

Grace Christian Educational Association **CONSTITUTION & BY-LAWS**



Grace Christian Educational Association **CONSTITUTION & BY-LAWS**

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1110 Article I Official Name

The name of this Association shall be the Grace Christian Educational Association.

1120 Article II Word of God

The basis of this Association shall be the Word of God; the following declaration expresses the common faith of its membership.

1121 Declaration of Faith

1. We believe in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as verbally, plenary, inspired by God and inerrant in the original writing, and that they are of supreme and final authority in faith and life. - (II Timothy 3:16- 17; II Peter 1:21; I Corinthians 2:13)
2. We believe in one God, eternally existing in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. - (John 4:24; Mark 12:29; Matthew 28:19-20; II Corinthians 13:14)
3. We believe in the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, His virgin birth, His sin less life, who is true God and true man. - (John 1:1-2; Matthew 1:20; I Timothy 3:16; Isaiah 7:14; John 14:6; Isaiah 53:4-6; Hebrews 2:9; Romans 1:4)
4. We believe in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit whose primary work to the sinner is to convict of sin, righteousness, and judgment, hopefully bringing him to Christ; and Who indwells each believer at the moment of conversion, primarily to establish God's work of redemption in him; simultaneously, to join him to the body of Christ with equal privileges with all other believers without additional works of grace. - (John 14:16-17; John 15:26; John 16:13-14; Romans 8:9; Acts 1:8; Ephesians 1:13-14)
5. We believe that man was created in the image of God; that he sinned, and thereby incurred not only physical death but also spiritual death which is separation from God; and that all human beings are born with a sinful nature and in the case of those who reach moral responsibility, manifest themselves as sinners in thought, word and deed. - (Genesis 1:26; Gene sis 2:17; Ephesians 2:1-3; I John 3:8; Romans 5:12-19; Jeremiah 17:9; Psalm 14:1-3; Romans 8:6-7)
6. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures; Who is our substitutionary sacrifice; and that all who believe in Him are justified on the ground of His shed blood. - (Ephesians 1:7; II Corinthians 5:21; Romans 5:15-21)
7. We believe in the physical resurrection of our crucified Lord, in His ascension into heaven, and in His present life there for us, as High Priest and Advocate. - Romans 1:4; 1 Corinthians 15:1-21; Hebrews 4:14-16

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8. We believe in “that blessed hope”, the personal pre-millennial and imminent return of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. - (Acts 1:11; I Thessalonians 4:13-18; I Corinthians 15:51-52)

9. We believe in the security of the believer and that all who receive by faith the Lord Jesus Christ are born again of the Holy Spirit and thereby become children of God. - Ephesians 2:8-9; Romans 3:24; John 10:28-29)

10. We believe in the bodily resurrection of the just and the unjust, the everlasting blessedness of the saved, and the everlasting punishment of the lost. - (II Corinthians 5:8; Revelation 14:13; Philippians 3:20-21; Luke 16:19-26; Revelation 20:11-15; II Thessalonians 1:7-9)

11. We believe God created the Heavens and the Earth and all that is in them in six regular days and rested on the seventh to demonstrate a pattern for his creation. Our planet is thousands of years old, not millions. Humanity was created in the image of God both male and female. Marriage defined by Jesus is one man and one woman joined together by God and the marriage should not be separated. Any form of sexual activity outside of marriage between one man and one woman is immoral. God is the author of creation even that which takes place in the womb. What man sees as birth defects, Jesus calls opportunities for the glory of God to be revealed. Like any other part of our being, our gender, either male or female, is a defined gift of God that we are given to glorify our Lord with. (Genesis 1-2; Exodus 20:11; 31:17; Psalm 139:13-18; Jerimiah 1:4-8; Ezekiel 3:4-11; Matthew 19:3-9; John 9; I Corinthians 6:9-20; Hebrews 13:4)

1122 Fundamental Principles

In accordance with the teachings of the Word of God, this Association is committed to the following fundamental principles:

1. That the instruction and education of children in the school as well as in the home must conform to the Word of God.
2. That educational institutions properly depend on and proceed from the home, rather than the church or state.
3. That educational opportunities should be provided to all without regard to race, creed, or color.

