



Donelson Christian Academy

**Student and Parent Handbook  
2025-2026**

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## *DCA Board of Trustees*

The Board of Trustees of Donelson Christian Academy meets at least quarterly to establish policies, set goals, and evaluate the affairs of the Academy. The members of the Board are elected to three-year terms. New members are nominated by the stakeholders, screened by the Board of Trustees, and elected by the stakeholders of the corporation at an annual meeting designated by the board.

The Board of Trustees elects a board chair, vice board chair, secretary, and treasurer from the members of the Board at its first meeting following the annual meeting. The officers are elected by ballot and, along with each committee's (the Board is comprised of several committees) chairperson, make up the executive committee of the Board and serve a one-year term.

## *Mission Statement*

Donelson Christian Academy serves Christ by assisting parents in providing students with a challenging, college-preparatory education taught from a nondenominational biblical worldview that develops the whole person into a Christ-like leader in the home, church, and community.

## *Statement of Belief*

The foundation of the Corporation shall be the Word of God as interpreted by the following statement of faith.

We believe the Bible to be the inspired and only infallible authoritative Word of God. (II Timothy 3:16)

We believe that there is one God, eternally existent in three persons-Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. (I John 5:4-6)

We believe in the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, in His virgin birth, in His sinless life, in His miracles, in His vicarious and atoning death through His shed blood, in His bodily resurrection, in His ascension to the right hand of the Father, and in His personal return in power and glory. (I Corinthians. 13:3, I Peter 2:21-24, John 3:1)

We believe that for the salvation of the lost and sinful man, regeneration by the Holy Spirit is absolutely essential. (Romans 3:21, Galatians 4:4-7)

We believe in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit, by who's indwelling the Christian is enabled to live a Godly life. (Galatians 5:22-25)

We believe in the resurrection of both the saved and the lost; they that are saved unto the resurrection of life; and they that are lost unto the resurrection of damnation. (John 5:24, 28, 29)

We believe in the spiritual unity of believers in our Lord Jesus Christ. (John 17:21-23)

We believe in the God-given value of human beings as unique image-bearers of God who are created male and female by Him. These two distinct complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God and we live consistently with the sex and gender God has given. (Genesis 1: 26-27, Psalm 139: 13-14, Matthew 19:4-6)

We believe in the Biblical model of marriage as a covenantal relationship created by God for a man and a woman. Sexual intimacy is a gift from God and has its proper place only within the context of marriage. (Genesis 2: 22-24, Matthew 19: 4-6, Romans 1: 21-27, 1 Corinthians 6: 9-10, 18, Ephesians 5: 31-32, Hebrews 13:4)

# *Enrollment*

## **Admissions Procedures**

The Admissions Office at Donelson Christian Academy is dedicated to assisting families through the steps necessary for enrollment. We will not discriminate based on race, color, or national origin. The following details outline this process.

### **Tour**

DCA recommends that families interested in applying first attend an Open House and/or Preview Day or make an appointment to visit the campus. The Open House/Preview Day experience allows families to learn more about what makes DCA unique. A private tour can be scheduled with our Admissions Office. For Early Learning (Preschool & Pre-K) admissions, you may call Kandice Smith at 615-577-1215, for Elementary admissions please call Leah Norris at 615-577-1214, and for Middle and Upper School admissions you may call Sloan Shaw at 615-577-1216.

We also encourage interested grades 3 through 12 students to **Shadow for a Day** where they are paired with a student who has similar interests. This will give prospective students a feel for our culture and experience a typical day at DCA.

### **Online Application**

An online application for admission must be completed for each prospective student wanting to begin the DCA admissions process. A \$75 fee is required for each application.

### **PreK - Kindergarten**

To be considered for pre-kindergarten or kindergarten students must be 4 or 5 years old respectively by August 15 of the year they plan to enroll.

### **Recommendations**

**Pre-K – Kindergarten** - One (1) recommendation must be completed and e-mailed directly to the DCA Admissions Office by the student’s current preschool teacher, daycare worker, etc. (once the teacher whose email address you provided in the online application “Referral Documents” section completes and submits the automated recommendation form, it will be sent to us electronically).

**1st – 12th Grade** - Three (3) recommendations must be completed by the teacher of your choice and e-mailed directly to the DCA Admissions Office (once the teacher whose email

address you provided in the online application “Referral Documents” section completes and submits the automated recommendation form, it will be sent to us electronically).

### **Academic Records for Grades 1 through 12**

A copy of the student’s most recent progress report, report card, and achievement test scores must be provided to complete an application file.

- **10th – 12th Grade** In addition to the above documents, an unofficial copy of the student’s transcripts including GPA and course grades must be submitted to the Admissions Office. Once enrolled, an official transcript will be requested from the former school by DCA.

### **Student Testing and Interview**

- **Pre-K – Kindergarten** - Once the application, recommendations, and applicable academic records have been received, the Admissions Office will schedule a readiness assessment.
- **1st – 12th Grade** - Once the application, recommendations, and applicable academic records have been received, the Admissions Office will schedule an appointment for student testing and an interview which must include at least one parent or guardian.

### **Admissions Decision**

Applicants will be notified via email once a decision has been made by the Admissions Committee. Upon acceptance, the enrollment contract and non-refundable tuition deposit are due within one week of notification.

Donelson Christian Academy welcomes students of any race, color, nationality, 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 in the administration of its educational and admissions policies, financial aid, athletics, or other school programs.

## **Business**

### **Student Insurance Coverage**

If any student sustains an accidental bodily injury while he or she is attending school during school hours or participating in or attending school-sponsored activities, including travel in a school-provided vehicle, he or she is covered by the following provisions:

### **Accident Coverage**

DCA has no supplemental medical insurance coverage other than insurance through membership with the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association (TSSAA) for grades 9-12.

Loomis & LaPann, Inc. designs the Catastrophic Insurance Program for TSSAA. The policy is underwritten by National Union Fire Insurance Company and has a \$500,000.00 medical limit with a \$10,000.00 deductible. These amounts may change without notice. Coverage is only for TSSAA-sanctioned activities.

### **Private Vehicle Coverage**

When a parent drives for a field trip or a student-athlete drives to an athletic event, his or her insurance pays for liability claims pertaining to transportation. If a liability claim exceeds the coverage, DCA's insurance provides additional coverage for anyone except the driver and his or her family members provided transportation was directly to the event and originated from DCA. Independent travel to and from events is not covered.

### **Non-Coverage**

Class socials, club meetings, or other extracurricular activities held off campus that are not under the direct supervision of a DCA faculty person are not covered by Donelson Christian Academy or any of its insurance carriers. Donelson Christian Academy does not provide student medical insurance coverage. All families should maintain medical insurance coverage.

### **Pictures of DCA Students**

DCA and/or the media routinely take pictures and videos of student activities during the school year as a communications tool and for the overall promotion of the school. Pictures may be distributed through various media channels including but not limited to school yearbooks, websites, newsletters, e-mails, social media, and newspaper articles. DCA will respect the right of any parent to prohibit the use of their child's picture **if written notice** is received by the school prohibiting such use.

# *Early Learning Policies & Procedures*

Welcome to Donelson Christian Academy's Early Learning Program (which is comprised of Preschool and Pre-K). We are pleased to have your child as a part of our DCA family. The following information is about our policies and procedures for our Early Learning program:

## **Philosophy**

We believe that each child is a unique individual. We believe in providing an environment that is safe, clean, healthy, and oriented to children. We are sensitive to the spiritual, social, emotional, intellectual, and physical needs of each child. We believe in teaching the unconditional love and acceptance of the Father and the Son, Jesus, thereby raising a child's esteem. We strive to have an excellent Early Learning program.

## **Enrollment Requirements**

Each child must have a completed enrollment form and health history form listing current immunizations signed by their physician; this is required for enrollment in the program. If an allergy is listed for your child, a physician's statement must be submitted stating the allergy; this is required for enrollment in the program as we must have a physician statement on file to acknowledge the allergy. The withholding or misrepresentation of information in your child's enrollment form may result in termination from the Early Learning program.

If, after spending time with your child in the classroom setting, our teachers and Early Learning administrators feel that additional support services may be needed, parents will be expected to comply with our recommendation for testing through the appropriate school system and/or government agencies (i.e. TEIS); failure to comply or to provide accurate and/or complete documentation may result in an inability to best serve your child and could result in dismissal from the Early Learning program.

All children must be toilet trained to be eligible for our 3 and 4-year-old Early Learning classrooms (which includes Pre-K). A child is considered toilet trained when he/she can verbally indicate the need to use the restroom, can independently clean themselves after both urination and bowel movement, can manage their clothing, and has been doing so consistently for a period of at least 2 weeks. If a child is not considered toilet trained prior to transitioning to the next class, you may lose enrollment eligibility as we are not able to reserve a space for non-toilet trained students in a classroom that is licensed as a toilet trained classroom.

Pacifiers and bottles are not permitted in our Early Learning program. The child must be off pacifiers and bottles at home as well.

To be considered for Pre-Kindergarten, a student must be 4 years of age by August 15<sup>th</sup> of the enrolling year and must successfully pass the admissions/entrance testing for Pre-Kindergarten



(admissions testing is required for all incoming Pre-Kindergarten – 12<sup>th</sup> grade students). If an existing student is age-eligible for Pre-Kindergarten or Kindergarten at the start of the school year and his/her teacher does not recommend progressing to the respective grade but you, the parent, wants him/her to be considered for progression to the respective grade, he/she will be required to complete admissions testing for Pre-Kindergarten or Kindergarten in order to be considered.

### **Program Hours/Late Policy**

Our program hours are 6:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. Our instruction time is from 7:45 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Extended Care is available from 6:30 a.m. to 7:30 a.m., and 2:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. As a courtesy to our staff, we ask that you please be considerate of these hours. THERE WILL BE A \$5.00 PER MINUTE LATE FEE FOR EVERY MINUTE PAST 5:30 P.M. THAT YOUR CHILD REMAINS IN OUR CARE. THIS IS A PER CHILD FEE. EXCESSIVE LATE PICK UPS MAY RESULT IN DISMISSAL FROM THE PROGRAM. We do not accept children for dropping off after **8:00 a.m.** unless they have a medical appointment that has been cleared beforehand through the Early Learning office.

### **Extended Care**

For your convenience, we offer an Extended Care program before and after school. Early Learning Extended Care hours are included in your monthly tuition. There is no additional fee for Preschool Extended Care. The morning Extended Care program hours are 6:30 a.m. – 7:30 a.m. Children go to their classrooms by 7:30 and classroom instruction begins at 7:45.

The afternoon Extended Care program hours are 2:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m. Students who are preschool age and remain in our care after 2:00 p.m. will continue the afternoon in their classroom for non-instructional care and may later transition to another classroom when classes are combined in the afternoon once dismissal procedures begin. Pre-K children will relocate to a different classroom with an extended care teacher.

### **Arrival & Dismissal**

Our instructional activities will begin at **7:45 a.m.** each day. Arrival after this time will cause distraction and disruption for your child and the entire group. It is important for your child to arrive on time each day. Upon arrival each day, you will need to sign in your child at the sign-in/out desk.

During the first week of school, you are welcome to bring your child into the classroom and help them put away their belongings. After the first week, please say goodbye to your child at the classroom door (don't forget one big hug and one big kiss!). It is our policy that parents stay **NO LONGER THAN 5 MINUTES** in the classroom at drop-off or pick-up time; this policy will be enforced by the classroom teacher and/or administration. Please talk to your child about this policy before you arrive at school (Later in the school year, Pre-K parents will be asked to begin letting their child walk down the hall to their classroom by themselves in preparation for kindergarten).

At the time of dismissal, please sign out your child at the sign-in/out desk. If you have a change in dismissal on any given day, please send a note in your child's folder or call the DCA Early Learning office at 615-577-1198.

Parents are requested to list the names of anyone having permission to pick up their child on the child's enrollment application. For security purposes, we will request photo identification before releasing your child to any unfamiliar individuals, regardless of their inclusion on your child's enrollment form. We must always have notification if someone other than those listed on your enrollment form will be picking up your child.

### **Payment Policy**

The Early Learning Program is a twelve-month program (August – July). There is no option to opt out of care during the summer months; if you choose not to attend in June or July, you will still be required to pay the monthly tuition to hold your child's spot for the coming school year.

Tuition charges for the month will be billed via a monthly Invoice Plan which you will receive by email; the invoice will have a link for you to pay through your FACTS Family Portal by ACH, debit, or credit card (please note that debit and credit card payments are subject to a 2.95% fee.) Invoice payments are due on the last date of every month. If your account is 2 weeks past due, your child is subject to termination from the program. If your account is turned over to collections, you will be responsible for all attorney fees and court costs.

DCA does require a 1-month notice should you decide to withdraw your student(s) from the Early Learning Program; such notice should be provided in writing (via email) to Mrs. Sherrie McGuire at [smcguire@dcawildcats.org](mailto:smcguire@dcawildcats.org), Mrs. Kandice Smith at [ksmith@dcawildcats.org](mailto:ksmith@dcawildcats.org), and Mrs. Kristen Carey at [kcarey@dcawildcats.org](mailto:kcarey@dcawildcats.org). Financial responsibility will be pro-rated based on when notice is given.

We are concerned when your child is absent, and we are unaware of the reason for the absence. If your child is unable to attend school, please let us know as soon as possible. This will allow us to adjust with lunch orders, etc. There is no reduction in tuition for days missed (for vacation, illness, etc.); the twelve-month billing plan accounts for closure due to scheduled school breaks such as Fall Break, Christmas Break, and Spring Break and absences due to family vacations.

Occasionally, we will plan special activities and projects for the children. These activities may have an additional cost associated with them. These costs are not a part of your weekly tuition, and you may be asked to pay an additional fee based on the activity requirements.

\*Please note that Early Learning students may participate in different activities (including theme dress days.) depending on their age group/class and may also participate in different activities than our Elementary classes. If you have multiple children, please refer to your

classroom newsletter, or calendar and read emails carefully. If you are in doubt, please ask your child's teacher for clarification.

**DCA Early Learning will be closed for the following holidays/breaks:**

Labor Day	Good Friday & Monday following Easter
Fall Break	
Pre-K Parent Teacher Conference-10/31/25 (this year) <i>Only Pre-K students will not attend this day</i>	The week of Memorial Day
Week of Thanksgiving	Juneteenth
Christmas Break	July 3 for the July 4 <sup>th</sup> Holiday
New Year's Eve, New Year's Day	Closed for 1 week and 3 days after summer camp is over, before school starts
Dr. Martin Luther King Day	<i>(these exact dates will be communicated)</i>
President's Day	
Spring Break	

If a holiday falls on a day that your child normally attends, regular payment is still expected.

On school in-service days, DCA Early Learning will be open for non-instructional extended care only. The café is closed, and the hot lunch program is NOT available on non-instructional days. Your child must bring lunch on non-instructional days.

We may request that you "sign up" for in-service days or holiday weeks so that we can determine our staffing needs. Parents will need to sign their child up with their classroom teacher (usually by way of a sign-up sheet, form, or reply to the teacher's text or email.) If no reply is received, we will assume that care will not be needed.

**Inclement Weather and Emergency Closing of the Academy**

Our Head of School will determine the need for school closure during inclement weather. Please watch the local news about up-to-date school closings and delays. Please make sure your contact information is updated in the FACTS system. This will ensure you will receive all communications, including those about closures and delays.

Emergency closing of the academy will be made when normal operations are prohibited or when the safety of students is of major concern. As soon as a decision is made, the announcement will be given to local television stations (these are channels 2, 4, 5, and 17). Notifications will also be sent via email through FACTS/Renweb and text messages will be sent using Parent Alert. Always keep your information up to date on FACTS/Renweb to receive

crucial information promptly. You can always update your information yourself by going to the “Demographics” section.

Rarely will the Academy close early once classes begin. In the event snow or icy conditions develop during the school day, every opportunity to provide instruction will be made. Students will not be dismissed from class until arrangements have been made for transportation.

The safety of students takes priority over the school schedule. Any parent should feel free to pick up students early or arrive late when icy conditions make driving hazardous.

If it becomes necessary to telephone the school and ask your child to drive or ride with someone else, it is requested you follow these guidelines:

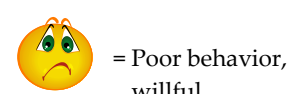
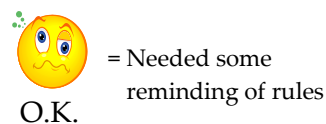
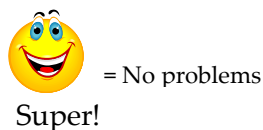
- Be brief. Remember approximately 500 calls will be coming to the school in a very short time and open lines of communication are important.
- Do not ask your child to come to the telephone.
- Do not call to discuss the weather and try to decide. Make your decision and inform the school.

When picking up a student, be sure the student has signed out with name, time, and person with whom he/she is leaving. This information assists if another parent telephones a student you have taken home.

In the event of inclement weather causing the Academy to alter the daily schedule, parents can be assured adult supervision will be present. Parents should inform their children of the importance of staying in the proper areas, signing out, and refraining from playful activities.

### Parent Communication

Daily parent communication and your child’s behavior report are an important part of our program. Your child will be given a pocket folder on the first day of school that will contain a monthly activity calendar. The daily folder will be used to note your child’s daily behavior and to send home school notes and any student work or projects completed by your child. Your child’s behavior will be noted on the calendar using the following stamp system:



Please review your child’s folder nightly and initial the behavior report for that day. If you need to send a note to your child’s teacher, you should send it to school in your child’s daily folder.



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In the event your child has an accident or gets hurt during the school day (i.e. – falls on the playground), you will be notified by a phone call/email, and you will receive an accident/incident report in your child's folder.

### **Discipline**

For discipline, we will use a reward system and a time-out system. Each day your child will have the opportunity to earn a treat from the treasure chest. Treasure Chest is earned by making good behavior choices throughout the day.

Time out is used for the following types of behavior: willful disobedience and consistently not following the teacher's directions, running inside the building, being disrespectful to others, destroying property, physically hurting others in any way, and infringing on other children's rights. The time-out period will be one minute per year of age for the child.

