

Elementary Parent-Student Handbook 2026-2027



325 N. M140 Hwy.
Watervliet, MI 49098
269-463-5545
www.gcspatriots.org

Updated October 2026

The GCEA board reserves the right to amend any policy or procedure at its sole discretion after reasonable notice provided to its constituents.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

*Each item in this Table of Contents is linked to its corresponding section in the handbook.
Simply click on any item to jump directly to that section.*

WELCOME.....	5
LIFE AT GCS: PATRIOT ESSENTIALS.....	6
GENERAL INFORMATION.....	7
Campus Hours.....	7
Communication from the School.....	7
Parent Involvement.....	9
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES.....	9
Student Placement.....	9
Special Education Services.....	10
Visitors.....	11
Student Dropoff & Pick-Up.....	11
Extended Care.....	12
Absences/Attendance.....	13
PRE-PLANNED ABSENCES.....	14
EXCUSED ABSENCES.....	14
STUDENT ILLNESS.....	14
UNEXCUSED ABSENCES.....	14
Tardiness.....	15
TARDY CONSEQUENCES	15
Truancy.....	15
HOT LUNCH.....	15
ACADEMIC POLICIES.....	16
Grading Scale.....	16
FACTS®.....	17
GCS Requirements for Grade Promotion.....	17
Books & Supplies.....	17
Homework.....	17
MAKE-UP ASSIGNMENTS.....	18
LATE WORK POLICY.....	18
LOWER ELEMENTARY (TK - 3 GRADES).....	18
UPPER ELEMENTARY (4 - 6 GRADES).....	18
PLAGIARISM.....	19
ARTIFICIAL TECHNOLOGY (AI).....	20

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY PROCEDURES.....	20
Physical Education (P.E.).....	20
Field Trips.....	21
Extracurricular Eligibility.....	22
STUDENT DISCIPLINE POLICIES.....	22
Detention.....	23
Final Authority in Matters of Belief and Conduct Statement.....	23
DRESS CODE.....	23
Dress Code Principles.....	23
PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS.....	24
Dress Code Policy Guidelines.....	24
General Guidelines.....	24
Chapel Dress.....	25
Blue & Gold Days.....	25
Field Trips and Special Events.....	25
GCS Best.....	26
Dress Code Enforcement.....	26
TECHNOLOGY.....	26
Usage Guidelines.....	26
Technology Code of Ethics.....	27
Cell Phones.....	28
Smart Watches.....	28
Music Standards and Headphone Usage.....	28
HEALTH & SAFETY ISSUES.....	29
Head Lice & Pink Eye.....	29
Illness.....	29
Medication Distribution and Consumption.....	29
STUDENT CONDUCT.....	29
General Conduct.....	29
Bullying.....	31
Social Media Conduct.....	31
Spectator Behavior.....	32
Lockers.....	33
Personal Property.....	33
Playground.....	34
Lunchroom Conduct.....	34
MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION.....	35

Security Cameras.....	35
Student Photo Media.....	35
Federal and State Regulations Information.....	35
SAFETY DRILLS.....	35
FERPA REGULATIONS.....	36
ASBESTOS REGULATIONS.....	36
PESTICIDES REGULATIONS.....	36
LAWS REGULATING CHILD SERVICES.....	36
ELASTIC CLAUSE.....	37
Appendix A	
Biblical Morality Lifestyle Statement for Grace Christian School.....	38
Appendix B	
Extracurricular Eligibility.....	39
Appendix C	
Medication Distribution & Consumption.....	41
Appendix D	
Understanding Our Discipline Investigation Process.....	44
Appendix E	
Standard Response Protocol (SRP).....	45

WELCOME

We are thrilled to welcome you to a new school year at Grace Christian Elementary! As we enter our 52nd year of providing Christ-centered education, we are more committed than ever to nurturing young hearts and minds in a loving and academically rich environment that is grounded in Christian values and shaped by a biblical worldview.

Whether you're joining us for the first time or returning for another year, we're so glad you're here. At Grace Christian, we believe that learning at the elementary level should be filled with purpose, curiosity, connection, and joy. We are committed to developing character and instilling values that will guide our students throughout their lives and are honored to partner with families who share our vision and ministry mindset.

Grace is known for its friendly atmosphere, strong relationships, and deeply rooted Christian values. We may be small in size, but we're big on heart. We strive to reflect the love of Christ in everything we do, from morning greetings at the classroom door to playground friendships and challenging academic growth.

This handbook is designed to help you understand how things work at GCS. Inside, you'll find important policies, expectations, and practical information that will guide your family through the school year. By enrolling at Grace, each family agrees to support the values, policies, and mission of our school. We ask that all families read through the handbook carefully together and refer to it as needed.

Grace thrives on partnership. A strong school-home connection is essential to a successful school year. Please know that your encouragement, communication, and support of our staff, both in and outside the building, are not only appreciated, but foundational to your child's experience here. Whether you're cheering on the sidelines at a game, volunteering at an event, or talking about the school day around the dinner table, your voice and example shape the culture of Grace in powerful ways.

As a Christian school, we strive to approach conflict in a biblical way, following the guidance found in Matthew 18. If a concern arises, please reach out directly to your child's teacher first. Most issues can be resolved quickly and respectfully when addressed with grace and clarity. If further support is needed, our principal will be happy to assist.

We are praying for a year of growth for our students, families, and staff alike. We look forward to walking alongside your family this year. Let's make it a great one, together!

LIFE AT GCS: PATRIOT ESSENTIALS

MISSION STATEMENT

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

SCHOOL SONG

Onward Patriots!

Onward Patriots!

On to victory!

We will always stand beside

and show our loyalty.

Gold and blue, our colors true,

We lift our banner high.

Fight! Fight!

For GCS and Patriot Pride!

OUR SCHOOL MASCOT IS THE PATRIOT -

The GCS Logos are as follows:



Academic



Athletics

BLUE & GOLD DAYS

On these days, everyone is invited to show their Patriot pride by wearing our school colors from head to toe. (See [Dress Code](#))

PLEDGES

To the American Flag:

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

To the Christian Flag:

I pledge allegiance to the Christian Flag, and to the Savior for whose Kingdom it stands;
One Savior, crucified, risen, and coming again with life and liberty to all who believe.

To the Bible:

I pledge allegiance to the Bible, God's Holy Word.

I will make it a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path;

I will hide its words in my heart that I might not sin against God.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Campus Hours

Our campus is open for students from 7:30 a.m. - 3:15 p.m.

Pledges and prayer are said in the gym each morning at 7:50, after which students are dismissed to class.

School hours are 8:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Morning-Care is available in our modular beginning at 7:00 a.m. After-Care is available from 3:15 until 5:30 p.m. (Additional charges apply for [Extended-Care](#).)

Communication from the School

We believe it is very important that parents/guardians and teachers support one another in the process of Christian education. Although parents are encouraged to contact their child's teacher directly at any time with questions or concerns, we have established regular methods to communicate with you at home. These tools are designed to support transparency and connection, but they're only effective if you stay engaged. Please check in often and don't hesitate to reach out!

- **BACK TO SCHOOL NIGHT**

This is an important evening of information and paperwork before the school year begins. This is an annual event the Thursday before school begins.

- **THE PATRIOT PREVIEW**

This publication will be an electronic, weekly, brief overview of what is happening during the upcoming week at GCS. It is a shorter publication than our monthly Impact.

- **THE IMPACT**

Formerly known as the *Communiqué*, this publication is a longer, detailed edition that contains a great deal of school information, featuring the events of the month and current marking period. We also highlight business boosters and advertise local church events. The Impact is sent out once a month. If you have information to be published in the *Impact*, please send it electronically to cromeo@gcspatriots.com by the 5th of each month before publication.

- **GCSPATRIOTS.ORG**

The school's website is updated often and includes important information.

- **EMAIL BLASTS**

On occasion, there will be a need to let all parents/guardians know information quickly. Please be on the lookout for emails from our GCS office.

- **TEXT BLASTS**

We use FACTS texting service to deliver important and immediate information via your cell phone. You will hear from us in this manner whenever there is time sensitive information to relay, and whenever there is a snow day. Please make sure that your information remains up to date throughout the school year so you don't miss out on these important messages.

