



# Grace Christian School

## *Student –Parent Handbook*

School Year 2021-2022

Grace Christian School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national or ethnic origin in admissions policies, administration of its educational policies, financial assistance or scholarships and athletic and other school administered programs.

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**Grace Christian School**

**Philosophy**

Grace Christian School believes education should be centered upon personal relationship with Jesus Christ, using the Bible as our guide, striving then for excellence in academics and all other areas of life in order to give God glory in the world.

**Mission Statement**

To prepare our children for life, to honor and glorify God,  
in a Christ-centered environment of academic excellence

**Vision**

Grace School will meet the needs of individual students in a Christ-centered, differentiated program of academic, fine arts, and athletic excellence.

**Accreditation**

Grace Christian School is fully accredited by the  
Florida Council of Independent Schools and  
the Florida Kindergarten Council.

**School Prayer**

Almighty God,

Open our minds in wonder of your Creation  
Let us pursue new learning and challenges today.

Open our hearts in Christ-like love of others  
Let us discover Jesus in unexpected people and places today.

Open our spirits in seeking your face  
Let us listen to your still, small voice and obey today.

Open our hands in receiving your blessings  
Let us share your many gifts with those around us today.

In Jesus' Name  
Amen

## **Policies and Procedures**

### **Academic Practices and Recognition**

#### **Report Cards and Interim Reports**

Evaluation of student progress (Grades 1-8) will be provided by electronic interim reports available through RenWeb at the midway point of each academic term, and through report cards sent home at the end of each academic term. K3-K5 student progress reports will be sent home in December and May.

#### **Grading scale:**

##### **Grades 1 – 8**

A+	99 – 100	C+	78 – 79
A	94 – 98	C	74 – 77
A	90 – 93	C	70 – 73
B+	88 – 89	D+	68 – 69
B	84 – 87	D	64 – 67
B	80 – 83	D	60 – 63
		F	59 – 0

A final grade of 60 or above is considered passing for all subjects.

#### **Cheating and Plagiarism**

Cheating and plagiarism are unacceptable. Please refer to the Student Code of Conduct for specific school policy on this.

#### **Homework Guidelines**

Current research indicates that children in elementary and middle school grades do NOT benefit from traditional forms of homework. This is especially true in the younger grades.

Based on research GCS teachers are committed to providing opportunities for students to engage in quality learning applications to reinforce and practice instruction provided at school. Students will be expected to study for upcoming tests, complete projects that align to the curriculum, and read for an extended amount of time each night. Recognizing that the needs of younger students are different from the needs of our older students, we differentiate the expectations and guidelines.

#### **K-5 Guidelines:**

- Students need a quiet place to study.
- Students should be held accountable for completing assignments.
- Students will be required to read for an extended amount of time each night. The amount of time is left to the discretion of the teacher and based on the needs of students.
- Parents should check their child's work and help him/her study/read.

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- No weekend homework will be assigned, with the exception of special projects.
- No homework will be assigned over holidays, with the exception of special projects that may have been assigned some time before the holiday break.
- No testing will be administered on the first day back from any holiday break.

#### **Middle School Guidelines:**

- Students need a quiet place to study.
- Students should be held accountable for completing assignments.
- Students are responsible for writing down all HW, projects, quizzes, and tests in their planner. Although tests, projects, and major quizzes will be posted on RenWeb, parents should help their child develop organizational skills by encouraging them to be accountable for their work and test preparations and utilize their planners daily.
- HW, assessments, and assignments will be posted on RenWeb; and any changes will be found in their planner. Teachers may administer pop quizzes which are unannounced. • All tests and projects will be posted on Renweb a week in advance.
- During the first semester 6<sup>th</sup> grade will not have more than one test on a day. This does NOT include quizzes.
- Students may turn in late HW for a 20% penalty for up to a week. After a week it is up to the teacher's discretion to accept late work and he/she will determine the grade deduction.

#### **Honors Recognition**

There are classifications of recognition for work done in the academic field in grades 6-8:

High Honor Roll: Students who earn 90 or above in all graded subjects.

Honor Roll: Students who earn 80 or above in all graded subjects.

#### **Duke Talent Identification Program**

Grace Christian School students participate in the Duke Talent Identification Program, which attempts to identify gifted students at an early age. Seventh grade students with high standardized test scores (95% or above) are invited to take the SAT or ACT. These tests are typically given the last two years of high school.

#### **Regional, State, and National Competitions**

All middle school students are required to complete a Science Fair project. These projects are

then judged on the local level, with many students going on to compete in regional and state competitions. Grace Christian School competes in an annual Book Bowl against private schools in North Central Florida. Teams of five respond to questions based on ten novels which are decided upon at the beginning of the year. In January, interested seventh and eighth grade GCS students who exceed Accelerated Reader goals are chosen, and practices take place during the school day and after school.

### **President's Award for Academic Excellence**

The National President's Award for Academic Excellence is awarded to students in both the 5<sup>th</sup> and the 8<sup>th</sup> grade. To receive this award, students must score an 85% or above on a standardized test in math or reading and have maintained a 3.5 GPA or above throughout their career. This GPA is calculated by receiving a 90 on a 100 percent grading scale in 4<sup>th</sup> grade and 5<sup>th</sup> grade 1<sup>st</sup> semester/7<sup>th</sup> grade and 8<sup>th</sup> grade 1<sup>st</sup> semester.

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### **Standardized Testing**

GCS administers the MAP assessment to all first through eighth grade students. This test is administered three times a year, Fall, Winter and Spring. Results will be made available within two weeks after the last day of testing. Conferencing about these tests may be scheduled at any time with the Assistant Head of School or Head of School

## **Attendance**

Regular and punctual attendance of all classes is required in compliance with Florida statutes. Students must be in attendance 170 days or the student will be in jeopardy of being retained for non-attendance. The most optimal learning environment is for all students to come to class prepared and that includes students who are returning from absences. Parents must provide the school with a note explaining the absence within three school days of when the student returns. Failure to provide a note concerning an absence may result in the absence being classified as unexcused.

### **Absences**

- One make-up day is allowed for each day's absence. For example, if your child is absent for four days, make-up work must be completed in four days after his/her return. All work must be completed within 5 school days. An F may result if the student fails to take a test in a timely manner.
- For absences other than emergency or illness, the teacher must be given advanced notice for assignments and homework. **Teachers MAY NOT be able to give assignments for days or weeks ahead of time—in which case, the student will be responsible for obtaining the work when he/she returns to class.**
- Students may access homework by logging into their Google Classroom and check for upcoming assignments. If you do not have internet access, please let the administration know.
- Students have 177 days to obtain an entire grade level's worth of material. Each day a child is absent, he/she is missing an opportunity to spend quality time with the content matter. Please make every effort to plan trips around the school calendar to maximize your child's exposure to the curriculum. Excessive absences may exclude your child from future attendance at Grace Christian School.

### **Excused and Unexcused Absences**

- The following ARE considered “Excused Absences” and require documentation
  - Illness (Note from parent and if excessive from doctor)
  - Medical appointments (Note from doctor)
  - Death in the immediate family (Note from parent)
  - Some religious holidays (Note from parent)
- Students with excused absences are permitted to make-up their missing work. All other absences for personal business, transportation problems, family trips, youth group activities, oversleeping, etc. are unexcused and make-up work will be permitted if absences are not habitual.

### **Signing In and Out**

- For safety purposes, students may not leave school without permission. Doing so is considered a major infraction and will result in a disciplinary action.
- Medical appointments should be scheduled outside school hours, if possible. In some cases this is unavoidable and appointments are scheduled during school hours. In order to excuse the appointment students must bring a note from the doctor. Failure to turn in a doctor’s note may result in an unexcused check out.
- All students leaving and/or returning to school during the day must be signed in and out by their parent/guardian in the main school office.

### **Tardy Policy:**

- All students arrive in their classrooms between 7:30 – 7:50 am.
- All teachers are in their classrooms at 7:30 am to supervise students as they arrive. • All students are considered tardy after 7:50. If a student is not in their homeroom by this time, that student will be considered tardy. Students arriving after Courtyard or Church Service must report to the office to receive a tardy slip prior to going to their classrooms.
- Getting your child to school on time establishes life-long habits that will benefit him/her in the future. In order to maximize instructional time please make sure students are on time every day.
- Middle school students with three tardies (five tardies for K-5) in a marking period will receive a consequence at the discretion of administration (such as lunch detention, after school detention, loss of privilege). Parents of students with excessive tardies will be required to meet with an administrator.