DCA Early Learning also follow a "Three Strikes You're Out" policy that will be applied if your child is hurting others in any way. For example, if your child bites or hits another child, we will do everything possible to help your child overcome this behavior. However, we are also obligated to protect the other children in the classroom. After three notifications of your child hurting other children in any way, we will terminate your child's enrollment. Your child will NOT be able to re-enroll at DCA Early Learning program in the future if they are terminated during the school year.

DCA Early Learning reserves the right to suspend and/or terminate care for children who are willfully disobedient, exhibit challenging behavior or educational needs that require one-on-one care, family refusal to follow the DCA Early Learning Policy and Procedures, and for family interaction with teachers, staff, or children that is considered inappropriate such as threatening statements or actions to a child or teacher.

*\*\*Challenging Behavior is defined as any repeated behavior that prevents or is at risk of preventing an optimal learning environment in the classroom or engagement in positive social interactions with classmates and adults.*

### **Clothing/Grooming**

All Early Learning students are required to wear a DCA uniform shirt; you may purchase these through Max & Alice School Uniforms. Please dress your child in washable, comfortable pants, skirts, or shorts; pajamas and/or nightgowns are not permitted to be worn with the DCA uniform shirt. Themed dress-down days will be held throughout the school year, and you will be notified of such dress-down days in advance. Children are taken outdoors every day (weather permitting), and they should be dressed accordingly. Light jacket and hat in the spring and fall; heavy coat, hat, and mittens in winter. **All clothing should be labeled.** We are required to go outside when the temperature is between 32 degrees and 95 degrees.

Sandals, flip-flops, open-backed shoes, and jelly shoes are not acceptable because they fill with gravel on the playground and can cause injury to your child. Comfortable shoes with traction,

such as tennis shoes are recommended. Please be sure that your child's shoes will not slip off their feet.

Water activities, occasional spills, and bathroom activities necessitate an extra change of clothing to be kept at school. If wet or dirty clothes are sent home, please return a clean set of extra clothes the next morning. All extra clothing must be labeled with your child's name.

Boys' hair should be kept neat and cut above collar length and out of their eyes.

### Max & Alice School Uniforms

(The 100 Oaks area)  
3205 Powell Ave, Ste B  
Nashville, TN 37204 - 615-373-0433

<https://maxandaliceuniforms.com/collections/donelson-christian-academy/products/dca-short-sleeve-unisex-polo>

### **Hours:**

Monday – Friday, 10:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m.  
Saturday, 10:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m.

### **Rest Time**

Your child will have a designated rest time each afternoon. DCA requires each child to have a quad-fold 2" thick rest mat with a fitted mat cover. Your child may bring a lightweight blanket for rest time. Fleece blankets and quilts are too large and bulky. Sleep aids such as one small stuffed animal or blankie are welcomed but must remain in your child's backpack until rest time. All blankets and sleep aids must fit inside a standard-size backpack. These items will be sent home each week. Your child's mat cover will be sent home on Fridays for laundering and should be returned on Monday. Please label all nap items with your child's name.

### **Birthdays and Special Occasions**

Parents are welcome to send in treats to share with their child's class on birthdays or special occasions. Please let the teacher know in advance that you will bring a treat. Some treat suggestions are cookies, cupcakes, or donut holes (treats in individual servings.) Teachers will not distribute birthday invitations to the class, unless an invitation is provided for each child in the class. On some holidays, each class will have a special party. Parents may be asked to bring treats for the class. Sign-up sheets are usually posted at each classroom.

### **Toys**

Please do not send toys to school. On special occasions, a child may be asked to bring something for show and tell. DCA Early Learning is not responsible for toys that are brought to school or for their safe return home.

**School Nurse** Standing orders cover a limited number of OTC (over-the-counter) medications to be given out such as ibuprofen, acetaminophen, Tums, Roloids, antibiotic ointment, burn ointment, and sting relief wipes. These medications are given only after written permission is granted by parents. Controlled drugs (prescription) require written authorization from the Primary Care Physician to be dispensed at school. Nebulizer treatments, MDI's (metered-dose-inhalers) and Epi-pens fall into this category. Diabetes testing and administering insulin is done as well. The nurse assists in acute illness, minor injuries, pulling teeth, splinting suspected fractures, and calling parents to pick up sick children. Lots of TLC! The school nurse is available during the school year (August-May) regular school hours, 7:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

### **Illness/Medical Concerns**

For the protection of all children, your child should be kept at home if he/she shows any signs of the following symptoms:

- A fever
- Diarrhea or vomiting
- Undiagnosed rash
- Nasal discharge (cloudy, yellow or green) or discharge from eyes or ears
- Productive or persistent cough

Parents should exercise caution and keep their children at home should any other unusual symptoms occur. **A child must be free from fever (without the use of medication), diarrhea, and vomiting for at least 24 hours from the time of the last incident before returning to school unless you provide a statement from your child's physician that he/she is not contagious.** If we feel that a child shows any indication of illness, including but not limited to the first occurrence of fever, diarrhea, vomiting, unexplained rash, or any other symptom that indicates illness, you will be notified. If you are notified that your child is ill, you will need to pick up your child within 1 hour from the time you are notified. We reserve the right to request a written doctor's statement when we feel there is a question of whether or not a contagious health condition exists. Refusal to comply with our illness policy may result in termination from the program.

Any medications, prescription, and non-prescription, for your child must be handed directly to the teacher in charge. A completed medication form including written instructions for administering the medicine and permission to give the medicine must accompany all prescription and over-the-counter medications. Medicine will not be given without written instructions and permission. The medication must be labeled with the child's name.

Please do not put any items in your child's backpack or personal belongings that have a label that states **Keep Out Of The Reach Of Children** (i.e. ChapSticks, sunscreen, lotions, hand sanitizers, etc.) Any items found will be removed and placed in a locked area. Parents will need to request that the items be returned.

### **Lunch Program & Snacks**

You may choose to send lunch, with a drink, to school with your child. If you send a lunch from home, please pack it in an insulated lunchbox with a cold pack AND eating utensils. Lunches sent from home will not be refrigerated. Please send food that your child can easily manage. We can heat food in a microwave, as needed. All food must be microwaveable ready. We cannot open cans, and we do not have dishes available.

If your child's classroom has a child with food allergies, the teacher will let parents know. Classrooms with nut allergies will be deemed a NUT FREE ROOM.

***\*IMPORTANT: Parents who send lunches with nut products to a NUT FREE ROOM may be terminated from the Early Learning program. Adherence to NUT FREE ROOMS is mandatory, as this can be a life and death situation.***

We also have a hot lunch program. You can buy your child a hot lunch for \$4.75 per day. You will receive instructions via email on adding funds to your child's lunch account. You will also receive a lunch order form weekly via email. You must fill out and submit the form to order lunches for the following week.

Your child will receive a morning and afternoon snack. If your child has dietary restrictions or food allergies, please notify us (parents may be asked to provide their snacks if we cannot easily accommodate restrictions/allergies.)

Parents are asked to provide the morning snack for the entire class for a week twice per school year. During the first week of school, your child's teacher will send home a list of each child's snack week. Please send the snacks to school with your child on Monday of their snack week. If your child does not attend on Monday, snacks should be sent to school the Friday before your week.

We encourage you to bring snacks that are nutritious and wholesome (fruit, snack crackers, graham crackers, and yogurt are always favorites). Remember this is a snack, not a meal! We also request that the snacks integrate with our curriculum by beginning with our letter of the week or matching our color, shape, number, or theme of the week.

### **Pictures of DCA Students**

DCA and/or the media routinely take pictures and videos of student activities during the school year as a communication tool and for the overall promotion of the school. Pictures may be distributed through various media channels including but not limited to school yearbooks, websites, newsletters, e-mails, social media, and newspaper articles. DCA will respect the right of any parent to prohibit the use of their child's picture **if written notice** is received by the school prohibiting such use.

### **Parent Involvement and Cooperation**

We value the involvement of our DCA parents. We have an open-door policy, and you are welcome to drop in at any time of day unannounced. However, visits or lingering in the classroom for extended periods of time, except during class parties, will be subject to different protocols as it relates to our licensing standards; please also remember, we are often hard at work or play and visits can be very distracting. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to talk to our director or your child's teacher. We look forward to serving your child. We ask for your prayers as we reach out to our youngest children.

DCA believes that a positive and constructive working relationship between the school and a student's family is essential to the accomplishment of the school's mission. Accordingly, the school reserves the right not to renew or terminate a student's enrollment contract if the school reasonably concludes that the actions of a parent or guardian make a positive and constructive relationship impossible. The school considers as grounds for dismissal any action by a student and/or his or her parents or guardian that seriously interferes with the school's ability to accomplish its mission. Parents are expected to fully support both the letter and the spirit of the guidelines, at least to the extent of recognizing the need for rules and the Academy's proper enforcement of them.

## *The Elementary Program*

Donelson Christian Academy seeks to provide a quality Christian education in partnership with the home, and the local church. To accomplish this goal, we seek to provide a unique environment where students are nurtured and thrive spiritually, academically, physically, socially, and emotionally. Each teacher is highly qualified to provide experiences that stimulate higher-level thinking skills. Students develop relationships with the staff and with each other that make them feel safe and able to enjoy the learning environment.

### **School Day Schedule**

One of the greatest indicators of academic achievement is the amount of time a student spends in the learning process. The organization of the school day takes this into account. The daily schedule for the elementary school is:

Kindergarten	7:40 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
1 <sup>st</sup> & 2nd Grade	7:40 a.m. to 2:15 p.m.
3rd-5th Grade	7:40 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

The school cafeteria will open at 7:10 a.m. for the elementary students arriving early and breakfast food will be available. Classrooms open at 7:30 am. Those students needing to be dropped off before 7:10 am will need to make prior arrangements with Extended Care Director, Sherrie McGuire, at extension 615-577-1189.

Elementary students should be picked up within fifteen minutes after dismissal. An elementary student who is riding with a middle/upper school student will be supervised until an older sibling arrives at the designated area for pickup. **All elementary students must be picked up by their middle/upper school siblings by 2:55 p.m.** If the older sibling is absent or is involved with after-school activities, your elementary student must be picked up at their grade level dismissal time. If you are unable to pick up your student at their elementary dismissal time, you will need to enroll them in the DCA Extended Care program. Please see the information above to make those arrangements.

### **Elementary Academics**

The curriculum for students enrolled in kindergarten through fifth grade includes language arts, mathematics, social studies, and science. Biblical studies are

taught with an emphasis on teaching and disciplining youth in their relationship with Jesus Christ. Classes in art, music, STEM, physical education, and technology assist in preparing the students for middle and upper school.

## Grading System

Donelson Christian Academy emphasizes learning and the acquisition of skills rather than a particular grade or score. However, grades are distributed as an indicator of progress beginning in grade 1. Every nine weeks, grades will be given, and a report card will be published for parents on Renweb. The school year is divided into four grading periods. Numerical semester grades are recorded on the permanent transcripts. The letter grade for the numerical grade is defined as follows:

Numerical	Letter
93-100	A
84-92	B
74-83	C
65-73	D
Below 65	F

## FACTS (RenWeb)

FACTS is a completely integrated system across the entire school that allows parents to quickly view up-to-date grades and attendance for grades 1- 5. FACTS provides parents with password-secure access to their children’s data such as attendance, daily grades, progress reports, report cards, transcripts, missing assignments, discipline, staff & school directory, teacher email addresses, etc.

Information for the roster of students is obtained from information entered into FACTS from the admission and registration forms. Any changes to your information, i.e., phone numbers, address, etc. would need to be changed or corrected by you. For directions on changing your information on FACTS please contact the Technology Department at 615-577-1225.

For a web demonstration, please visit [www.renweb.com](http://www.renweb.com), and click on “Online Video Demonstration.” Our school code is DCA-TN. If you have any difficulty with FACTS please contact Kandice Smith at [ksmith@dcawildcats.org](mailto:ksmith@dcawildcats.org).

## Homework

Homework is considered an essential part of the educational process. In addition to providing reinforcement, homework also provides the opportunity to instill in students

a sense of responsibility. Homework on Wednesdays is limited or given in advance so as not to interfere with church commitments.

## **Summer Reading/Math**

Summer reading and math are requirements for incoming first through fifth-grade students. Returning students will receive these items at the end of the previous school year. New students will receive their grade level requirements from the Admissions office.

## **Honor Roll and Distinguished Scholars**

Students in grades four and five who score an average of 84 or above every nine weeks in each subject are listed on the Honor Roll; in grades four and five students who maintain an average of 93 or above every nine weeks in each subject are listed as Distinguished Scholars.

## **Grade and Deficiency Reports**

Daily and weekly progress may be monitored via FACTS (RenWeb). Frequent communication regarding student progress is shared throughout the school year. Each grade level has developed a communication system for reporting progress. Official report cards are posted on FACTS at the end of each nine weeks for grades one through five. Kindergarten students are assessed every nine weeks, and parents will receive a printed report.

## **Elementary Attendance**

The school recognizes that there will be unusual circumstances that arise from time to time; however, vacation plans, regular medical appointments, etc., should not interfere with school if they can be avoided.

It is imperative that students be present and on time for school and their classes so they can fully benefit from the instruction being provided. When students miss in-class learning, they miss the teaching of the course content and valuable discussion, which cannot be replicated when they are not present in the classroom.

### **Pre-arranged Absences**

1. While school is in session, we discourage students from taking extra days off.
2. If absences are necessary, the parent must let the child's teacher and elementary office know ahead of time.
3. Work must be made up at the initiative of the parent or the student (upper elementary) **after** returning unless arrangements are made with the teacher to



take a test beforehand. The teacher is NOT responsible for compiling materials before the pre-arranged absence.

4. The student is responsible for completing the work within a specified time determined by the teachers and/or principal. Students may receive a deduction if the work is not completed in the allotted time.

### **Unplanned Absences**

1. If your child is absent, we encourage your child to receive his/her make-up work when they return to school the next morning. This will allow teachers to instruct missed skills and assignments. Teachers will communicate with the parents and/or student when the make-up work will need to be completed.
2. If you decide to request make-up work for a child who is ill, you must contact the elementary office by 9:00am on the day you wish the work to be ready (615-883-2926). This will give the teacher sufficient time to prepare your child's assignments for that day without taking instruction time from other students.
3. The make-up work that is requested before 9:00am may be picked up at the main entrance lobby between 3:15-4:30. **Work will not be available before this time.**
4. We cannot send make-up work home with siblings.

### **Make-up Work**

Teachers will collaborate with students to ensure that they have a reasonable amount of time to complete all the missed work. Parents will be notified by teachers about the status of make-up work. No student may have his/her grade reduced or lose academic credit for any excused absence when missed assignments and tests are satisfactorily completed within a reasonable amount of time. However, if they are not completed in the given time, points may be deducted.

### **Sickness During the School Day**

In the event a student becomes ill during the school day, the school nurse or office will notify the parent. The student will remain in the clinic until a parent can pick him/her up. If it becomes necessary for the student to go home, parents will come to the front entrance to have the receptionist call the nurse. The nurse will bring the student to the parent and have them sign the student out from the nurse.

The school nurse must have written permission to give medication to a student. Prescription medication is not dispensed except under physician's orders and medication from home must be in the original prescription container, clearly marked and tagged with the student's name, name of medication, purpose of the drug, and the dosage.

If a student has a temperature of 100 degrees or more, he/she must leave school for home and be free of fever for 24 hours (without fever-reducing medication) before returning to school. The school nurse may be reached at 615-577-1211.

### **Tardiness**

Like absenteeism, tardiness is a disruption not only to the learning process but also to other members of the class. It is important to teach punctuality as an integral part of life. The student and parent must learn to make appropriate adjustments to be assured of being at school at the appropriate time. Excessive tardiness requires a conference between the student, parents, and school officials. Students arriving late should report to the office.

If a student is tardy, it is the responsibility of the student and/or parent to communicate with teachers about any work that may have been missed.

Students accumulating **excessive** tardies may be placed on attendance probation.

## **Elementary Student Behavior Guidelines**

Any elementary student who has received discipline by the faculty or principal for a pattern of three or more like offenses (lying, teasing others, cheating, fighting, stealing, aggression toward other students, threatening students or teachers, profanity, sexual misconduct, truancy, defiance, or disrespect for authority) may be placed on behavioral probation with the possibility of expulsion should the behavior not improve.

### **Elementary Discipline Guidelines**

Discipline procedure in elementary school is divided into lower elementary (grades Pre-K-2) and upper elementary (grades 3-5.) The offenses are broken down into two categories: minor and major, which are used to determine the appropriate discipline in each offense. The elementary faculty will exercise discipline measures for minor offenses and will communicate with the parents. The faculty may refer the student to the Head of Elementary for disciplinary action should it be deemed necessary in the minor offenses or if minor offenses become repetitious or excessive. The list of offenses may not be all-inclusive. The administration reserves the right to determine the appropriate discipline for violations.

### **Lower Elementary (grades K - 2)**

#### *Minor*

- Disrupting class
- Rude or discourteous behavior
- Dress code violation
- Rough-housing/horseplay
- Teasing/name-calling

*Major*

- Lying
- Cheating
- Profanity
- Stealing
- Disrespect/defiance of authority
- Intentional damage to school property (the student pays repair costs.)
- Invasion of privacy
- Intentional harm to another student
- Fighting or aggression toward another student

**First Offense** - conference with Head of Elementary, notification of parent, suspension, or dismissal should the principal deem necessary

**Second Offense** - conference with Head of Elementary, notification of parent, suspension, or dismissal should the principal deem necessary

**Third Offense** - automatic suspension, behavior probation status, parent notification, or dismissal should the Head of Elementary deem necessary

*All suspensions are at the Head of Elementary's discretion for in or out of school.*

Parents will be notified whenever a student is placed on behavioral probation and are required to meet with the elementary principal to discuss a plan of disciplinary action. Behavior probation will result in the student being reviewed for continued enrollment or dismissal from DCA should the behavior not improve.