- **PROGRESS REPORTS**

Progress reports allow you to see your student's grades midway through a marking period (once per quarter, usually at the end of week 5).

- **REPORT CARDS**

Elementary report cards are sent home in Friday folders at the end of the marking period.

- **PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES**

Conferences will be held early in November at the beginning of the 2nd marking period. You are welcome to schedule additional meetings with specific teachers at any time.

- **CLASSROOM COMMUNICATION**

Teachers will contact parents via our FACTS system using the email address on file. Please make sure that your information remains up to date throughout the school year. Likewise, parents are asked to email teachers rather than text their personal phones. Teachers are not permitted to communicate with parents via text messages unless required by extenuating circumstances (such as a field trip, emergency, etc.).

- **FACTS®**

FACTS is our online grading and student information system. It provides immediate access to a student's grades, allows you to make payments on your account, etc. Families set up usernames and passwords as part of the enrollment process. Please contact the main office if you forget your username or password. Make sure that your preferred email address is current.

- **SNOW DAYS**

In the event of a snow day, or other unexpected school closing, you will be notified via the following methods: GCS text, GCS email, GCS Facebook page, GCS website, Principal Colford's Instagram story, and WNDU's school-closing list. *Please note, if Watervliet Public Schools close for weather we will also close.*

Parent Involvement

Parent involvement is critical to Grace Christian School's overall effectiveness. Parents and families can get involved in the following ways:

- **PARENT/TEACHER FELLOWSHIP (PTF)**

The PTF supports and encourages the faculty and staff of GCS in many different ways. Examples of past efforts include planning fellowship events, writing words of encouragement or emailing devotionals, planning Teacher Appreciation Week activities and luncheon; organizing Muffins with Mrs. and Donuts with Dudes, etc. If interested in this most important ministry, please contact ptf@gcspatriots.com.

- **VOLUNTEERING**

When volunteering at our school please understand that there are health and safety protocols we must follow. Volunteers must sign in and out in our main office, wear a name badge at all times, and follow instructions given by staff members while present. Background checks must be completed for anyone volunteering at GCS. The Volunteer Form can be found on our website under [Tools > Documents > Volunteers](#).

- **FUNDRAISING**

Tuition accounts for roughly 70% of the cost of a student's education; the school depends upon the additional 30% from gifts and fundraisers to supplement tuition. Each family is requested to assist the school in various school wide fundraisers throughout the year. When we all pull together, the work is much easier.

There are many opportunities throughout the school year to participate in a fundraiser that fits into your schedule. We have multiple school-wide fundraisers and we ask all parents and staff to participate in at least one. Our two biggest fundraisers are our Patriots-in-Action day in the fall and our Annual Auction in the spring. While your help is greatly coveted for these main events, there are many small fundraisers that you can participate in as well.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Student Placement

The school has full discretion over the grade placement of each student. All new students will be given an entrance test to determine grade placement and determine if they fit the educational capabilities of the school. Please note that in order to maintain a consistent and accurate testing environment, we do not allow parents to observe or be present in

the testing room with our staff. This allows us to see a more authentic picture of each student's independent abilities and ensures consistency for all children being evaluated.

Students who have previously withdrawn from GCS and wish to return will be tested as part of the re-enrollment process. The school will review all students' records, including their most recent report card, standardized test scores, and any disciplinary or special needs information from the last school attended or the school where the student is presently enrolled prior to enrollment. Grace Christian School does not allow students to skip a grade at the elementary level.

In cases where students have been homeschooled, families will be asked to provide documentation of academic history, such as verified report cards, portfolios, standardized test results, or curriculum details. The absence of such records could impact placement decisions. In these situations, we may require additional evaluation or a provisional placement to ensure the student is set up for success.

Note: Students moving up from our preschool classes will participate in a readiness assessment before being placed in TK or Kindergarten.

Special Education Services

Grace Christian School is a small private school with limited capacity to support students with special education needs. While we do not have a special education teacher or a dedicated resource room, we do have a Special Education Coordinator who works with families to facilitate referrals and meetings through the local RESA (Regional Educational Service Agency).

Our teachers are trained to recognize potential signs of learning delays or disabilities and will make referrals when they suspect a child may benefit from further evaluation. In some cases, these concerns may only become fully evident after a child has been enrolled for some time. It is important to note that a parent's decision not to pursue testing or evaluation does not eliminate the school's responsibility to recognize and respond to a student's learning needs.

In some cases, the academic or behavioral support a student requires may exceed what we can reasonably provide as a small school.

When minimal classroom accommodations are appropriate, we will work with families to create a 504 Plan that supports the student within the resources we have available.

If we determine that a student's needs cannot be met within our existing structure, or if a family's expectations are not aligned with what is developmentally appropriate or in the best interest of the child's growth and well-being, we may recommend alternative educational placement and, if necessary, discontinue enrollment. These situations are handled with care and in close communication with families.

Our goal is always to act in the best interest of each student, and to support families in making informed decisions for their student's long-term success.

Visitors

All visitors, including parents, board members, volunteers, staff family members, alumni, etc., must sign in at the main office immediately upon arrival to receive a visitor's badge. All individuals must be in the building for specific business and are not permitted to wander the campus. Individuals visiting for lunchtime must sign out at the end of lunch. Students are not allowed to bring visitors to class for social visits. All student visitors in class should be those who have an enrollment interest in GCS.

Please report pre-planned school visitors prior to the visit. Student visitors will be asked to meet the school dress code. Students and staff are encouraged to be friendly and courteous to all visitors. Expelled or suspended students will not be permitted on the school grounds or at on-campus school events without permission from the principal.

Student Dropoff & Pick-Up

Parents are responsible for arranging their own transportation to and from school, as the school does not operate buses. When dropping off/picking up students please follow the clockwise direction of pick-up as directed by signage. Please always defer to staff in yellow vests as they are directing traffic and pedestrian flow.

Between 7:30 - 8:00 AM and 2:30 - 3:15 PM the parking spaces in the semi-circle near the building will be off-limits due to heavy traffic volume, congestion, and poor visibility during these times.

DROPOFF

The main doors will open promptly at 7:30. Please do not plan to drop off your student(s) prior to 7:30 a.m. as there will be no supervision for them before this time (our staff does not report until 7:30). Under no circumstances are students to be left unattended outside the building; this is extremely unsafe and will not be permitted. If you need care for your

student before 7:30, we offer Before-Care in our modular beginning at 7:00 a.m. (Additional charges apply for [Extended-Care](#).)

Parents accompanying their students into the building must park in designated spaces in the main parking lot. Please do not leave your vehicle unattended in the traffic circle.

Upon arrival in the morning, elementary students must report directly to the gym. Classrooms and the elementary hallway are closed to both students and parents prior to 8:00. There is a designated area for each grade in the gym where students may place their backpacks, lunchboxes, etc. until time to go to the classroom.

Students will be monitored from 7:30 - 7:50, at which time we will come together as a student body to say pledges, hear announcements, and start our day with prayer. Students will then be dismissed with their teachers to make their way to their classrooms.

PICK UP

In the afternoon, all elementary students will be dismissed through the elementary wing doors at the southeast end of the building. Parents will enter the car line and our staff will radio for your student to be dismissed to the sidewalk area. Please do not exit your vehicle; our staff will make sure your child remains safe and approaches your vehicle at the correct time.

As you prepare to exit, please follow directions from staff and be alert to your surroundings. We ask that you remain in the car line until you reach the end and then proceed to the exit drive.

Parents who wish to pick up their child in person may enter the building and wait outside the double glass doors near our main office. Please do not come down the hallway! Our staff will announce your arrival and make sure your student comes down to you at the appropriate time.

We thank you for your help and understanding as we make every effort to keep our students safe during this hectic time of day.

Extended Care

The following options are available to assist parents who need hours beyond the scheduled school day.

BEFORE SCHOOL

Students are asked to arrive at school no earlier than 7:30 a.m. as there will be no one to monitor them until our staff report. If it is necessary for you to drop off earlier, we have limited space in our modular unit, where our Before-Care staff is available starting at 7:00 a.m. There is an additional charge of \$6 per day for this service and space is filled on a first come, first served basis. Parents dropping students off for Before-Care will need to drive around to the preschool modular to park, walk them into the building, and sign them in.

