each (two credits total) on the transcript and count toward the foreign language graduation requirements.

## **2.16 Transfer Credit**

Rhetoric students who transfer to Grace Academy may receive credit for courses taken previously if they are approved by the administration. Such courses will be designated on the student's Grace Academy transcript as transfer credits, and a letter grade will be listed for each course in accordance with the grading scale found in section 2.12 above. While these transfer credits will count toward Grace Academy's graduation requirements, the grades received in these courses will not count toward the student's cumulative GPA.

## **2.17 Honor Roll**

At the end of each semester students in the Upper School may qualify for the honor roll according to the following conditions:

“A” Honor Roll: The student’s semester grades are all As.

“A-B” Honor Roll: The student’s semester grades are all As except for no more than two Bs.

At the end of the year students who qualified for either honor roll both semesters receive a Magna Cum Laude award, while students who qualified for “A” honor roll both semesters receive a Summa Cum Laude award.

## **2.18 Add/drop Policy**

Students in the Upper School may add a class during the first two weeks at the beginning of the year. Students may withdraw from a class up until the end of the first quarter. After the end of the first quarter students will receive a “W” on their transcript if they withdraw. Students will not receive partial credit on their transcript for completing part of a course (the first semester of a year-long course, for example).

## **2.19 Promotion and Remediation**

GRAMMAR students currently in Grace Academy must meet all the following basic criteria for promotion to the next successive grade:

1. Averaging a “C” letter grade or better in Language Arts (reading, writing, spelling, grammar) and Math for the year .
2. Averaging a “D” letter grade or better in all other academic subjects (e.g. Natural History/ Science, Latin, etc.). Teachers shall follow and adhere to their grading guidelines found in the faculty handbook.
3. In addition, when considering promotion of students currently enrolled, special emphasis should be given to the appropriate level of mastery of the following skills/subjects in the grades noted:
  - a) Kindergarten to First Grade: Behavioral maturity, reading readiness and a general readiness for learning should be demonstrated for First Grade.
  - b) First Grade to Second Grade: Able to read orally and silently with adequate speed, correct use of phonetic skills, and fundamental oral and written comprehension. Able to write complete sentences with neat lettering. Able to add and subtract single digit numbers with at least 70% accuracy. Ability to recognize shapes, tell time, and understanding of days, weeks, seasons, and years.
  - c) Second Grade to Third Grade: Cumulative mastery of above requirements, plus: Able to read fluently and independently, using books of a second grade level. Able to write neatly and correctly identify the basic parts of a sentence. Able to spell correctly with at least 70% proficiency. Able to add and subtract two digit numbers with at least 70% accuracy. Demonstrate ability to read, write and cipher at grade level with a 70% mastery.

UPPER SCHOOL students currently in Grace Academy who have two or more year-end grades of “F” or three or more year-end grades of “D” or lower will not be promoted to the next grade.

RHETORIC SCHOOL Students (grades 9 – 12) must earn a passing grade of 70% or higher in each course required for graduation in order to receive credit for that course.

All appeals for diverging from or waiving the requirements of this policy will be submitted to the Head of the Upper School, who may seek whatever counsel is deemed necessary to render a proper judgment.

## **2.20 Academic Probation and Expulsion**

At the end of each quarter students who are failing a class, have grades below C- in more than one class, or have a GPA below 2.67 (C- average) are placed on academic probation. An action plan, if not already in place, will be developed in collaboration with the student's teachers and parents so that appropriate interventions can be employed to help the student in the area(s) of difficulty. Academic probation lasts for a period of three weeks unless otherwise specified by a student's action plan. At the end of the probationary period the student's grades are reassessed and a decision is made as to whether the probation will end or be extended. Students may be expelled for academic reasons if they are repeatedly placed on academic probation or fail to meet the terms of their action plan. Any decision to expel a student will be communicated to the parents in writing.

## **2.21 Academic Eligibility**

Students who are on academic probation may not participate in any Grace Academy extracurricular activities (practices, rehearsals, competitions, or performances). Furthermore, varsity athletes are ineligible if they are failing one or more classes on each of the TCAF eligibility dates. Students who are so deemed ineligible may not participate in games for the three weeks following the TCAF date. At the end of that three-week period ineligible students will regain their eligibility if they are not failing any classes at that time. Students, parents, and coaches should be notified when a student is determined to be academically ineligible and again when the student regains academic eligibility. Ineligibility does not extend from the fourth quarter to the beginning of the following academic year.

## **2.22 Students with Learning Disabilities**

Grace Academy desires to serve students with a wide range of academic abilities. The school does not, however, have the resources necessary to serve students with severe learning disabilities that would require a separate classroom, program, or staffing.

Students with specific learning disorders that do not require a separate classroom, program, or staffing are welcome at Grace Academy. While we are committed to maintaining an academically rigorous environment for all students, we also desire to provide reasonable support to help students be successful in that environment. For a student with a verified specific learning disorder, as evidenced by updated documentation from a certified diagnostician, parents may request a meeting with the Head of the applicable school and the teacher to discuss the diagnosis. The Head may approve a limited number of suggested classroom accommodations, including:

- preferential seating for those with visual processing disorders, visual impairment, or attention disorders
- action checklists (created and provided by family)
- the use of personal copies of books for highlighting/marking
- oral *and* written directions when possible
- visual checklists for "wise time" or longer assignments
- permission for private therapists to meet with the student on campus before or after school
- limited spelling deductions on activities or assessments *where spelling is not the main skill being assessed* (K-5 only)
- wiggle seats or bounce bands (K-5 only)

Official testing and diagnosis is not provided by the school and is the financial responsibility of the

parents.