**Upper Elementary (grades 3 - 5)**

*Minor*

- Disturbing class
- Rude or discourteous behavior
- Dress code violation
- Rough-housing/horseplay
- Teasing/name-calling

*Major*

- Lying
- Cheating (zeros on work or test)
- Profanity
- Disrespect/defiance of authority
- Stealing

- Skipping class
- Fighting or aggression toward another student
- Intentional harm to another student or teacher
- Intentional damage to school property (the student pays repair costs)
- Sexual harassment (verbal or physical)
- Violation of computer Authorized User Policy (AUP)
- Possessing or drawing pornographic material
- Possession of tobacco on campus or at school-related activity

**First Offense** - conference with the Head of Elementary, notification of parent, suspension, or dismissal should the principal deem necessary

**Second Offense** - conference with Head of Elementary, notification of parent, suspension, or dismissal should the principal deem necessary

**Third Offense** - automatic suspension, behavior probation status, parent notification, or dismissal should the Head of Elementary deem necessary

*All suspensions are at the Head of Elementary's discretion for in or out of school.*

Parents will be notified whenever a student is placed on behavioral probation and are required to meet with the Head of Elementary to discuss a plan of disciplinary action. Behavior probation will result in the student being reviewed for continued enrollment or dismissal should the behavior not improve.

**The following behaviors may result in expulsion for lower and upper elementary students:**

- Carrying or possessing firearms or lethal weapons
- Selling or providing alcohol, inhalants, or illegal drugs to other students on or off campus
- Commission of a felony-level offense either on or off-campus
- Life-endangering vandalism/actions at school or school-related activities (i.e., setting fire to the school, bomb threats, fireworks)
- Threatening with intent to do physical harm to a faculty member
- Intentional damage to the property of a student, faculty, or staff member
- Sexual harassment

### **Cheating**

The academy operates on an honor system. The honesty and integrity of each student is considered vital. Cheating is a major violation and is disciplined accordingly.

The following areas are examples of cheating:

- Giving or receiving help on tests, copying homework, allowing someone to copy.
- Telling others information from tests or quizzes.
- Plagiarizing or copying work (including material copied from the internet) and claiming it as the student's own work.

### **Respect for Property**

Emphasis is placed upon respect for the property of others and the right of everyone to the free use of personal possessions. Borrowing without the consent of the owner is considered a theft by the Academy. Damaging property, whether it is personal or school property, is violating the rights of others. It is expected that all damage, even though it may be accidental, will be acknowledged by the person involved and amends made if possible. The offender will be expected to make an immediate report to the office.

### **Bullying**

The components of bullying, found in the list of minor and major offenses, are addressed as outlined within the disciplinary guidelines.

### **Re-admission after Expulsion**

The following policy will provide a structure for handling the applications of students who have been expelled from Donelson Christian Academy and who wish to reapply.

- Reapplication: Students who are expelled from Donelson Christian Academy may reapply for admission after two consecutive semesters. (Summer school is considered one semester.)
- Applications will be processed according to current admissions standards.
- Applicants must meet all established admissions criteria. The academy reserves the right to deny admission, readmission, or continued enrollment to any student whose actions demonstrate that it is not in the academy's best interest to allow admission, readmission, or continued enrollment.

### **Illegal Drugs**

DCA has a school-wide policy and procedure. See alcohol and drug policy.

## *Elementary Electronic Device Usage*

Participation in all required Elementary School activities is vital to the growth and success of each student. We also realize that our elementary students have various “after-school” activities and settings away from the campus which may require communication with a parent/guardian. Therefore, our policy regarding personal communication devices, (both receptive and expressive) including cell phones, computers (iPads, watches, laptops, games), and any other such device is as follows:

Students may have electronic devices; however, during school hours any device must be powered “off” and stored out of sight. If a teacher discovers the use of any device, it will be taken up immediately and the parent will be notified of the infraction, related issue(s), consequences, and a retrieval procedure.

### *Additional Notes:*

School hours are reflected by each grade level’s arrival and dismissal times. An illustration of this would be from the time a student enters the school building to begin the day until the student exits the building following the school day.

- The school will not be responsible for lost or stolen devices.
- Medical technology device usage will be subject to our school nurse’s review for use at school.
- Please remember, if an emergency arises, parents may call the Elementary Office at (615) 577-1202.
- Extended Care electronics usage and guidelines are in the Extended Care publication.

## **Parental Cooperation**

DCA believes that a positive and constructive working relationship between the school and a student’s family is essential to the accomplishment of the school’s mission.

Accordingly, the school reserves the right not to renew or terminate a student’s enrollment contract if the school reasonably concludes that the actions of a parent or guardian make such a positive and constructive relationship impossible. The school considers as grounds for dismissal any action by a student and/or the student’s parents or guardian that seriously interferes with the school’s ability to accomplish its mission. Parents are expected to fully support both the letter and the spirit of the guidelines, at least to the extent of recognizing the need for rules and the Academy’s proper enforcement of them.

## Conferences and School Visitation

Donelson Christian Academy is delighted to have parents and patrons visit the campus. Prior arrangements can be made for guided tours and visits. After checking in and receiving a badge from the Main Office, please check in at the elementary office.

Parent-teacher conferences are also encouraged but should be on a scheduled basis outside class hours. Parents may arrange conferences on an individual basis by both contacting the Elementary Administrative Assistant and asking for an appointment or contacting the teacher **by email or note**.

## Cleanliness of the School

The elementary school belongs to the Donelson Christian community, and students are expected to share in the responsibility for its clean and orderly appearance.

## Student Lockers

Placing items in the proper places is an important part of organization. It is an attribute that should be learned early. The student locker is viewed as a place where organizational habits are necessary.

- All books and materials are to be neatly organized inside lockers.
- Books are not to be left outside lockers.
- No papers are to be left sticking out of lockers.
- Decals nor tape of any kind are permitted on the inside or outside of lockers.
- Students are not to write on or in lockers.

## Lost and Found

Lost and found items may be claimed by parents and students. **Please contact the office regarding the location of the lost and found items.** If an item is lost and the owner cannot be identified, the item will be removed.

## Messages to Students

Messages to students are limited to emergencies only. Please contact the elementary office at 615-883-2926, extension 1202, or by calling the direct line 615-577-1202.

## Food Services

DCA offers breakfast and lunch through the Wildcat Café. Students have various combo selections and various ala carte items. Students may bring a portion or all their lunch if they choose.

Students are expected to behave maturely and use appropriate table manners in the cafeteria, clean their tables, and place trays in appropriate places. Students who bring their lunches are to be sure no food is left in school lockers at the end of the day. Breakfast is served Monday through Friday in the cafeteria from 7:15 a.m. to 7:35 a.m.

## **School Nurse**

Standing orders cover a limited number of OTC (over-the-counter) medications to be given out such as ibuprofen, acetaminophen, Tums, Roloids, antibiotic ointment, burn ointment, and sting relief wipes. These medications are given only after written permission is granted by parents. Controlled drugs (prescription) require written authorization from the Primary Care Physician to be dispensed at school. Nebulizer treatments, MDI's (metered-dose-inhalers) and Epi-pens fall into this category. Diabetes testing and administering insulin is done as well. The nurse assists in acute illness, minor injuries, pulling teeth, splinting suspected fractures, and calling parents to pick up sick children. Lots of TLC!

## **Special Programs for Students**

Accelerated Reader Program with incentives and recognition; Hands-On Science Program; Art/Music/Physical Education Programs; STEM classes, keyboarding for upper elementary; intramural sports for boys and girls; Comprehensive Bible curriculum for each grade level; Honor Roll and Distinguished Scholars recognition; Wilson Bank & Trust School Bank Program; numerous musical presentations; Weekly Chapel & Student Led Worship; Book Fairs; Arts Academy offered with private lessons.

## **Media Center**

The Media Center provides resources for research, study, and casual reading. An extensive collection of books and online databases are available. There are over 10,000 volumes for student use. A computer lab is also available for elementary students.

All Media Center materials must be checked out before they are taken from the media center. A student is required to pay the replacement cost of books or materials not returned. Students are responsible for maintaining a respectful and quiet atmosphere in the Media Center.

## **Bible**

Bible class is a required part of the curriculum. Teaching the Bible begins in kindergarten and continues through all grades with a survey of the Old and New Testaments. The Bible curriculum and spiritual emphasis of the school are designed to lead students to a greater knowledge of Jesus Christ and to develop the necessary



disciplines to become fully devoted followers of Christ. This is consistent with the overall philosophy and purpose of the Academy, which is to nurture the whole person mentally, physically, and spiritually as our Lord "...advanced in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man." (Luke 2:52)

### **Assembly or Chapel**

In addition to daily prayer in the classrooms, weekly devotions are held for all students. Guest speakers, students, faculty, and staff participate in special assembly programs.

### **Physical Education**

Physical education (P.E.) is an integral part of an individual's development. All students in grades K-5 will be involved in a structured physical education program 3 days a week for 30 minutes. The curriculum is comprised of developmentally appropriate learning experiences that allow the students to develop skills, knowledge of games and activities, and learn game rules that will benefit them throughout life. Physical education provides an atmosphere for students to improve physically and mentally as it is an avenue to release stress and anxiety. All students are encouraged to respect others through good sportsmanship. The program also aligns with state standards.

### **Elementary Intramurals**

Intramurals are games and activities among students within DCA. The competition is a great way to enhance a student's experience at the Academy. Students will learn to interact with others from different grades, learn and build new skills apart from P.E. classes, and exhibit leadership qualities. Intramurals uphold the culture of fairness, accountability, and respect toward others through positive sportsmanship. Students are encouraged to play with positive energy and enthusiasm. Much like P.E., intramurals help relieve stress and anxiety after a day of academics.

### **STEM Class**

STEM is an approach to learning and development that integrates the areas of science, technology, engineering, and math. Students will have one thirty-minute stem class each week. During this class, students will participate in science experiments, math and engineering lessons, and technology-related activities they can build on for a lifetime. Through STEM, students develop problem-solving skills, increase creativity, and learn to work together through hands-on problem-based learning. Students will build character and leadership skills as they participate in STEM classes.

## **Technology**

The elementary technology program at DCA consists of instruction in the classroom and computer lab. Curricular lab instruction begins in grade 1 and continues through grade 5. The curriculum is based on Tennessee State Standards for Technology and 21st Century Learning Standards established by the American Association of School Librarians. Technology skills currently covered during the four years include word processing, presentation, spreadsheet, and drawing programs, as well as other various online programs that support classroom projects (BibMe, a graphing program, online templates, and others as the need arises). The learning projects used to evaluate mastery of the programs integrate research and classroom topics or units. In addition, keyboarding skills are taught in grades 2 through 4. Classroom instruction of basic keyboarding skills precedes the use of a self-paced typing program. The goal is for students to achieve 17 WPM with 95% accuracy by the end of grade 4. Our overall program is to expose, master, apply, and utilize 21st-century technology skills.

## **Art**

Elementary Art is taken by all students in grades K-5. The class is for the exploration of various mediums, artists, and techniques. Art Elements and Principles of Design are considered and utilized. The class is a creative setting that also develops dexterity and craftsmanship skills with each project. The students will enjoy a combination of structured projects as well as a free choice of art throughout the school year.

## **Elementary Policy on Literature and Movies at DCA**

### **General**

It is the goal of the school to see all students accept Christ as their personal Savior, and to teach the clear meaning and implications of what it means to be a Christian. During each school year, several novels will be read, and movies viewed in classes at DCA. One goal of the school is to help prepare our students to succeed at the college level by adequately preparing them for college expectations. We strive to do this within the context of a Christian worldview, and in a way that supports the mission of the academy, which is to develop the whole child for the glory of God by providing exemplary academic and extracurricular programs. We intend that the student, “love what is lovely and hate what is hateful” and seeks to use the Word of God as his/her guide in evaluating all books and movies.

Due to the different needs and maturity levels of elementary and secondary students, guidelines for the books and movies used within classrooms and/or assigned by teachers will not be the same for all grades. In general, works are chosen that meet several criteria, including supporting the mission of the school, as well as the following:

### **Artistic merit**

- A good fit into the larger academic goals.
- Works that will contribute to students' moral/character development.
- Works that show the consequences of evil choices, and the benefits of virtue.
- Age-appropriate in terms of vocabulary, themes, and subject matter.

At the elementary level, selections are determined not only based on being among the classics of children's literature but also because of the spiritual and emotional level of the grade. Works are chosen that help students in upper elementary grades deal with issues of honesty, social issues, family development, and character development. Realizing that this is a time when students may be highly impressionable and in the process of forming personal values, books and movies will be chosen that clearly show the consequences of evil (if contained in the work) and illustrate the value of actions that honor God. When possible, Christian fiction and books about Christian heroes will be selected to introduce students to the wide range of excellent books that glorify Christ so that they may be encouraged to read books that strengthen their faith. Philippians 4:8 will be the benchmark used to choose works for the elementary grades. "Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable, if anything is excellent or praiseworthy, think about such things." If a parent has a question or concern about a work being studied or assigned, he/she is encouraged to talk to the teacher. If a parent still has concerns after talking with the teacher, a meeting with the elementary principal may be requested.

## **Personal Appearance Code for Elementary Students**

### **Grades Kindergarten through 5**

School is a place of work for students. Clean, neat, and appropriate attire creates a quality of appearance and enhances the learning atmosphere and process. Dress reflects an attitude and DCA seeks to establish an atmosphere and attitude that reflect a Christian learning environment.

Parents are expected to play an active role in the enforcement of the personal appearance & uniform code. Questions about the appropriateness of clothing or personal appearance may be answered by the school administration. Teachers and administrators reserve the right to determine what is appropriate attire or appearance for the educational setting. Physical appearances that detract from the learning environment will be addressed.



- **All DCA uniform pieces (except for the khaki pants and shorts) are to be purchased from Max & Alice School Uniforms. \*Khaki pants and shorts may be purchased from any vendor.** The type of khaki pants worn must follow the pant dress code requirements. The school administration may designate non-uniform days.
- Clothes should be worn properly and should not be dirty or ripped.
- Any t-shirt worn under the white uniform shirt must be white and with no visible graphics.
- All plaid skorts, jumpers, and kilts **MUST BE NO SHORTER THAN 3" ABOVE THE FRONT OF THE KNEE**. Kilts and jumpers must be worn with modesty shorts. Kilts, jumpers, and skorts must have hems. Absolutely no sweatpants or any slacks will be worn under skirts, kilts, or skorts. Modesty shorts that are not longer than the jumper, kilt, or skirt are required.
- Tights (for girls) must be solid black. Solid black ankle length leggings are also permitted.
- All pants and knee length shorts worn by boys and girls must be the khaki/tan uniform pants (specifically defined in the Uniform Dress Code).
- Non-DCA outerwear may be worn outside but must be removed and placed in the student's classroom or locker when inside the building. DCA athletic outerwear jackets and Spirit Store outerwear are acceptable to wear indoors along with any solid black, white, grey, or royal blue jacket or sweater. Students must wear the correct uniform underneath.
- Clothes must be size-appropriate.
- Students must not wear hats, bandannas, scarves, or other headgear inside the building.
- Shoes must be clean and in good repair. No flip-flops. Tennis shoes are required for all physical education classes and encouraged daily.
- A belt must be worn with pants or shorts designed with belt loops. (Not applicable for Pre-Kindergarten, Kindergarten, and First Grade)
- Boys may not wear earrings or other body piercings at school or any school-related activity. No tattoos can be visible at school or ANY school-related activity.
- Girls may wear earrings in their ears only. No other face or body piercings can be worn at school or any school-related activity. No tattoos can be visible at school or any school-related activity.

### **Male-Specific**

Conservative haircuts for boys are expected. For example, haircuts that are unusually shaved or spiked are not allowed. Hair **MUST** not be longer than the top of the



Donelson Christian Academy

shoulders and out of the eyes. Tails and/or ponytails, buns, unnatural coloring, and pointed mohawks will not be allowed.

### **Female-Specific**

Traditional haircuts for girls are expected. Hair should be well kept and groomed and worn out of the eyes. Unnatural coloring or hairstyles that attract negative attention to a girl's appearance are not allowed.

*Boys and Girls must wear only solid white undergarments (no other colors and no visible graphics) under any white shirt.*

## Uniform Dress Code for Early Learning through Grade 5

### Early Learning Program (18 mo. through PreK)

#### Top Attire Boys and Girls (with DCA logo and purchased from Max & Alice School Uniforms)

**Polo's** – (If wearing a long sleeve shirt under a short-sleeve polo, it must be the same color as the polo shirt and with no visible graphics)

- White cotton and/or Dri-Fit
- Royal cotton and/or Dri-Fit
- Black cotton and/or Dri-Fit

#### Bottom Attire Boys and Girls

- No specific brand requirements for pants or shorts. May be purchased from any vendor and be of any color.
- **Tennis shoes** are strongly encouraged for this age.

## Grades Kindergarten through 5

### Girls

#### Bottom Attire for Girls

- DCA plaid jumper (Grades K-3) – (Purchased from Max & Alice School Uniforms) **No shorter than 3" above the front of the knee and must be worn with modesty shorts.**
- DCA plaid skort (Grades K-12) – (Purchased from Max & Alice School Uniforms) **No shorter than 3" above the front of the knee.**
- Khaki/tan pants and Khaki/tan knee-length shorts **Can be Purchased from any vendor. Khaki color will be considered tan.** The styles and colors of khaki/tan pants and shorts that will NOT be allowed are:
  1. No denim khaki pants or shorts
  2. No skinny-leg pants or shorts
  3. No banded or elastic ankle pants
  4. No cargo pants or shorts
  5. No green, gray, or brown khaki color pants or shorts

#### Top Attire for Girls (with DCA logo and purchased from Max & Alice School Uniforms)

**Polos** – Long and short sleeve (If wearing a long sleeve shirt under short-sleeve polo, it must be the same color as the polo shirt and with no visible graphics)

- White cotton and/or Dri-Fit

- Royal cotton and/or Dri-Fit
- Black cotton and/or Dri-Fit

### **Oxfords**

- White short and/or long-sleeved

### **Outerwear**

Non-DCA outerwear may be worn outside but must be removed and placed in the student's classroom or locker when inside the building. DCA athletic outerwear jackets and Spirit Store outerwear are acceptable to wear indoors along with any solid black, white, grey, or royal blue jacket or sweater. Students must wear the correct uniform underneath.