## **Character and Physical Development**

### **Citizenship**

The National Citizenship award is given to two students in each grade 1<sup>st</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup>. The award is given by the National Association of Lower School Principals and the National Association of Secondary School Principals. In grades 1<sup>st</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> the classroom teachers select the recipients and middle school teachers vote for the recipient in grades 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>. They use the following criteria stated by the NAESP and NASSP:

- Participation in school community service
- Shown a positive attitude toward classmate, school, and community



- Displayed an outstanding and appreciation of civic responsibility
- Possessed strength of character and the courage to do what's right
- Promoted citizenship within the school community

### **Grace Christian Spirit Award**

In eighth grade the coveted Grace Christian Spirit Award is given to two students who best exemplify the spirit of Grace Christian School. Selection is made by the majority of votes of all middle school teachers. The award is presented at the graduation ceremony.

### **Fruit of the Spirit**

This character education program is school wide and includes an instructional component as well as being the theme of our entire program. It is based on the development of the Fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22 and includes love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, faithfulness, and self-control. In our school we are trying to develop the Fruit of the Spirit in our lives – students as well as staff.

Each Thursday during Courtyard “Fruit of the Spirit” awards are presented to one student in each grade (K5-8<sup>th</sup> grade). These children are recognized in front of the entire school community with a “Fruit of the Spirit” certificate. Other weeks the award is voted on by the students for a fellow student in their class.

### **Light of Christ**

Each quarter two students from each grade 6-8 receive the Light of Christ award. This honor is given to students who exhibit Christ-like behavior towards other students, teachers, staff, and community. These students shine the light of Christ to all around them.

## **Communication**

### **Media/Internet Consent**

A major part of our program involves Internet use and photography. Occasionally the media will be on campus taking pictures of students and their activities for publicity and marketing purposes. We require parents to sign the Grace Christian School “Public Release Form” and the Grace Christian School “Acceptable Use Policy Form” giving their child/ren permission to be photographed (including yearbook pictures) and use the Internet. These forms are included in the registration packet and need to be signed.

### **Parent Conferences and Communication**

The parent or the teacher may request Parent/school conferences. Parents and teachers will meet periodically throughout the school year to discuss student progress. Parents in need of

additional time should contact the teachers through the school office or e-mail, which can be found at the end of this booklet and on the GCS website [www.gcsocala.com](http://www.gcsocala.com)

### **Electronic and Written Communication**

Each elementary child is assigned a “Friday Folder.” Please check this for regular communication from the school, teachers and school organizations. In addition, Grace Christian School will distribute electronically our quarterly newsletter and weekly Friday FAST FACTS. The newsletter contains articles about classroom, school-wide, and church activities. The Friday FAST FACTS provides the highlights about upcoming events and other pertinent information.

### **Website**

We maintain a website at [gcsocala.com](http://gcsocala.com). The website provides basic information such as a general school calendar, information on basic programs, school newsletters, lunch orders and staff information including email addresses.

## **Conduct**

### **Grace Christian School Code of Conduct**

As members of Grace Christian School we share Christ’s love and spirit in all we do. The Code of Student Conduct for all students at Grace Christian School frames our mission to prepare our children for life, and to honor and glorify God in a Christ-centered environment of academic excellence. It is our goal to encourage our students to be responsible, respectful, kind, and accountable to one another.

### **Purpose of Conduct**

- To achieve Christian attitudes of respect, love, and responsibility for self, others, and the greater community.
- To provide a classroom environment conducive to learning for all students by practicing self-control and developing maturity.

### **Student-Teacher-Parent**

We believe that behavior of students is a maturing process in which the students will take increasing responsibility for their own conduct. However, we understand that this process involves parents, teachers, and students. Therefore, Grace Christian School administration, teachers, and staff are committed to helping students develop academic and socially appropriate behavior in a positive, caring, safe, and orderly school climate. Teachers will maintain open communication with parents regarding student conduct and inform them of recurrent problems by means of a telephone call, written note and/or conference. Teachers will maintain records of these communications.

### **Norms for All Students**

- Students will be respectful to teachers, staff, coaches, administration, clergy and students, in language, actions, and attitude.
- Students will be respectful of the property of Grace Christian School as well as fellow student's property.
- Students will be prompt and prepared for class including homework, books and supplies. • Students will follow classroom rules and policies of GCS.
- Students will wear proper uniforms and present neat appearance.

### **Infractions/Rules**

These rules apply to all students in K3 through 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Students committing infractions are disciplined according to the severity of the rule being violated and the number of times a student repeats the infraction. Unacceptable behavior may be dealt with by suspension, expulsion or alternative educational consequences. Students are expected to follow the code of conduct at all school sponsored events including those off campus and while representing the school (i.e., sporting events and field trips).

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The following infractions constitute offenses for which students are strictly accountable:

Bringing/using non-school related items	Profane or obscene language or materials
Misuse of cell phones	Stealing
False fire alarm	Threats
Classroom disruption	Intimidation
Disrespect and unkindness to others	Unauthorized absence from school or class
Gum chewing, food at times other than lunch or designated times	Disorderly conduct
Inappropriate display of affection	Destruction of property/ vandalism
Insubordination to someone in authority	Bullying/Cyber-bullying
Plagiarism/Forgery/Cheating	Fighting
Violation of dress code	Misbehavior on school trips or related functions
Drugs/Alcohol	Harassment/Sexual harassment
Breaking and entering	Unauthorized use of internet
Computer fraud	Weapons at school

### **Procedures for handling conduct problems**

Students must learn that choices have consequences and that they are responsible for their choices. Disciplinary action is designed not only to correct conduct but also to encourage and motivate students to become responsible citizens of the school community. Teachers and

administrators use their professional judgment to determine appropriate action based on seriousness and frequency of the offense, student age, ability and functional level, attitude, intent of the student, and the effect on the school environment. Each student will be dealt with on an individual basis in communication with the parent(s). The teacher is expected to maintain proper discipline with all students at all times. Anecdotal records will be kept by the teacher on serious problems which are referred to an administrator.

When a child exhibits a pattern of inappropriate and/or disruptive behavior

- The teacher will first address the behavior with the child through redirection and/or warning.
- If the student chooses to continue the behavior the teacher will informally contact the parent to seek help in correcting the behavior. Teachers will maintain a record of contact and serve as documentation of the behavior and attempt to informally find a solution to the problem.
- If the behavior continues the teacher will formally write a discipline referral through Renweb and the child will receive a consequence based on the age of the child and the severity of the behavior.

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Consequences for poor choices include but are not limited to:

- Incentive based plan
- One-on-one conference with student •  
Move student's seat
- Loss of privileges
- Logical consequences (i.e., making a mess at the lunch tables=cleaning tables, damaging property-making restitution for damage)
- Temporary removal from setting –  
Time out in class
- Student behavior contract
- Action plan with parent and student •  
Silent lunch detention
- Parent / Teacher conference •  
Temporary removal from school related activities or programs
- Required counseling (out of school) •  
Community service (to Grace School)
- After school detention
- Saturday detention or work detail •  
In-school suspension
- Out-of-school suspension
- Student placed on probation •  
Immediate removal from school •  
Expulsion

## **Suspension and Expulsion**

**Suspension** is considered a severe action and, therefore, is not taken lightly. Its intent is to aid parent and child to work together to arrive at the best solution to the problem. Only the administration is authorized to suspend students.

### **In-School Suspension (ISS)**

The student is allowed to attend school, but is isolated from their classmates. Time will be devoted to assigned class work and to working out the problem that caused the suspension. Assignments may be graded with limited points.

### **Out-of-School Suspension (OSS)**

A grade of zero may be recorded in every class a student misses while suspended. The student may be given an opportunity to make-up missed assignments for a reduced grade at the discretion of the administrator. Any assignments made prior to the suspension and that becomes due during the suspended period will be accepted, but will be treated as

any late assignment with penalty points being deducted.

**Expulsion** is the most severe action taken by the school. It is the permanent dismissal of the student from the school. In the event that expulsion is decided, the student will be removed from school immediately. The Head of School will notify the Board of Trustees of the decision and will provide documentation to support the decision, including but not limited to the Disciplinary Notice and a record of past disciplinary actions.