AFTER SCHOOL

Unless reporting to a school sponsored activity immediately, all students are expected to vacate the campus before 3:15 p.m. After this time, students must go to our After-Care Program and parents will be billed at the rate of \$6/hr. per student. All students must be at their school activity or in an approved location with a GCS staff member or their parent(s) by 3:15. Students may not remain elsewhere on campus (gym, parking lot, playground, etc.) unsupervised after school.

Once the 3:15 bell has rung, parents must enter the preschool building to sign their child(ren) out of the After-Care room. Students are not permitted to pick up younger siblings.

Absences/Attendance

At GCS we believe that establishing a solid work ethic is important in the development of Godly character. Regular and punctual attendance is necessary for all students to excel to their maximum potential.

To participate in any extracurricular athletic event or contest, student-athletes must arrive at school by 10:00 a.m. and remain in attendance for the rest of the day. Students who are too ill to attend class are also considered too ill to participate in practices or competitions. This policy applies to both games and after-school practices. Exceptions may be granted on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of the principal and athletic director.

Unless the school has received medical documentation of an extended illness, parents are expected to call the office daily by 9:00 a.m. with an update on their child's status. For absences lasting more than three days, we ask that a doctor's note be provided upon the student's return.

PRE-PLANNED ABSENCES

Families are strongly encouraged to review the school calendar and, when at all possible, schedule activities such as vacations, etc., on days that would not require missing school. When this is not possible and a student must miss several days of school, the student's family should:

- Communicate with teachers via email no less than 3 days ahead of time so that teachers have time to gather work. (Requests too far in advance, while appreciated, may not be possible to accommodate.)
- Copy the office in on the email so they are aware of the absences as well.
- Make every effort to complete and submit work that has been requested in advance.
 - Note: Makeup work for full credit and without a grade penalty is allowed for all absences, including pre-planned absences (regardless of whether or not work was given ahead of time). It is the parent's responsibility to request work and communicate with teachers until all work is made up. The number of days allowed to make up work will be the same as - and no more than - the number of days absent.

EXCUSED ABSENCES

Absences are considered excused if it involves:

- Student illness or injury (with appropriate information for the school to report to the health department)
- Death in the family
- Professional appointments (i.e. doctor, dentist, etc.) which are supported by a doctor's note. Please attempt to schedule these after school hours when possible.
- Extenuating circumstances as approved by the principal.

STUDENT ILLNESS

Your child must be fever and symptom free without the use of medications for 24 hours before they return to school after an illness. Children should not return to school until 24 hours have passed after vomiting or having diarrhea. Please note that this time does not begin when your child is picked up, but rather when the fever breaks and symptoms subside. A fever is defined as a temperature of 100.4 or higher. (see [Health and Safety Policy](#))

UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

Absences are considered unexcused when an explanation exists but cannot be approved. Please remember that parental consent does not automatically render the absence as excused. Examples of unexcused absences include:

- Choosing to stay home because of weather when school is still in session

- Skipping class or chapel (see [Truancy Policy](#))
- Transportation issues
- Oversleeping, alarm clock issues, etc.
- Staying home to catch up on homework or taking a “rest” day (see [Truancy Policy](#))

Tardiness

Being tardy is a serious situation which causes a student to be unprepared and miss class time while also disrupting the classroom learning environment. As a result, the following tardy policy will be in effect. Any student arriving at school after 8:00 a.m. must sign in at the main office. A student is considered tardy if they are not seated in their classroom at 8:00 a.m. when the bell rings.

TARDY CONSEQUENCES

A student’s tardy will be recorded in the main office and appear on report cards. A student who is tardy in the morning and subsequently becomes behind in morning classwork will have the work sent home to be completed as homework. Students will not be kept in during recess to complete work missed due to tardiness. Work not completed by the following day will be subject to our late work policy. (see [Late Work Policy](#))

Truancy

Truancy (or skipping class) is a willful absence for any length of time from an assigned class (including chapel, pep rallies, lunch, etc.) without permission. Truancy is a deception and counter to the biblical stance of the school. If a student is found to be truant, the following three consequences will result:

- Time missed will be made up with an after school detention.
- The student will receive a “0” for any work completed or due during the classes skipped. This could include a daily participation grade, homework, quizzes and tests.
- The student will be ineligible for any extra curricular activities for one week, beginning the day of the offense and running for 7 calendar days (weekends included).

Food and Beverages

HOT LUNCH

Monthly lunch calendars are available through your [FACTS](#) Family Portal where families can order lunch for students individually. Families will be billed at the end of each month according to the manner that you have selected in FACTS®.

SNACKS AND VENDING MACHINES

All snacks eaten during the school day must be part of a class schedule or a 504 Plan; the classroom teacher will oversee the time/location of these. No food or drinks other than clear water and translucent bottles will be allowed on carpeted areas at any time. If your child has a documented medical need that prevents them from using an approved water bottle, please contact the administration so we can discuss a safe and appropriate alternative.

Any food or drink containers in student lockers must be sealed; beverage lids must be spill-proof. Students are not allowed to chew gum anywhere on campus.

Elementary students are not permitted to use the vending machines before or after school unless with a parent. With parental permission and teacher approval, students may use the machines during lunch.

To help promote healthy habits, the school reserves the right to limit the amount of soda or candy a student may purchase or consume at lunch.

ACADEMIC POLICIES

Grading Scale

The grading scale for GCS is as listed.

GCS STANDARD GRADING SCALE

<u>Score</u>	<u>Letter</u>	<u>GPA</u>
93-100	A	4.00
90-92	A-	3.67
87-89	B+	3.33
83-86	B	3.00
80-82	B-	2.67
77-79	C+	2.33
73-76	C	2.00
70-72	C-	1.67

ALTERNATIVE ELEMENTARY GRADING SCALE

<u>Score</u>	<u>Letter</u>
95-100	E
83-94	S+
77-82	S
70-76	S-
63-69	N
0-62	U

67-69	D+	1.33
63-66	D	1.00
60-62	D-	0.67
Below 60	F	0.00

Note: Some lower elementary classes or specials may use a mix of both grading scales.

FACTS®

GCS uses FACTS for enrollment, billing, [communication](#), student information, and our [hot lunch program](#). Parents and students will primarily interface with FACTS to view grades. Both parents and students are able to view grades online, via a desktop computer or by using the FACTS mobile app. Please do not ask your child's teacher to print off a list of missing assignments. Students/parents have access to do this at any time.

Families set up usernames and passwords as part of the enrollment process. Please contact the main office if you misplace your username or password. After logging in for the first time, parents may set up preferences for alerts they would like to receive regarding their child's progress throughout the quarter.

Grace Christian School expects students to achieve grades relative to their potential. If a student is consistently failing to meet basic academic expectations, we will work closely with the family to explore what support is needed. In some cases, if progress remains limited over time, we may recommend that the student continue their education in a setting that is better suited to meet their needs.

GCS Requirements for Grade Promotion

Promotion to the next grade is based on overall academic performance, with particular emphasis on English and Math, as these are key indicators of future success. Students who struggle significantly in these core subjects may be considered for retention. Additionally, a student who has failed the same subject for more than two consecutive years, even if previously promoted, may also be retained to ensure a stronger academic foundation.

Books & Supplies

Textbooks and activity manuals are furnished by the school. Extra supplies and accessories are to be purchased by the parents. Students are responsible for taking care of textbooks, library books, tablets, laptops, headphones, and other school property loaned by the school. Parents will be billed for lost or damaged books at the end of each school year. Report cards may be held until fines are paid.

During the summer, a supply list for each class will be available in the school's monthly publication, the Impact, as well as on our GCS [website](#).

Homework

Homework is an important part of your child's learning experience. It reinforces what is being taught in the classroom and helps develop good study habits and responsibility.

Teachers assign homework that is appropriate for each grade level. Subjects like math, spelling, cursive, and band often require regular - sometimes daily - practice in order for students to master key skills. Teachers are mindful of the amount of time homework should reasonably take and aim to keep it manageable for young learners.