1130 Article III Purpose

This Association is a non-profit Association whose purpose shall be to promote the aims of Christian education and in particular to fund, organize and conduct private Christian schools in accordance with all regulations and/or ordinances governing this type of school organization.

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1140 Article IV Membership

1. A member must be at least 21 years of age or older.
2. Each member will pay annual dues in accordance with the by-laws of this Association.
3. Each member joining the Association will be allowed one vote.
4. Each member is required to subscribe, in writing, to Article II, DECLARATION OF FAITH.
5. Any member found out of harmony with the membership requirements listed above may be dismissed from the Association. All contributions are to be forfeited on discontinuance of membership.

1150 Article V Meetings

1. The Annual Meeting of the Association shall be during the 1st or 2nd Quarter of the calendar year, and the exact date shall be determined by the Board of Directors. At the Annual Meeting the Board, through its officers, shall report to the Association. A budget for the ensuing year shall be proposed for the Association's consideration and action. The annual election of members of the Board of Directors shall be held, and the Association shall transact any other business pertaining to the Association. A fiscal year shall be from June 1st to the 31st of May.
2. Special meetings may be called at any time by the Board or by the Chairman of the Board. Special meetings may also be called by 1/4 of the association by the written request. Such call shall state the reasons for calling the meeting.
3. Notice of any meeting shall be communicated to all members at least two weeks prior to the meeting. At any meeting one-fourth of the membership shall constitute a quorum. When questions of parliamentary procedure are raised, Robert's Rules of Order shall prevail.

1160 Article VI Board of Directors

1. The Board of Directors shall administer the affairs of the Association and become the operating School Board relating to any schools under its direction.
2. The Board shall consist of a minimum of 7 members. The term of office shall be three years; except that at the first election, three shall be elected for three years, three for two years, and three for one year.
3. Each year following the Annual Meeting, the Board shall elect its own officers and shall determine the time of its meetings. The Chairman of the Board shall be the President of the Association. The Officers of the Board shall be Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary, and Treasurer. These officers shall constitute the Executive Committee.

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4. The Board shall meet at least once a month.
5. Board members shall be absent no more than two successive meetings or three meetings in one year, unless satisfactory reason has been given in advance to the Board Chairman. Failure to comply automatically terminates membership on the Board.
6. Vacancies shall be filled by individuals selected by the Board who shall serve subject to approval by the Association at its next meeting.
7. All members of the Board must be in good standing of an evangelical church with pastoral recommendation and must be members of the Association and must willingly endorse and sign Articles II and III of this Constitution at the Annual Meeting.
8. A Nominating Committee of four shall be appointed by the Board Chairman for the purpose of presenting nominees to the Association for election to the Board. All members of this Committee must be Association members and two must be non-Board members. Committee must communicate that there are open positions to be filled for the board. The Committee must circulate biographical sketches and testimonies in writing of all nominees by mail two weeks before the annual meeting of the Association at which the voting takes place.
9. Standing committees of the Board shall be appointed by the Chairman of the Board. Additional committees shall be appointed by the Board as needed. Committee members shall be selected by the Committee Chairman and approved by the Board. Committee members may be selected from the Association membership and will serve a one-year term and may be reappointed.
10. Spiritual counsel shall be administered by a committee of the Board, appointed by the Chairman, to any member of the Board as determined necessary. Dismissal shall be accomplished either by a majority vote of the entire Board or a majority of a quorum of the Association.

1170 Article VII Amendments

The Board shall be responsible for the maintenance of the Constitution & By-Laws of the Association. The Constitution & By-Laws shall be amended by a two-thirds majority of the Board with subsequent majority approval by the Association at the next Association meeting. Article II may be amended only by the unanimous vote of all the members of the Association.

1180 Article VIII Dissolution Clause

In the event of dissolution of the Association, all assets, real and personal, shall be distributed to such organizations as are qualified as tax exempt under Section 501 © (3) of the Internal Revenue Code or the corresponding provisions of a future United States Internal Revenue Law. If none is designated, then to any organization so qualified.