\*\*\*All new enrollees will have a 9 week probationary period. During this time, if the academic, behavior or attendance record of the student does not meet the Grace Christian School standard the school holds the right to disenroll the student\*\*\*

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### **Grace Christian School Policies**

Grace Christian School is dedicated to fostering an environment that promotes kindness, self control, acceptance, and embraces differences among individuals. This policy supports the school's mission statement. Students are entitled to a safe and healthy learning environment. Bullying, cyber-bullying, threatening or harassment will not be tolerated, nor will drugs and/or alcohol of any sort; all will be just cause for immediate disciplinary action.

#### **Bullying**

Bullying is any pattern of behavior by a student, or a group of students, that is intended to harass, intimidate, ridicule, humiliate, or instill fear in another student or group of students. Bullying behavior includes verbal abuse, threats, and/or actual physical harm to another student. Bullying is a series of recurring actions committed over a period of time directed toward one student, or successive, separate actions directed against multiple students.

Examples of bullying may include but are not limited to a pattern of behavior involving one or more of the following:

- Pointed questions intended to embarrass or humiliate
- Mocking, taunting, or belittling
- Verbal and/ or non-verbal threats and/or intimidation
- Sarcastic "compliments" about another student's personal appearance •  
Demeaning humor relating to the student's race, gender, ethnicity, or personal characteristics
- Deliberate physical contact or intent to injure person or property
- Stalking
- Rumor or spreading of falsehoods
- Theft (hiding victim's books or personal belongings)
- Unwanted teasing
- Retaliation against a student by another student for asserting or alleging an act of bullying or harassment.

#### **Cyber-bullying**

Cyber-bullying refers to using technology to engage in conduct that promotes bullying through internet, using instant messages, creating websites, e-mails, using camera phones, or any other forms of technology.

### **Drugs, Alcohol, or Tobacco products**

Possession, use, distribution or being under the influence of any alcoholic beverage, drug, tobacco products or look-alike substances is prohibited and may result in immediate suspension or expulsion.

<sup>1</sup> Reporting an act of bullying or harassment that is not made in good faith is considered retaliation.

### **Harassment**

Harassment means any threatening, insulting, or dehumanizing gesture, use of data or computer software, or written, verbal or physical conduct directed against an individual that:

- Places a student in reasonable fear of harm to his or her person or damage to his or her property.
- Has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's performance.
- Has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of a school.

### **Threatening**

Threatening is similar to bullying and it is a statement or expression of intent to do physical, mental, or emotional harm to another. If a student is accused of making a threat the administration will investigate the legitimacy of the accusation. If the administration determines that a threat was made the student will be removed from the school and the local authorities called to complete a full investigation. Once the student has been cleared of criminal charges the student will be required to take a risk assessment from a licensed psychologist, psychiatrist, or mental health counselor before returning to the school. These results will become part of the student's permanent record. If the risk assessment indicates that the student is a threat to the school he/she will be removed from the school permanently.

### **Academic Integrity**

Grace Christian School is a community of academic excellence in a Christ-centered environment. Students are expected to follow and practice the principles of truth and honesty in all academic endeavors. Therefore, academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. It is the student's responsibility to make sure all work turned in is his/ her own work and reflects the student's true ability.

### **Cheating**

Cheating is an offense that must be dealt with firmly to establish a code of honor among students. The offense of cheating takes many forms and as a result, teachers must have a variety of strategies to deal with cheating. For the purpose of this policy, cheating will be defined as the willful or deliberate unauthorized use of the work of another person for

academic purposes.

Cheating includes, but is not limited to, any of the following behaviors:

- Copying another person's test answers
- Allowing someone else to copy test answers
- Divulging test questions and answers to other students
- Copying another person's homework
- Allowing someone else to copy your homework
- Using "cheat sheets" of any kind

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### **Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is the act of knowingly attempting to pass off the work of another as the work of your own thought, whether the other work is published or unpublished, or the work is of another student or teacher. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, any of the following behaviors:

- Quoting text or other written materials without citation on a term paper, homework, test, or other written materials submitted to the teacher when requested by the teacher to present your own work.
- Using other's graphics and pictures without citation.
- Using information and data obtained from the Internet without citation.

### **Consequences for Cheating or Plagiarizing:**

- The student's parent will be notified.
- The teacher conferences with the student.
- The student may be required to redo the assignment for half credit.
- The student(s) may receive a zero for the assignment/test.

In the event of a student continuing with the behavior, major consequences will apply, including but not limited to, removal from leadership positions (e.g., Student Ambassador, NJHS).

## **Grace Christian School Parent/Guardian Code of Ethics**

### **Rationale**

A positive relationship between school representatives (teachers, administrators, coaches, etc.) and families at Grace Christian School is one of the most important elements of an effective education and creating a Christ-centered environment. This policy statement provides structure to several phases of the relationship. We believe in Christ-centered conflict resolution and interaction between all members of the Grace community. Please read the following set of expectations and procedures used to maintain a healthy relationship between our families and school representatives.

## **Academic**

Parents maintain high realistic expectations for their children at Grace Christian School. Those expectations include academic standards and classroom practices designed to maximize achievement of all students. Oftentimes those expectations elicit questions from parents. These expectations should clarify the direction for both the child and teacher in the areas of goals and expectations. Some suggested ways to inquire about the academic expectations are:

- What skills and knowledge will my child be expected to master this academic year? •  
How will my child be evaluated?
- What can I do to stay more involved in my child's academic progress? •  
How do you as the teacher accommodate differences in learning?
- How do the expectations and practices prepare my child for future academic pursuits?

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## **Behavior**

A student's behavior is closely linked with his/her academics. As a result, Grace Christian School has a behavior code of conduct for the students whereby student behavior problems can be identified and remediated. Some suggested ways to inquire about the behavior expectations are:

- What are the classroom rules and procedures and how are students notified of these? •  
How did my child not meet expectations you require?
- How can I help motivate, encourage, and teach my child to meet behavior expectations?

Should a parent wish to question/challenge a school staff report of misbehavior, or wish to question/discuss a specific action, the following procedure must be followed:

**Step 1:** Please contact the staff by phone or email to discuss the issue. The telephone conversation or email between parent and staff is expected to be courteous, collegial, and cooperative. A plan should be worked out with follow up communication or face-to-face meetings as needed. Anonymous forms of communication will not be addressed.

**Step 2:** If the behavior is repeated or is beyond the realm of a telephone conversation or email, a conference between the parent and staff member should be scheduled. It is the expectation that these conferences remain calm and collaborative. All matters discussed will remain private and confidential by both the staff member and parent. On any occasion involving a difference of opinion, the administration may participate at the request of the staff member and/or parent. All of these interactions are part of the confidential relationship regarding student behavior and academic achievement.

**Step 3:** In the event that the disagreement between parent and staff member cannot be resolved via this procedure or in those instances when the parent's behavior becomes



intrusive, inflammatory, and/or explosive this procedure has been developed:

- The administration will be involved in every conference between the parent and staff member and will attempt to resolve the differences and find reconciliation.
- If the difference cannot be resolved and leads to disruptive behavior on the part of the parent, a decision may be made by the administration to deny the continuation of the family as a member of the Grace Christian School community.

### **Disciplinary Policy for Problems involving School Parents:**

Grace Christian School has a disciplinary policy and code of conduct for its students. It is proper and necessary for this policy to be extended to parents/guardians whose behavior is intrusive, inflammatory, or disrespectful therefore damaging the goals of keeping our school community centered around Christ-like behaviors. A decision to apply this policy to a parent

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would be made by the administration using careful forethought and only to significant behavioral issues. The disciplinary policy also extends beyond the school to activities where you serve as a representative of Grace Christian School in any capacity (i.e sport events, social media, field trips, etc.)

Examples of such disruptive behaviors by parents include, but are not limited to:

- Defamatory comments made about the school, faculty, staff, students, or other parents
- Verbal communication or written threats made against the physical or emotional well-being of others.
- Negative gossip spread in person, by phone, by letter, email, or social media.
- Harassing multiple messages or repeated complaints about matters that are already considered settled in the view of the administration.
- Disrespect towards faculty or staff members that would not be tolerated from any school student.

If a parent engages in disruptive behavior, the administration will follow these steps:

**Step 1:** warning to parent that this disciplinary policy is being engaged in regard to his/her behavior, with a mediation meeting with parents, administration, and other staff as needed.

**Step 2:** removal of parent from opportunities to volunteer in school activities and organizations.

**Step 3:** restriction of parental access to the school building and grounds without prior authorization by the administration

**Step 4:** final meeting, removing the parents and their child(ren) from enrollment in the Grace Christian Community

The administration has the discretion to skip steps in this policy pending the nature or severity of the parental behavior.