If you notice that your child is regularly spending more time on homework than expected, please reach out to the teacher. We value working together to find solutions that support your child's success and well-being.

MAKE-UP ASSIGNMENTS

Students will have as many days to make up the work as they were consecutively absent.

When absent due to illness for multiple days, the parent or student should contact the teachers and/or check for assignments in FACTS so they do not fall farther behind.

For pre-planned absences, we encourage students to request any upcoming assignments in advance so they can stay on track. Work that was assigned before the absence is expected to be completed and turned in immediately upon the student's return. Students should also be ready to take any tests or quizzes that were announced before they left, unless the teacher arranged something different ahead of time.

Students will not be allowed to make up missed work for credit when an absence is unexcused.

LATE WORK POLICY

LOWER ELEMENTARY (TK - 3 GRADES)

Daily work not completed in class and sent home to be completed is due the next school day. Work that is received after this will be marked down according to each teacher's classroom policies.

UPPER ELEMENTARY (4 - 6 GRADES)

Daily work that is not present or complete at the start of the class period that it is due will lose 10% each day that it is late for five days. After five days the grade will be a zero.

Projects with a due date at least one week in advance will lose 20% the first day that it is late, 40% the second day, 60% the third day, and will not be accepted after three days late.

Academic Conduct

Learning to work with integrity is part of growing both academically and spiritually. Any form of dishonesty in schoolwork is considered a serious issue.

Academic dishonesty includes (but is not limited to):

- Changing answers after something has been graded
- Copying someone else's work or letting someone copy yours
- Using notes, old tests, or assignments from other students who already had the class
- Getting answers from the internet or AI tools and pretending they are your own
- Sharing test questions or answers with others
- Turning in work that you didn't do yourself
- Working on homework with friends without the teacher's permission
- Taking screenshots, pictures, or sharing messages from a teacher without permission
- Changing or misusing school documents
- Logging in as someone else or providing credentials for another person to login as you.

If a student shares their work with others or works together when the teacher hasn't said it's okay, that is considered cheating. Students should always check with their teacher if they are unsure about working with someone else.

We want all students to grow in both character and knowledge, which means always doing class work with honesty and effort.

PLAGIARISM

Failure to give proper credit to quoted or paraphrased material, through the use of parenthetical citations and a work cited page, is considered plagiarism.

Plagiarism is a serious offense at Grace Christian School. If a student is caught copying someone else's work and turning it in as their own (whether it be online or in person), the assignment will receive an automatic and immediate 0% no matter how many times it has happened before.

If the student is allowed to redo the assignment, the 0% will stay in the gradebook until the new assignment is turned in and graded. This may affect things like extracurricular eligibility until the updated grade is recorded. Teachers will re-grade the work as soon as they are able, but other assignments and responsibilities will not be delayed to rush the process.

Plagiarism violations do not reset each year. Students are expected to learn from their mistakes and to work honestly and responsibly as they move forward.

ARTIFICIAL TECHNOLOGY (AI)

Using AI to write a paper or do other homework is considered cheating. A teacher who suspects a student of using AI may orally quiz a student on their work and ask them to elaborate, explain, or defend it. If suspicion remains, the student may be asked to redo the assignment in the classroom under direct supervision.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY PROCEDURES

Staff, faculty, or students that believe a student has violated the academic conduct policy should bring their concerns to the principal, who will then investigate the situation. For any determination of dishonesty or cheating, the following disciplinary actions will be taken:

- First offense: score on assignment is negated; student is allowed to redo work. Parent is emailed.
- Second offense: score on assessment is negated; student is allowed to redo work with an automatic 25% deduction. Parents are notified.
- Third offense: score is negated, no opportunity to make up work. Parents are notified.

Physical Education (P.E.)

Every student is expected to participate in Physical Education every day. Students not able to participate must have a note from a parent. After three days of not participating, a signed doctor's excuse must be brought to the office and/or to P.E. teacher. If a student is

participating in recess it is our expectation that he/she is also participating in P.E. unless otherwise noted by a physician. If a physician has restricted P.E. for a student, we will assume the same restrictions apply to recess. *(Note: Students will still be taken outside to get fresh air and a break from the classroom, but physical activity will be limited/restricted per physician instructions.)*

All students are required to wear non-marking, rubber-soled tennis shoes in P. E. class. If non-marking, rubber-soled tennis shoes are not worn to P.E., the student will participate in an alternative activity. To ensure the safety of every student, we recommend students wear tennis shoes that lace up with shoestrings or have velcro closures.

Field Trips

Field trips are a valuable part of our educational program and are open only to currently enrolled GCS students. Families will be notified in advance with details about each trip, including the destination, travel times, educational purpose, dress expectations, and transportation plans.

Per Michigan State Law, all children under eight years old or under 4'9" tall must be in an approved booster or car seat at all times while traveling. Please plan to leave these at school with your child's name on it for field trips in which chaperones will be transporting your child.

Students and chaperones are expected to dress neatly and appropriately for each trip, in keeping with the nature of the outing and the school's dress code.

When off campus, students should make every effort to represent Christ and GCS to the best of their ability in both their words and behavior.

Parents who accompany students on field trips are expected to help actively chaperone and enforce teacher expectations of student behavior while on the trip.

Because field trips are considered part of the instructional day, students who stay home and choose not to participate will be marked [*unexcused absent*](#) for the day.

TRANSPORTATION SAFETY:

In accordance with Michigan state law, all children under eight years old or under 4 feet 9 inches tall must use a booster seat or car seat when riding in a vehicle. Please label your child's seat and send it to school on the day of the field trip if chaperones will be driving.

When off campus, students are expected to represent both Christ and Grace Christian School in their words, actions, and attitudes.

CHAPERONE EXPECTATIONS:

Parents who volunteer as chaperones are asked to actively supervise and help enforce teacher expectations for student behavior throughout the trip. Chaperones who will be driving students must provide a copy of their drivers license and have a Volunteer Form on file. The Volunteer Form can be found on our website under [Tools > Documents > Volunteers](#).

Extracurricular Eligibility

See [Appendix B](#) for the eligibility policy that applies to upper elementary students playing on junior high sports teams.

STUDENT DISCIPLINE POLICIES

We believe that every part of the school day is an opportunity to learn - not just academics, but how to live in a way that honors God. We recognize that each student is created by a loving and sovereign God, and it is a privilege for our teachers and staff to help guide students in developing Christ-like behavior and attitudes.

Our goal is to help students grow into responsible, respectful, and self-disciplined individuals who understand the importance of obeying God, honoring their parents and teachers, caring for others, and taking good care of school property. We encourage students to make wise choices that reflect the character of Christ, both during school hours and outside of school.

Teachers will handle most discipline within the classroom using consistent, biblical principles that are age-appropriate and restorative when possible. When needed, the principal may become involved to help resolve more serious or repeated issues (*see [Appendix D](#)*). In all cases, we consider the child's behavior, heart attitude, and whether the issue has happened before.

Students in grades 3-6 will sign a student code of conduct to show that they understand and agree to the expectations of our school community.

School rules apply not only during the school day but also at any school-sponsored events - such as sports games, field trips, and performances - both on and off campus. Students may also be held accountable for behavior that happens outside of school hours if it

clearly goes against the values and standards of Grace Christian School, including behavior on digital platforms.

In rare cases, if a student engages in very serious misconduct, the school may impose immediate and significant consequences, including suspension or expulsion. Examples of serious misconduct include (but are not limited to): bullying, physical harm or threats of harm, destruction of property, breaking the law, or behavior that clearly goes against God's Word.

Our desire is not only to correct wrong behavior, but to help students grow in character, take responsibility for their actions, and become more like Jesus in how they treat others.

Detention

In general, detentions are primarily used at the secondary level. However, there are times students in our upper elementary (grades 3-6) may be assigned lunch detention.

During the detention period, students are not permitted to study or work on homework, read, draw, nap, or talk to others. No cell phones or tech devices are permitted during detention.

Final Authority in Matters of Belief and Conduct Statement

We believe the Bible is God's Word and the foundation for what we teach and how we live. It guides us in knowing what is true, how we should behave, and how we treat others. While our [Statement of Faith](#) explains many of our core beliefs, the Bible is our final authority in all matters. When questions come up about what the Bible means or how it applies to school life, our School Board is responsible for making final decisions.