### **Optional**

- Sweater Vest - Black
- Cardigan – Black

## **Boys**

### **Bottom Attire for Boys**

Khaki/tan pants and Khaki/tan knee-length shorts **from any vendor**. **Khaki color will be considered tan**. The styles and colors of **khaki/tan** pants and shorts that will NOT be allowed for the boys to wear are:

1. No denim khaki pants or shorts
2. No skinny-leg pants or shorts
3. No banded or elastic ankle pants
4. No cargo pants or shorts
5. No green, gray, or brown khaki color pants or shorts

### **Top Attire for Boys (with DCA logo and purchased from Max & Alice School Uniforms)**

Polos – Long and short-sleeve

(If you wear a long sleeve shirt under short-sleeved polo, it must be the same color as the polo shirt and with no visible graphics)

- White cotton and/or Dri-Fit
- Royal cotton and/or Dri-Fit
- Black cotton and/or Dri-Fit

### **Oxfords**

- White short and/or long-sleeved

### **Optional**

- Sweater Vest - Black

### **Outerwear**

Non-DCA outerwear may be worn outside but must be removed and placed in the student's classroom or locker when inside the building. DCA athletic outerwear jackets and Spirit Store outerwear are acceptable to wear indoors along with any solid black, white, grey, or royal blue jacket or sweater. Students must wear the correct uniform underneath.

## **DCA School Uniform Vendor Information**

### **Max & Alice School Uniforms**

(The 100 Oaks area)

3205 Powell Ave, Ste B

Nashville, TN 37204 - 615-373-0433

<https://maxandaliceuniforms.com/collections/donelson-christian-academy/products/dca-short-sleeve-unisex-polo>

### **Hours:**

Monday – Friday, 10:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m.

Saturday, 10:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m.

*Subject to change. Please refer to the Max & Alice website for updated hours.*

## *Extended Care*

The Extended Care Program is available for the convenience of students enrolled at the school and their parents. The program is licensed by the State of Tennessee and limits class size to state requirements. Students must be pre-registered before entering the program. Payment for services and registration will be done through the FACTS management system.

Hours for the program are from 6:30 a.m. until 5:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. The program is open for pre-registered students during teacher In-Service meetings **except for the August In-Service meetings before school starts for the year.** Please refer to the school calendar for days when the service is not available. DCA reserves the right to suspend or dismiss any student whose conduct jeopardizes the integrity of the school or the welfare of others.

### *2025-26 Extended Care Fees (Grades Kindergarten-5)*

#### **Registration Fee - \$75 per family per year**

Before School Only	\$30.00 per week
After School Only	\$80.00 per week
Before & After School	\$90.00 per week
Sibling Care	No Charge

*Payment will be paid through FACTS.*

#### **In-Service days are an additional \$75**

#### **Fees Associated with Extended Care/Summer Camp (summer 2026)**

- Registration fee - \$75.00 per family/\$125.00 per family (paid online with the application and then charged yearly thereafter).
- Late pick-up fee - \$5.00 per minute after 5:30 pm.

*Any account more than two weeks past due may result in dismissal from the program.*

### **Summer Camp**

A summer camp program is available most of the summer break for kindergarten through rising grade five students. Applications and information on summer camp fees, tuition, and schedules will be sent in March each year.

# *The Middle School Program*

## **Academic Policies**

Donelson Christian Academy emphasizes the development of the basic tools of inquiry and intellectual development that will help students learn throughout their lives. A student completing Donelson Christian Academy's program will have mastered the skill of effective oral and written communication in English and the basic subjects of science, social studies, and mathematics. Students are encouraged and expected to go beyond the acquisition of knowledge to practice analyzing facts and drawing conclusions to understand the complex nature of our lives. Through participation in a wide spectrum of fine arts, students will be prepared for a lifetime of continued engagement in the arts. Donelson Christian Academy consistently reviews the curriculum to ensure student needs are being met.

Students in grades six, seven, and eight are assigned the following courses: English, Mathematics, Social Science, Science, Bible, Spanish and Physical Education. Other enrichments may be but are not limited to band, art, choir, and a variety of activities that expose the student to a wide array of academic, enrichment, and recreational studies.

## **Media Center**

The DCA Middle School Media Center provides research, study, and casual reading resources. An extensive focus is placed on online resources for research and reading. Students can access an online library with eBooks, audiobooks, student-directed research sites, and citation assistance. The Middle School Media Center is located above the Brown Gym, with varied hours throughout the school week.

All Media Center materials must be checked out before being removed from the Media Center. Students may check out up to 5 items at a time and can be renewed upon request. Students are allowed to keep checked-out materials for up to 2 weeks. There is no cost for overdue items. If students fail to bring back borrowed items, they will be responsible for a replacement or pay a fee to purchase a replacement. Students are responsible for maintaining a respectful and quiet atmosphere.

## **Bible**

Bible class is a required part of the curriculum. Teaching the Bible begins in kindergarten and continues through all grades with a survey of the Old and New

Testaments. The Bible curriculum and spiritual emphasis of the school are designed to lead students to a greater knowledge of Jesus Christ and to develop the necessary disciplines to become fully devoted followers of Christ. This is consistent with the overall philosophy and purpose of the academy, which is to nurture the whole person mentally, physically, and spiritually as our Lord "...advanced in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man." (Luke 2:52)

## **Grading System**

Donelson Christian Academy emphasizes learning and the acquisition of skills rather than a particular grade or score. However, grades are required for college entrance. Grades are updated in Renweb each week and report cards are released on Renweb at the end of each nine-week period. Numerical semester grades are recorded on the permanent transcripts. The letter grade for the numerical grade is defined as follows:

Numerical	Letter
100-93	A
92-90	B+
89-84	B
83-80	C+
79-74	C
73-70	D+
69-65	D
Below 65	F

## **Honor Roll and Distinguished Scholars**

Students in grades 6-12 who earn an academic average of 84 or above in each subject are listed on the Honor Roll. Students in grades 6-12 who maintain an average of 93 or above in each subject will be listed as Distinguished Scholars. The lists for these honors are computed following each grading period.

## **Grade and Progress Reports**

Official grade reports are viewable on Renweb at any time. At the midpoint and the end of each nine-week grading period, parents will receive an email with up-to-date grades.

## **Academic Improvement Plan for Middle School**

To promote academic accountability and success in the college preparatory curriculum at DCA, an Academic Improvement Plan is utilized.

*The structure is as follows:*

The Academic Dean, Dean of Men, Dean of Women, and the Head of Middle & Upper School will identify students with grades below 74 in multiple classes each week. These students will meet with the appropriate Dean to:

1. Discuss status and means by which to improve their grades.
2. Be made aware of the following steps in the plan should progress not be sufficient.

Students who have two or more grades below a C after the first semester will be placed on Academic Probation and must meet with their parents, the Head of Middle and Upper School, and the appropriate Dean. Re-enrollment will be held until sufficient progress has been made. Probation status will be reviewed again after the third nine weeks. The school withholds re-enrollment during academic probation periods until the student's progress is satisfactory. If the Head of Middle and Upper School recommends separation from the school, a meeting with the student and the parents may be requested with the Head of School for an appeal for one semester. If the student has not met the required improvements, the student and parents will be informed that they must make alternate education plans for the following semester.

## **FACTS/Renweb Family Portal**

FACTS is a completely integrated system across the entire school that allows parents to more quickly view up-to-date grades, attendance, and assignments. FACTS provides parents password-secure access 24/7 to their children's data such as attendance, daily grades, progress reports, report cards, transcripts, lesson plans, homework, missing assignments, discipline, staff & school directory, teacher email addresses, etc. For a web demonstration, please visit [www.renweb.com](http://www.renweb.com), and click on "Online Video Demonstration." Our school code is DCA-TN. If you have any difficulty with Renweb please contact Kandice Smith at [ksmith@dcawildcats.org](mailto:ksmith@dcawildcats.org) or Kevin Ray at [kray@dcawildcats.org](mailto:kray@dcawildcats.org)

## **Summer School Policy**

Middle School students who fail math and/or English must complete an online course recommended by school administration. The course must be completed two weeks prior to returning to DCA in the fall semester.

## **Financial Obligations**

The Board of Trustees has established a policy that states that if financial obligations are not met the students' transcripts and report cards will be withheld.

# *The Upper School Program*

## **Upper School Academic Policies**

Students in grades nine through twelve are required to enroll for six credit classes each year. Course selection is accomplished through careful deliberation between the school guidance office, parents, and the student. Students should plan their course of study in accordance with their intended college major. Students planning to submit applications to specific colleges should review entrance requirements and enroll in appropriate classes.

Donelson Christian Academy provides a complete college counseling program for secondary students. Students and parents are encouraged to work closely with the College Counseling Office throughout the college application and selection process.

## **Graduation Requirements**

To graduate from Donelson Christian Academy, students must successfully complete the 24 credits listed below, with a minimum of six each year.

### Required Courses

- *Christian Studies*: One-half credit each in grades 9 through 11, plus one credit in grade 12, which includes one semester of Christian service as part of the graduation requirement. This service will be completed during class time. The Department Head is Karen Singer.
- *English*: Four credits in English, one credit each year. The Department Head is Jennifer Altom.
- *Fine Arts*: One credit in the fine arts. This may be achieved through Studio Art, Band, Choir, or Theatre. The Department Head is Kristen Folsom.
- *World Languages*: Two credits in the same World Language. The Department Head is Jacquie Gonzalez.
- *Lifetime Wellness*: Combines Fitness or Strength Training with Health to equal one credit. (Strength Training and Fitness cannot be taken in the same semester.) The Department Head is Matt Smith.
- *Mathematics*: Four credits in mathematics. These must include Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, and Pre-Calculus. The Department Head is Veronica Mitchell.
- *Personal Finance*: one-half credit.
- *Science*: Three credits in science that must include Biology I, and Chemistry I, plus one additional science credit. The Department Head is Joel Walsh.

- *Social Science*: Three credits that must include Civics, U.S. History, and World History, plus one additional half credit. The Department Head is Amy Crace.
- *Electives*: Three credits.

## **Honors Policy**

Students are accepted into Honors classes based on their previous course work, aptitude, and having a minimum of a B in the prerequisite courses. Honors courses permit students to study on a more advanced level and to explore more in-depth than college preparatory courses. The workload is heavier, and the learning pace is accelerated. Coursework is designed to prepare students for college honors programs.

## **Advanced Placement Policy**

The Academy offers students an opportunity to take Advanced Placement exams to receive potential college credit while in upper school by taking any of the following classes: AP Biology, AP Calculus AB, AP Chemistry, AP English Language, AP English Literature, AP Environmental Science, AP European History, AP 2-D Art and Design, and AP United States History.

Students who wish to take any of these courses must qualify by meeting the following criteria: maintain an average of 93 in the prerequisite class, complete work on time, have good study skills, have a teacher recommendation, and exhibit an ability to produce accelerated work. All students in Advanced Placement classes will take the Advanced Placement exam at an approximate cost of \$100. Colleges may award credit or placement for an acceptable score on the AP exams. Each college and university determine its own requirements for an acceptable score on an AP exam; therefore, it is important to check with the college in advance. These classes are truly college-level courses and should only be attempted by those students who are capable and willing to do the required work.

## **Dual Enrollment Policy**

These Dual Enrollment courses, for which credit may be granted, are offered to qualified upper school students during the school day on the DCA campus through local universities. Successful completion of these courses will award both college and upper school credits. Students should check with the College Counseling Office for current entrance requirements into Dual Enrollment courses. Students may apply for the Dual Enrollment Grant, which will help pay the college tuition for up to ten courses over two years if the student maintains eligibility.

## Dual Enrollment Courses

Dual Enrollment Courses Offered through Trevecca Nazarene University:

- ENG 1020 – English Composition I (3 credit hours)
- ENG 1080 – English Composition II (3 credit hours)
- ENG 2000 – World Literature (3 credit hours)
- HIST 2010/2020 – US History Survey I & II (6 credit hours)

Dual Enrollment Courses Offered through Welch College:

- MAT 2111 – Intro to Statistics & Probability (3 credit hours)
- PHY 2007 – General Physics I with Lab (4 credit hours)
- PHY 2017 – General Physics II with Lab (4 credit hours)
- SPE 1000 – Fundamentals of Speech (3 credit hours)

\*Be sure to check with each of your prospective colleges to see which credits transfer as core, elective, or not at all.

## Summer Reading

Summer reading is a requirement for grades 6-12. Students must purchase their own summer reading books. As part of a student's preparation for college, students need to start a personal library of classic literature and to learn annotation and other reading comprehension skills.

## Dropping and Adding Courses

During pre-registration, every effort is made to place students in the appropriate courses. In some circumstances, however, a student may need to change his/her academic schedule. Grades 6-9 will see the Academic Dean, Alice Prentice, and grades 10-12 will see the Director of College Counseling, Nicole Schierling, to drop or add a class. Class changes may occur during the first two weeks of the class, with the permission of the parent, teacher, and appropriate counselor.

Students may not add a course after the second week of the first grading period of the fall or spring semester unless they move from an Honors or AP class to the corresponding College Preparatory course. This type of move may only occur after the end of the first grading period of the semester.

Understanding the benefit of seeing a challenge through to the end, we encourage all students in honors courses to continue in the upper-level class throughout the year. If necessary, students have the option to repeat the course, at the college preparatory



level, either the following year (if their schedule allows it) or as an online summer course through one of our partnering providers. The family is responsible for all online course costs. GPA earned through courses repeated for grade replacement will not be considered for valedictorian/salutatorian eligibility. The only exception is a student who took Honors Algebra I in 8<sup>th</sup> grade and wishes to replace their grade by either taking College Preparatory Algebra I in 9<sup>th</sup> grade or by taking the original credit, non-honors online Algebra I course during the summer immediately following 8<sup>th</sup> grade.

If a change does become necessary after the first grading period, an attempt will be made to move the student to the college preparatory level. The student will carry the grade earned for the first term to the new class and it becomes part of their permanent record. The student will forfeit the honors weight in their GPA. If the schedule will not allow the change, but the student must leave the honors level, he/she will be allowed to take a corresponding non-honors online course through one of our partnering providers. The family is responsible for all online course costs.

If a student moves to College Preparatory after a complete semester, the first-semester grade for the Honors or AP course will be entered on the transcript and the student will receive the honors weight in their GPA for that semester for any grade above 73.

All Drop/Add decisions can be appealed. If a student wishes to appeal a Drop/Add decision, the student will express their specific hardship concerns through a written letter to the Head of Middle & Upper School for a final decision.

## Upper School Grading System

Donelson Christian Academy emphasizes learning and the acquisition of skills rather than a particular grade or score. However, grades are required for college entrance. Each nine weeks, grades will be given and report cards will be released on Renweb. The school year is divided into four grading periods. Numerical semester grades are recorded on the permanent transcripts. The letter grade for the numerical grade is defined as follows:

Numerical	Letter	Points
100-93	A	4.0
92-90	B+	3.5
89-84	B	3.0
83-80	C+	2.5
79-74	C	2.0
73-70	D+	1.5
69-65	D	1.0
Below 65	F	0

The point system in the last column is used for upper school students to determine a student's grade point average, relative standing in class, and academic probation. Grade point average (GPA) information sent to colleges includes all classes. Rank in class (except for valedictorian and salutatorian) is determined by a weighted GPA.

### **Weighted Grades System (Advanced Placement, Dual Enrollment, and Honor Courses)**

Successfully completing an Advanced Placement course will add one quality point, for a Dual Enrollment course three-fourths of a quality point, and for an Honors course half a quality point in computing the student's semester weighted GPA. Weight is added for higher-level courses for grades above 73. For more detailed information on how GPA and class rank are determined, please contact College Counseling.

### **Valedictorian/Salutatorian Selection Policy**

To be eligible for valedictorian/salutatorian, a student must take at least eight Honors courses and five AP courses at DCA. Of those seniors eligible after seven semesters, the one(s) with A's in all upper school courses completed will be a candidate for valedictorian. (If no eligible seniors have all A's, the one(s) with the fewest B's, C's, etc. will be a candidate for valedictorian.) The next highest eligible senior will be a candidate for salutatorian unless two or more students are valedictorians; in that case, there will be no salutatorian that year. All valedictorians and salutatorians must exemplify qualities that positively represent the school regarding behavior, academics, and Christian citizenship. Eligible candidates will be subject to administrative review.

GPA earned through courses repeated for grade replacement will not be considered for valedictorian/salutatorian eligibility. The only exception is a student who took Honors Algebra I in 8<sup>th</sup> grade and wishes to replace their grade by either taking College Preparatory Algebra I in 9<sup>th</sup> grade or by taking the original credit, non-honors online Algebra I course during the summer immediately following 8<sup>th</sup> grade.

### **Scholars Diploma**

Participants in the Scholars Program must complete at least 8 Honors, H/DE, and/or AP courses in grades 9-12 at DCA, or another accredited school, to receive a Scholars Diploma.

### **Honor Roll and Distinguished Scholars**

Students in grades 9-12 who earn an academic average of 84 or above in each subject are listed on the Honor Roll. Students in grades 9-12 who earn an average of 93 or above in

each subject are listed as Distinguished Scholars. The lists for these honors are computed following each grading period.

## **FACTS/Renweb**

FACTS/Renweb is a completely integrated system across the entire school and administrative offices, which allows parents to quickly view up-to-date grades, attendance, and assignments. FACTS/Renweb provides parents password-secure access to their children's data such as attendance, daily grades, progress reports, report cards, transcripts, lesson plans, homework, missing assignments, discipline, staff & school directory, teacher email addresses, teacher websites, etc. Parents are also able to update demographic information as well. For a web demonstration, please visit [www.renweb.com](http://www.renweb.com), and click on "Online Video Demonstration." Our school code is DCA-TN. If you have any difficulty with FACTS/Renweb please contact Kevin Ray [kray@dcawildcats.org](mailto:kray@dcawildcats.org).

## **Homework**

Homework is considered an essential part of the educational process. In addition to providing reinforcement, homework also provides the opportunity to instill in students a sense of responsibility. Homework on Wednesdays is limited or given in advance so as not to interfere with church commitments.

## **Grade and Progress Reports**

Official grade reports are available in Renweb at the end of each nine-week grading period. Progress reports are emailed to parents at the midpoint of each grading period. Students with a grade below 74 must attend tutoring.

## **Examination Exemptions**

Students in grade 12 may be exempt from final exams if the semester average is 90 or above. All exemptions are at the discretion of the teacher. No exemption will be granted for students in grades 6 through 11.

## **Financial Obligations**

The Board of Trustees has established a policy that states that if financial obligations are not met the students' transcripts and report cards will be withheld.