When any disciplinary action of this nature is being administered to a school parent, it is always within the discretion of the administration to notify other involved parents of the fact that such disciplinary action is being taken. However, the administration may choose not to disclose the exact nature of the parental infraction for privacy reasons. At the discretion of the administration, a more complete report concerning the disciplinary actions and the factors that gave rise to them may be shared with the school board in executive sessions.

Any parent that is aware of any situation where other school parents are engaged in behaviors that are disruptive to the harmony within the school community, they are asked to bring these issues to the attention of the administration.

### **Reconciliation of School Parents**

Reconciliation of school parents is a goal for Grace Christian School. We believe in forgiveness and restoration for parents and seek to bring parents back into good standing in our community. Any restoration of parents whom have participated in disruptive behaviors outlined above is predicated on two key factors:

- The parent understands and accepts the reasons why this process had to be applied in response to their behaviors
- The parent is committed to reconciliation among those who were adversely affected by their behaviors.

## **Emergency Procedures**

### **Fire Drill**

During the school year, we are required by law to conduct regular, unannounced fire drills. These drills allow our students and faculty to practice evacuating their classrooms quickly and orderly. Each teacher will instruct his or her class in proper fire escape procedures as follows:

- Maps instructing students where to go in the event of an emergency that necessitates evacuating the classes are displayed in every classroom.
- Students will exit the classroom in an orderly, single file line.
- Teachers will take their record book and will take roll once their class has reached the designated area.
- Teachers will be the last to exit the classroom, closing all doors and windows.
- Students will be kept in class groups and will not be permitted to wander.
- Should there be an incident requiring parents to pick up children, you will receive a phone call and/or an email.

## **Violent Intruder Procedures**

The safety of our children is one of the highest priorities at Grace. In order to prepare our children for the possibility of a violent intruder, members of the staff have been trained by “SafePlans,” an organization that specializes in “Security Awareness for Educators.” Students will practice lock-down and evacuation drills regularly throughout the school year. In the event that a violent intruder (armed or not) approaches the campus, staff will execute appropriate procedures while continually practicing the OODA Loop, a critical decision making strategy.

\*OODA Loop:

1. Observe-Become aware of a potentially dangerous situation.
2. Orient- Understand your options for responding to the situation.
3. Decide- Based on what you know, decide on best response.
4. Act- Carry out your decision to the best of your ability.

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In the event that the school is evacuated, children will be reunited with families next door at the CF Farm. The secondary location is Shady Hill Elementary School. Parents will be notified of the specific location via text, email, and/or phone call. All students will be signed out to a parent or approved guardian to ensure their safety.

Following a threatening incident, students and faculty will have the opportunity to process/debrief the situation with a licensed mental health counselor. The school administration will disseminate information to parents with the guidance of local law enforcement.

**Weather Policy:** Tornado drills are practiced regularly with students in preparation of potential dangerous weather. Every teacher has available instructions relating to the protection and evacuation of students in the event of a weather warning alert:

- If severe weather conditions develop while your child is at school, the school will notify parents using the email via the Renweb system and/or phone call. Please monitor local weather stations in case the school closes early.
- In the event of early dismissal or school closing, after-school activities will be canceled. • In the event that school closes early, your child will always be taken care of by faculty and staff until you are able to arrive.
- If Marion County Public Schools close because of weather, GCS will also close. Please stay tuned to the local radio/TV stations for reopening information. We will follow the Marion County Public Schools reopening schedule unless the administration determines otherwise. Parents/Guardians will be notified via email/phone if there is a change in procedure.

## **Extracurricular and Enrichment**

While extra-curricular activities are an integral part of our program, academics remain the first priority. In order to be eligible to participate in an extra-curricular activity after school, a student must have been present for at least 4 hours of the school day and meet academic and financial requirements.

- All rules stated in the GCS handbook apply for curricular and extra-curricular activities.
- Guests of GCS students at extra-curricular activities are subject to GCS rules and policies.

## **Athletics**

Students who meet the age requirement standard for a particular sport may participate in the athletic program at GCS.

### **Athletic Programs Offered**

- Varsity and JV Volleyball
- Co-ed Soccer
- Varsity and JV Basketball-Girls & Boys
- Track & Field
- Flag Football
- Pep Squad
- Tennis

### **Facilities**

GCS rents space for most of its athletic competitions. Co-ed soccer and flag football are played at GCS. At the beginning of each season, there will be a parent/coach/student meeting to explain the policies and procedures and the schedule for practices and games with the Athletic Director.

### **Parents Concern**

Parent concerns should be addressed in the following manner:

- Make an appointment with the coach.
- If the coach cannot be reached, call the Athletic Director to set up a meeting.
- Please do

not attempt to confront a coach before, during or following a game. These can be busy and emotional times for both the parent and coach, and this period does not promote objective analysis of the situation.

- If the meeting with the coach and/or Athletic Director does not allay your concerns, make an appointment with an administrator to discuss the situation.

### **Policies**

Student athletes at Grace Christian School must meet the following requirements:

- Maintain a 2.0 cumulative GPA. Incoming students are automatically eligible for the first semester.
- Keep a current annual check-up on file in the office.
- All paperwork can be picked up and returned to the Athletic Director prior to each season.
- There is a one time \$75.00 Sports fee for every student participating in the athletic program. This fee must be paid prior to issuing of uniforms or attendance at practices.
- Uniforms are issued for each sport. At the end of the season, it is the responsibility of the student to return the uniform or receive school debt for not returning the uniform.

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- In order to be eligible to participate in a practice or game, an athlete must have been present for at least 4 hours of the school day.

### **Sportsmanship**

Sportsmanship is an important aspect of the GCS athletic program. Student-athletes are expected to display good conduct during practices, games, and in the classroom. Sportsmanship is also displayed by the fans, families, and spectators at events. Those individuals participating in these roles also bear a responsibility to show good sportsmanship to the referees and the opposing team's players, coaches, and fans.

### **Courtyard:**

All Grace students gather in the courtyard area as a family each morning. It is a time of announcements, special presentations, celebrations of birthdays and achievements, devotion and prayer concerns, the Lord's Prayer and the pledge to the flag. It is a very special way to begin these days. On Thursdays we celebrate the Fruit of the Spirit Character Education Program.

### **Eighth Grade Play**

In spring the eighth grade class participates in a dramatic production. Performances are open to the public and have received much acclaim.

### **Field Trips**

The classroom teachers schedule field trips at various times throughout the school year. These trips enhance and enrich our curriculum. The fee for school field trips is paid by the parent. We also encourage parents to chaperone for these trips. Chaperones must follow the "Chaperone Guidelines" provided by the teacher before each field trip. Chaperones must have completed the volunteer form prior to the field trip. For liability purposes **siblings are not allowed to attend field trips.**

### **Little Buddies**

Seventh and eighth grade students have "Little Buddies" from the K4 and K5 classes. "Little Buddies" have scheduled time to meet in addition to special occasions, such as

sitting with buddies at Courtyard.

### **National Junior Honor Society**

- The NJHS is an organization whose purpose is to recognize and encourage academic achievement while developing other characteristics essential to good citizens. To be eligible for membership a student must have completed the third quarter of his/her 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Candidates must have a cumulative Grade Point Average of 3.5 or above. Students who meet this criterion will then be evaluated in the areas of character, leadership, service, and citizenship. The selection of each member shall be by the majority votes of the faculty council. The faculty council is composed of middle school teachers.
- Students who have the required GPA by the end of the first quarter of the academic year will receive a letter notifying them of their pre-eligibility and inviting them to meet with the chapter advisor. This notification is not an invitation for membership. At the time of the meeting the student and parent will be notified if there is a problem in one or more of the areas of character, leadership, citizenship, and service. The student will have 16 weeks (end of third quarter) to improve in the area of weakness.

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- At the end of the third quarter, students who meet the academic criteria and wish to become members of NJHS will complete an application and an essay which addresses the following points: 1) personal leadership 2) character 3) service 4) citizenship and 5) how the student's membership will benefit the chapter and the school.
- Students must return their completed application to be considered for membership to the NJHS Grace School Chapter. Students who choose not to return their application and essays will not be considered for membership. The faculty council will meet to evaluate and discuss the application and essays and will cast their vote. The decision of the faculty council will be final.