DRESS CODE

How we dress is one way we can show respect for God, ourselves, and others. The Bible teaches us to be modest, to care for our bodies, and to focus on inner character more than outward appearance. We want students to wear clothing that reflects kindness, self-respect, and a desire to honor God.

While popular trends come and go, we aim to uphold standards that support a healthy, Christ-centered learning environment. Because of this, GCS may update dress code guidelines as needed.

Dress Code Principles

The following principles guide our expectations for student dress:

- God-Honoring: Clothing should reflect a desire to glorify God (1 Corinthians 10:31).
- Non-Distracting: Attire should help promote focus and a spirit of learning (Romans 14:19, 21).
- Modest: Students should dress in a way that reflects self-respect and purity (1 Corinthians 6:19–20).
- Safe: Clothing choices should support student safety and active participation (1 Corinthians 13:7).

PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS

We ask parents to help students make wise clothing choices each day. Please review the dress code regularly with your child to ensure their attire meets school expectations. If a student's clothing does not meet the dress code, parents may be contacted to bring a change of clothes. Repeated issues may result in the student waiting in the office until they are dressed appropriately.

Dress Code Policy Guidelines

Students are expected to wear clothing that is neat, modest, and appropriate for a learning environment. Clothing should be appropriately sized - not too small/tight and not too large/baggy.

Parents and students share the responsibility of making sure each day's clothing choices follow the dress code. In all situations, the school administration will make the final decision if there is a question about whether something meets the standard.

Students must dress in a way that reflects their God-given gender. Final decisions about dress code compliance rest with school administration. The school also reserves the right to make adjustments to the dress code in response to new styles or cultural trends.

General Guidelines

If you are unsure about a clothing item, bring that item to the principal for review before wearing the item to school.

ACCEPTABLE:

- Piercings - ears only/girls only

- Shorts are allowed from April 1 to November 1. Shorts must sit no shorter than mid-thigh when seated. Spandex or jean shorts are not permitted, with the exception of bermuda style (no frayed edging or holes). Spandex may be worn underneath other school-appropriate shorts or dresses, but it does not replace the required length of the outer garment.
- Flip-flops and slides are allowed; however, elementary students may not wear these outside for recess or for P.E. class.
- Loose fitting pants that come as a set with a matching top are permitted for girls. (Tight leggings are not permitted as pants.)
- Distressed jeans with MILD fraying that does not result in skin showing through.
- Lightweight fleece jackets; thin vests; etc.
- Cap sleeve shirts (not sleeveless)
- Loose fitting athletic/track pants (*This does NOT include spandex, leggings, or tight fitting pants that fall into the "athletic" category.*)

UNACCEPTABLE:

- Hats, bandanas or hoods worn in the building or classroom
- Nail polish, earrings, or makeup worn by boys
- Tight or baggy clothing
- See-through or revealing clothing
- Costumes (this includes tiaras, headbands with animal ears, capes, tails, and the like)
- Pajamas worn as clothing
- Gloves or mittens worn in the building
- Clothing with tears or holes that show the skin or are in excessive disrepair (have excessive shredding, food/bleach stains, etc.)
- Shirts that have cut outs on the arms, shoulders, back, etc.
- Tank tops or sleeveless shirts
- Outerwear such as coats or blankets in the classroom
- Shirts which promote bands or musical events, both secular and sacred
- Clothing that displays graphic, suggestive, or dark imagery (skulls, blood, death, melting, hallucinogenic appearance, etc.)
- Skirts/dresses that do not come at least to mid-thigh when sitting
- Slippers, ballet shoes, heelys/roller shoes, costume shoes
- Students may not write on their skin with ink, marker, temporary tattoos, etc.
- Girl's makeup:
 - Elementary girls: light mascara and lipgloss allowed, face must look natural
 - All ages: makeup that would be considered excessive, distracting, cartoonish, etc.

Chapel Dress

Students are encouraged to dress up on Wednesdays as we come together for Chapel.

Blue & Gold Days

Blue & Gold Days are special spirit days at Grace Christian School! On these days, everyone is invited to show their Patriot pride by wearing our school colors from head to toe. You can wear shirts, pants, socks, shoes, hats, hair accessories, and more, as long as they are blue, gold, or both!

We love to see students get creative and go all out to show their school spirit. These days are fun and help us celebrate being part of the Grace Christian School family!

Field Trips and Special Events

For field trips, special events, and school activities in which a student is a participant (concerts, award ceremonies, sports trips, etc.), the teacher or coach will set the expectations specific to that event. These expectations will be included on the field trip form and/or an informative email from the teacher. If no instructions are given, the students should follow the standard GCS dress code.

GCS Best

From time to time, students will be asked to dress in GCS best (special programs, award ceremonies, etc.). While our typical school dress code is not in effect at special events, the principle of our clothing being God-honoring and modest remains the guiding standard for dress at these events. Students who do not comply with these standards may be denied participation in the event (at the discretion of the staff member overseeing the event).

- For girls, this includes selecting either dress pants with an appropriate dress top or a dress that is appropriate in length, has two thick straps, is not shorter than the top of the knee, covers the bra entirely, and that provides appropriate coverage (no cleavage; the back of the dress cannot be lower than the bra line). In addition, the dress should be free from skin revealing cutouts; any dress insert intended to accomplish the standard of modesty must be opaque (not see-through).
- For boys, dress pants and dress shirts must be worn, tucked in and a belt worn. When a tie is worn, it should be worn properly (must cover the top button).
- The following items are not appropriate attire for GCS Best events: shorts, jeans, sweatshirts, hoodies, flip-flops, and slides.

Dress Code Enforcement

If a student's clothing doesn't follow the dress code, a staff member will kindly let the student know and fill out a purple Dress Code Reminder Slip. This slip will be given to the principal, who will keep track and decide whether the student needs to change clothes right away or just receive a warning.

We treat dress code reminders seriously and keep a record of each one. If a student continues to break the dress code after being reminded several times, it may be seen as choosing not to follow directions. After three reminders, the principal may take further action, and parents will be contacted.

TECHNOLOGY

Usage Guidelines

Much of technology can be a distraction in the educational setting unless there is a clear reason why it will enhance learning. Any electronic device must be approved by each classroom teacher before it is brought into the classroom. The use of technology (before, during, and after school) at Grace Christian School is an opportunity extended to the students, faculty, and staff to enhance learning, productivity, and information processing. Any computer hardware/software used at Grace Christian School shall be used solely for educational purposes in support of education.

Students within the GCS community who wish to access a GCS network must complete a Wireless Usage Policy form.

Technology Code of Ethics

Students are responsible to:

- Only use a computer while a Grace Christian staff member is present in the room.
- Utilize information technology only for educational purposes.
- Adhere to the rules, including, but not limited to, those posted in classrooms or computer labs or otherwise specified by school employees.
- Avoid downloading software onto any GCS computer or device.
- Keep devices and software from being relocated, removed from school premises, or modified without permission from administration.
- Maintain the privacy of passwords and thus are prohibited from publishing or sharing passwords.
- Adhere to the law pertaining to copyright and privacy rights in the use of hardware and software and in the transmission or copying of texts or files including photos and videos.
- Report any concerning material to a teacher and/or administration.

- Avoid the malicious use of information technology to disrupt the use of technology of others, to harass or discriminate against others, or to infiltrate unauthorized computer systems.
- Save to cloud based storage (such as Google Drive). Saving material to the hard drive is prohibited.
- Abstain from using proxy sites or VPNs to bypass network filters. This practice will not be tolerated.
- Absolutely no email (other than your GCS email for school projects), instant messages, social media sites, apps, or music sites are allowed on GCS computers.

Students who cannot adhere to these guidelines will not be permitted to use GCS computers. If any member of GCS staff sees a personal device being used for a purpose other than that for which it was approved, the student will lose the device for the remainder of the school day. The staff member will confiscate the device and deliver it to the main office, which will pass it on to the appropriate designee to determine if the student will lose the privilege for the remainder of the year.