Note: Teachers who suspect a learning disorder in a student should report their concerns to the applicable Head of School, who will provide student observation and recommendations.

### **2.23 Tutoring**

If a student needs help with the work for a class, the first step is to schedule a meeting between the teacher and student at a time that is mutually convenient either before school, after school, during lunch, or during a study hall. Such informal tutoring is willingly offered by teachers when they are available and is considered part of their job. If a student needs ongoing individualized tutoring, however, the parents should seek outside professional tutoring or should agree to pay the teacher for regular tutoring sessions that are scheduled outside of the teacher's normal working hours.

### **2.24 Textbooks**

In some classes students are issued textbooks that are owned by the school. It is the responsibility of students to keep and maintain these textbooks throughout the year. At the end of the year parents will be financially responsible for textbooks that are missing or have been damaged beyond the standard of reasonable use.

## **3. Conduct and Discipline**

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### **3.1 School Rules**

The school rules at Grace Academy are designed to cultivate an ordered and godly environment in which students can learn and grow. The three primary rules from which others follow are: 1. Honor God; 2. Honor others; 3. Honor God's property. The following are other school rules that follow from these three primary rules and are in place to facilitate obedience to them:

- Students should always demonstrate basic Christian standards of behavior and conversation.
- Students are not to talk back or argue with teachers or staff. When a teacher gives instructions, students are to obey promptly and cheerfully. The chant "We obey right away, all the way, with a good attitude everyday" is often used in the Grammar School and is the standard for all students.
- Students are to be aware of and avoid off-limits areas of the buildings and grounds.
- All of the school's facilities, supplies, and materials should be treated with respect and care.
- Students may not chew gum on campus.
- Students should consume food in class only at times designated by the teacher. Water is the only beverage allowed in classrooms without prior permission from the teacher. Parents should not bring special snacks or drinks during the school day unless prior arrangements have been made with the teacher.
- Students may not have weapons (guns, knives, etc.) on campus.
- Students may not run or make noise on the decks but should walk and talk quietly. Grammar teachers are to escort their classes to assembly, lunch, recess, and other class functions.
- Students should walk and use crosswalks in the parking lot and driveway.
- Between classes, in the bathrooms, and during all other classroom or non-classroom times inside the buildings, students are to exhibit good behavior and talk quietly or in normal conversational volume.
- Students are to arrive at the beginning of class with all necessary supplies and materials such that they are ready to learn when class begins.

### 3.2 Discipline Policy

|                           |
|---------------------------|
| Grammar School Discipline |
|---------------------------|

Classical Christian education uniquely recognizes that education is the process of training student affections. We want students to love our rules, love our standards, love their neighbors, and most importantly, love God. To love God, a student must love what God loves. God has set forth authority in the lives of students, and these authorities set up standards. The school and its rules are part of that structure. To bring students to love our standards, we disciple them in love, as Christ loved and trained his disciples. This involves a close, loving community and high standards.

Discipline is based on biblical principles and administered with love and consistency in light of the student's behavior and attitude. In imitating what God does with His people, we strive to teach students how to behave with good character, practice with them in exhibiting good character so the student understands what is expected, reward students who show exceptional character, and discipline students who lapse until they reach a state of true, heartfelt repentance. In all of these steps, love and forgiveness are integral parts of the discipline of a student.

The majority of discipline problems are handled at the classroom level. *Most minor discipline issues can be taken care of in class through correction and habit training.* We spend much time teaching, training, and practicing what is expected of students. Young students thrive in a structured environment and therefore, if we maintain order, discipline issues tend to remain minor.

When needed, teachers will make use of the following incremental system to determine consequences of misbehavior as needed. The system gives the student visual cues that a correction in behavior is needed. All clips or checks are reset at the end of each day.

Time missed at recess may be assigned at the teacher's discretion as walking laps, sitting out, or an applicable consequence for the offense (or example, a student who is being disruptive and wasting class time might spend their missed recess time helping with a classroom chore or working on an assignment to help make up the wasted time). Parents should treat the occasional disciplinary contact from a teacher as a teaching opportunity. Multiple contacts should be dealt with more seriously by parents.

#### Kinder

|   |   |
|---|---|
| 1st clip move   | Grace warning   |
| 2nd clip move   | 2 minutes missed at next recess   |
| 3rd clip move   | 5 minutes missed at next recess; communication to parents at teacher's discretion   |
| 4th clip move   | 10 minutes missed at next recess; teacher emails parents and Head of Grammar School via FACTS   |
| 5th clip move   | Student sent to office with referral form; Head of Grammar School has discussion with child, calls parents with the student, and provides consequence; student is now on behavior probation for the day |
| Any additional negative behavior will result in an immediate visit with the Head of Grammar School and may result in a partial-day suspension. A parent conference may be required. |   |

Grades 1 & 2

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Initials  | Grace warning   |
| Name  | 2 minutes missed at next recess   |
| Name + ✓  | 5 minutes missed at next recess; communication to parents at teacher's discretion   |
| Name + ✓✓   | 15 minutes missed at next recess; teacher emails parents and Head of Grammar School   |
| Name + ✓✓✓  | Student sent to office with referral form; Head of Grammar School has discussion with child, calls parents with the student, and provides consequence; student is now on behavior probation for the day |
| Any additional negative behavior will result in an immediate visit with the Head of Grammar School and may result in a partial-day suspension. A parent conference may be required. |   |

Grades 3-5

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Initials  | Grace warning   |
| Name  | 5 minutes missed at next recess   |
| Name + ✓  | 15 minutes missed at next recess; communication to parents at teacher's discretion  |
| Name + ✓✓   | Loss of full recess; teacher emails parents and Head of Grammar School  |
| Name + ✓✓✓  | Student sent to office with referral form; Head of Grammar School has discussion with child, calls parents with the student, and provides consequence; student is now on behavior probation for the day |
| Any additional negative behavior will result in an immediate visit with the Head of Grammar School and may result in a partial-day suspension. A parent conference may be required. |   |

*Administrative Involvement in Discipline*

The Head of Grammar School is involved in the classroom discipline process in an ongoing way as a coach and encourager. She will intervene in the training and discipline process when teachers' attempts at training student behaviors require additional support.