### **Parties**

- **Class Parties:** Academics are of utmost importance and maintaining that focus is vital to our students' academic growth. Additionally, celebrating important holidays as a family helps our children socially and builds community. Therefore the school allows two class parties to celebrate Christmas and the end of the year. These parties are planned by the teacher and homeroom parent.
- **Holidays:** As a Christian school it is important to emphasize the importance of Christ in our religious celebrations. At Christmas we focus on the Holy Family and the birth of Jesus rather than Santa Claus, elves, and reindeer. At Easter we focus on the death and resurrection of Jesus rather than the Easter bunny and chocolate eggs. In addition, we do not celebrate the secular version of Halloween; rather students learn the religious and cultural significance of Dia De Los Muertos in Spanish Class.
- **Birthdays:** In an effort to keep distractions to a minimum and to keep students with allergies safe, all students (K-5) are NOT permitted to celebrate birthdays by sharing food while at school. Your child's teacher (K-5) will send home a "birthday bag" for you to provide a special treat for **your child** on their birthday. The child is made to feel special with the birthday song, special privileges in class, and acknowledgement from their class community. Party invitations for all grades may **NOT** be distributed on campus **UNLESS** the entire class is invited. Similarly, we request that you do not pick up specific groups of children from school to attend parties.

## **Religious Program/ School Eucharist**

All school students attend Christian Education classes each week. At Grace Christian School religion is not treated as something separate or different. The Lord's presence is welcomed at GCS and prayer is an important part of our daily life. The "religious moment" at Grace Christian School occurs as we live with children hour-by-hour and day-by-day, growing together in the knowledge that the Lord loves and cares for each of us. The classroom teachers often lead the students in spontaneous prayers as well as leading the blessing before snack and lunch.

Each Wednesday the entire school community gathers at 7:45 am in the church at Christ the King to celebrate the Eucharist. Either the Pastor or Associate Pastor of Christ the King Church will deliver the message and GCS music teachers and students lead the school in praise and worship. The middle school students serve as acolytes and readers each week. We welcome all who are baptized to receive communion. Those children not receiving will go to the altar for a blessing. Parents, family, and friends are welcomed to join us during this celebration.

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## **Safety Patrol Program**

Students in 5<sup>th</sup> grade have the opportunity to serve on Safety Patrol. One of their jobs is to direct cars through the carline and help fellow students get themselves and their belongings safely in or out of the car. Being part of Safety Patrol develops responsibility, citizenship, and leadership skills. Fifth grade patrollers are eligible for the annual Washington, D.C. trip.

## **Crusader Ambassadors**

A student organization made up of middle school students appointed by the middle school teachers and administrators. Students will be invited to apply based on their behavior in and out of class, character, and a desire to promote the success of our school. Students will be required to write an essay regarding their thoughts on how to best promote our school and make it a safe, kind, and Christ-like environment as well as what characteristics they possess to help this cause.

There will be at least two students but no more than five appointed from each grade level. Within the council, members will vote for a president from 8<sup>th</sup> grade, a vice president from 7<sup>th</sup> grade and one secretary and treasurer from any middle school grade. Crusader ambassadors will be expected to reach out to new students and faculty, encourage kindness within the school community through various activities, promote school spirit and assist with learning opportunities with all grade levels. Students will be appointed each year and does not necessarily carry over the following year.

## **Financial Information and Ways to Support Grace School**

### **Tuition**

Grace Christian School partners with FACTS Management Company to help manage tuition and fees. FACTS is used by many schools locally and over 6,500 schools nationally. FACTS provides:

- **Payment Flexibility:** Each month an automatic payment will be made from your choice of checking, savings, or credit cards. Each payment that does not clear will be charged an NSF fee of \$30 to FACTS.
- **Convenience & Security:** Your payments are processed securely through a bank-to-bank transaction.
- **Peace of Mind Insurance:** FACTS offers this optional benefit for only \$14 per year per family. In the event of death of the Responsible Party or spouse, the remaining tuition balance owed for the current school year is paid to the school.
- **Consumer Account:** You may check your personal account or make payments online from the convenience of your home or office anytime.

ALL PARENTS must register on FACTS. The fee for this system is covered by the registration fee. This system will also be used for aftercare/extended care, field trips, yearbook, sports, and other miscellaneous fees and invoices throughout the year.

### **Financial Assistance**

- **GCS Financial Aid:** Grace Christian School has limited financial aid funds available to families who qualify. FACTS is used to establish financial eligibility for the Grace Christian School Financial Aid Awards. It is the responsibility of the parent to complete the online application. The business office has additional information if needed.
- **SUFS/FES:** Parents who qualify for Step Up For Students (SUFS) will need to go online, fill out the application and submit all paperwork directly with SUFS. If you are awarded SUFS funding, then you will need to bring the award letter to the Grace Christian School Business Office.
- **McKay:** Grace Christian School accepts a limited number of McKay Scholarships. We will only accept McKay Scholarship students if we are able to meet his or her educational needs.

### **Annual Giving**

Annual giving is a vital part of private education. Your gift to the Annual Fund provides new programming, computers, library enhancement and competitive salaries and benefits for teachers. Your gift is also tax deductible. GCS relies on the loyalty and generosity of parents, grandparents, alumni, parents of alumni, and friends to continue the long tradition of outstanding education in a warm, safe, and caring Christian atmosphere. Parents will be notified of the Annual Giving campaign by mail and GCS will sincerely appreciate full participation.



## Tuition and Fees

### TUITION – School Year 2021-2022

GRADE	TUITION
All applicants	Application fee - \$100
ALL GRADES	Registration Fee - \$250 first child, \$200 each additional
K-3	\$5,100 (5 days) , \$4,000 (3 days)
K-4	\$5,100
K-5	\$7,200
Grades 1 - 5	\$7,900
Middle School	\$ 8,400

#### TUITION PAYMENT PLANS:

- Payment in full – due by June 1
- Payment in ½ by June 1 & ½ by Dec. 1
- Twelve (12) equal monthly payments due June 1, 2016 – May 1, 2017

***If you register after school starts your monthly payments will be based on a 10 month payment of total tuition***

#### DISCOUNTS:

- 2<sup>nd</sup> child 5%
- 3<sup>rd</sup> child 8%, each additional child 8% each

**ADDITIONAL FEES**

- **Application fee: \$100.00 (due with application)**
- **Sports Fee** – Any student who plays a sport in GCS after school sports program: \$75
- **Graduation fee** – 8<sup>th</sup> grade - \$100
- **School Uniforms** – Purchased through Land’s End, Choice Awards, and GCS Spirit Shop (new uniforms and used uniform)

**AFTER/EXTENDED CARE PROGRAM FEES**

This program provides a special place for your child before school and after dismissal. The staff provides a safe, nurturing environment. These hours that follow dismissal is a time for students to work on homework, enjoy an afternoon snack, and visit with friends. Students using the aftercare program regularly will pay a annual supply fee of \$25.

<b>Program</b>	<b>GRADE</b>	<b>Hours</b>	<b>Daily Drop in Fee</b>	<b>Monthly Fee</b> <small>(based on 17-18 days billing)</small>	<b>Payment in Full</b> <small>(Due Aug. 18)</small>
Before Care	K3 – 8th	7:00am-7:30am	\$4.00	\$50.00	\$470
After Care	K3 & K4	12:00pm– 3:00pm	\$9.00	\$150.00	\$1,350
Extended Care	K5 – 8 <sup>th</sup> grade	3:00pm 5:30pm	\$9.00	\$150.00	\$1,350
AfterCare /Extended Care	K3/K4	12:00pm – 5:30pm	\$12.00	\$200.00	\$1,750

## **General Information**

### **Cell phones and Smartwatches**

Students in grades 6 – 8 are allowed to bring cell phones and smartwatches to school but must keep them in their backpack during the school day and are not allowed to use them until after dismissal. Dismissal for this purpose is once the child is in the care of their parent and off school campus. The school is not liable for any lost or damaged cell phones or smartwatches. The exception to activation would be under the direct supervision of a teacher for instructional use as outlined in a lesson plan. The office phone may be used only for an emergency. Students in K-3 through 5<sup>th</sup> grade are NOT permitted to carry cellular phones or have a smartwatch. Parents should NOT attempt to contact their child during the school day on their cell phone or smartwatch.