## **Summer School/Online Credit Policy**

These guidelines are to be followed:

- Approval from the Academic Dean and the Director of College Counseling is required before a course is taken.
- The family is responsible for all course costs.
- All credit must be earned through an accredited institution.
- Approval to take a course will be granted according to the following guidelines:
  1. To repeat a course after earning a failing or unsatisfactory grade
    - a) GPA earned through courses repeated for grade replacement will not be considered for valedictorian/salutatorian eligibility. The only exception is a student who took Honors Algebra I in 8<sup>th</sup> grade and wishes to replace their grade by either taking College Preparatory Algebra I in 9<sup>th</sup> grade or by taking the original credit, non-honors online Algebra I course during the summer immediately following 8<sup>th</sup> grade.
    - b) Failing grades will be recorded in the student's permanent record and on the transcript; a credit recovery program will be used to earn the needed credit.
    - c) Students wishing to replace an unsatisfactory passing grade must take a full original credit, non-honors course.
  2. Taking a course to catch up with grade-level requirements
  3. Taking a course to resolve a schedule conflict (recommended for non-core courses only)
  4. Taking a course not offered by DCA (taken for elective credit only) to resolve a schedule conflict or pursue an interest
  5. Taking a dual enrollment course to pursue an interest and possibly earn college credit

## **Academic Improvement Plan for Upper School**

To promote academic accountability and success in the college preparatory curriculum at DCA, an Academic Improvement Plan is utilized.

*The structure is as follows:*

The Academic Dean, Dean of Men, Dean of Women, and Head of Middle and Upper School will identify students with below 74 in multiple classes each week. These students will meet with the appropriate Dean to:

1. Discuss status and means by which to improve their grades.
2. Be made aware of the following steps in the plan should progress not be sufficient.

Students who have two or more grades below a C after the first semester will be placed on Academic Probation and must meet with their parents, the Head of Middle and Upper School, and the appropriate Dean. Re-enrollment will be held until sufficient

progress has been made. Probation status will be reviewed again after the third nine weeks. The school withholds re-enrollment during academic probation periods until the student's progress is satisfactory. If the Head of Middle and Upper School recommends separation from the school, a meeting with the student and the parents may be requested with the Head of School for an appeal for one semester. If the student has not met the required improvements, the student and parents will be informed that they must make alternate education plans for the following semester.

## **College and Career Planning**

Donelson Christian Academy provides a complete college counseling program for secondary students. Students and parents are encouraged to work closely with the college counseling office throughout the college application and selection process.

Students are required to take the PreACT test in their freshman and sophomore years and all seniors are required to take the ACT or the SAT at least once before graduating. Juniors are encouraged to take one of these at least once per semester of their junior year. (Students may take the ACT and SAT as often as they like to achieve the highest desired score possible.) Students planning to enroll in Dual Enrollment Classes must take the ACT during their sophomore year, April at the latest, to qualify for DE classes.

## **College Visit Days**

Students may miss up to two school days a year to visit college campuses with their parents. Arrangements for these college days are to be made by filling out and signing the available form and turning it into the College Counseling office at least one week in advance. **Students requesting extra college days should contact the Director of College Counseling.**

## **Automobiles and Safety**

Students are permitted to drive motor vehicles to school. This is a privilege with parental permission. Once a student arrives on campus, the student should exit the vehicle and enter the building. Loitering or sitting in parked cars is not permitted. Students are not allowed to return to their car during the school day. If reckless driving or loud radio noise occurs, the student may lose the privilege of parking on campus.

# *Middle and Upper School Policies*

## **Attendance for Middle and Upper School Students**

Consistent attendance is vitally important for success at Donelson Christian Academy. Missing class for any reason puts the student at a disadvantage, so the Academy requests parents minimize absences as much as possible. The Academy also realizes that special family events (family weddings, family funerals, family graduations, etc.) and illnesses/injuries/professional appointments require students to miss school. The most important detail during any absence is good communication with the Middle/Upper School office.

When a student must leave school during the day, a phone call, email, or note from the parent should be received by the Middle/Upper School Office by 8:15 a.m. This note should indicate the time of departure, the time of return, and the reason for departure. Students should not miss a school day to rest or prepare for any after-school event. The academic day must be the top priority. Students must attend four full periods to participate in after-school activities or have administrative approval.

Seniors in good academic standing and with parent permission may sign out of the 7th-period study hall to leave campus at the end of the day. If a senior has an afternoon commitment on campus (Athletic or Fine Arts Activity), he/she must remain in the study hall.

### **Excused Absences**

During each semester, an absence from a class period will be considered excused (no penalty) if it satisfies one of these criteria:

- Parent Approved - Any absence (vacation, special event, or trip) is at a parent's discretion. Students are limited to **three** parent-approved absences from each class per semester.
- School-sponsored activities, such as sports or fine arts, for participants only
- A student is allowed two college visit days if approved through the college counselor's office. Students must fill out the appropriate paperwork for the college counselor's office.
- Professional Appointment (medical, dental, psychological, legal, etc.) with an email or call to confirm the appointment by 8:15 a.m. on the day of the appointment and a professional note from the appointment.
- Illness or injury necessitating absence for at least one full day of school or the remainder of the day. The school requests parent confirmation through note, email, or call by 8:15 a.m. on the day of illness and may require information from a doctor as necessary.

- Death, wedding, or graduation in the student's family
- Administrative discretion day

### **Unexcused Absences**

An absence may be considered unexcused (academic penalty) if any of the following criteria apply:

- More than **three** Parent Approved absences per semester per class
- Not receiving notice from a parent why a student is absent
- Truancy (skipping class, leaving class without permission, failing to return to class promptly)
- More than 10 minutes late to a class or excessive tardiness to class
- Out of School Suspension (OSS) for disciplinary reasons

### **Planned Absences**

As early as possible, the school must be informed of all planned absences (e.g., medical appointments, parent-approved, college visit days, etc.). Parents should notify the Middle/Upper School Office when their child will be absent. The student is responsible for coordinating with teachers any make-up work (and corresponding deadlines) and following the agreed-upon plans following the teachers' and the school's make-up work policies. Parents should schedule appointments after school or on school vacation days. The administration understands that there are occasions when schedules will not permit an appointment outside of school hours. If an appointment needs to be made during school hours, we recommend that parents schedule appointments during Study Hall or community periods to avoid missing instructional time. Student schedules will be available for parents in the Middle/Upper School Office upon request.

For parent-approved absences for family trips, students should pick up a **Pre-planned Absence Form** from the Middle/Upper School Office and have parents and teachers sign the form. The form must be turned back into the office before an absence occurs. All planned absences must be **approved** by the Head of Middle and Upper School in advance. Please remember students are only allowed **three** parent-approved absences per semester.

### **Unplanned Absences** (Sickness, injuries, doctor's appointments, etc.)

Parents must inform the Middle/Upper School Office of all unplanned absences by 8:15 a.m. that morning. Students must check with all teachers upon returning to school to determine missed assignments and adhere to the school's make-up work policy.

### **Make-Up Work Policy**

For **excused absences**, students will have one day for each day absent to turn in missed assignments. The student does not get an extra day for all assignments (including tests,



papers, and homework) made before the unplanned absence that was due while the student was absent or the day the student returned (ex: If a student is at school Monday and misses Tuesday, the student will be responsible for Monday's assignments upon returning to school). Those assignments are due the day the student returns. For **unexcused absences**, the student will receive a zero (0) for daily work missed in each class and a grade level deduction for missing significant assignments (Tests, Projects, Papers, Presentations) missed in each class. **Direct communication with teachers is vital to a successful return to the classroom.** The make-up work policy does not apply to students who are in school and fail to submit or complete an assignment on time. Students should expect the teacher to follow the classroom policy outlined in the syllabus, which could be a 0 for incomplete or late assignment(s).

### **Excessive Absences**

Since absence from class hinders a student's academic progress, excessive absences (excused and/or unexcused) may necessitate the loss of credit or withdrawal from a class. If a student has the equivalent of **ten** days of accumulated absences in a particular class, the student will be placed on attendance probation. After the 9th absence, the student will receive a warning from the appropriate Dean. Once a student is placed on attendance probation, the student can only miss class for a school-sponsored activity, professional appointment, or illness/injury. For an absence due to a professional appointment, illness or injury, a parent is required to email or call the office by 8:15 a.m. For an absence due to a professional appointment, illness or injury lasting more than one day, a professional note must be turned into the office upon the student's return, or the absence will be **unexcused**. Any student on attendance probation that receives an **unexcused absence** will receive a zero (0) for daily work missed in each class and a grade level deduction for missing significant assignments (Tests, Projects, Papers, Presentations) missed in each class. In all cases, the academic work missed must be completed. The student will remain on attendance probation for the rest of the school year. In addition to attendance probation, the school's administration may meet with the student and/or parents to review the cause(s) for the absences to determine if the student can earn credit for the course. Excessive absences may also result in re-enrollment being held or the students' dismissal from DCA. Exceptions will be made for long-term illness or injury. If a student is more than ten (10) minutes late for a middle or upper school class without the proper excuse, it will count as an unexcused absence. In all cases, missed academic work must be completed.

### **Tardiness**

Like absenteeism, tardiness is a disruption not only to the learning process but also to other members of the class. It is essential to teach punctuality as an integral part of life. The student must learn to make appropriate adjustments to be assured of being at



school in the morning or in class at the appropriate time. A student is considered tardy if he/she is fewer than 10 minutes late for class. The Middle/Upper School Office will determine first-period tardiness, and classroom teachers will evaluate tardies for each class period after the first period.

### **Tardy Policy**

Outside of all-school traffic tardies, weather related tardies, or tardies related to school-sponsored activities (for participants only), such as sports or fine arts, each student is allowed **three** tardies per nine-week grading period. After the third tardy per nine-week grading period, the student will receive a warning from the appropriate Dean. On the fourth tardy and all future tardies during the nine-week grading period, the student will be assigned detention.

## 2025-26 Bell Schedule

Monday - Wednesday - Friday		Tuesday - Thursday	
Early Supervision - Tutoring	7:15-7:45	Early Supervision - Tutoring	7:15-8:10
Period 1	7:50-8:40	Period 1	8:15-9:00
Period 2	8:45-9:35	Period 2	9:05-9:50
<b>MS CT / Chapel / FT</b>	<b>9:40-10:00</b>	<b>MS 10-Minute Break</b>	<b>9:50-10:00</b>
<b>MS Period 3</b>	<b>10:05-10:55</b>	<b>MS Period 3</b>	<b>10:00-10:45</b>
<i>HS Period 3</i>	<i>9:40-10:30</i>	<i>HS Period 3</i>	<i>9:55-10:40</i>
<i>HS CT / Chapel / FT</i>	<i>10:35-10:55</i>	<i>HS 10-Minute Break</i>	<i>10:40-10:50</i>
Period 4	11:00-11:50	Period 4	10:50-11:35
<b>MS Lunch</b>	<b>11:55-12:20</b>	<b>MS Lunch</b>	<b>11:40-12:05</b>
<b>MS Period 5</b>	<b>12:25-1:10</b>	<b>MS Period 5</b>	<b>12:10-1:00</b>
<i>HS Period 5</i>	<i>11:55-12:40</i>	<i>HS Period 5</i>	<i>11:40-12:30</i>
<i>HS Lunch</i>	<i>12:45-1:10</i>	<i>HS Lunch</i>	<i>12:35-1:00</i>
Period 6	1:15-2:00	Period 6	1:05-1:55
Period 7	2:05-2:50	Period 7	2:00-2:50

## 2025-26 Special Bell Schedules

Mon - Wed - Fri 20 Minute Combined		Mon - Wed - Fri 40 Minute Combined		Mon - Wed - Fri 40 Minute Split	
Early Supervision - Tutoring	7:15-7:45	Early Supervision - Tutoring	7:15-7:45	Early Supervision - Tutoring	7:15-7:45
1st Period	7:50-8:40	1st Period	7:50-8:35	1st Period	7:50-8:35
2nd Period	8:45-9:35	2nd Period	8:40-9:25	2nd Period	8:40-9:25
3rd Period	9:40-10:30	3rd Period	9:30-10:15	<b>40 Minute MS Special Event</b>	<b>9:30-10:10</b>
<b>20 Minute Special Event</b>	<b>10:35-10:55</b>	<b>40 Minute Special Event</b>	<b>10:20-11:00</b>	MS 3rd Period	10:15-11:00
4th Period	11:00-11:50	4th Period	11:05-11:50	HS 3rd Period	9:30-10:15
<b>MS Lunch</b>	<b>11:55-12:20</b>	<b>MS Lunch</b>	<b>11:55-12:20</b>	<b>40 Minute HS Special Event</b>	<b>10:20-11:00</b>
<b>MS 5th Period</b>	<b>12:25-1:10</b>	<b>MS 5th Period</b>	<b>12:25-1:10</b>	4th Period	11:05-11:50
<i>HS 5th Period</i>	<i>11:55-12:40</i>	<i>HS 5th Period</i>	<i>11:55-12:40</i>	<b>MS Lunch</b>	<b>11:55-12:20</b>
<i>HS Lunch</i>	<i>12:45-1:10</i>	<i>HS Lunch</i>	<i>12:45-1:10</i>	<b>MS 5th Period</b>	<b>12:25-1:10</b>
6th Period	1:15-2:00	6th Period	1:15-2:00	<i>HS 5th Period</i>	<i>11:55-12:40</i>
7th Period - MS Athletics	2:05-2:50	7th Period - MS Athletics	2:05-2:50	<i>HS Lunch</i>	<i>12:45-1:10</i>
MS - After School Supervision	3:00-5:30	MS - After School Supervision	3:00-5:30	6th Period	1:15-2:00
				7th Period - MS Athletics	2:05-2:50

## Personal Appearance Code for Middle and Upper School Students

### Grades 6 through 12

School is a place of work for students. Clean, neat, and appropriate attire creates a quality of appearance and enhances the learning atmosphere with fewer distractions. Dress reflects an attitude and DCA seeks to establish an atmosphere and attitude that reflects a Christian learning environment.

Parents are expected to play an active role in the enforcement of the personal appearance and uniform code. Questions about the appropriateness of clothing or personal appearance may be answered by the school administration. Teachers and administrators reserve the right to determine what is appropriate attire or appearance for the educational setting.

### General Requirements

- **All DCA uniform pieces except for the khaki pants (for the boys and girls) and the shorts (for boys only) are to be purchased from Max & Alice School Uniforms. Khaki pants may be purchased from any vendor.** The type of khaki pants worn must follow the pant dress code requirements. The school administration may designate non-uniform days.
- Clothes should be worn properly and should not be dirty or ripped. Any t-shirt worn under the uniform shirt must be with no visible graphics. White t-shirts only under white uniform shirts.
- All kilts MUST BE **NO SHORTER THAN FINGER TIP LENGTH ABOVE THE FRONT OF THE KNEE**. Parents can measure the length of their child's skirt by having the child place their arms to the side and then measure. The kilts must have hems. The kilts must be worn with modesty shorts underneath and must not be longer than the kilt. **Absolutely no** sweatpants or any slacks will be worn under the kilts.
- Shirrtails must be tucked in on Chapel days or any other special event day identified by the administration, i.e., Veterans Day, Christmas Chapel, Special Speakers, etc.
- Solid black leggings or tights for girls are permitted and encouraged during the winter months. **NO sweatpants will be allowed.**
- **Blankets are not allowed at DCA.**
- All pants (and knee length shorts worn by boys only) must be the khaki/tan uniform pants (specifically defined in the Uniform Dress Code).

- Non-DCA outerwear may be worn outside but must be removed and placed in the student's classroom or locker when inside the building. DCA athletic outerwear jackets and Spirit Store outerwear are acceptable to wear indoors. Students must wear the correct uniform underneath.
- Clothes must be size-appropriate.
- Students must not wear hats, sweatshirts (except spirit wear), hoodies (except for spirit wear), bandannas, scarves, or other headgear inside the building.
- Headphones and earbuds should only be used under the supervision of a teacher in class.
- Shoes must be clean and in good repair. **No** flip-flops, athletic slides, house shoes, or plastic shoes (crocks). Tennis shoes are required for all physical education classes.
- A black or brown belt must be worn with pants or shorts.
- On Chapel dress days, students must remove their sweatshirts during the chapel service.

### **Haircuts and Accessories**

No haircuts or accessories should be worn that the administration deems as calling attention to a particular student's appearance.

- Conservative haircuts for boys are expected. Haircuts that are unusually or unnaturally shaved, spiked, or colored, are not allowed. Hair **MUST** not be longer than the top of the shoulders and out of the eyes. Tails and/or ponytails, buns, unnatural coloring, and pointed mohawks will not be allowed.
- Traditional haircuts for girls are expected. Hair should be well kept and groomed and worn out of the eyes. Unnatural coloring or hairstyles that call attention to a girl's appearance are not allowed.
- Boys will not be allowed to have facial hair (seniors exempt). Sideburns can be no longer than the bottom of the earlobe.
- After the senior portrait pictures are completed with the school photographer, seniors may have a **well-groomed** mustache, beard, or mustache/chin beard.
- Boys may not wear earrings or other body piercings at school or any school-related activity. No tattoos can be visible at school or ANY school-related activity.
- Girls may wear earrings in their ears only. No other face or body piercings can be worn at school or any school-related activity. No tattoos can be visible at school or any school-related activity.

*Boys and Girls must wear only solid white undergarments.  
No other colors and no visible graphics under any white shirt.*

## Uniform Dress Code Grades 6 through 12

### GIRLS

#### Bottom Attire

**DCA Plaid Kilt– (Grades 6-12) Purchased only from Max & Alice School Uniforms**

No shorter than finger-tip length above the front of the knee and must be worn with modesty shorts

**DCA Plaid Skort (Grades K-12) – (Purchased from Max & Alice School Uniforms) No shorter than finger-tip length above the front of the knee.**

**Khaki/tan pants can be purchased from Max & Alice School Uniforms or any vendor.**

The styles and colors of **khaki/tan** pants that will NOT be allowed for the girls to wear at DCA are:

- No denim khaki pants (cotton/polyester blend dress pants are required)
- No skinny-leg pants
- No banded or elastic ankle pants
- No cargo pants
- No green, gray, or brown khaki color pants
- No shorts
- Must have belt loops and worn with a belt

#### Top Attire (with DCA logo and purchased only at Max & Alice School Uniforms)

**Polos** – Long and short sleeve (If wearing a long sleeve shirt under short-sleeve polo, it must be the same color as the polo shirt and with no visible graphics)

- White cotton and/or Dri-Fit
- Royal cotton and/or Dri-Fit
- Black cotton and/or Dri-Fit

#### Oxford

- White short and/or long sleeve
- \*Blue and white stripe (\*seniors only)

#### Outerwear

- Non-DCA outerwear may be worn outside but must be removed and placed in the student's classroom or locker inside the building. DCA athletic outerwear jackets and Spirit Store outerwear are acceptable to wear indoors. Students must wear the correct uniform underneath.