A visit to the office may be warranted due to persistent patterns of disobedience as outlined above, but the following behaviors necessitate automatic discipline from an administrator, rather than a teacher. These behaviors are:

- Flagrant disrespect, rebellion, or disobedience.
- Dishonesty including lying, cheating, and stealing.
- Fighting: striking or pushing in anger with the intention to harm another student.
- Reckless or intentional actions that may or do result in physical injury.

- Obscene, vulgar or profane language, as well as taking the name of the Lord in vain.
- Vandalism of property.

During the office visit, the Head of Grammar School or her designee will determine the nature and degree of the discipline. Consequences may include seeking forgiveness from the offended party, restitution, community service, loss of privileges/opportunity, additional loss of recess time, a partial-day suspension (being sent home from school), a suspension of 1 or more days, a behavior contract, or a recommendation to the Head of School for expulsion of the student. The discipline will be administered in light of the individual student's issue, attitude, and other relevant information. The office visit will always conclude with the Head of Grammar School praying with and for the student.

In the vast majority of cases, after an office visit the Head of the Grammar School will record the incident and consequences in FACTS and email the report to the student's parents and the teacher who referred the student to the office.

If an office visits occur on more than two days in a quarter, a meeting will be required between the students' parents and the Head of Grammar School and a suspension may be indicated.

#### *Serious Misconduct*

Examples of serious misconduct could include: acts endangering the lives of other students or faculty members; violence/vandalism to the school facilities; violations of criminal law; or any act in clear contradiction of scriptural commands. When a student commits a serious act, suspension or expulsion may be imposed immediately.

#### *Behavior Contract*

Grace Academy provides an educational service to parents so that they can fulfill their God-given responsibility to educate their children. However, when special resources or attention is required for a specific student over time, we expect parents to intervene and take responsibility for the correction. When a behavior contract is needed, it will be signed by both the student and parent(s).

When a student is placed on a behavior contract, his ability to remain at the school in the future depends on his demonstrated change in attitude and behavior. Students who are disciplined for repeated or serious offenses (as determined by the Head of Grammar School) will be put on a behavior contract. Once on a behavior contract, a student will be given less latitude. Students may lose privileges until they have earned the trust of the staff and administration.

|                         |
|-------------------------|
| Upper School Discipline |
|-------------------------|

Teachers are to enforce order and proper behavior on campus in general and in the classroom in particular. All discipline is to be based on biblical principles, e.g. confrontation of sinful behavior, confession and apologies, swift punishment, restitution, restoration of fellowship, no lingering attitudes, etc. The vast majority of discipline problems are to be dealt with between teacher and student. Love and forgiveness will be an integral part of the discipline of all students. We expect students to exhibit proper behavior at school, at school functions, on school trips, and at events or activities.

In the Upper School, teachers will determine and communicate behavior expectations to students at the beginning of the school year. Consistent, impartial enforcement of these expectations is critical to maintain a classroom culture that is conducive to learning. All Upper School teachers have authority over all Upper School students when it comes to discipline.

For minor offenses, an Upper School teacher will observe the following procedure:

For the first behavior violation in a class period, the teacher will issue a verbal warning to the student and put the student's name on the board.

For the second violation in a class period, the teacher will issue a lunch detention. Lunch detentions are staffed on Wednesdays and Fridays. The teacher must notify the Head of the Upper School via email (or FACTS, if the feature is available) of the lunch detention.

If the student misbehaves a third time in the class period, the teacher will send the student to the Head of the Upper School for further discipline. The teacher will send the student with a Student Referral form. The Head of the Upper School may issue further discipline, including an additional lunch detention, Saturday school, a partial-day suspension, or another suitable consequence.

Teachers should address minor offenses immediately. Such offenses include:

- Disobedience (though this may be a major offense depending on the circumstances)
- Disrespect to teacher or staff (though this may be a major offense depending on the circumstances)
- Being unprepared for class
- Disrupting class
- Littering
- Repeated or prolonged inattentiveness or disengagement in class
- Willful or repeated uniform violations
- If a student commits serious misconduct, the teacher will immediately send the student to the Head of the Upper School.

Serious misconduct includes:

- Bullying
- Dishonesty, including lying, cheating, and stealing
- Fighting (including at athletic events)
- Flagrant disrespect to any adult (teacher, staff, parent)
- Leaving campus without permission during school hours
- Obscene, vulgar, or profane language, including taking the Lord's name in vain
- Possession of prohibited materials on campus (i.e. weapons, pornography, alcohol, drugs, tobacco)
- Rebellion
- Reckless driving on school grounds
- Reckless or intentional actions that may or do result in physical injury
- Repeated minor offenses
- Sexual harassment
- Vandalism
- Verbal abuse

During the office visit, the Head of the Upper School or his designee will determine the nature and degree of the discipline. Consequences may include any combination of the following: seeking forgiveness from the offended party, restitution, community service, loss of privileges/opportunity, one or more lunch detentions, Saturday school, a partial-day suspension (being sent home from school), a suspension of one or more days, or recommendation to the Head of School for expulsion of the student. Once the facts and consequences have been established, the Head of the Upper School will call one of

the student's parents and the student will explain the reason for the office visit to his or her parent. The office visit will always conclude with the Head of the Upper School praying with and for the student.