### **Lockers**

Students in grades 6 - 8 will be assigned a locker. The school assumes no responsibility for the contents of lockers. Students are not permitted to go into other students' lockers. We strongly recommend that students and parents exercise careful judgment regarding cash, jewelry and other valuables brought to school. **THE SCHOOL RESERVES THE RIGHT TO CONDUCT LOCKER CHECKS AT ITS DISCRETION.**

### **Records**

- Grace Christian School maintains educational records in accordance with state and federal laws. These records are kept in a fireproof cabinet in the school office.
- Parents, legal guardians or eligible students have the right to review records on their child. Student education records are forwarded to other schools which have requested the records and in which the student seeks or intends to enroll. Records may be held if there are delinquent accounts until such time as the financial debt is paid.
- All students attending GCS must have on file:
  - Current health form (including immunization)
  - Birth Certificate

- Emergency information and a notarized waiver forms.

### **Textbook Information**

- The cost of textbooks and consumable workbooks are included in the tuition. The teacher will assign each student his/her textbook. If a student loses or defaces a textbook or workbook, a new one will be issued and the parent will be billed.
- ALL BOOKS MUST BE COVERED WITH PAPER OR CLOTH. (NO sticky or contact paper covers).

### **Visitors**

All visitors coming onto the campus must sign in at the main school office to receive a visitor's pass. This includes all parents working in a volunteer capacity including chaperoning field trips. Visitors must sign out at time of leaving. Parents must also sign in to go to the lunch area.

## **Health and Medicine**

### **Animals on Campus**

For the safety of our children we do not allow animals on campus without the express permission of a school administrator. Please do not bring your pet to school when dropping off or picking up your children unless your pet stays in the car.

### **Health records**

- The Florida Immunization Law requires that all children enrolling in any public, private, parochial or denominational school in Florida must submit a statement signed by a physician that the student has been immunized or protected by these vaccines: DTP, TB, Polio, MMR, Rubella, Mumps, HepB, and Tetanus.
- Students entering Kindergarten, or anytime they have received a new immunization, must provide an updated Florida Blue Immunization card.
- Students entering the seventh grade must provide an updated Florida Blue Immunization card showing they have been immunized for Tetanus.
- Students entering sixth grade must be screened for scoliosis.
- Please advise the office of any allergies or other health-related information relevant to emergency situations.
- Parents must sign a medical waiver allowing the school to provide medical attention to their child/ren in case of an emergency.
- Students with allergies must have an action plan and pertinent information on file. This plan should identify the allergy, and provide specific steps to take in the event of exposure to the allergen and who to contact.
- Students with any health risks must have a medical action plan on file indicating what steps the school should take in an emergency.

## Notification of Injury or Illness

- Any child who is unable to participate in P.E. or any other physical event due to illness or injury will need a note from a parent. If injury persists more than three days, a doctor's note is necessary.
- Parents should notify the school if the student has a communicable disease such as measles, mumps, chicken pox or head lice.
- In case of illness or accident, the student will report to the clinic. Parents will be notified. The school may request that the student be picked up immediately. If parents are unavailable, the alternate names appearing on the Student Information Sheet will be contacted. It is the parent's responsibility to inform the school of telephone and address changes and to maintain at least two (2) emergency contacts.
- When a child sustains a head injury at school, the parent will be notified and they will be asked to have the child assessed for a concussion.

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## Student Illness

If your child gets sick at school and may be contagious or exhibits symptoms that make it advisable to send the child home, we will contact you or others on your contact list to come to school to pick them up. For the safety of our students the school cannot allow a sick child to remain at school. The school does not have a nurse on staff and therefore a staff member will provide basic first aid to students. Parents will be notified if a student needs professional medical care. **Please make sure that your contact information and your emergency contact people are kept current.**

## Medication

- Any student requiring medication, whether prescription or OTC, at school must have an **Authorization for Administering Medications** form on file.
  - These guidelines for administering prescription medication must be followed
    - Medication must be in its original prescription container.
    - Medication brought to school must be left with the staff in the clinic.
    - Medication will be stored in a locked cabinet.
    - Other staff members are prohibited from providing or administering any medication to any student except as authorized by you as a parent or guardian and the child's physician.
  - Nonprescription medication may be administered by a designated staff member under the following guidelines
    - The authorization form signed by the parent AND the doctor is on file.
    - The doctor provides specific instructions for the school to follow.
    - The parent must provide the medication.

**Medication cannot be stored in students' lockers or carried on their person unless required for their medical condition and prescribed by their physician (i.e., inhalers). Safety Guidelines for Communicable Illnesses**

For the safety of our students and staff, those who are contagious or showing symptoms that indicate a possibly contagious illness should follow the guidelines below regarding

their exclusion from school. Illnesses not included in the chart below will be handled on an individual case basis.

<b>Symptom or Illness</b>	<b>Return to School Guidelines</b>
Oral temperature of 100° or above	Fever free for 24 hours without fever reducing medication such Tylenol
Vomiting, nausea or severe abdominal pain	Symptom free for 24 hours
Red, inflamed or discharging eyes	Written physician release
Wound, skin and soft tissue infections	Exclude until drainage is contained and covered with a clean dry bandage
Suspected scabies or impetigo	Written physician release
Any skin lesion in the weeping stage	Covered and diagnosed as non-infectious
Lice	Lice and nit free (Student will be checked by an office staff before returning to the class)
Strep Throat	Student on antibiotics for 24 hours and fever free.
Other symptoms suggestive of acute illness	Written physician release

**Smoking Policy**

Grace Christian School has a smoke-free environment. No one may smoke on campus or at any school sponsored event or field trip. Please be sure to dispose of cigarette butts before entering campus. We will be teaching students about the adverse effects of smoking and attempt to discourage children from developing the habit of smoking.

## **Lunch**

- Students who do not wish to purchase a lunch may bring his/her own lunch from home. Parents will receive a menu each month. Parents will receive information explaining how to set up their child/ren's lunch account. Money on this account will be deducted each time their child/ren purchases a lunch by entering in their personal pin number. Daily orders must be submitted no later than the night before the desired day of lunch service. The orders will be submitted to the cook who prepares the meals each day. Students not on the lunch list who do not have a lunch from home will be provided the "chef's choice" at the parent's expense.
- Students will have the option to purchase desserts on Fridays after they have consumed their healthy lunch. Staff on duty will monitor students to encourage healthy choices. • Students bringing lunch from home are not permitted to bring food from outside vendors such as Pizza Hut or McDonalds.
- Students are not allowed to share food at lunch or for snack. We have an increased number of students with food allergies and we do not want to risk having a medical emergency.
- Students are not allowed to have caffeinated drinks, soda or energy drinks. At lunch students may buy milk or water.
- **SNACKS:** Students (K3-5<sup>th</sup> grade) should have a healthy snack such as a fresh vegetables, fruit, or crackers and water. Students should not have items that would easily spill or cause a mess that is difficult to clean. The snack is something simple that tides them over until lunchtime. Middle School may eat a small healthy snack during homeroom.

## **Library**

### **Accessibility**

- The library is open to all students in grades K3 through 8.
- K3 through 5<sup>th</sup> grade students will have a regularly scheduled library class each week and students 1<sup>st</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grade may use the library during posted "open library" times with a

teacher's permission to check out books (K3—K5 students do not check out books)

### **Circulation**

- 1<sup>st</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade students may checkout up to 3 books at a time (2 AR and 1 non-AR) ○ Students in grades 1-5 may checkout their books for one week.
  - Middle school students may checkout their books for two weeks.
  - Reference books, such as encyclopedias and dictionaries are to be used only in the library.
  - Students may renew library materials unless the material is on a “waiting” list.
- Students are encouraged to take AR tests in their classrooms.
- Current year Sunshine State Reader books may only be checked for one week and may not be renewed.
- Students who have overdue books may not be allowed to checkout.
- Lost books and books damaged beyond reasonable wear will be paid for by the student. • The library staff has the discretion to limit or prohibit student checkouts of any library material.

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- **ALL LIBRARY FEES MUST BE PAID BY THE END OF THE YEAR BEFORE FINAL GRADES CAN BE RELEASED.**

### **Parent / School Partnership**

Parental involvement is essential in the development and academic success of your child. There are many ways for parents to play an active role in school. Open Houses and parent conferences will provide an opportunity to find out more about your child and Grace Christian School. The GCS website will provide parents and students with information about activities, events, and fundraisers. All information regarding your child/ren's academic progress (i.e., grades, homework, tests, etc.) will be located on RenWeb.