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1210 Grace Christian Educational Association

This Association is a non-profit Association whose purpose shall be to promote the aims of Christian education and in particular to fund, organize and conduct private Christian schools in accordance with all regulations and/or ordinances governing this type of school organization. The name of this Association shall be the Grace Christian Educational Association.

1220 Grace Christian Education Association Membership

Each member is required to subscribe, in writing, to Article II, DECLARATION OF FAITH.

1230 Fees

Association membership fee schedule

1. No fee for full-time staff members, or parents of presently enrolled students.
2. All other members - \$10 per person per year.
3. Lifetime memberships - \$100 per person per lifetime.

1250 Voting Requirement

All GCEA members must have membership paid no later than 14 days prior to be eligible to vote at any Association meeting.

1310 Board Authority

The authority to establish and maintain the Board of Directors for Grace Christian School comes from the Grace Christian Educational Association. Article VI of the GCEA Constitution details various responsibilities and procedures.

1311 Board Responsibilities

The Board shall be responsible for the maintenance of the Constitution & By-Laws of the Association. The Constitution & By-Laws shall be amended by a two-thirds majority of the Board with subsequent approval by the Association at the next Association meeting.

1. The Board must establish and maintain the Biblical principles and policy oversight by which the school will operate.
2. The Board must exercise, on behalf of the GCEA, ultimate decision-making authority in the broad areas of:
 - a) Financial procedures
 - b) Personnel standards
 - c) Curriculum and materials
 - d) Buildings and facilities

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3. The Board must hire the head of school and maintain direct communication with him/her.
4. The Board must be responsible for maintaining a high-quality faculty and staff by establishing standards, policies, salaries, and benefits insuring the welfare of the faculty, staff, and student body.
5. The Board will obtain liability insurance for each of its members so that they are covered throughout their terms of service on the board.
6. The head of school will be formally evaluated by the Board on a yearly basis and the results of that evaluation will be put in writing. The head of school administrator will be given the results of the evaluation.
7. The Board must maintain fiscal stability:
 - a) Establish financial policies (including bonds, grants, and gifts).
 - b) Formulate and control the budget.
 - c) Set tuition rates and collection policies.
8. The Board must provide adequate facilities for the school:
 - a) Establish long-range goals and plans.
 - b) Anticipate future growth.
 - c) Initiate development of building programs.
 - d) Supervise the plans, approve the contracts, and oversee the building of new facilities.
9. The Board shall communicate with all interested groups:
 - a) Provide for frequent GCEA meetings.
 - b) Establish GCEA membership standards.
 - c) Establish nomination standards and voting procedures for Board membership.
 - d) Cooperate with the head of school administrator in establishing matriculation standards.
 - e) Communicate with the proper governmental agencies.
 - f) Continued communication with supporting churches and individuals.
10. In accord with the principles found in Matthew 18:15-17, a board member will not act on or repeat at a board meeting any complaint brought to them about a staff member until the person with the complaint (or the board member) has done the following:
 - a) First, he or she goes to the employee in question and presents the concern.
 - b) If the issue of concern has not been resolved, he/she must then present the concern to the head of school.
 - c) If the head of school deems it necessary, he might ask that the two parties meet with him to try to resolve the issue.

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1312 Board Restrictions

Board members cannot serve on Board if immediate family members are full-time staff members.

1313 Terms of Office

1. Board members will serve 3-year terms that comply with fiscal year dates.
2. Board members are elected during the Annual GCEA meeting but do not take the responsibility of holding the office until the beginning of the next fiscal year.

1320 Board Officers

Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary and Treasurer.

1321 Board Chair

1. The Board Chair is elected in accordance with Article VI, part 3 of the GCEA Constitution and is the President of the Association
2. The president of the Association and responsible for:
 - a) Chair all Association meetings.
 - b) Ensuring the needs of the Association are addressed.
 - c) Making sure the Constitution & By-Laws are followed.
 - d) Present to the Association all matters of concern to them.
 - e) Appoint a Chairperson to standing committees.
 - f) Work closely with and aid the school administration in the sound operation of the school.
 - g) Has the authority to appoint Board members or individual Association members to aid in the operation of the Association or the school as need dictates.
3. The GCEA Board Chair is given the right to sign all legal papers re requested for the school. If the Board Chair is not able to sign legal papers, any member of the Executive Committee can sign in place of the Board Chair.