Cell Phones

Engaging in positive, face-to-face social interactions is an important part of a student's development and building a school community; consequently, GCS does not permit the use of cell phones at all during the day, unless instructed by a teacher. Cell phones are to be kept in student lockers and may not be on their person or in backpacks/purses that are carried to class. Cell phone use during classwork of any kind will be considered cheating. Lost and stolen cell phones or electronic items are not the responsibility of the school.

Cell phone use may be permitted during After-Care only, the use of which is at the discretion of the staff on duty. Violations of the rules or misuse of the device will result in a student no longer being allowed to bring their device to school (or they will need to leave it in the office during the school day for the rest of the year).

Students may use the office phone, with permission from the office staff, should the need arise. To protect our students' learning, we request that parents not ask for a student to be removed from class to receive a phone call unless it is an emergency.

Parents can help us enforce this policy by not texting students during the school day. Parents may get messages to students by calling the school office; our staff will make sure that messages related to non-emergency issues will be forwarded to the appropriate students.

Students may not photograph or take videos of staff members or other students without their consent.

Smart Watches

For primarily the same reasons as those of cell phones, smart watches will also be under restrictions during the school day. Students will be closely monitored, and may be asked to remove smart watches during tests, quizzes, bathroom requests, etc. Any student who is caught inappropriately using their smart watch during the school day will have it confiscated until after school. In general, watches at school should be limited to checking the time and medication alarms (as directed by the office) only.

Music Standards and Headphone Usage

A student may only wear headphones/earbuds while actively listening to their own device in [Extended-Care](#) (at the staff's discretion) and not during the school day. Extended Care staff have the right to monitor a student's listening choices and determine its appropriateness for the school environment while on campus. Headphones/earpods may not be shared with another student (are to be worn by only one student at a time).

HEALTH & SAFETY ISSUES

Head Lice & Pink Eye

The office will do individual checks as needed. If a student is found to have pink eye or lice/nits (lice eggs), the parents will be notified and the student will need to be picked up immediately and may not return to school until the issue is completely resolved. Upon returning to school, parents will need to bring the student to the office to be checked before returning to the classroom.

Illness

If your child becomes ill at school, you will be contacted to arrange pick-up as soon as possible. In consideration of the health of others, it is our policy that a student must stay home with:

- Fever. (***Must be fever free AND symptom-free for a full 24 hours, without the use of medication, before returning to school. Please note that this time does not begin when your child is picked up, but rather when the fever breaks and symptoms subside***)
A fever is defined as a temperature of 100.4 or higher.
- Vomiting (24 hours free)
- Strep throat
- Flu symptoms
- Diarrhea (24 hours free)

- Chicken pox
- Other contagious illnesses

Medication Distribution and Consumption

For detailed information about the procedures and authorizations required for students to receive medication during school hours, please refer to [Appendix C: Medication Distribution and Consumption Form](#). Please note that no medications will be given at school until these steps have been completed.

STUDENT CONDUCT

General Conduct

Upholding GCS standards of moral and social conduct is expected of all students. This includes (but is not limited to):

ACCEPTABLE:

- Christlike actions and attitudes
- Respect for others as well as building/grounds
- Honesty
- Obedience that is immediate and cheerful
- Positive school spirit
- Inclusive behavior towards peers
- Uplifting speech about peers

UNACCEPTABLE:

- Disrespect for others
- Disparaging speech about others
- Mistreatment of school property or the property of others
- Profanity; misusing the name of God; suggestive innuendo, images, or gestures
- Excluding peers and/or bullying
- Participating in, observing, or encouraging social media challenges
- Any disruption of class
- Disregard for school policies

Both elementary school and secondary students share parts of our school's campus. It is courteous that each respects the needs and rights of the other. We expect the older,

more mature students to take the lead in avoiding conflict and displaying a respectful example to others.

GCS considers the spiritual life of students and faculty a vital part of Christian education. When attending chapel, students are expected to bring their Bibles and actively participate in worship, listen attentively to speakers, and refrain from distracting behavior (which includes sleeping, reclining, whispering, studying, etc). Students may not bring homework, reading materials, or other non chapel related items with them.

Students should remain in the hallway outside of a classroom if a teacher is not in the room. Students should not be in a room without supervision at any time.

Areas off-limits to students include: the teacher's lounge, storage closets, teachers' desks and personal belongings, office work areas, the balcony, and other students' lockers/personal belongings. Students should not be in the locker rooms and/or weight room except for P.E. class and/or sports practice. Students should only disrupt the office staff for specific needs.

Bullying

Grace Christian School will not tolerate any physical, verbal, or written/typed threats or intimidation. This includes, but is not limited to, name calling, insults, unwelcome physical contact, and continuing any action after a request has been made that a specific behavior be stopped. Students found to be bullying other students will be dealt with immediately, which may include: detention, suspension, or expulsion from school - the length of which is at the discretion of the principal. Students who are being bullied (threatened or harassed) or witness this behavior should report the bullying to a GCS faculty/staff member. Students may also report via the number on the OK2SAY posters throughout the school.

Bullying that occurs outside of school through such means as text, email, or social networking can be addressed by the school as well, if the principal feels that it is affecting school life in any negative manner. If the principal becomes aware of any students participating in cyber bullying (including the use of cell phones), GCS will investigate and follow up appropriately. If student conduct is deemed to be of a serious nature, the principal may determine that local authorities should be notified.



Stop the Silence. Help End the Violence.

Visit ok2say.com to learn more

Call: 8-555-OK2SAY
(855-565-2729)

Email:
OK2SAY@mi.gov

Text: 652729
(OK2SAY)

Download App for:
iPhone/Android

Social Media Conduct

Misconduct online carries serious consequences. Students are expected to uphold the signed Standard of Conduct at all times during the year, even when not on campus. Students whose conduct and behavior outside of school reflects poorly on accepted Christian values may be subject to school probation or loss of enrollment. This includes the improper use of the Internet and other forms of electronic communication.

Students must use appropriate language and model honorable behavior, such as respect, integrity, honesty, and excellence. Profanity or suggestive language (innuendo) or jokes are inappropriate, regardless whether it occurs face-to-face, over the Internet, or by any other means. Social media (i.e. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, TikTok, personal blogs, etc.) is a powerful communications tool. Grace Christian school expects all staff and students to abide by its social media policy in all their communications on any social media site.

All communications must be appropriate. Profanity, suggestive language (innuendo) or jokes, images of a sexual nature, or similar communications involving adult topics, drugs, alcohol or public support of these or other unbiblical principles including those listed in the Standard of Conduct are never appropriate, no matter if they occur in person, in an email or text message, or on a social media site. Students participating in or encouraging such content will be considered complicit and will be subject to appropriate consequences. Students who are being bullied (threatened or harassed) or witness this behavior should report the bullying to a GCS faculty/staff member. Students may also report via the number on the OK2SAY posters throughout the school.

If GCS becomes aware of inappropriate conduct by students on social media sites or via cell phone or computer, GCS will investigate and follow up appropriately. If the problem persists the school will move forward with appropriate disciplinary actions.

Spectator Behavior

Students are encouraged to attend and support the GCS community at any extracurricular event. Students attending school assemblies or public performance events as spectators are expected to behave in a respectful manner. Any student being disrespectful through language or actions, causing an interruption in the activity, or violating school policy will be removed from the event with further discipline to follow as determined by the principal.

During athletic events, all children/students must be in the gymnasium, seated and watching the game. Visits to concessions and bathrooms are allowed during games; however, we request that a parent accompany small children/students when leaving the gym. Grace Christian cannot be responsible for your children during games. For their safety, children/students will not be allowed to play in hallways, the commons, bathrooms, or corners of the gym during athletic events.

Other than the game ball, there will be no balls allowed in the gym area during events and no free play at halftime.

Lockers

Lockers are the property of Grace Christian School and are provided for students to keep their belongings safe and organized during the school day. Each student is expected to use their assigned locker only and may not enter another student's locker at any time.

Students should keep their lockers neat and clean, including the area around them. The locker door must close completely, and nothing inside should stick out or be visible when it is closed. Students should never climb, stand, or sit on the locker or its base.