### **Parents of Grace**

Parents of Grace (POG) is an organization of the school's parents. It sponsors all school activity days and supports the school tremendously in fund raising efforts. More importantly, this organization is a parent support group, acting as a liaison with the school, supporting new parents, offering prayer reflections, and a variety of other activities to bring Grace families together. All parents are encouraged to participate and support Parents of Grace (POG).

### **Volunteering**

- Parents are required to volunteer for a minimum of 10 hours a year. Joining our Parents of Grace organization is a great way to get involved and obtain your 10 hours of volunteering. Examples of volunteer opportunities include but are not limited to:
  - Chaperoning
  - Tutoring
  - Assisting a teacher
  - Working in the office
  - Making or preparing materials for a classroom
  - Maintenance work at school
- Background Checks are required for any volunteer who works with children. Volunteer forms may be picked up and returned to the front office. Once a background check is complete you will be notified that you may begin to volunteer on campus or as a chaperone.



- Parents who intend to drive other children besides their own for any school related event (field trip, games, etc) must also include a copy of his/her driver's license and a current copy of the declaration page from his/her auto insurance policy showing a minimum \$100,000 liability policy.
- Parents working on campus must sign in and out through the front office. These hours are calculated at the end of the year. Parents working off campus are responsible for reporting his/her volunteer hours to the Advancement Director.
- When you volunteer at school it is important to know that you must maintain confidentiality. Whatever you hear in a classroom or working with a child needs to stay there. It is a breach of confidentiality to share with anyone other than the classroom teacher what you observed in the classroom or in working with a child.

## **Transportation Safety/School Hours**

### **Arrival**

- Students may be dropped off in the car loop in front of the Andersen building. • Parents who park and walk their child/ren to class, please use the back parking lot and back entrance into the building.
- Students arriving before 7:30 am must go to the Art room for Before Care for an additional charge of \$4 per day.
- Safety patrols who are assigned to morning duty must be at their post by 7:25 am. For afternoon duty, safety patrols must remain until 3:00 pm or when "off duty" is called.
- The crosswalk leading from the parking lot to the walkway between the main building and the portables will be blocked off in the morning. You will not be able to make a loop through the side parking lot in the morning. In this case, you will have to pull in and park. If you are just dropping off your child, you will need to pull through the loop in front of the school.
- Staff is positioned throughout the school to ensure students arrive safely to their classroom.

### **Dismissal**

- K-3 dismisses at 11:45 am and K-4 dismisses at 12 noon.
  - All students in K3 and K4 not picked up within 10 minutes of dismissal time will be moved to the After Care Room located in the left side of Portable # 5 and regular charges for this program will apply.
  - Please park and wait for your child at the end of the ramp leading to the portables.
- K5 – 8<sup>th</sup> and After Care dismisses at 2:45 pm.
  - Car Line: Post your family name sign on the front dashboard.
  - Back or Front Door: A staff member will call for your child to come to the back door to place in your care. You may be asked to present ID for clearance to pick up.
- Students must remain with their class until the teacher calls their name. Students should

listen closely and be prepared to get into the car promptly.

- For the safety of our children, students are NOT allowed to open the back trunk or back hatch to load backpacks and/or other materials. Everything is to be loaded through the back passenger door of the car.
- Students are not allowed to use the playground before or after school, unless they are part of the Extended Day program or a school supervised activity.
- **Rainy Day Dismissal**
  - Please follow the car line and your child will be brought to your car. ○ In the event of lightning, students will not be walked to the car. This is for the safety of children and staff. At your discretion, you may get out of the car and pick up your child.

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- **Early Day Dismissal**
  - Please check Friday Fast Facts and the school calendar for specific dismissal times during early day dismissal.
- **Emergency Dismissal Days**
  - If we have to go into a lockdown at dismissal we will NOT dismiss students until the emergency is over. If we have to evacuate the campus you will receive a text message/email concerning pick up procedures.

### **After Care**

The Aftercare Program has been designed to foster cognitive, social, and spiritual development, while reinforcing preschool standards and the importance of classroom structure. Time is one of the greatest gifts we can give our children, especially when it comes to laying an academic foundation and preparing them for life. Our program not only offers a warm and nurturing environment, but also offers an opportunity for extended learning time. The children will participate in high energy learning, hands on activities, and develop a readiness for kindergarten. Our program includes the development of Christian character. Children are encouraged to love their classmates, respect their teachers, and strive to make good choices.

- Aftercare is provided for K3 and K4 students beginning at their dismissal time until 3:00pm for an additional fee (please see fee schedule). A onetime annual supply fee of \$25 will be assessed for any child who stays more than three times in a month.
- Pick-up will be at the back door or through the carline. Children remaining after 3:00 pm will be taken to Extended Care.
- Please purchase or provide a lunch for your child each day they attend Aftercare. • Children will have quiet time daily and may sleep or rest quietly on individual mats. Parents are responsible for providing the following items for aftercare children:
  - 1 set of extra clothing in a baggie labeled with the child's name
  - Crib sheet and a small blanket

### **Extended Care**

- Extended Care is available for all students from K3 – 8<sup>th</sup> grade from 3:00 pm until 5:30 pm (K3 students may stay until 4:30) for an additional fee (please see fee schedule). • K3-2<sup>nd</sup> grade students will be in the Art Room and 3<sup>rd</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grade students will be in the Spanish Room for study hall until 4:30 pm at which time they will move to the Art Room. **Changes in location will be communicated via email.**
- All students remaining after 3:00 pm will be sent to extended care for supervision and

regular charges for this program apply at 3:05.

- K3 students must be picked up no later than 4:30 pm, and all other student must be picked up by 5:30 pm. Students not picked up by their designated time will be charged a late fee of \$1 per minute and the parent will be called to pick up their child.
- 3<sup>rd</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade students will have the opportunity to complete homework and projects. The extended care staff will provide a quiet space for students to work and students are expected to work quietly.
- All students should bring an afternoon snack.
- Pickup is in front of the main building (front portico) and parents should enter through the **Art Room's exterior door**.

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### **Traffic Policy**

- For the safety of your child, cell phones should not be used while picking up or dropping off your child. This is a great opportunity to learn about your child's day at school and help them build communication skills. If you are on the cell phone we may ask that you pull over to the side until such time as you complete your call. At that time we will gladly load your child in your car.
- Students, parents and faculty must use the identified crosswalks at all times. State law requires that you stop for pedestrians in the crosswalk.
- Please do not leave cars for any reason during arrival/dismissal (when you are in the moving car line).
- Please follow the directions of the safety patrol students, pulling up when asked.
- **PLEASE notify the front office of all changes in transportation either via written note, email, or phone call.**
- Please do not attempt to conference with teachers during dismissal. This pulls the teacher away from their supervisory duties. Please contact the teacher via email or phone and set up a time when they can give you their full attention and speak in confidentiality.

### **Parking**

- Staff, visitor, and volunteer parking are located on the south side and closest to the main building. This is reserved for staff, volunteers, and visitors. There are also two auction purchased parking slots in this area. Do NOT park in these reserved spaces. • Parent parking is located in the lot that runs north to south in front of portables 1 – 3.

## **Uniforms and Dress Code**

People's dress often reflects their attitude toward their work. Grace Christian School has always upheld high standards in all areas, including standard of dress. For these reasons, GCS requires that all students in grades Kindergarten – 8<sup>th</sup> grade wear uniforms and have a neat, clean appearance (i.e., shirts tucked in, belts, etc.). The GCS approved uniform is found at Tommy Hilfiger, Landsend.com using our source code 900141904 or by visiting Choice Awards. Uniforms can be purchased or exchanged at the GCS spirit shop.

### **K3 and K4 Dress Code**

Students in preschool are not required to wear uniforms. However, for their safety and comfort, students must comply with the following:

- Girls must wear shorts under dresses and skirts.
- All tops must cover the midriff area.
- Tennis shoes should be worn. Children wearing sandals may not participate in all activities.
- “Theme” wear must be appropriate for a Christian School.