1322 Board Vice-Chair

1. The Vice-Chair is elected in accordance with Article VI, part 3 of the GCEA Constitution.
2. Responsible for aiding the Board Chair in duties and substituting when necessary.

1323 Secretary

1. The Secretary is elected in accordance with Article VI, part 3 of the GCEA Constitution.
2. The Secretary is responsible for taking minutes of all called meetings of the Association and Board. (Minutes: Abbreviated summary of discussions, action taken, and people present)
3. The Board Secretary is responsible for overseeing and maintaining the GCEA Membership List.

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4. A copy of the minutes of each business meeting is to be made available to all members.
5. The Board Secretary is responsible for maintaining and updating the GCEA Constitution and By-Laws.

1324 Treasurer

1. The Treasurer is elected in accordance with Article VI, part 3 of the GCEA Constitution.
2. The Treasurer is the chairman of the Finance Committee and is thereby responsible for directing all committee responsibilities.

1331 Executive Committee

1. The officers of the Board form the Executive Committee.
2. They are to handle issues which are extremely sensitive in a highly confidential manner.
3. They assist the administration in difficult situations where time does not allow a full Board to convene and advise.

1332 Building & Grounds Committee

The Building & Grounds Committee is a standing committee. They have the following responsibilities:

1. Work with the Administrator to see that the building and grounds are well kept.
2. Advocate for necessary funds to keep the school in good condition.
3. Aid the administration in conducting regular inspections of the school.
4. Establish and supervise volunteer work details.
5. Serve as the guiding agent for a building committee when the school is engaged in expansion.

1333 Advancement Committee

The Advancement Committee is a standing committee. The purpose is to assure the school has effective fund development and alumni relations and marketing and communication programs in place so as to maximize the financial support for the school and its proper recognition throughout the region. Responsibilities include:

1. Assure that the school has a clear set of fundraising objective, goals and priorities.
2. Development and implementation of the various components of the school's fundraising programs.
3. Assure that the cultivation, stewardship and recognition of donors is appropriate for the school.
4. Recommend to the Board for its approval policies and guidelines for accepting financial gifts and fundraising activities.

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1334 Finance Committee

The Finance Committee is a standing committee. It has the following responsibilities:

1. Make recommendations to the Board on the policies and procedures for the business activity of the school.
2. Seek and promote efficient and effective business operations.
3. Work with the administration and the Board in establishing the annual budget.
4. Make recommendations to the Board on registration fees, tuition, and other fees.
5. Handle the collection of delinquent accounts within the policies of the board.
6. Keep all financial records and reports in good order.
7. Arrange the annual audit of the financial records.
8. Work out careful procedures for handling all income.
9. See that sound procedures are established for placing orders and for subsequent payment of bills.
10. Line up the best financing available for capital improvements and other types of financing as needed.
11. See that the school is adequately insured at the best rate.
12. See that all taxes are paid for which the school is liable.
13. Be certain that legal requirements have been fulfilled for tax exemption and for foundation appeals.
14. Maintain a five-year projection of the school's finances to keep the Board alert to the financial trends which are coming.

1335 Academic Committee

The Academic Committee is a standing committee. It has the following responsibilities:

1. Recommend broad educational policies to the Board.
2. Work with the administration in the development of the curriculum.
3. Encourage and assist the Administrator and teachers in maintaining accreditation for the school.
4. Examine existing admissions policies annually and recommend changes as needed.
5. Do an annual study of the school's dropouts and trends in admissions and report to the Board.
6. Review the forms for admission and revise them as needed.

1342 Nominating Committee

1. See Article VI, part 8 of the GCEA Constitution.
2. A Nominating Committee of four shall be appointed by the Board Chairman for the purpose of presenting nominees to the Association for election to the Board. All members of this Committee must be Association members and two must be non-Board members. The Committee must circulate biographical sketches and testimonies of all nominees two weeks before the annual meeting of the Association at which the voting takes place. Nominees must be an association member.