### Optional

- Sweater Vest - Black
- Cardigan – Black

## BOYS

### Bottom Attire

**Khaki/tan** pants and **khaki/tan** knee-length shorts can be purchased from **Max & Alice School Uniforms** or any vendor. **Khaki color will be considered tan.** The styles and colors of **khaki/tan** pants and shorts that will NOT be allowed for the boys to wear at DCA:

1. No denim khaki pants or shorts
2. No skinny-leg pants or shorts
3. No banded or elastic ankle pants
4. No cargo pants or shorts
5. No green, gray, or brown khaki color pants or shorts
6. Must have belt loops and worn with a belt

### Top Attire (with DCA logo and purchased only at Max & Alice School Uniforms)

**Polos** – Long and short sleeve (If wearing a long sleeve shirt under a short-sleeve polo, it must be the same color as the polo shirt and with no visible graphics)

- White cotton and/or Dri-Fit
- Royal cotton and/or Dri-Fit
- Black cotton and/or Dri-Fit

### Oxford

- White short and/or long-sleeve
- \*Blue and white stripe (\*seniors only)

### Outerwear

- Non-DCA outerwear may be worn outside but must be removed and placed in the student's classroom or locker inside the building. DCA athletic outerwear jackets and Spirit Store outerwear are acceptable to wear indoors. Students must wear the correct uniform underneath.

### Optional

- Sweater Vest – Black

## Chapel Uniform Dress for Grades 6 through 12

### Girls

White short and/or long sleeve oxford top (blue and white stripe **for seniors only**) with plaid kilt

### Boys

White short and/or long sleeve oxford shirt (blue and white stripe **for seniors only**) with khaki/tan pants (no shorts)

Students are not allowed to wear sweatshirts during the chapel service and must remain in their chapel uniform for the entire school day.

## Middle and Upper School Policy on Literature and Movies

### **General**

It is the goal of the school to see all students accept Christ as their personal Savior and to do nothing that might interfere or confuse them regarding what it means to be a Christian.

During each school year, several novels will be read, and movies viewed in classes at DCA. One goal of the school is to help prepare our students to succeed at the college level by adequately preparing them for college expectations. We strive to do this within the context of a Christian worldview and in a way that supports the mission of the academy, which is to develop the whole child for the glory of God by providing exemplary academic and extracurricular programs. We intend that the student “love what is lovely and hate what is hateful” and seek to use the Word of God as his/her guide in evaluating all books and movies.

Imaginative works have several characteristics in common. They all have plot, setting, character, point of view, and tone which contribute to conveying a theme worth evaluating. All such works stimulate our minds as they reveal the human condition, and as such they relate to our lives. While DCA is firmly committed to fostering spiritual growth in all aspects of our program, this should not be interpreted to mean that Christians will have authored all works or that all works will have a Christian perspective. Many works will only ask the great questions. The leadership of DCA prayerfully seeks to hire faculty who are wholeheartedly committed to the Lordship of Jesus Christ and a Biblical worldview. As such, it is the responsibility of the teacher to make age-appropriate book and movie choices and to partner with parents in training children to use spiritual discernment in evaluating all works considering Biblical truth.

Due to the different needs and maturity levels of elementary and secondary students, guidelines for the books and movies used within classrooms and/or assigned by teachers will not be the same for all grades. In general, works are chosen that meet several criteria, including supporting the mission of the school, as well as the following:

- Artistic merit.
- A good fit into the larger academic goals (i.e., novels used in junior English contribute to an understanding of American culture learned in junior American history).
- Works that colleges expect upper school students to have read.
- Works that will contribute to students' moral/character development, works that show the consequences of evil choices, and the benefits of virtue.
- Age-appropriate in terms of vocabulary, themes, and subject matter.

Colleges assume that students have already had some exposure at the upper school level to the works of certain authors, such as Shakespeare, Chaucer, Dickens, Hawthorne, Twain, Fitzgerald, Hemingway, Steinbeck, and Miller. Because of the desire to have graduates prepared for college, selected works contributing to that goal are specifically chosen. Part of the human condition is evil, and no work can be great if it fails to acknowledge the existence of evil. Some works chosen at this level include incidences of violence, sex, and vulgarity.

Works are specifically avoided where such incidences are gratuitous if they attract the reader/viewer to evil. By wrestling with moral issues through books and movies in a classroom discussion, a student's Christian worldview and spiritual discernment can be developed and strengthened.

## **Challenged Material Policy**

DCA acknowledges the right of parents or groups to object to materials that are a part of the Media Center collection. Any complaints about the material will be directed through the following procedures:

- The complainant will file objections in writing by completing the Request for Reconsideration of Instructional Materials and Media Center Resources. This form is available from the principals.
- A committee of two teachers and one librarian, appointed by the Head of Middle and Upper School, shall review the material in question and submit its report in writing to the Head of Middle and Upper School.
- The final decision for a controversial reading matter shall rest with the Board of Trustees after careful examination and discussion of the book or reading matter with school Officials or anyone else the Board may wish to get involved.

## Student/Parent iPad Use Agreement

### Grades 6 through 12

Donelson Christian Academy is committed to the integration of technology into the academic programs of the school. We believe that digital tools in the form of iPads are an excellent way to develop and enhance the lifelong learning process. We also believe that the use of iPads in the classroom can promote educational and organizational excellence. We resolve to prepare our students for a future where 21st-century skills are required. This policy is effective for all students who have signed the *Student/Parent iPad Use Agreement*.

**Term:** In consideration for paying tuition, Donelson Christian Academy (DCA) will provide an iPad to the above student. The parents and students will always comply with DCA's Student iPad Procedures for Use and Responsible Technology Use Policy. Any failure to comply may terminate the student's rights of possession effective immediately and Donelson Christian Academy may repossess the iPad.

**Title:** The legal title to the iPad is with DCA and shall always remain with DCA.

**Loss or Damage:** If the iPad is lost or stolen the parent is responsible for the replacement value on the date of loss. It is the parent's responsibility to decide whether additional insurance is necessary to cover this responsibility. Loss or theft of the property must be reported to a person in DCA's technology department by the next school day after the occurrence. This agreement also includes iPads that may be given to students for use while the unit listed above is repaired. The parents will be financially responsible for replacing any of these items that are lost or damaged: charger, keyboard, case. These items are not covered under AppleCare+. If the screen is damaged or cracked, AppleCare+ allows 2 repairs to the device for \$50 each repair. Parents will be responsible for the \$50 fee. After 2 repairs, Parents will pay DCA to replace the device.

**Possession:** Students may keep the iPad full-time in their possession while enrolled at DCA but must turn in the property immediately upon withdrawal, dismissal, or graduation. The student may keep the iPad during the summer vacation only if all tuition and fees have been paid to DCA for the previous school year and the student is enrolled for the next school year. If tuition is not paid in full or the student is not re-enrolled, the iPad must be returned to the school on the last day of the school year.

**Repossession:** If the parent or student does not timely and fully comply with all terms of this Agreement and DCA's Student iPad Procedures for Use and Responsible

Technology Use Policy, including the timely return of the property, DCA shall be entitled to declare you in default and come to your place of residence, or other location of the property, to take possession of the property.

**Appropriation:** Failure to return the property timely and the continued use of it for non-school purposes without DCA's consent may be considered unlawful appropriation of DCA's property.

**Warranty:** Tuition includes a full warranty, excluding damage, and not including loss or theft. However, the parent/student is responsible for replacing all accessories such as the keyboard (\$35), power charger/cord (\$30), and iPad case (\$30).

**Exchange:** DCA may exchange a different iPad, for the assigned one, to the student at any time by its sole discretion.

**Maintenance Costs:** The student and parent will be responsible for accessories such as the keyboard (\$35), power charger/cord (\$30), and iPad case (\$30) replacement. Due to Apple's warranty, these items must be purchased through the school. If the iPad gets physical damage to the screen or the device itself, the warranty repair cost is \$50 for the first two incidents, and market value thereafter. Other fees may be assessed for any functional problems that may arise due to the inappropriate use of the iPad by the student. Inappropriate use will be determined solely by the technology staff of DCA. The backup of files to online storage sites is the sole responsibility of the student. DCA is not responsible for any lost files during resetting of the device or other machine or software maintenance procedures.

**Responsible Use:** A student's use must always be supportive and respectful of educational goals and standards of conduct for DCA students both on and off campus. Students must keep the iPad in the assigned case. Students must treat the iPads gently and never leave them unattended or in an unsecured location. If you leave the room during class time, you should make sure your iPad is in a responsible place, such as your backpack.

**Expected Availability at School:** The student is responsible for having the iPad at school, fully charged, in good working order, every school day. In the event of problems or damage, the student should bring the iPad to the technology department as soon as possible.

**DCA Supervision of Student Tablets:** The technology department, faculty, and school administrators may have immediate physical or remote access to always view the iPad. We manage the student-issued iPad with a Mobile Device Management product named FileWave. FileWave allows DCA to place restrictions on the devices related to the iOS, and profiles for different grade levels. The profiles include the lockout of students being able to have access to the App Store or iTunes Store. Only DCA, through FileWave, can place applications (Apps) on the iPads. Students may request free Apps, if they need one and if they fall within educational parameters.

**Internet Safety:** The internet can be dangerous for minors. Potentially harmful sites are blocked on all student-issued iPads. DCA also filters all network-connected devices in the school, along with the student-issued iPads, at home. We use Securly as our content filter. Securly is a filter designed with K-12 schools are at the forefront of its development. You can find out more about Securely on their website: [www.securly.com](http://www.securly.com)

**Wallpapers:** Inappropriate media may not be used as a wallpaper on the iPad. Weapons, pornographic materials, inappropriate language, alcohol, drugs, gang-related symbols, or pictures will result in disciplinary action. DCA places a Lockscreen wallpaper on each student device that must always stay on as the lockscreen. Passcodes can be used but DCA may clear those when needed.

**Sound:** Sound will be always muted unless permission is given by the teacher for instructional purposes. Headphones may be used in class for instructional purposes when permitted, but may not be used outside a teacher's supervision in the classroom.

### **Artificial Intelligence (AI) Statement**

Donelson Christian Academy acknowledges the rapid advancements in technology and their profound impact on education. Artificial intelligence (AI), particularly large language models like ChatGPT, commonly referred to as Generative AI, necessitates a thorough evaluation of their influence on our teachers' teaching methods, student learning outcomes, and academic integrity. It is our responsibility to provide education and training for our school leaders, teachers, and students on the ethical and educational use of AI. Simultaneously, we must underscore and promote academic integrity, critical thinking, profound comprehension, cybersecurity, and data privacy. The code of conduct is written to address potential risks and to avoid undermining learning in the classroom. Our commitment to academic excellence will continue amidst the evolving demands of AI.

## **Middle/Upper School AI Code of Conduct**

- 1. Use AI responsibly:** Students should use AI tools and techniques in a responsible and ethical manner. This includes not using AI to cheat, plagiarize, or gain an unfair advantage. Generative AI tools should only be used for school-related creative work (e.g., to generate text or other creative works) when given approval or guidance from a classroom teacher.
- 2. Understand the limitations of AI:** Students should understand the limitations of AI and recognize that it is not a substitute for critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills.
- 3. Consider the potential biases of AI:** Students should be aware that AI tools and techniques may be biased and should take steps to mitigate bias when using AI.
- 4. Maintain data privacy:** The use of AI should be done in a way that protects personally identifiable information (PII). Students should not share any PII with AI technologies, including name, birth date, address, or other financial or confidential information.
- 5. Student Accountability Regarding Information Accuracy:** AI is not perfect, has been known to create inaccurate information, and can be used to create misinformation and disinformation. Use proper researching skills (Stop, Investigate the Source, Find Better Coverage & Trace to the Original Context) to check sources and find independent facts to confirm AI-generated content. The student is solely responsible for any inaccuracies in any information provided by AI and must be sure to verify the reliability of information when creating assignments.
- 6. Provide attribution:** When using AI tools and techniques, students should provide proper attribution and credit to the source of the tool or technique. 7. Seek guidance when in doubt: When students are unsure whether the use of AI is appropriate for a particular assignment or project, they should seek guidance from their teacher or instructor.
- 7. Usage:** AI tools will be used for educational purposes only. Misuse or malicious use of AI technologies will lead to disciplinary action.

## Philosophy of Discipline Grades 6 through 12

Every child at DCA is uniquely made in God's image. As a result, we believe that cultivating Christ-honoring conduct provides opportunities for our students to learn, understand, and practice Christian virtues. We also realize that DCA students learning from their mistakes increase dramatically when they see a clear connection between their choices and resulting consequences.

DCA dedicates itself to following a set of core beliefs that provides a clear guide for dealing with student conduct.

- We believe how we think and act regarding student conduct should be redemptive in nature, emphasizing growth.
- As Christians, we believe an individual's public testimony is an essential area of personal responsibility. We want to encourage our students to be good representatives of our Lord Jesus Christ, their families, and Donelson Christian Academy.
- Attending DCA is a privilege...not a right.
- Rules and regulations are guardrails designed to establish proper standards of behavior. A student's honesty, repentance, and cooperation in the discipline process say much about whether he/she wants to be at DCA and whether he/she is willing to accept responsibility for his/her behavior.
- Christian love is at the heart of all discipline. Correction and chastening are essential parts of genuine love. Firmness without love is harsh; love without firmness is sentimental. The responsibility and the authority to discipline come from God. The child who learns obedience to parents and teachers is developing a lifestyle that encourages obedience to God. *"because the Lord disciplines those he loves" Proverbs 3:12a*
- Because character development is not limited to school hours, we aim to partner with parents in training and maintaining high standards of conduct for our students. Students are expected to behave not to bring reproach to the Academy.
- We believe students should take responsibility for their actions, knowing they influence those around them.

Responsible student participation at the Academy is characterized in three ways: (a) cooperation which fosters an orderly, safe learning environment, (b) whole-hearted respect for other community members, school property, and the property of community members; and the integrity of the educational program, and (c) maintenance of a lifestyle consistent with Christian principles. Each discipline issue is a case that stands on its own, will be handled confidentially with the student, family, and school



personnel, and can lead to disciplinary actions with a goal of changing the student's heart. Discipline actions generally include counseling, detention (before school, during lunch, or after school), loss of privilege, in-school (ISS) or out-of-school suspension (OSS), behavior probation, denial of re-enrollment, or dismissal from the Academy.

The discipline system aims to change students' hearts and minds to be Christ-like. *"Train yourself to be Godly. For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come."* I Timothy 4:7b-8 At the end of the day, discipline is a way to disciple students to develop godly character. Donelson Christian Academy students are expected to be ladies and gentlemen who influence their community for good. DCA is concerned with students' conduct both on and off campus. When a student makes a mistake, he/she is expected to deal with the problem HONESTLY, correct it, accept the discipline, and move forward. We aim to show each student a vision of what they can be and help them achieve it.

## **Parental Cooperation**

DCA believes a positive and constructive working relationship between the school and a student's parents/guardian is essential to accomplishing the school's mission. Accordingly, the school reserves the right not to renew or terminate a student's enrollment contract if the school reasonably concludes that the actions of a parent or guardian make such a positive and constructive relationship impossible. The school considers any action by a student and/or his parents or guardian seriously interfering with the school's ability to accomplish its mission as grounds for dismissal. Parents are expected to fully support both the letter and the spirit of the guidelines, at least to the extent of recognizing the need for rules and the Academy's proper enforcement.

## **Discipline Offenses**

### **Level I (Renweb warning to one or two Demerits)**

The classroom teacher will deal with these offenses and, if necessary, may refer the student to the administration. For learning to occur, the DCA discipline plan must be initiated in the classroom. Therefore, teachers will use various methods to train students on appropriate behavior. Consequences may include but are not limited to a student being assigned to detention.

The following are examples of *Level I* behaviors:

- Disrupting a class, the hallway, or a school function
- Rude behavior
- Poor lunchroom behavior
- Littering or not cleaning up after lunch

- Leaving campus for lunch or ordering lunch on campus (DoorDash)
- Dress Code - Shirrtails out on chapel days, not wearing the appropriate chapel dress, wearing non-DCA outerwear in the building, no belt, wrong shoes, **inappropriate skirt length (skirt should not be shorter than fingertip length of the female student wearing the skirt)**, not wearing a DCA collared shirt.
- Inattentiveness, lack of effort, failure to bring necessary materials, or a pattern of incomplete work
- Food or beverage in a restricted area
- Parking Lot Violations (parking in the wrong spot, in the parking lot without permission – students are not allowed to return to their vehicles once school begins)
- Cell Phone Violation - student phone **not** in backpack or locker from 7:50-2:50. Middle School students will not be allowed to use their cell phone while in before-school care from 7:10 a.m. to 7:50/8:10 a.m. On the first offense, the student will turn in the cell phone to the office for the remainder of the day and receive one demerit. On the second offense, the student will turn in the cell phone to the office for the remainder of the day and receive two demerits with detention. On the third offense, the student will turn in the cell phone to the office for the remainder of the day and receive three demerits with a double detention. After three offenses, the school administration will begin conversing with the student's parents. On the fourth offense, the student's cell phone will remain in the office until a parent meets with school administration. The student will receive four demerits, serve an ISS, and meet with the appropriate dean, principal, and parents to discuss the student's future of having a cell phone on campus. After four violations of the cell phone policy, the school reserves the right to suspend the student from having a cell phone on campus.

These behaviors are intended as examples. Other behaviors may result in similar consequences. Repetitive or severe Level I violations may result in Level II consequences.