**Uniform Guidelines Kindergarten – 8<sup>th</sup> grade**

<b>Style</b>	<b>Girls</b>	<b>Boys</b>
Skorts, Skirt, Tab skort (Mid-thigh/fingertip length whichever is longer)	Khaki, navy & plaid	
Pants (Flat front-no capris or cargo)	Khaki & navy	Khaki & navy
Shorts (Flat front, Bermuda length, no cargo)	Khaki, navy & plaid	Khaki & navy
Jumper (logo optional)	Khaki, navy & plaid	
<b>SHIRTS:</b>		
Peter Pan Blouse w/logo (UNDER THE JUMPER-no logo needed )	White	
Knit shirt/Active Polo, long or short sleeve w/logo	Red, White or Navy Blue	Red, White or Navy Blue
Turtleneck (wear under shirt)	Solid -Red, White or Navy Blue	Solid - Red, White or Navy Blue
V Neck Cardigan (w/ logo)	Solid- Red, White or Navy Blue	Navy, Red, White
<b>JACKETS:</b>		
Fleece jacket (logo optional)	Solid- Navy, Red or White	Navy, Red or white
Jacket (logo optional)	Solid-Navy, Red or White	Navy, Red or White
Sweatshirts (logo optional)	Solid-Navy, Red or White	Navy, Red or White
<b>PHYSICAL EDUCATION:(5<sup>th</sup>– 8<sup>th</sup> ONLY)</b>		

Shorts ( <b>Mid-thigh/fingertip length</b> )	Navy	Navy
Shirts	Gray or Red	Gray or Red
Sweatpants	Navy	Navy
Sweatshirts	Navy, Red or white	Navy, red or white
HAIR	Student's natural color. Novelty headbands and accessories are NOT permitted. (i.e. cat ears, unicorn, etc)	Student's natural color Appropriate style and length: above the eyebrows, ears, and collar - neatly combed
Make up	No Make up No nail polish or acrylic nails No tattoos <b>8<sup>th</sup> grade ONLY</b> – light make up and nail polish is permitted, but only colors that do not draw attention to the student	Not permitted to wear earrings No tattoos
Jewelry	No jewelry permitted except the following... Small earrings-no dangle or hoops. Necklace with religious symbol. Watches	No jewelry permitted except the following... Necklace with religious symbol, Watches
<b>SOCKS (Knee highs and Tights for girls)</b>	<b>Solid</b> red, white, black or navy	<b>Solid</b> red, white, black, or navy
<p><b>SHOES:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• K-5<sup>th</sup>: For safety purposes students should only wear shoes that fit securely with a strap across the foot and have a rubber sole conducive to outdoor activity.</li> <li>• Middle school: Students may wear any flat, closed-toe and closed back shoe that is safe and sturdy.</li> </ul>		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All students <b>MUST</b> wear athletic shoes for PE.</li> <li>• All students are expected to follow these guidelines: No lights, sandals, wheels, bedroom slippers, “fivefinger” shoes, Crocs (or “croc” like), boots, or flip-flops.</li> </ul>
<p><b>BELTS:</b> If there are belt loops, students must wear a solid navy, black, brown/tan, or school plaid belt.</p>
<p><b>COLD WEATHER UNIFORM:</b> Students are encouraged to wear uniform pants when it is cold. Uniform sweaters and jackets are also recommended. If non-uniform coats are worn to school they must be taken off and stored in lockers for middle school students or in the classroom of elementary grade students. Non-uniform clothing may not be worn during the school day unless it is an out-of-uniform day.</p>

**OUT-OF- UNIFORM:** On designated out-of-uniform days, students may wear neat clothing of their choice. Long pants, jeans or shorts are acceptable clothing for boys; skirts, dresses, slacks, capris, or jeans are acceptable for girls. Shorts and skirts must be **mid-thigh length/fingertip length whichever is longer**. Jeans may not have rips or holes. Tank tops, bare midriff, spaghetti straps, hip hugger pants, leggings (including but not limited to tight athletic wear) are not permitted. Students not following these guidelines will have the opportunity to rectify the problem by either borrowing/purchasing an appropriate substitute in the used uniform shop or contacting a parent or guardian to bring him/her a change of clothes.

**Uniform Violation Procedures**

- Teachers are the observers to determine if the student is following the uniform policy. • With repeat offenses, when the teacher sends the student to the office for uniform violation it will be supported by the administration as per Grace Christian School Uniform Policy.

**Consequences for violation of uniform policy**

<b>Kinder-5<sup>th</sup> grade</b>	<b>Middle School</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>1<sup>st</sup> infraction-</b> Teacher verbal reminds student and sends an informal note to parent.</li> <li>• <b>2<sup>nd</sup> infraction</b> –Teacher sends an “out of uniform” slip to the parent.</li> <li>• <b>3<sup>rd</sup> infraction</b> –Student is sent to the office to call a parent who will need to provide the appropriate uniform. If parent cannot be reached or provide the uniform, one from the spirit shop will be given to the student at the parent’s expense.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>1<sup>st</sup> infraction-</b> Verbal reminder to the student.</li> <li>• <b>2<sup>nd</sup> infraction-</b> Parent will be contacted. •</li> <li>• <b>3<sup>rd</sup> infraction-</b> Student will receive a disciplinary referral via Renweb and a consequence (ex. Lunch detention, before school detention)</li> <li>• <b>If dress code violations become a pattern more severe consequences will occur.</b></li> </ul>

**Additional Items**

Please label and identify personal property and clothing. All shirts must be tucked in and shorts and pants must be worn on the waist, including PE uniforms. The length of skirts, shorts or skorts must be no shorter than fingertip/mid-thigh length (whichever is longer). Clothing must not fit a student too tightly. The school has used uniforms for purchase at a reasonable price.

### **Appendix A -- Administration/Teacher/Staff Email Addresses**

Please follow the proper chain of command in your communications. If the matter of communication is a classroom question, please email the classroom teacher first and allow him/her to respond. Thank you!

#### **Administrative Team**

Head of School, Thomas Gerds	tgerds@gcsocala.com
Assistant Head of School, Kyle McKenzie	kmckenzie@gcsocala.com
Director of Development, Meredith Garner	mgarner@gcsocala.com
Technology Director, Ryan Owens	rowens@gcsocala.com
Admissions/Event Director, Debbie Bruni	dbruni@gcsocala.com
Business and Health Manager, Kelsey Atkins	katkins@gcsocala.com
Office Manager, Roxie Foster	rfoster@gcsocala.com
Athletic Director, Kyle McKenzie	

#### **Classroom Teachers**

K-3 Teacher, Robin Booth	rbooth@gcsocala.com
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K-4 Teacher, Stacey Gibson	sgibson@gcsocala.com
K-5 Teacher, Chrissy Leard	cleard@gcsocala.com
K-5 Teacher, Carol Cameron	ccameron@gcsocala.com
1 <sup>st</sup> Grade Teacher, Cheryl Young	cyoung@gcsocala.com
2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade Teacher, Sarah Curran	scurran@gcsocala.com
3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade Teacher, Ashley Hinkle	ahinkle@gcsocala.com
4/5 Math/Science Teacher, Austin Yates	ayates@gcsocala.com
4/5 ELA Teacher, Mallory Strong	mstrong@gcsocala.com
MS Math Teacher, Christy Benway	cbenway@gcsocala.com
MS Language Arts Teacher, Daniel Donnan	ddonnan@gcsocala.com
MS Social Studies Teacher, Andrew Touchton	atouchton@gcsocala.com
MS Science Teacher, Cassie McKenzie	bpyle@gcsocala.com

### **Special Area Teachers**

Art, N/A

Band, Jack Covell	jcovell@gcsocala.com
Computer/Technology, Ryan Owens	rowens@gcsocala.com
Library, Ninette Clauss	nclauss@gcsocala.com
Lower School Music/Christ Ed/MS Chorus, Luke Ferguson	lferguson@gcsocala.com
M/SChristian Ed, Father Tom Carson	tcarson@gcsocala.com
PE, Robert Ramirez	rramirez@gcsocala.com
Spanish Teacher, Nina Canfield	ncanfield@gcsocala.com
After & Extended Care Program Manager, Nadine Evans	nwood@gcsocala.com

### **Teacher Assistants**



Pam Feaster, K-3, 2<sup>nd</sup>&3<sup>rd</sup>

[pfeaster@gcsocala.com](mailto:pfeaster@gcsocala.com)

Nadine Evans, K-4

[nwood@gcsocala.com](mailto:nwood@gcsocala.com)

Stephanie Salmon, K5

[ssalmon@gcsocala.com](mailto:ssalmon@gcsocala.com)

Lauren Tuzzolino, K5

[ltuzzolino@gcsocala.com](mailto:ltuzzolino@gcsocala.com)

Mary Fulkerson, 1<sup>st</sup> grade

[mfulkerson@gcsocala.com](mailto:mfulkerson@gcsocala.com)