In the vast majority of cases, after an office visit the Head of the Upper School will record the incident and consequences in FACTS/RenWeb and email the report to the student's parents and the teacher who referred the student to the office.

We hope and expect that the disciplinary process will be part of the Holy Spirit's sanctifying work in the student's life and that as such, escalating consequences will not be necessary. If, however, they are necessary, we will observe the following:

- The fourth lunch detention in a semester or sixth in a year will also result in a Saturday school.
- The second Saturday school in a semester will instead result in a 1-day suspension.
- Any assignment of Saturday school or suspension will result in the student being placed on disciplinary probation for the remainder of the semester or 6 weeks, whichever is greater.
- Disciplinary probation will include a behavior contract delineating specific expectations for the student and consequences of violating those expectations.
- After any suspension, the student and his or her parents will have to meet with the Head of the Upper School to review the behavior contract before the student is permitted to return to school.

### *Suspension*

A student who is suspended is not allowed to be on campus, attend classes, participate in extracurricular activities, or represent the school in any manner during the period of suspension. Students who are suspended are required to complete all academic assignments but will receive a maximum grade of 70% on these assignments. Suspended students are responsible for contacting their teachers to get missed assignments and should turn in all assignments and take all tests on the day they return to school from suspension unless special exceptions are made by the teacher.

### *Expulsion*

Grace Academy realizes that expelling a student from school is a very serious matter and should always be carefully dealt with on a case-by-case basis. Forgiveness and restitution are fundamental to our total discipline policy. However, should a student demonstrate a repeated disregard for our community and standards, the student will be expelled. Student expulsion generally results when a student's behavior or attitude is negatively affecting our school culture.

A student who is expelled from Grace Academy may not return to classes, be on campus during the school day, or participate in school activities for the remainder of the school year. The parents of an expelled student may appeal the decision by submitting a written statement to the chairman of the school board. If the parents of an expelled student wish for the student to return to Grace Academy for a subsequent year, they will need to go through the normal admissions process and may be admitted or denied based on standard admission criteria as well as the student's demonstrated attitude of repentance and desire for restoration.

### *Re-admittance*

Should the expelled student desire to be re-admitted to Grace Academy at a later date, the board and Head of School will make the decision based on the student's attitude, demonstration of repentance, and circumstances at the time of re-application.

### **3.3 Electronics**

While Grace Academy recognizes the potential educational value of some electronic devices, personal electronics on campus are not necessary for student success and bring with them a host of potential dangers and distractions. The Grace Academy campus is intended to be a space set apart from the world around us in which teachers and students can focus together on the pursuit of learning. The academic community we seek to foster requires full student engagement and is inhibited by the ubiquitous distractions and outside influences that personal electronic devices so readily provide. It is for these reasons that the following electronics policies are in place.

Laptop computers and e-readers may be used in the classroom by Upper School students only and at the teacher's discretion, provided that the teacher gives explicit permission and provided that the laptop or e-reader is being used only for academic tasks (research, writing papers, etc.). Playing games, viewing or listening to saved media, or other personal uses are not acceptable.

Smartwatches may be worn, but they may not be a source of distraction in the classroom. Students may not use their smartwatch to communicate with anyone on or off campus, including parents. Students may not play games on their smartwatches. The use of all other electronic devices (cell phones, tablets, portable listening or recording devices, headphones, and any other device that can access the internet or communicate with other devices) is prohibited during the school day. All such electronic devices (except calculators) must be turned off and stored in students' lockers from the beginning of class in the morning to dismissal at the end of the school day. If any such electronic device is seen or heard by a teacher during the school day, the device will be confiscated and held in the office for one week. After a full calendar week from the time of confiscation the device can be retrieved by the student.

If students need to communicate with their parents during the school day, they may use a phone in the office. If parents need to communicate with their children during the school day, they may call the school office so that the message can be relayed or the student can be brought to the office to talk.

The computers located in classrooms are for teacher use only. Students should not use these computers except with specific teacher permission. Grace Academy does not provide printers for student use. When students need to print documents they should do so at home.

No student is allowed to access the internet during the school day without explicit teacher permission.

Students are encouraged to use personal electronic devices as little as possible while at school functions and before/after school activities (athletic practice, for example). In all such cases students should use such devices only in a way that glorifies God and reflects well upon themselves as representatives of Grace Academy.

### **3.4 Uniform Policy**

The uniform policy at Grace Academy is designed to diminish social pressures and socioeconomic differentiation, promote a positive and professional impression of Grace Academy within our community, encourage biblical attitudes and standards regarding modesty, and promote a sense of school spirit and unity.

Please refer to ParentsWeb under Resource Documents for an up-to-date version of the uniform policy.

On the third and every subsequent uniform violation that a student receives in any 6-week period, parents will receive an email and the student will serve a lunch detention. Repeated violations may result in further consequences including, but not limited to, probation, suspension, and expulsion.