### **Level II (Two to Four Demerits)**

These offenses will be referred to the administration to determine appropriate disciplinary measures. Consequences may include but are not limited to detention, double detention, loss of privilege, and in-school (ISS).

The following are examples of *Level II* behaviors:

- Conduct unbecoming of a DCA student
- Inappropriate use of technology

- The **first offense** of academic dishonesty (cheating, copying work, inappropriate use of AI, etc.), lying or stealing.
- Inappropriate display of affection
- Intentional or repeated dress code violations
- Profanity or vulgarity
- Defiance or disrespect
- Failure to attend detention
- Vandalism (student will pay all repair costs)
- Skipping class (the student will receive a grade of zero for all missed work)
- Excessive tardiness begins after six tardies in a nine-week grading period
- Reckless driving
- Invasion of privacy
- Occupying restricted areas on campus without permission (Administrator's office, classroom, teacher's workroom, etc.) Borrowing without permission

These behaviors are intended as examples. Other behaviors may result in similar consequences and repetitive or severe Level II violations may result in Level III consequences.

### *Level III (ISS and OSS incur Four to Six Demerits)*

These offenses will be referred to the administration to determine appropriate disciplinary measures. Consequences may include, but are not limited to, in-school suspension (ISS) or out-of-school suspension (OSS).

The following are examples of *Level III* behaviors:

- A pattern of truancy (repeated unexcused absences)
- Malicious hazing or bullying
- The **second and third offenses** of academic dishonesty (cheating, copying work, inappropriate use of AI, etc.), lying, or stealing.
- Possession of tobacco products *and/or electronic cigarettes* (vapes) on campus or at a school activity
- Malicious, serious vandalism
- Profanity or derogatory language directed toward a student or employee
- Offensive or derogatory language (racist comments)
- Fighting
- Posting harmful information on social media
- Sexual harassment
- A student choosing to identify with something other than their birth gender

- Repetitive/Major cell phone violations (four) or unacceptable behavior with a school iPad or computer

These behaviors are intended as examples. Other behaviors may result in similar consequences. Repetitive or severe Level III violations may result in Level IV consequences.

**Level IV (Eight to Ten Demerits or possible expulsion)**

The administration will immediately handle the offenses. Students will be suspended from school (OSS) until the appropriate action has been decided. The following are expellable offenses.

The following are examples of *Level IV* behaviors:

- Carrying or possessing on campus or at a school activity any object identified in the state penal codes as a weapon
- Selling or providing alcohol, inhalants, or illegal drugs
- Use or possession of alcohol, inhalants, or illegal drugs on campus
- Commission of a felony-level offense either on or off-campus
- Life-endangering actions at school or a school activity
- Participation on/off campus or at a school activity in fornication, same-sex acts, any immoral sexual acts, sharing of pornographic materials, or sexting
- Threatening physical harm to a DCA employee or student
- Intentionally damaging the property of a DCA employee
- Stealing or selling a test or quiz and/or distributing such materials to fellow students
- Multiple lying, stealing, or cheating events
- Commission of any act that brings reproach or shame to the Academy
- Abortion or pregnancy- any female student who becomes pregnant and any male student responsible for pregnancy must report this to the Head of School as soon as it is medically confirmed. At such times, the student(s) must withdraw from DCA. Parents will be responsible for continuing education during the term of pregnancy. There will be no refund of fees and tuition.

These behaviors are intended as examples. Other behaviors may result in similar consequences.

## Discipline Consequences

### *Mitigating Circumstances*

Occasionally, mitigating circumstances may influence a disciplinary decision. Factors worthy of consideration include but are not limited to prior record, intent, provocation, and attitude. The administration reserves the right to decide discipline in situations not covered in this Handbook.

### *Demerit System*

Demerits are used to maintain a record of student behavior for the Due Process System (see Due Process). Students who receive certain consequences may also receive a set number of demerits. After receiving a demerit, students who do not receive any demerits for 20 school days will have one (1) demerit subtracted from their total.

### CODE OF CONDUCT DEMERIT SYSTEM

Demerits	Conduct Note	Communication
1		Renweb email to parents from the Dean
2		Renweb email to parents from the Dean
3		Renweb email to parents from the Dean
4		Renweb email to parents from the Dean
5		Renweb email to parents from the Dean
6	Lunch Detention (MS) or Wednesday 1/2 hour Detention (3:00-3:30 p.m.)	Renweb email to parents from the Dean
7		Renweb email to parents from the Dean
8		Renweb email to parents from the Dean
9	Lunch Detention (MS) or Wednesday 3/4 hour Detention (3:00-3:45 p.m.)	Renweb email to parents from the Dean
10		Renweb email to parents from the Dean
11		Renweb email to parents and coaching from the Dean
12	Lunch Detention (MS) or Wednesday 1 hour Detention (3:00-4:00 p.m.)	Renweb email to parents, coaching from the Dean and student meeting with the Head of Middle & Upper School
13		Renweb email to parents and coaching from the Dean
14		Renweb email to parents and coaching from the Dean

15	In-School Suspension (ISS)	Phone call to parents, coaching from the Dean, and a student meeting with the Head of Middle & Upper School
16		Renweb email to parents from the Dean
17		Renweb email to parents from the Dean
18	Out-of-School Suspension (OSS)	Parent meeting with Head of Middle & Upper School and Deans to discuss behavior probation and a behavior contract
19		Renweb email to parents from the Dean
22	Out-of-School Suspension (OSS)	Parent meeting with the Head of School, Middle & Upper School Head, and Dean to discuss the student's future at DCA.

### *Detention*

Middle School detention can be served at lunch or with Upper School detention on Wednesday afternoons from 3:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. in the secondary office or a classroom. Students with two detentions will serve from 3:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. on a Wednesday afternoon. Talking, eating, or sleeping during detention may be a cause for additional punishment.

### *Suspension*

Suspensions will be either in (ISS) or out (OSS) of school. Students serving ISS will be isolated from the student body and will perform academic work during the entire school day. If a substitute teacher is utilized for supervision, the student's parent will be responsible for the substitute's pay. Suspended students will not be allowed to participate in extracurricular activities until he/she returns to class.

OSS will be recorded as unexcused absences. The student will receive a zero (0) for missed daily work and quizzes. If a student misses a test or significant assignment (paper or project) due to suspension, the student will take the test or complete the assignment the day he/she returns to class. Teachers will deduct one letter grade from the final grade for missed significant assignments due to suspension from school.

### *Due Process*

To help modify student behavior and provide due process for students who may reach the level of separation from school, the following will occur:

If a student reaches **twelve demerits** during one school year:

1. An email to parents and a student meeting with the Head of Middle and Upper School is required.
2. The student will receive after-school detention on a Wednesday from 3:00-4:00 pm.

If a student reaches **fifteen demerits** during one school year:

1. A second student meeting with the Head of Middle and Upper School is required and parents are contacted by phone.
2. The student will receive one day of ISS, which may impact participation in school activities.

If a student reaches **eighteen demerits** during one school year:

1. A parent/student meeting with the Head of Middle and Upper School and the Dean is required to discuss behavior probation and develop a behavior contract.
2. The student will receive one day of OSS, which may impact participation in school activities.

If a student reaches **twenty-two demerits** during one school year:

1. The student may be separated from the Academy.
2. An expulsion review hearing with parents, the student, the Head of School, and the Head of Middle and Upper School is required to discuss the student's future at DCA.

### **Readmission after Expulsion**

The following policy will provide a structure for handling the applications of students expelled from Donelson Christian Academy who wish to reapply.

- Reapplication: Students expelled from Donelson Christian Academy may reapply for admission after two consecutive semesters. (Summer is considered one semester.)
- Applications will be processed according to current admissions standards.
- Applicants must meet all established admissions criteria.

The Academy reserves the right to deny admission, readmission, or continued enrollment to any student whose actions demonstrate that it is not in the Academy's best interest to allow admission, readmission, or continued enrollment.

## **Student Evaluation**

### *Review of Student Progress*

At the mid-point and end of each grading period, every student's progress will be evaluated. This evaluation is designed to assist parents in ensuring that their students are placed in the appropriate school where their abilities can be maximized.

Evaluations shall be based on the following criteria:

1. Academic Progress
2. Conduct
3. Support and Cooperation of Parents
4. School Attendance
5. General Attitude

### *Responsibility for Tuition and Fees*

Any student who is expelled or withdraws in place of expulsion for any disciplinary reason shall be responsible and pay for all tuition and fees for that school year.

### *Testimony Regarding an Infraction of the Rules*

Students who have information about any disciplinary investigation must provide all their information. Refusal to provide information or intentionally giving false information will result in the student or students involved receiving the same level of punishment as the infraction being investigated, up to, but no higher than, a suspension.

### *Conferences and School Visitation*

Donelson Christian Academy is delighted to have parents, prospective parents, and guests visit the campus. Prior arrangements can be made for guided tours and visits. All visitors must check in to the main office and then on to the appropriate office before going to the classroom.

Parent-teacher conferences are also encouraged but should be scheduled outside class hours. Parents may arrange for conferences on an individual basis by contacting the teacher directly. Group conferences may also be arranged through the guidance office.

## **Personal Counseling Services**

The counseling center will provide short-term counseling to individual students in crisis. After several sessions, the student may be referred to an outside agency or an individual for more in-depth counseling. Contact Alice Prentice at 615-577-1212 to coordinate counseling services.

# *School-wide Guidelines*

## **Handling Interpersonal Relationships**

### *The Matthew 18:15 Policy*

“If your brother sins against you go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over. But if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that ‘every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.’ If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan or a tax collector.” Matthew 18:15-17 NIV

Matthew 18:15 specifically addresses what should be done if a Christian has been sinned against by a brother or sister in Christ. While not all matters where parents need to meet with employees of the school involve sins, or even offenses, the basic principle of going to the person with whom one disagrees or has a concern, still applies. In addition, there is the matter of how to deal with such subjects within an institutional structure. Institutions have a chain of command. These recommendations are an attempt to establish practices which are consistent with Scripture and fit them into an institutional structure.

Both during and after the resolution of a conflict, it is professional conduct on the part of teachers, administrators, and trustees, and courtesy on the part of students and parents to maintain confidentiality and avoid gossip about the conflict with colleagues and friends. It is not appropriate for parents, faculty, or staff to publicize conflicts. Should a case go before the Board, it is the responsibility of the Board of Trustees alone in such instances to disseminate information as to the disposition of those matters.

The principles listed here deal with extremely important matters that affect the lives, well-being, and good names of students, parents, school employees, and the school as an institution. If the concern involves a conflict in the classroom, then the following should serve as a guideline.

### **Guidelines**

- If there is a problem between a child and a teacher, it is recommended that the issue first be raised with the teacher. The parents should feel free to contact the teacher without any concern about how their child would subsequently be treated by that teacher. Ideally, at the secondary level, the issue would be respectfully raised by the

student directly with the teacher and, if resolved, the parents would not need to get involved.

- Similarly, if a parent has an issue with something an employee has done or said, it is suggested that the issue be raised directly with the employee first.
- It is the responsibility of an administrator, if brought into a meeting, to function primarily as a mediator, but also as a judge if necessary. It is understood that all parties in a meeting shall treat each other with respect without such things as threats, profanity, or personal assaults.
- Regardless of whether an administrator has been at the first meeting or not, if either party is dissatisfied with the conclusion of the first meeting, either may appeal to the next highest level in the chain of command. At this next level meeting, each party may bring along one or two other people of their choice as advocates, supporters, etc.
- The chain of command runs as follows: teacher, department head, division head, Head of School, and chairman of the Board of Trustees. (For athletic matters, the athletic director is the department head.)
- If either party is dissatisfied with a decision, they may appeal through the chain of command. If there is still dissatisfaction after the Head of School meeting, an appeal may be made in written form to the chairman of the Trustee Board. Appeals beyond the Head of School should be specifically focused on complaints that either the policies of the school have not been followed by the Head of School or that the policies have been wrongly applied. The chairman will render a response within fourteen (14) days of receipt of the request.
- The Board is at the very top of the chain of command and should only be addressed as a group through the chairman of the board of trustees on such matters. Contact with individual trustees is discouraged.

### **For All Parties**

Different types of offenses or concerns may occur in an institutional setting. If there is reason to believe that someone connected to the school is involved in criminal activity or moral turpitude, this matter should be brought directly to the head of school. If the concern involves policy or interpretation of policy, then the concern should be addressed to the head of the department first.

### **Emergency Closing of the Academy**

Emergency closing of the academy will be made when normal operations are prohibited or when the safety of students is of major concern. As soon as a decision is made, the announcement will be given to local television stations (these are channels 2, 4, 5, and 17).

Notifications will also be sent via email through Renweb and text messages will be sent using Parent Alert. Always keep your information up to date on Renweb to receive crucial information promptly. You can always update your information yourself by going to the “Demographics” section.

Rarely will the Academy close early once classes begin. In the event snow or icy conditions develop during the school day, every opportunity to provide instruction will be made. Students will not be dismissed from class until arrangements have been made for transportation.

The safety of students takes priority over the school schedule. Any parent should feel free to pick up students early or arrive late when icy conditions make driving hazardous.

If it becomes necessary to telephone the school and ask your child to drive or ride with someone else, it is requested you follow these guidelines:

- Be brief. Remember approximately 500 calls will be coming to the school in a very short time and open lines of communication are important.
- Do not ask your child to come to the telephone.
- Do not call to discuss the weather and try to decide. Make your decision and inform the school.

When picking up a student, be sure the student has signed out with name, time, and person with whom he/she is leaving. This information assists if another parent telephones a student you have taken home.

In the event inclement weather, which causes the Academy to alter the daily schedule, parents can be assured adult supervision will be present. Parents should inform their children of the importance of staying in the proper areas, signing out, and refraining from playful activities.

## **Student Sexual Harassment Policy**

Donelson Christian Academy is committed to maintaining an academic environment in which all individuals treat each other with dignity and respect, and which is free from all forms of intimidation, exploitation, and harassment, including sexual harassment. DCA is prepared to take action to prevent and correct any violations of this policy. Anyone who violates this policy will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination or expulsion. **Employee-student sexual harassment is prohibited. Student-student sexual harassment is prohibited.**

*Definition:* “Sexual harassment” means unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, visual, or physical conduct of a sexual nature, made by someone from or in the work or educational setting, under any of the following conditions:

- Submission to the conduct is explicitly or implicitly made a term or condition of an individual’s academic status or progress.
- Submission to or rejection of conduct by the individual is used as the basis of academic decisions affecting the individual.
- The conduct has the purpose or effect of having a negative impact upon the individual’s academic performance, or of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment.
- Submission to or rejection of the conduct by the individual is used as the basis for any decision affecting the individual regarding benefits and services, honors, programs, or activities available at or through DCA.

*Examples:* Unwelcome sexual conduct of this type can include a wide range of verbal, visual, or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Among the types of conduct which would violate this policy are the following:

- Unwanted sexual advances or propositions.
- Offering academic benefits in exchange for sexual favors.
- Making or threatening reprisals after a negative response to sexual advances.
- Visual conduct such as leering, making sexual gestures, displaying sexually suggestive objects or pictures, cartoons, or posters.
- Verbal conduct such as making or using derogatory comments, epithets, slurs, and jokes.
- Verbal abuse of a sexual nature, graphic verbal commentaries about an individual’s body, sexually degrading words used to describe an individual, suggestive, or obscene letters, notes, or invitations.
- Physical conduct such as touching, assaulting, impeding, or blocking movements.

#### *What to Do If You Experience or Observe Sexual Harassment*

Students who feel that they have been subjected to conduct of a harassing nature are encouraged to promptly report the matter to the Head of School or the Head of the appropriate school. Students who observe conduct of a sexually harassing nature are also encouraged to report the matter to any of the school officials. All complaints will be promptly investigated.

*Confidentiality:* Every effort will be made to protect the privacy of the parties involved in any complaint. However, the school reserves the right to fully investigate every complaint and to notify a student's parent/guardian and appropriate government officials as the circumstances warrant.

*Protection Against Retaliation:* It is against the school's policy to discriminate or retaliate against any person who has filed a complaint concerning sexual harassment or has testified, assisted, or participated in any manner in any investigation, proceeding, or hearing concerning sexual harassment.

*Procedure for Investigation and for Taking Corrective Action:* When one of the designated school officials receives a complaint, he/she shall immediately inform the other administrator concerned. The Head of School will direct an investigation. If the investigation confirms the allegations, prompt corrective actions shall be taken. The individual who suffered the harassing conduct shall be informed of the corrective action taken. In addition, any employee or student found to be responsible for sexual harassment in violation of this policy will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action up to and including expulsion or termination. The severity of the disciplinary action will be based upon the circumstances of the infraction.

## **Digital Behavior Policy**

Digital activity includes, but is not limited to, social networks, blogs, message boards, video and digital photo images, and any messaging used by a student. If it is brought to the administration's attention that a student is violating DCA policy through an online venue, appropriate action will take place. Students are personally responsible for the content of what they post for public viewing and/or private messages to others. These behaviors are considered inappropriate when they involve:

- Using obscene, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude, inflammatory, threatening, or disrespectful messages
- Posting information that could cause damage, danger, or disruption of the educational process.
- Making a personal attack, including prejudicial or discriminatory attacks
- Posting false or defamatory information about a person
- Using technological communication to intimidate, bully, harass, or embarrass others in any area included in this policy.

DCA's philosophy of technological behavior is that the *primary monitoring responsibility* lies at home with parents. We encourage parents to periodically review their students' use of

technology. The Matthew 18: 15-17 scripture is applied, which supports going directly to the source of the offense; meaning that if students cannot resolve this between themselves, the next line of action should be parent-to-parent communication (with physical proof). If that action does not stop the behavior, the parents of the victim should bring evidence to the administration.

### **Middle/Upper School Cell Phone and Personal Electronic Device Usage**

DCA values a strong community that, we believe, is built, and strengthened by personal interaction and time spent together communicating. As an academic institution, the ability to focus, free of constant distractions and alerts, is vital to success in an educational setting. DCA limits the use of cell phones during the school day to increase the quality and quantity of time spent together and decrease potential distractions during instructional time. As an iPad school, DCA students can fully harness the power of technology in the classroom without using their phones or other personal electronic devices.