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- a. Seek evidence that the nominee is in good standing with an evangelical church. Seek pastoral approval for nominee. (see 1160.VI.7 and 8)
 - b. Provide nominee with GCEA Declaration of Faith. (see 1140.IV.4 and 1120)
 - c. Provide nominee with GCEA Membership Application. (see 1342.2)
 - d. Provide nominee with GCEA Constitution and By-Laws. (see 1311)
 - e. Provide nominee with Biographical and Testimony questionnaire. (1160.VI.8)
3. The Nominating Committee report is to be presented at a closed portion of board meeting. The board will vote to approve the nominations.

DEFINING STATEMENTS

1410 Mission Statement

Inspiring students to impact the world for Jesus Christ through an excellent educational experience from a Biblical worldview.

1420 The Educational Philosophy of Grace Christian School

The philosophy of education at Grace Christian School includes the following 5 key pillars which support the methodology for everything we do.

1. ***The Supremacy of Christ.*** We believe that all education must start with the acknowledgement that Jesus is the unique Son of God and is Lord of all. We believe that Jesus is the head of all and that through Him all things are held together. We approach every subject and activity recognizing that Jesus Christ is the author of our faith and reason we strive for excellence.
2. ***The student's need for salvation through Jesus Christ.*** Humankind was made in God's image with the capacity to know and respond to God personally. God offers His free gift of salvation through his Son to everyone. We will seek to foster an environment where students are exposed to the message of the gospel of Jesus Christ and have the opportunity to respond.
3. ***The Primacy of the Parent-Child Relationship.*** The book of Deuteronomy establishes parents as the primary educators of their children. The school will seek to come along-side the parental figures in the students life in order to support the educational process.
4. ***The Commitment to a Non-Denominational Evangelical Theology.*** We seek to provide a solid Biblical foundation for our students that will support the ministry and goals of many evangelical churches throughout Southwest Michigan. We seek to respect the denominational beliefs of the various churches represented at our school while holding to the inerrant Word of God as our guide. We hold to an evangelical theology which believes in the necessity of regeneration by grace through faith in Christ alone.
5. ***Excellence in Education.*** The mission of Grace Christian School is to "inspire students to impact the world for Jesus Christ through an excellent educational experience from a Biblical worldview." Our goal is to prepare our students for a lifetime of learning through challenging coursework and

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curriculum. We not only want our students to be successful in their vocational endeavors, but to exercise a passion for modeling Christ likeness in their everyday lives.

1430 Vision Statement

Grace Christian School exists to partner with parents to see children inspired towards excellence. Christ is the foundation of the "Grace Difference". Grace Christian School strives for optimal development of each child in the following areas:

- a) Great physical development
- b) Relationship and faith in the grace of Christ
- c) Artistic pursuits including music and drama
- d) Community with faculty and fellow students
- e) Excellence in academics

1440 Core Values

TRUTH – We are committed to the supreme authority of the Bible in all areas of life. (John 17:17; John 14:6; 2 Peter 1:21)

PARTNERING – We are committed to assisting the home and church in spiritual discipleship. (Deut. 6:6- 9; Prov. 22:6; Ecc. 4:12)

MENTORING – We are committed to developing servant leaders who model Christ. (Eph. 4:11, 12; Eph. 5:1; 2 Tim. 2:2)

ACADEMICS – We are committed to a comprehensive education that equips students to succeed in God's purpose for their lives. (Prov.3:5, 6; 2 Tim. 3:16, 17)

EXCELLENCE – We are committed to achieving God's best for His school and each student. (Eph. 1:10; Eph. 3:12-14; Col. 3:23)

SERVICE – We are committed to reaching out to others with the love of Christ and by sharing the Gospel. (John 13:34, 35; Matt. 28:19, 20)

ACCOUNTABILITY – We are committed to regularly evaluating all functions of the school and maintaining an environment of responsibility. (Job 31:14, 37; Prov. 27:17; Ezek. 33:6; Philippians 3:17)