Any food or drinks kept in lockers must be sealed and spill-proof. Coats, books, and backpacks should be stored inside the locker - not left in the hallway or on the floor. Items left outside of lockers may be collected and placed in the lost and found. Unclaimed items will eventually be donated to the school's thrift store, *Reclaimed by Grace*.

Band instruments should be placed in the designated storage area upon arrival each morning.

With teacher approval, students may decorate the inside of their lockers using magnets only - no tape or adhesives are allowed. All decorations should reflect the Christian values of our school. Students may not decorate or write on the outside of their lockers unless given special permission by a teacher or the school office. Locker name tags and labels

placed by the school must stay in place all year. Any sports team or club decorations must be removed once the season or event is over.

Because lockers belong to the school, Grace Christian School staff may open and check a student's locker at any time. Students should not expect privacy regarding items placed in or on school property. Students do not have the right to be present during these checks. If there is reason to believe that something harmful, illegal, or against school rules may be in a locker or backpack, the school administration may search that locker, desk, or personal items. These searches will be done with care and always include more than one staff member. If needed, the school may work with local police to make sure the campus stays safe for everyone.

Personal Property

All possessions should be marked with the student's name. Items brought from home may be used before and after school and during recess as long as they are school appropriate and do not become a distraction. The school is not responsible for personal belongings brought to the school that get lost. The school recommends valuables not to be brought to school.

Playground

The playground is a wonderful place for students to get a break from classes and expend excess energy. However, supervision and safety are our primary concerns as this can also be an area of student scrapes and scratches. Therefore, students are not to be on the playground without supervision and students are not to leave the playground without permission from the teacher on duty. Students are to follow all of the safety rules given to them by the adult in charge. Students disobeying the rules will be given appropriate consequences, which may include, but are not limited to, walking laps, being sent to stand at the wall, or missing part of the next recess.

The following are NOT acceptable playground behaviors:

- Roughhousing (this includes tackling and fighting)
- Selling or trading items
- King of the Mountain on snow or other equipment
- Games of Keep Away
- Picking up or throwing rocks/pebbles/sticks/etc.
- Walking on the wall of the GaGa pit
- Standing on swings, jumping on swings, twisting self or others on swings
- Running in the path of or under the swings
- Climbing swing poles or up the slide

- Playing by school buildings
- Excluding or targeting students in games or activities

The following guidelines should also be observed:

- Students should not use swings, slides, or other playground equipment in a manner other than its intended purpose
- Students are not to go into any of the wooded areas or down the hill without adult supervision
- Skateboards, rollerblades, roller skates, and roller shoes are not allowed on the playground or elsewhere on campus
- Staff will signal students with one short whistle blow to give a warning if any student is in jeopardy of breaking a playground rule. Three consecutive whistle blows indicates that all students need to line up quickly and orderly. One long/continuous whistle blow indicates an emergency and students are expected to respond immediately and listen for instructions.

Lunchroom Conduct

During lunch all students are to stay seated at their assigned tables in the cafeteria but are allowed to go use the restrooms in the gym hallway. Students are not to use restrooms in the locker rooms, go back to class unattended, or wander the hallways.

MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION

Security Cameras

Security cameras are used on our campus. For the privacy of our students and families, footage may only be reviewed by administration.

The primary purpose of our security cameras is to enhance campus safety. They are not intended for regular monitoring of student behavior. Reviewing footage for behavioral concerns is a time-intensive process and will only be conducted when deemed necessary and appropriate by administration.

Student Photo Media

From time to time, photos and videos of students and school activities may be taken during the school year. Grace Christian School reserves the right to use these images for purposes such as news releases, the school website, social media, class websites, yearbook, school publications, presentations, and marketing materials.

Occasionally, members of the media may also be invited to cover events such as athletic competitions or special programs, and may take photos for publication.

We view these moments as positive opportunities to celebrate our students and promote the mission of Grace Christian School.

If a parent or guardian does not want their child's photo to be used or published, they must notify the school office in writing by the second week of school each year.

Please note: Grace Christian School is not responsible for photos taken by individuals and shared on personal social media accounts.

Federal and State Regulations Information

SAFETY DRILLS

All safety drill records can be viewed on the school [website](#).

FERPA REGULATIONS

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are "eligible students".

This law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the US Department of Education. Parochial and private schools do not generally receive such funding and therefore are not subject to FERPA. The statute is found at 20 U.S.C. § 1232g and the Department regulations are found at 34 CFR part 99. You may contact our principal with questions.

ASBESTOS REGULATIONS

Asbestos reports are kept on file in our main office in a folder separate from the MSD (material safety data) sheets. If you have a question see the facilities manager.

PESTICIDES REGULATIONS

In the event pesticides have to be used on the school grounds, notification will be posted at each entrance of the building. State law says posting must be done up to 48 hours after application. The area affected will be thoroughly cleaned and rinsed down.

LAWS REGULATING CHILD SERVICES

Grace Christian School understands that child abuse/neglect is against the law and will not tolerate any activities that could be deemed as abusive or neglectful of any child. Staff members who have acted in any way that is abusive or neglectful toward children will be reported to the state authorities and removed from employment or position as a volunteer.

Any employee or volunteer who has a reasonable suspicion of child abuse or neglect is required by law to report suspected abuse to CPS. School policy also dictates that administration also be notified.

STANDARD RESPONSE PROTOCOL (SRP)

Grace Christian School is committed to maintaining a safe and secure environment for all students and staff. As part of our emergency preparedness efforts, we utilize the Standard Response Protocol (SRP) developed by the “I Love U Guys” Foundation. The SRP provides a consistent, clear, and age-appropriate set of actions for responding to various emergencies, including situations that may require a lockdown, evacuation, or secure campus. All staff members are trained in these procedures, and students participate in regular drills throughout the year to practice them.

We encourage families to familiarize themselves with the SRP language and procedures, which are posted in classrooms and available upon request. If you have questions or would like more information, please contact the school office. (See [Appendix E](#))

ELASTIC CLAUSE

While this handbook outlines many of our school rules and expectations, there may be times when situations come up that are not specifically covered here. In those cases, the school administration will make fair and thoughtful decisions that are in the best interest of all students. Any actions taken will be consistent with similar situations that have been handled in the past if deemed appropriate.

The absence of a specific rule in this handbook doesn't mean the school doesn't have the responsibility or authority to respond. Our goal is always to maintain a safe, respectful, and supportive environment for every student.

These rules apply to all students while they are:

- On school property,
- Attending school or a school-sponsored event (on or off campus),
- Using school technology or school accounts,
- Or when their behavior, even off campus, directly affects the safety, well-being, or learning environment of other students or staff.

Appendix A

Biblical Morality Lifestyle Statement for Grace Christian School

We believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God. (Gen. 1:26-27). Rejection of one's biological sex is a rejection of the image of God within that person. We believe that the term "marriage" has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture. (Gen. 2:18-25). We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other. (I Cor. 6; 18; 7:2-5; Heb. 13:4)

We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman. We believe that any form of sexual immorality (including adultery, fornication, homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, and use of pornography) is sinful and offensive to God. (Matt. 15:18-20; I Cor. 6; 9-10) We believe that in order to preserve the function and integrity of Grace Christian School as the local Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to the Grace Christian School members and the community, it is imperative that all persons employed by Grace Christian School in any capacity, or who serve as volunteers, agree to and abide by this Statement on Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality. (Matt. 5:16; Phil. 2:14-16; I Thess. 5:22)

We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ. (Acts 3:19-21; Rom. 10:9-10; I Cor. 6:9-11) We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity. (Mark 12:28-31; Luke 6:31) Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture nor the doctrines of Grace Christian School.

Parents and legal guardians who choose to enroll their children at GCS acknowledge our position and belief in these basic biblical values derived from historical Christianity. Parents and/or legal guardians understand and agree that GCS will teach these principles and biblical values.

Appendix B

Extracurricular Eligibility

This policy applies to our upper elementary students who play on junior high sports teams.

- Students must attend full-time.
- Students must maintain proper conduct in and out of school
- Students must maintain at least a C minus average or 70% which is a 1.67 GPA
- Students must not be failing more than two courses

Initial ineligibility determinations will be made at the progress report during first quarter (5 week grades). Students will be notified by the principal of ineligibility status whether or not they are currently active in a sport. A list will be given to the appropriate teachers and the athletic director who will notify the coaches. Additional grade checks will take place at each report card and progress report throughout the remainder of the school year.