Students must keep powered-off cell phones in their lockers, backpacks, or cars during the school day. Students may not use their cell phones unless directed to do so by a faculty member between 7:50 am and 2:50 pm. If a student violates the cell phone policy, the phone will be given to an administrator. On the first offense, the phone will be taken to the office for the remainder of the day, and one demerit will be issued. On the second offense, the student will receive two demerits and turn in the cell phone to the office. On the third offense, the student will turn in the cell phone to the office, receive two demerits, and serve a detention. After three offenses, the school administration will begin conversing with the student's parents. On the fourth offense, the student will receive four demerits, serve a double detention, and meet with the appropriate dean, principal, and parents to discuss the student's future of having a cell phone on campus. After four violations of the cell phone policy, the school reserves the right to suspend the student from having a cell phone on campus.

All personal electronic devices are included in this policy. These include, but are not limited to, wearable devices, tablets, personal gaming systems, and handheld devices. Any personal laptop brought on campus must connect to the DCA network. Laptops and earbud-style headphones must be used strictly for academic purposes and at the teacher's discretion. Devices outside these parameters will be removed and turned into the office.

#### *Additional notes:*

The school will not be responsible for lost or stolen devices.

Please remember, if an emergency arises, parents may call the Upper School Office at (615) 577-1207.

## **Elementary Electronic Device Usage (see page 9)**

### **Social Behavior Policy**

Student behavior is a direct reflection on Donelson Christian Academy; therefore, students will be always judged by their conduct, both on and off campus.

DCA is committed to maintaining an environment free from any form of harassment. Any witnessed or reported incidents of harassment will be addressed appropriately, which may include conferences with students and parents, investigating, the requirement of outside counseling, and taking disciplinary action as warranted by the severity of the situation. Any student who feels that he or she has been subject to harassment should immediately report the matter to a faculty member or administrator. Any student who feels that he or she has been harassed or has witnessed some form of harassment should immediately report the matter to a faculty member or administrator.

Harassment, including the components of bullying, is categorized in three ways:

- Non-malicious, verbal exchanges that occur between students/students are encouraged to work these offenses out on their own, or with the help of their parents. If the behavior continues, we encourage the offended student to bring it to the attention of a faculty member or administrator.
- Harassment -- derogatory comments, jokes, slurs, off-color language, or innuendos; using belligerent or threatening words towards another student or employee; or a pattern of name-calling, gossiping, sarcasm, and put-downs, mocking, belittling, hurtful teasing, or taunting.
- The threat or perceived threat of physical harm towards a student or employee by another student.

### **Student HIV Policy**

Members of the student body, who contract Acquired Immune-Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS), or any AIDS virus-related condition, shall have their status at DCA reviewed by the Head of School. This review will be conducted in such a manner as to protect the privacy of the student. The recommendation of the Head of School will be directed toward ensuring the safety of the school at large and the health of the affected person.

In general, DCA will follow the AIDS guidelines of the National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS), a copy of which is in the Head of School's office. Pertinent medical information from the patient's physician will be reviewed by the administration at the patient's request. However, the decision regarding continuation at DCA will be made by the Board of Trustees based on recommendations from the administration and in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Any student who is prevented from completing the school year due to AIDS will be eligible for tuition refunds like other medically necessitated withdrawals.

## Drug Screening Procedures - Grades 6 through 12

### *Purpose*

The trustees and administration believe the DCA family needs to take a proactive position on the serious threat to its students that modern-day culture presents. They believe DCA should be a drug-free environment. They also believe parents expect the academy to aggressively protect each of its students through education and deterrents from the harm caused by illegal drug use. **Alcohol is considered a "drug" for this policy.**

To this end, the school will teach students that God's word says the body is the temple of the Holy Spirit (I Corinthians 6:19.) Therefore, we are not to abuse our bodies in any way, but to be fit in health for service to the Kingdom. Through the scope of the curriculum, especially in Bible and science/health, stewardship of the body will be emphasized as a positive lifestyle.

### *Who Is Screened*

- A student about whom there is reasonable suspicion to believe they have been using drugs will submit to drug screening. Such reasons would include, but not be limited to, physical symptoms, persistent poor work or discipline problems, a marked change in attitude toward school life, parental concern, or anything deemed to give a prima facie reason for testing. Request for testing on the grounds of reasonable suspicion will be determined jointly by any two of the following core groups:
  - Head of School
  - School Nurse (or substitute nurse)
  - Head of Middle and Upper School
  - School Counselor
- In addition, as per the student contract, random drug testing for upper school students may occur at different times of the school year.

### *Results and Consequences of Drug Screening or Discovery of Drug/Alcohol Use*

*First Offense:* All results will be communicated in writing to parents. When the administration of the school discovers that a student uses, purchases, or possesses an illegal mood-altering chemical at a non-school function, he/she will serve two days out of school suspension and receive twelve demerits.

- If, in the opinion of the administration, the student needs a professional assessment, it shall be the responsibility of the parents to secure an assessment at an approved facility at the expense of the parent. The student's parents shall provide a copy of the assessment to the school.
- The student must then enter counseling with an approved facility to be educated about addiction and the consequences of social use of drugs and/or alcohol. Any outside treatment program will be at the expense of the parents. Refusal of treatment will result in the removal of the student from the Academy.

*Second Offense:* If the administration becomes aware that the same student has used, purchased, or has been in possession of an illegal mood-altering chemical again, the student will be expelled from DCA.

### **Illegal Drugs Identified**

At the present time, these drugs will be tested for in DCA's testing program: barbiturates (downers), tricyclic antidepressants, benzodiazepines (bennies or uppers), cocaine (coke), methaqualone (quaalude), opioids (codeine, heroin, morphine, methadone), phencyclidine (PCP, angel dust), amphetamines (speed), cannabinoids (marijuana), and possibly steroids. This list may be changed from time to time by DCA without notice. A "positive" test sample will mean a predetermined level of detection has been exceeded and that level is unacceptable according to recommendations of the testing laboratory. If a student refuses to provide a sample, it will be treated as a "positive" test result and the student will bear the consequences of the offense.

### **Procedures Governing the Implementation of the DCA Drug Screening Policy**

Tests will be conducted on urine samples collected by a trained and certified collector. Samples may be collected at DCA, or any other location or lab designated by DCA. Procedures for collection will be in accordance with industry standards.

These procedures will be used:

- A certified collector will collect the sample.

- Efforts to protect against tampering will be made prior to testing including a coloring agent in the toilet, water sources secured, and removal of soaps, cleaning agents, etc.
- The temperature of the sample will be recorded.
- The sample will be placed in a sealed container. The student will initial the sample containers.
- The sample will be picked up by the lab for testing the same day it is collected. Samples tested at the lab will normally be completed within 3 working days.

### **Laboratory Testing**

DCA will generally follow the lab's recommendation for handling. At present, the lab follows these procedures. The lab will first test the sample to ensure it has not been altered. The lab personnel will analyze urine samples using a competitive, membrane-based immunochromatographic assay, always confirming any positive indication with GC/MS (gas chromatography mass spectrometry). Lab results will be sent to the Medical Review Officer (MRO). If the results are negative, this will be reported to the school nurse with no further action needed. If the results show the presence of any tested drug above the approved cutoff levels, the school nurse will notify the parents to schedule a call with the MRO. On that call, the parent(s) will be able to provide prescriptions to the MRO that match the lab's results.

If the test shows evidence of alteration, then the student will be subject to suspension. The student will be given the opportunity to explain the results and, in its discretion, DCA may offer the student the opportunity to take advantage of the intervention alternative if the findings stand.

If the parents want to contest or challenge the result from the first lab, arrangements can be made with the MRO to ship the remaining sample to the second approved lab. If the results from the second test confirm the presence of drugs above the standard cutoff levels, the student will be disciplined according to policy.

If it is determined that a positive test is due to the presence of a prescription drug or over-the-counter drug, the test will be considered negative. A retest (without the prescription or over-the-counter drug) may be required at DCA's sole discretion.

## *Athletic Policies*

*Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not men.*  
Colossians 3:23

Athletic and physical activities are an integral part of a student's development. The academy encourages students to participate in some form of physical activity every day. As part of Donelson Christian Academy's philosophy of developing a healthy lifestyle, students are encouraged to participate in whatever sport is in season rather than specializing in one sport for the entire year. Athletic participation is a family affair and should be discussed with parents and coaches before embarking upon the rigorous schedule required for sporting events.

Team members are not allowed to miss any class due to their participation in a particular sport. Attendance in school on the day of an athletic event is required. In the event scheduling is done by someone other than Donelson Christian Academy and necessitates team members missing school, the coach must get permission from the Athletic Director and submit a list of students and classes missed to the Head of Middle and Upper School and the faculty.

Before participation, including practice, students must have a physical examination and permission to participate from a physician and parent. Students must see a physician for their sports physicals. Special forms are provided for this permission and physical. Parents are expected to provide health/medical insurance for their student. Physicals must occur after April 15 for the following school year. All required health forms must be uploaded to the Final Forms app.

DCA requires all students who participate in middle school or upper school sports to have medical insurance coverage. The Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association (TSSAA) provides a supplemental Catastrophic Insurance Policy through Loomis & LaPann, Inc., that covers students and/or student-athletes in all TSSAA-sanctioned activities.

## Seasonal Offerings

- *Fall:* cross-country, volleyball, football, cheerleading, golf (varsity), girls' soccer, bowling (varsity)
- *Winter:* basketball, cheerleading, bowling, wrestling (varsity), swimming (co-op with University School of Nashville)
- *Spring:* track, baseball, softball, tennis, boys' soccer (varsity), Lacrosse (co-op with University School of Nashville)

All athletes are required to take a strength training class every semester they are active in athletics. Only those students whose schedules create a conflict with academic classes will be excused from strength training by the guidance counselor. **All athletes will be expected to participate in an off-season and/or summer strength and conditioning program. Failure to do so will result in the following: Game participation will be limited to JV level of play for at least half the total varsity games played in that season. Then it will be up to the coach's discretion to allow varsity participation based on the player's ability and the criteria set forth by the coach. If there is not a JV program in that sport, play will be limited to exhibition matches or scrimmages for at least half of the total varsity games or matches played in that sport's season. Then it will be up to the coach's discretion to allow varsity participation based on the player's ability and the criteria set forth by the coach.**

## New/Transfer Student Athlete Policy for all Sports: Equal Participation for Males and Females

1. A student should be allowed to try out for a sport within 2 weeks of their enrollment date.
  - a. Eligibility should be based on TSSAA policy.
  - b. Must be in compliance with DCA grade policy regarding athletic eligibility
  - c. Students who transfer within four weeks of the start of the season (as determined by the first day of practice) shall be eligible to try out for the varsity team in that sport. Students shall be eligible to try out for the junior varsity team when transferring at any point during the season.
2. The coach has discretion as to the player's ability and willingness to follow team rules and guidelines. The coach will determine the level of placement on the varsity or junior varsity based on his or her professional opinion and the criteria used for athletes in that sport. (Space limitations in certain sports must be considered)

3. Middle School students shall be eligible to try out for any sport when transferring to DCA at any time during the season. Guidelines for placement or an acceptable tryout shall be the same as those used by the coach at the opening of the season.
4. Summer conditioning is open to new students. Students will be informed and encouraged to join once they have officially enrolled at DCA. Returning students who have reenrolled at DCA are expected to begin summer workouts within two weeks of their enrollment date. Failure to comply with expectations will result in the consequences as outlined in the summer workout policy.

## **Tuition and Financial Aid**

**Section 16.** If tuition is charged, it must be paid by a parent, bona fide guardian, or other family member. If a parent, guardian or other family member secures a loan for payment of tuition, it must remain an obligation of the parents, guardian, or other family member to repay the principle and interest in full with no exceptions.

Financial aid may be awarded based on need, but proof of such need must be filed in the TSSAA office on forms approved by the Executive Director. To determine the need basis, all schools awarding financial aid shall use the School and Student Scholastic Service for Financial Aid of Princeton, New Jersey. The Board of Control will then rule on all cases at the August meeting. The Board of Control shall have authority to reject the basis for need for students when in its opinion, or the opinion of the school committee, the amount of need stated by School and Student Service for Financial Aid of Princeton, New Jersey, cannot be justified.

## **Additional DCA Athletic Requirements**

Athletes at DCA are expected to be outstanding citizens. Because they represent the school they are held to a higher standard. Any athlete who displays a pattern of misconduct or disregard for school policies is subject to suspension from athletic competition.

- A. Demerit Limit. Any discipline issues, at any time, may be communicated between the Deans and Coaches along with the Directors of all co-curricular activities. At 15 demerits and again at 20 demerits students are suspended from one game.

- B. In-school/Out-of-School Suspension. If a student has an in-school or out-of-school suspension he/she is ineligible for practice or play that day. This is considered an unexcused absence, and the suspension will result in a one-game suspension.
- C. School Attendance. A student-athlete must attend a minimum of four full periods to be eligible to practice or play in a competition that day/evening. Administrative approval is required for other absences. A student may be excused from a game for a school-related event or activity or extenuating circumstance with prior approval by the athletic director.

Any student-athlete who displays a pattern of absence (any part of the day) or tardiness before, on, or after an athletic event which includes practice will be subject to additional attendance requirements set forth by the principal or Director of Athletics. This policy applies to the athlete both in and out of the season.

- D. Switching/Quitting Sport. If a student-athlete quits a sport, he/she cannot begin another until the first sport has finished its season. The sport in-season has priority over others. Athletes should not be practicing another sport while participating in the current season. An athlete may participate in two sports in the same season with the approval of both coaches and the Athletic Director.
- E. Strength Training. All athletes are required to take strength training class every semester they are active in athletics. Only those students whose schedules create a conflict with academic classes will be excused from strength training by the guidance counselor. All athletes will be subject to mandatory strength training during the off-season.
- F. Student Dress. Athletes traveling to and from a game must dress in a way that causes them to represent DCA well and does not cause a distraction. Individual team dress will be established by the coach and director of athletics.
  - (1) No earrings or body piercings are allowed during school events, practice, or play.
  - (2) Tattoos are discouraged. Any existing tattoos may not be visible while participating in athletics.

## Athletic Conduct Code

- Be kind to each other and tenderhearted.
- Forgive one another as God has forgiven you because you belong to Christ.

*Ephesians 4:31*

## Athletic Priorities

1. God
2. Family
3. Academics
4. Athletics

A. Good sportsmanship should be observed in all game and practice situations.

This involves NO:

1. Cursing
2. Taunting
3. Trash talking
4. Throwing equipment
5. Disrespect for officials, coaches, and/or fans. This will not be tolerated.
6. Improper wearing of uniform, i.e., shirttails out, etc.
7. Obscene gestures. This will result in suspension from playing.

B. Any player ejected from a contest will be suspended by the TSSAA for the next game. Depending on the severity, DCA may also suspend the player for an additional game(s). Any pattern of bad sportsmanship that persists, such as personal fouls, technical fouls, yellow cards, red cards, or a poor display of behavior or attitude, will result in suspension.

Be consistent with Mission Statement expectations in representing Christ and Donelson Christian Academy. Penalties will be dealt with on an individual basis.

**Sportsmanship Is Very Important and Is A Main Emphasis At DCA for Athletes, Coaches, And Fans.**

## Practice Requirements

All athletes are required to attend practice.

All absentees must get prior approval from the coach to be excused.

1. Absences from team sports
  - a. An excused absence will result in a starting player not starting a game; others will result in loss of playing time. Death in the immediate family or extreme sickness under a doctor's care will result in no penalty. A school-related trip will result in no penalty if prior approval is given by the coach. A college day is permissible if it is approved by the Head of Middle and Upper School and the Director of College Counseling and when the coach is notified beforehand.
  - b. If an absence is unexcused, the player will not dress for the next game. If this happens a third time, the player will be suspended.
  - c. Extenuating circumstances that will prevent the team from being able to participate will be considered.
2. Absences for individual sports
  - a. For an excused absence, the athlete will make up the amount of practice time missed, at the coach's discretion.
  - b. An unexcused absence will result in the athlete not participating in the next event/meet.
3. Tardies

Extra conditioning will be given for being tardy. If tardies continue, they may result in a participation penalty or suspension.
4. An emergency situation will be dealt with at the coaches' discretion.

Notification by the athlete as soon as possible is necessary for clarification.

Special circumstances may be taken into consideration by the athletic director for any absence.

## Game Requirements

No athlete may miss a game unless for sickness or death in the family. An unexcused absence from a game will result in a player not dressing for the next games/matches. DCA expects athletes to attend all games. Any extenuating circumstances will be reviewed by the coach and athletic director.

## Parent/Fan Spectator Demeanor Expectations

Walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing forbearance to one another in love, and being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Ephesians 4:1-3

- All parents of athletes will be required to sign an expectations agreement before their child will be allowed to participate in any sport. Good sportsmanship and fan behavior are a joint endeavor of the TSSAA and DCA.
- All parents must attend a pre-season meeting with their coach for their child to be eligible for athletics.

## Handling Interpersonal Relationships

(Matthew 18:15 Policy)

“If your brother sins against you go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over. But if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that ‘every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.’ If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan or a tax collector.” - Matthew 18:15-17 NIV

Matthew 18:15 specifically addresses what should be done if a Christian has been sinned against by a brother or sister in Christ. While not all matters where parents need to meet with employees of the school involve sins or even offenses, the basic principle of going to the person with whom one disagrees or has a concern still applies. In addition, there is the matter of how to deal with such subjects within an institutional structure.

Institutions have a chain of command. These recommendations are an attempt to establish practices that are consistent with scripture and fit them into an institutional structure.

Both during and after the resolution of a conflict, it is professional conduct on the part of teachers/coaches, administrators, and trustees, and courtesy on the part of students and parents to maintain confidentiality and avoid gossip about the conflict with colleagues and friends. It is not appropriate for parents, faculty, or staff to publicize conflicts. Should a case go before the Board, it is the responsibility of the Board of Trustees alone in such instances to disseminate information as to the disposition of those matters.

The principles listed here are to deal with extremely important matters that affect the lives, well-being, and good names of students, parents, school employees, and the school as an institution.

## **Best Practices**

Parents should not approach the coaching staff immediately after a contest with a grievance. A minimum of 24 hours should occur before an appointment is made to discuss any grievances. This will allow both parties, parents and coaches, an opportunity to have their distance from the event and in a less emotional state. The chain of command as previously mentioned must be followed.