### **3.5 Academic Misconduct/Plagiarism**

All academic misconduct is considered a serious discipline issue and will be dealt with swiftly and decisively. Such misconduct includes cheating by copying another student's work, having someone else do work and then submitting it as one's own, asking what is on a test/exam, bringing a "cheat sheet" to a test/exam, etc. Plagiarism is a form of academic misconduct that involves dishonestly representing another's work as one's own. Plagiarism can be deliberate or unintentional, and students must be very careful to properly cite their sources so as to clearly attribute words, ideas, or data that are not their own and are not common knowledge to the proper sources. Cases of academic misconduct typically result in a grade of "0" for the assignment and may result in further disciplinary consequences as well.

### **3.6 Policy Regarding Student Use of AI Tools**

The use of AI to write a paper is prohibited. It is essentially plagiarism. The value of assigning a paper is for a student to use his or her knowledge, understanding, and possibly research about a topic to respond to a prompt. In the writing process, the student displays his or her command of the content, grammar, vocabulary, mechanics, and style, all of which contributes to the student's "voice." An AI bypasses all of these elements. Any paper found to have been written by an AI in part or whole will receive a grade of zero and the responsible student will be placed on disciplinary probation. Subsequent violations will result in elevated consequences, up to and including expulsion.

### **3.7 Off-campus Behavior**

Students are members of the Grace Academy community even when they are not on campus and are expected to represent the school in a positive manner at all times through their conduct. Students may be subject to school discipline for serious misconduct that occurs off campus and outside of school hours including during weekends, breaks, and summer vacation. Such misconduct includes illegal activity, immoral activity, and inappropriate activity or communication through electronic media. While it is not the school's desire to "police" students or intrude on their private lives, the school maintains the right to investigate and respond with disciplinary action to misconduct of which it becomes aware.

## **4. Student Life**

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### **4.1 Chapel**

Chapel is a time that is set aside on a regular basis when students come together to corporately worship and grow in their Christian walk. Chapel services may include times of prayer, singing, teaching, and the reading of Scripture or creeds.

### **4.2 Athletics**

A variety of athletic teams are available to students in 5<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade including cross country, volleyball, flag football, basketball, tennis, track and field, soccer, and golf. Grace Academy participates in both TCAF and ACAA athletic competitions.

### **4.3 National Honor Society**

The National Honor Society is a national organization that recognizes scholarship, service, character, and leadership. Application packets for interested 10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade students are available in the spring.

#### **4.4 Retreats**

Logic and Rhetoric students will each have a retreat in the fall semester. The purpose of these retreats is to foster spiritual growth, leadership growth, and community growth among students. School administration works with student leaders to plan and carry out the retreats.

#### **4.5 Student Clubs**

Students may form clubs with the support of a faculty sponsor. All such clubs must align with the school's mission and statement of faith and must be proposed to and approved by the Assistant Head of School.

#### **4.6 Senior Privileges**

Seniors at Grace Academy enjoy a number of privileges that go along with the leadership responsibilities incumbent upon them. These privileges are subject to administrative discretion and can be granted or revoked at any time based on the compliance of the class as a whole. The following are special privileges enjoyed by seniors at Grace Academy:

- Seniors may have beverages other than water in class without prior permission from the teacher.
- Seniors may leave campus for lunch.
- On spirit dress days, seniors may wear college shirts.
- Seniors have reserved parking spaces as designated by the Head of the Upper School.

### **5. Admissions and Reenrollment**

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#### **5.1 Philosophy of Admissions**

Grace Academy is a covenantal school that partners with like-minded parents in the education of their children. Consequently, admissions policies and procedures are in place to ensure that all Grace Academy families accept the school's beliefs about God, the created order, and the nature and purpose of education. Through a process of applications, visits, testing, and interviews, the school admits families who meet these criteria and exhibit a strong desire to partner with the school to fulfill its mission. In order to be admitted students also must demonstrate academic compatibility with the population of Grace Academy students they will join. Specific admissions standards and procedures can be obtained from the Director of Admissions.

#### **5.2 Reenrollment**

Grace Academy invites all students in good standing with the school to reenroll for the following year. Students who are on academic or behavioral probation face the possibility of not being invited to reenroll. Reenrollment is offered in the winter to current families so that they can reserve their place for the next year before new students are accepted. Applications for the siblings of current Grace students are accepted during the reenrollment period in order that siblings might be given priority in the admissions process. A signed parent contract and non-refundable registration fee must be received by the reenrollment deadline in order to avoid the possibility of losing a current student's or a current student's sibling's seat to a new student. Advancement to the next grade level will be contingent on students' successful completion of the current grade level.

#### **5.3 Payment of Tuition**

Grace Academy offers a monthly payment plan for the convenience of parents. Parents selecting this plan are required to enroll with FACTS Tuition Management and pay the family's annual enrollment fee

for this service. The annual tuition is divided into twelve equal parts, one of which is initiated by FACTS on the fifth of each month starting in May and continuing until April of the school year for which tuition is being paid. If a student enrolls after the beginning of May, the annual tuition is divided into monthly payments based on the number of remaining months in the payment plan (which ends in April).

In the event that a monthly tuition payment attempt is returned, FACTS will assess, on behalf of the school, a late fee and will remit that late fee to the school when it is collected. If payment for the outstanding balance and fees has not been made within 30 days of the due date, the administration will contact the parents or responsible party. The essential elements of any agreement made at this time will be signed, recorded, and filed. If outstanding payments or written arrangements are not received by the school within 45 days of the due date, a pending expulsion notice will be sent in writing to the parents or responsible party. If all the above steps have been taken and outstanding payments or written arrangements are not received by the school within 60 days of the due date, the administration will inform the family in writing that their student(s) are expelled, effective immediately, for non-payment of tuition and fees.