A student who becomes ineligible will not be permitted to participate in extracurricular activities, including games or tournaments for 5 school days following the notification of the student's ineligible status.

During the period of ineligibility, the student will not attend meetings or practices until all of his/her assignments, tests, quizzes, and or special projects are made up to the best of his/her ability.

The student will not "suit up" for games or lead extracurricular events until he/she has regained eligibility. Should a student's academic performance be such that there is little chance for regaining eligibility, the principal or athletic director or appropriate teacher and the parent shall set up a meeting to discuss the student's future status.

A student regains eligibility:

- After 5 school days, the principal will check the student's grades and determine if his/her average is at least 70%, with no more than two failing grades and no new missing assignments. If everything is in order the student will be eligible for that week.
 - If the student is ineligible because of a single missing assignment, the student may be reinstated (without the 5 day waiting period) after the

teacher reports the work has been satisfactorily made up and a passing grade has been achieved.

- Please note, teachers may not be able to grade late work the same day it is presented. Teachers will be granted 48 hours to bring the student's grade current, if needed. The GPA will be checked by the principal, who will then advise the athletic director and/or coaches.
- If the student does not meet these requirements, then the period of ineligibility restarts. The principal will recheck the student's eligibility weekly thereafter.

**In the event that the principal is unavailable, the Academic Advisor may make the eligibility determination.*

***Middle school students playing a varsity sport must meet high school eligibility guidelines.*

Appendix C

Medication Distribution & Consumption

Policies and Guidelines for Administering Medications to Pupils at Grace Christian School:

“Medication” includes both prescription and non-prescription medications, including those taken by mouth, taken by inhaler, which are injectable, applied as drops or ointment to the eye or nose, applied to the skin, or any other form prescribed by a physician. These include over-the-counter (OTC) medications such as pain relievers, cough suppressants (including cough drops), nasal decongestants, upset stomach medications, etc. excluding OTC topical substances (refer to Permission to Self-Apply, Form MED-3, for list).

1. Medications administered at school shall be restricted to only medication that must be administered during the school day. Parents/guardians should administer medications at home when possible.
2. Parents/guardians must complete the Consent for Medical Treatment Form (Form MED-2).
3. Permission to Self-Apply (Form MED-3) may be completed to give consent for the application of FDA approved OTC topical medications.
4. The first dose of a newly prescribed medication may not be administered at school, except for emergency medications such as epinephrine autoinjectors (EAI's). Parents must let the Medication Administration Monitor know when the first dose of a new medication is given and communicate any potential side effects.
5. All medications may only be administered by trained staff. Medications will be kept in a locked cabinet at all times (with the exception of EAI's). Expired medications will be returned to parents within one month of expiration. GCS will not administer expired medications.
6. A Medication Administration Authorization Form (Form MED-4) must be signed by the student's licensed medical practitioner for the administration of each prescribed or over the counter (OTC) medication, including cough drops and other medical remedies, during school hours and at school-sponsored events, including off-campus events. The Medication Administration Authorization Form (Form MED-4) shall be renewed annually and signed by the licensed prescriber. Changes in the order or discontinuation of the order must be in writing from the licensed prescriber. Written instructions from a

physician, which includes the name and birthdate of the student, name of the medication, dosage of the medication, route of administration, and the time the medication is to be administered to the pupil shall accompany the request and be kept on record by the school. A separate Medication Administration Authorization Form (Form MED-3) must be on file for each medication.

7. Medication must be delivered to authorized personnel by a responsible adult (whenever possible, a parent) in an original pharmacy labeled container or unopened manufacturer's package. Medication may not be delivered directly by the student. Medication is counted and documented on the Medication Administration Log (Form MED-9) upon receipt. This document will then be signed by the school staff member and adult delivering the medication.

8. Any changes to the medication dosage or time of administration will not be made without written instructions from the physician or authorized prescriber after the initial request.

9. Parents/Guardians are responsible for resupplying all medications. Grace Christian School will not supply any medications to students for any reason. All medications for students must be supplied by the parents and must have the required Medication Administration Authorization Form (Form MED-4) in order to be administered to the student.

10. All medications left at the end of the year must be picked up by the parent/guardian within one week of the end of the school year. All medications left after this will be discarded or destroyed per local ordinances.

11. If a student has an adverse reaction to the medication, we will notify parents immediately. We will also call 911 if the reaction is severe.

12. Students may self-carry emergency medications if the following requirements are met:

1. The parent/ guardian understands that medication may be given without supervision.
2. The parent/guardian, the prescribing physician, and the principal have determined the student is capable of self-carrying and will be responsible with the medication.
3. The prescribing physician has signed the Medication Administration Authorization Form (Form MED-4) allowing the student to self-carry. The Form must specifically state that the student may self-carry.

4. The student's teachers must be made aware that the student is self-carrying medication. The teachers must also be given training in case the student is unable to self-administer the medication.
5. Any misuse of medication that violates the policies- such as irresponsibility, selling of medication, mishandling of medication, or giving away of medication- will result in revocation of self-carry permissions. Building administration may disallow self-carrying abilities if it is deemed necessary for the safety of the student population. Parents/guardians and the prescribing physician will be notified immediately if self-carry permissions are withdrawn.
6. Emergency Medication Self-Carry and Self-Administration Care Plan (Form MED-5) must be completed for each emergency medication that a student is self-carrying. This plan must include how the student will record self-administration and when the student must seek assistance. For emergency auto-injectors, see point g.
7. The Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Emergency Care Plan (Form MED-6) must be completed by a healthcare provider when a student is self-carrying an emergency auto-injector.

Appendix D

Understanding Our Discipline Investigation Process

We want to take a moment to explain our approach to handling discipline matters at Grace Christian School. We understand that, as parents, you want to be informed about any incidents involving your child as soon as possible. However, it is important to note that not all discipline issues can be communicated immediately.

When an incident occurs, our administration takes time to thoroughly investigate all perspectives before making any determinations. This process can take 2-3 days, as we ensure fairness by gathering facts, speaking with all parties involved, verifying details, following up as necessary, documenting findings, and ensuring that all aspects of the situation are properly addressed. Once these actions have been completed, parents are then notified. Premature involvement or external influence can impact the integrity of our investigation, which is why we ask for your patience and understanding.

That said, if a student is assessed to be in immediate danger following a threat assessment, administration will take swift action. This includes contacting the parents of the student at risk and implementing necessary safety measures to ensure the well-being of all students.

Our primary goal is to maintain a safe and fair environment for all students. We appreciate your support as we work diligently to handle situations with the care and attention they deserve.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to reach out to school administration.

Appendix E

Standard Response Protocol (SRP)

IN AN EMERGENCY TAKE ACTION



HOLD! In your room or area. Clear the halls.

STUDENTS

Clear the hallways and remain in room or area until the "All Clear" is announced
Do business as usual

ADULTS

Close and lock the door
Account for students and adults
Do business as usual



SECURE! Get inside. Lock outside doors.

STUDENTS

Return to inside of building
Do business as usual

TEACHERS

Bring everyone indoors
Lock outside doors
Increase situational awareness
Do business as usual
Take attendance



LOCKDOWN! Locks, lights, out of sight.

STUDENTS

Move away from sight
Maintain silence
Do not open the door

ADULTS

Recover students from hallway if possible
Lock the classroom door
Turn out the lights
Move away from sight
Maintain silence
Do not open the door
Prepare to evade or defend



EVACUATE! (A location may be specified)

STUDENTS

Leave stuff behind if required to
If possible, bring your phone
Follow instructions

ADULTS

Lead students to Evacuation location
Account for students and adults
Notify if missing, extra or injured students or adults



SHELTER! Hazard and safety strategy.

STUDENTS

Use appropriate safety strategy for the hazard

Hazard

Tornado
Hazmat
Earthquake
Tsunami

Safety Strategy

Evacuate to shelter area
Seal the room
Drop, cover and hold
Get to high ground

ADULTS

Lead safety strategy
Account for students and adults
Notify if missing, extra or injured students or adults