As an alternative to the monthly payment plan, parents may choose to prepay the annual tuition in full by the first business day of May for the subsequent school year. Parents who select this option receive a 5% prepaid tuition discount and do not pay the annual enrollment fee to FACTS.

#### **5.4 Tuition Scholarships**

Grace Academy desires the education it provides to be available to a socioeconomically diverse set of families. To that end, tuition scholarships are offered each year to qualifying families who are in good standing with the school and demonstrate financial need. Such tuition scholarships are granted on a year-by-year basis. Each year families who desire to be considered for a tuition scholarship should complete and submit the application by the announced application deadline. After applications have been submitted, a double-blind tuition scholarship committee works in collaboration with the administration to determine how available funds will be allocated.

#### **5.5 Fees**

In addition to annual tuition, families can expect to pay fees including, but not limited to, application, registration, parent council, athletic, and literature book fees.

#### **5.6 Refunds for Approved Withdrawal from School**

Parents are obligated to pay the full year's tuition, even if they withdraw their child from the school during the school year. Our Lord commands that we pay our obligations in a faithful and timely manner. He also commands that we practice wisdom in assessing the cost of building a tower before beginning the construction of it.

All tuition is non-refundable and non-transferable. The only exceptions to this policy are (1) the family moves its residence from the Georgetown and surrounding area, (2) loss of employment, (3) death or serious illness or injury which would prevent the student from attending school, and (4) in the judgment of the Head of School, Grace Academy is unable to provide effective education to the student.

## 6. Communication

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### 6.1 General Principles

Regular communication between students, teachers, parents, and administration is essential for the successful education of students at Grace Academy and a healthy partnership between parents and the school. The school communicates with parents in a number of ways including by individual emails, face-to-face conversations, phone calls, handwritten notes, texts, weekly newsletters (Grammar), parent alerts, assemblies, Family Portal, Monday Newsletter, parent/teacher conference days, the bulletin board outside of the office, open board meetings, state-of-the-school meetings, new parent orientation, back-to-school night, meet the teacher, etc. If parents or students want to communicate with the school or individual teachers, they should feel welcome to do so. School personnel should respond to parent emails or phone calls within one school day whenever possible. All communication should be done in a godly way that seeks the building up of one another (Ephesians 4:29), the success of students, and the collaborative cooperation of parents and the school.

### 6.2 Conflict Resolution

As in any group of people, it is inevitable that conflicts will arise at Grace Academy. As Christians, however, we have a responsibility to resolve such conflicts in a way that is biblical and directed toward the restoration of relationship. This does not mean that we always will be in agreement about every issue, but it does mean that we should seek unity despite disagreements and dialogue respectful to achieve agreement or at least understanding whenever possible.

As an educational organization, Grace Academy endeavors to foster openness in its communication between students, families, and staff and earnestly desires feedback to improve our quality of service to help fulfill the mission statement.

- Grumbling and gossip has no place in our community (James 3 1-12; Philippians 2 14, Ephesians 4:29). Gossip is inappropriate within Christian community and can quickly lead to disunity in our school and unfounded conclusions by parties who are not directly involved in the situation.
- Any person who has a concern or complaint should address the concern or complaint with the appropriate person in an effort to bring resolution to the issue. Concerns or complaints may be directed toward the person directly involved or to the Head of School (“HOS”). If the concern is shared with the HOS, the HOS will counsel the complainant toward the proper handling of the complaint (e.g., whether the complaint should be shared with another staff member, the school’s procedure for investigation, or the process for follow-up, etc.). If a conflict reaches the HOS and resolution is not possible, the parties involved may appeal to the school board by writing a statement of two pages or less, signing and dating it, and sending the statement to the chairman of the board.
- All communication between members of the Grace Academy community (parents, students and staff) should be civil and respectful. If the school receives a communication (in person or electronically) that the administration deems inappropriate and/ or threatening, the school reserves the right to request a redirected communication or to restrict communications accordingly (this may include not responding to the inappropriate communication or limiting the electronic access to school staff). Face-to-face meetings or phone conversations are generally more productive than electronic communication when strong emotions are involved and better to avoid the miscommunications and misinterpretations that occur so easily with electronic communication.

### **6.3 RenWeb**

RenWeb is an online service that Grace Academy uses to maintain grade books, record attendance, generate report cards and transcripts, and send email communications. Parents can access RenWeb through Family Portal where they can monitor their children's grade averages and access web forms, the school calendar, resource documents, and the school directory.

## **7. Other Information and Policies**

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### **7.1 Daily Schedule and School Hours**

The school day begins for all students at 8:15 a.m. The school day ends for Grammar students at 2:55 p.m. and for Logic/Rhetoric students at 3:15 p.m. While school is in session the school office is open from 7:45 a.m. to 4:15 p.m. During June and July the office is open Tuesday-Thursday from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. In May and August when school is not in session the office is open Monday-Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

### **7.2 Arrival and Dismissal**

Students may arrive in the morning before classes anytime between 7:50 a.m. and 8:15 a.m. Parents should ensure that students do not arrive before 7:50 a.m., and the school will assume no responsibility for students who do so. Students will not be permitted to enter school buildings before 7:50 a.m. Grammar students should be picked up promptly at 2:55 p.m. when they are dismissed, and Logic/Rhetoric students should be picked up promptly at 3:15 p.m. when they are dismissed. Any student who has not been picked up by the end of carpool will be sent to the extended care program to wait for the parents' arrival. Parents will be charged for the use of the extended care program.

### **7.3 Attendance, Tardies, and Absences**

Students enrolled at Grace Academy are expected to be present and on time to school each day that school is in session. Any student who arrives or leaves campus during the school day (after arrival time and before dismissal) must check in/out at the office. No student will be released by the office to leave campus without parental permission. Students who arrive tardy in the morning will be given a pass from the office and must proceed directly from the office to class. Logic/Rhetoric students who arrive tardy to a class during the school day will be given a tardy by the teacher. On the fifth and every subsequent tardy that a student receives in any given semester, parents will receive an email and the student will serve a lunch detention. Repeated violations may result in further consequences including, but not limited to, probation, suspension, and expulsion. Any student who arrives after 11:00 a.m. or leaves before 12:30 p.m. will be considered absent for a half-day. A grammar student must be present for at least 4 hours for a full day of credit and at least 2 hours for a half-day of credit. An upper student must be present for at least 4 periods for a full day of credit and at least 2 classes for a half-day of credit. A student must be present for a minimum of 90% of a class's meetings to gain credit for the class. This averages to a maximum of 8 absences per semester for a 5-day-a-week class and a maximum of 5 absences per semester for a 3-day-a-week class. If a student exceeds these absences, but is present for at least 75% of a class's meetings, he may appeal to the appropriate school Head to receive credit. After review of the reasons for the absences, the student's grades, the student's behavior record, and other circumstances, the Head may: 1) grant credit with a reduced final grade, 2) require remediation before granting credit, 3) deny credit for the class. Except for truly exceptional circumstances, If a student is present for fewer than 75% of a class's meetings, he will not receive credit for the class. Absences that are the result of legitimate Grace curricular or extracurricular activities (e.g. athletic events, field trips, fine arts competitions, etc.) do not count toward the total number of absences. If half or more of the

absences are the result of one unforeseeable catastrophic event (illness, accident, etc.), the student may appeal to the school Head for a waiver to this rule. Families should understand that no appeal will be granted for absences that are the result of choice (e.g. family travel).

#### **7.4 Campus Visitors**

All visitors to campus during the school day must sign in at the office before entering classroom buildings or going to the playground. Before leaving campus, all visitors should sign out at the office. Any student who wants to invite a visitor to campus (to attend classes, for lunch, etc.) must obtain prior permission from their respective Head of School, unless the visitor is a parent visiting for lunch.

#### **7.5 Student Drivers**

Students with a valid driver's license are permitted to drive to and from school, provided their parents submit a signed student driver form to the office authorizing them to do so. No student may leave campus during the school day unless the office receives permission for the student to do so from the parents. Seniors, but not other student drivers, have the privilege of leaving campus for lunch. In order to use this privilege, seniors must submit signed parent permission to the office authorizing them to do so. Students may not be in a vehicle with only one student of the opposite gender on or off campus during the school day. Any student who arrives or leaves campus during the school day must check in/out at the office. Grace Academy is not responsible for the safety of students who ride in the vehicles of student drivers. It is the responsibility of parents to give permission to their student to ride with a student driver and to know who is riding with whom, where, and when.

#### **7.6 Student Health Requirements**

All students attending Grace Academy must have on record with the office either a current immunization record or an "Exemption from Immunization for Reasons of Conscience" form from the Texas Department of Health and Human Services. Standard immunization record forms may be obtained from a family doctor and a copy given to the school office. All students attending Grace also must have on record with the office an emergency contacts form and a medical web form (if applicable).

No medication, either prescription or non-prescription, will be given to students without written parental permission. Any student who requires regular medication must leave the medication in the school office in a clearly marked bottle with the student's name and accurate instructions. No student may carry or administer medication (with the exception of inhalers). No student may share or furnish any form of medicine, prescription or non-prescription, to another student.

Students should not attend school if they are sick, ill, or have a contagious disease. Students must be free of fever (100.4 and above) without fever-reducing medication for 24 hours in order to attend school. If a student has a fever of 100.4 or above while at school, the parents will be notified immediately and the student will be sent home. Grace Academy does not maintain facilities to care for sick students, so parents should pick up their sick student as promptly as possible.

#### **7.7 Field Trips**

Throughout the school year classes may schedule curriculum-specific field trips. Since field trips are an extension of classroom learning, all rules pertaining to conduct on campus must be adhered to during field trips. Students will be allowed to participate in field trips only with parent permission.

Transportation for field trips is normally provided by parent chaperones. All parent chaperones must complete the field trip guidelines form in Family Portal. All parent drivers must also complete the field trip driver form in Family Portal. Grace Academy requires a background check for all parents attending

a field trip. Field trips are organized by the teacher and/or homeroom parent and run by the teacher alongside parent volunteers. Grace Academy teachers are the final authority on all field trips. In order to maximize students' educational experience on field trips, younger siblings generally are not permitted to attend.

### **7.8 Inclement Weather**

Grace Academy will follow Georgetown Independent School District (GISD) with regard to delays and closures due to weather. Parents thus should follow TV, radio, and website announcements from GISD. As an additional courtesy, when school will be delayed or closed parents will receive a parent alert text.

### **7.9 Safety**

The safety of Grace Academy students, personnel, and facilities are a central priority of the school. In order to provide uniform responses to potential incidents such as weather events, fires, accidents, intruders, and other safety threats, Grace Academy uses the Standard Response Protocol (SRP) system. This protocol is based on four specific actions that can be performed during an incident. Execution of the action is performed by all active participants including students, faculty, staff, and first responders. The four actions are lockout, lockdown, evacuate, and shelter. Standard Response Protocol posters are posted around campus, and drills are practiced by all faculty, staff, and students throughout the school year.

### **7.10 Child Protection Policy**

The Biblical model for the home and corresponding commands of Scripture for educating children are both a blessing and a challenge. The world remains a fallen place. In order to follow our mandate for educating students, our operations must include a child protection policy and corresponding practices. The Child Protection Policy (CPP) applies to all Grace Academy employees, volunteers, and substitute teachers who are serving in any position involving the custody or supervision of students and other minor children at school, on field trips, retreats, or school related activities and events.

All qualified individuals in custody of or supervision of students must submit to a criminal background and driving history check. Any qualified individual in custody of or supervision that poses a risk to children or others at school or school events will be automatically disqualified for service or supervision.

Students, minors, or individuals under 18 years of age may be used in positions that involve supervision or custody of other students and children only with adequate adult supervision. Adult supervisors of minor age students and volunteers must qualify to the same standards as all other adult supervisors, employees, volunteers, and substitutes.

All employees must participate in formal child protection education and training. It is highly recommended that all volunteers and substitutes also receive the training. As a minimum, all employees, volunteers, and substitutes will read the policy and sign a statement indicating they have read and understand the CPP.

Specific guidelines are as follows:

1. Always work in an open environment avoiding private or one-on-one situations which are unobservable. Doors should be open and unlocked, and windows should not be blocked, such

that visual supervision by other adults and students is allowable. Visual access must be available. Avoid private or secluded situations or opportunities.

2. Avoid situations which involve unsupervised access to children. If students are left alone, the adult most responsible for custody or supervision should contact the teacher next door, the office, or another approved adult in close proximity. Avoid leaving any group of students unsupervised.
3. All adults, workers, volunteers, substitutes, and student volunteers who have custody of or supervise students must monitor each other to protect the students and children under their collective safekeeping. Supervision and custody of students and children includes and implies the protection of all by all. If someone were to observe another in an unsafe or compromised situation, it is the duty of both individuals to communicate and eliminate exposure risk or danger. If a situation cannot be resolved by mutual agreement and cooperation, both parties should report to the adult, teacher, or administrator in charge for a better or best solution. Safety of students in all settings is the priority in all situations.
4. All overnight activities must include a pre-plan of the administrator or Head of School. The plan must take into consideration the spirit and role of the CPP. All overnight activities must be parent approved with proper Medical Release and Consent to Treatment forms.
5. Be aware of your physical contact or proximity to children. Physical expressions of affection must not be excessive or imposed upon another adult or student. The less known or familiar the adults or students are with other students and adults, the less familiar and physically “friendly” they should be. A spoken word and a friendly smile are superior ice-breakers for strangers.
6. Adults are always responsible for maintaining proper relationships and proper actions even if a student or child acts inappropriately. Adults should never place themselves in a vulnerable or compromising situation, position, or conversation.
7. These guidelines serve as a template for the godly responsibility we have to protect children. The template also includes email, text, or any technology applications. It is highly recommended to avoid all forms of Facebook, Twitter, and other similar social networking relationships with a minor child or student for any social purposes not in the proper context of family.
8. Be mindful of the safety of the students and children at all times and in all circumstances.

#### Reporting Procedure:

1. All staff are mandated reporters as defined by Texas law. This means that if a staff member has cause to believe that child abuse or neglect has occurred, they must report to Child Protective Services. However, prior to reporting to CPS, the adult who has cause to believe that any form of abuse toward a student or child must report the facts to the head of school first. It is not the duty of the worker, employee, or volunteer to investigate allegations. Immediately after you have reported to the Head of School, sit down and write out the conversation with the child in as much detail as possible. Sign, date, and provide the Head of School a copy; you keep the original.
2. Do not report to anyone outside the scope of administration, until you have reported to the Head of School. If the allegation involves the Head of School, the report goes to the Head of the

Grammar School for her investigation and response. The meeting with the Head of School will be to review the facts, determine what, if any, additional information can be appropriately gleaned, and to consult the staff member as to the law and the appropriateness of the report. However, if at the conclusion of the meeting with the Head of School, the staff member continues to have cause to believe child abuse has occurred, he must file a report with CPS, regardless of whether the Head of School (or other administrator) states that he will file the report or that a report should not be filed.

3. All involved with the report or investigation must keep all information in strict confidence.
4. All allegations will be taken seriously, and school staff will take appropriate actions to protect all children/students in accordance with the laws of the state of Texas and/or based upon the advice of legal counsel and/or insurance policy requirements. If abuse is suspected, per Texas law, as the outcry witness, you are required to report within 48 hours of initial findings to the Texas Department of State Health Services – Child Protection Services. The Head of School also will report to the State.
5. For any questions or clarification of this policy or practice of policy, please contact the Head of School.

### **7.11 Handbook Changes**

All policies and procedures stated in this handbook are subject to change without notice at any time. If any change is made during the school year, parents will be notified.

### **7.12 Parent Signature Page**

Parents are required to sign the following affirmation each year as part of the enrollment process in order for their child(ren) to attend Grace Academy.

I have read, agree with, and will adhere to the statements and policies set forth in the Grace Academy Student/Parent Handbook. I understand and agree that this handbook is not meant to exhaustively express all policies and procedures of Grace Academy and that students and parents are responsible for knowing and adhering to the policies and procedures set forth in the Student/Parent Handbook in its most current form.