



**PARENT/STUDENT  
HANDBOOK**

2025-2026

# **GCA Handbook 2025-2026**

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# GRACE CLASSICAL ACADEMY

## VISION & MISSION STATEMENT

### **Vision:**

To inspire and equip students for a life-long pursuit of knowledge, virtue, and service to the glory of God.

### **Mission:**

Grace Classical Academy exists to provide an education founded on the *Biblical view of reality*, shaped by a *classical structure*, and guided by *spiritual and intellectual integration*.

Christianity is more than a subject we study: it is the lens through which all knowledge is viewed and interpreted. We teach the Bible as truth, and we teach obedience to God's Word as wisdom for every area of life.

Education should cultivate a desire for truth, goodness, and beauty. It should guide students toward a life of wisdom, virtue, stewardship, and accountability. We do this through a classical approach defined by three core phases of education: grammar, logic, and rhetoric.

### **Values:**

*We desire these values in all students, parents, teachers, and administrators.*

1. **Calling:** We each participate by a sense of God's individual calling.
2. **Honesty:** We promote honest study and questions in pursuit of God's truth.
3. **Discipleship:** We seek to grow in Christ and His knowledge.
4. **Worship:** We openly declare the goodness of God.
5. **Humility:** We acknowledge, examine, and confront the broken human condition.
6. **Courage:** We seek to challenge the assumptions of culture with the light of the Gospel.
7. **Faith:** We trust God to provide for ourselves and the school.
8. **Community:** We contribute through our unique, God-given gifts for a shared unity.

## **OUR CLASSICAL APPROACH**

Grace Classical Academy uses the classical approach to education which recognizes the three learning phases of grammar, logic, and rhetoric. We also see II Peter 1:3-10 as a directive in this process. Young students begin their education in the grammar stage with a natural propensity to love learning and memorization. At this stage we lay a foundation of training in faith and virtue on which is built knowledge. Without this crucial foundation, knowledge tends only to puff students up with pride. The knowledge taught in this stage includes the basics (the grammar) of each subject. As students mature, they enter the logic stage in which they desire to investigate, question, and debate. We take their questions seriously and strive to develop the qualities of self-control and steadfastness. Students are led to subject the mind, will, and emotions to the higher goal of searching for truth. Students are encouraged to be steadfast in their determination to discover truth, not to justify their own desires. The third stage is the rhetoric stage, usually beginning in the high school years, where students desire to express themselves.

Instruction in this stage centers on how to best communicate what they have learned. The highest means of expressing truth, beauty, and goodness is through godliness, brotherly affection, and love. Having these qualities in increasing measure keeps us from being ineffective and unproductive. If our education is not rooted in faith and does not result in godly love, it is worthless—or worse.

## **STATEMENT OF FAITH**

### **THE WORD OF GOD**

We believe the Bible is the Word of God, fully inspired and without error in the original manuscripts, written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and that it has supreme authority in faith and conduct.

### **THE TRINITY**

We believe there is one living and true God who is omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent, and sovereign in all things and is limited by nothing other than His own nature and character. We believe God is eternally existing in three persons and that these three are equal in every divine perfection, and that they execute distinct but harmonious offices in the work of creation, providence and redemption.

### **GOD THE FATHER**

We believe in God the Father, an infinite, personal spirit, perfect in holiness, wisdom, power and love. We believe He concerns Himself mercifully in the affairs of men, that He hears and answers prayer, and that He saves from sin and death all who come to Him through Jesus Christ.

### **GOD THE SON, JESUS CHRIST**

We believe in Jesus Christ, God's only begotten Son, conceived by the Holy Spirit. We believe in His virgin birth, sinless life, miracles, and teachings. We believe in His substitutionary atoning death, bodily resurrection, ascension into heaven, perpetual intercession for His people, and personal visible return to earth.

### **GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT**

We believe in the Holy Spirit who came forth from the Father and Son to convict the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment, and to regenerate, sanctify and empower all who believe in Jesus Christ. We believe the Holy Spirit indwells every believer in Christ, and that He is an abiding helper, teacher, and guide.

### **REGENERATION**

We believe all men are sinners by nature and by choice and are, therefore, under condemnation. We believe that salvation is by grace through faith in Jesus Christ alone, and that faith without works is dead. We believe those who repent of their sins and trust in Jesus Christ alone as Savior are regenerated by the Holy Spirit.

## **MARRIAGE AND SEXUALITY**

We believe that God wonderfully and immutably created each person male or female. These two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God. Rejection of one's biological gender is a rejection of the image of God within that person. We believe that the term "marriage" has only one meaning and that is a marriage sanctioned by God which joins one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union as delineated in Scripture. We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other. We believe that God has prohibited intimate sexual activity outside of a marriage between a man and a woman. We believe that any form of sexual immorality (including adultery, fornication, homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, pornography, and attempting to change one's biological sex or otherwise acting upon any disagreement with one's biological sex) or advocacy of sexual immorality is sinful and offensive to God. We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ. We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity. Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accordance with Scripture or the policies of Grace Classical Academy.

## **ADHERENCE**

We believe that in order to preserve the mission and integrity of the school and to provide a biblical role model to the students and the community, it is imperative that all persons employed by the school and all those who attend the school should agree to abide by this Statement of Faith, and all parents/legal guardians of persons who attend the school should agree to this Statement of Faith.

## **SECONDARY DOCTRINE POLICY**

Secondary doctrine is anything not covered in our Statement of Faith. Secondary doctrine topics may be discussed in class on an informative, non-sectarian level. If these topics arise, presentation of all sides of an issue will be encouraged. The teacher will encourage the students to follow up any questions they have with their parents and/or pastor.

## **BIBLE TRANSLATION**

To facilitate the reading and memorization of Scripture, each classroom uses the same translation of Scripture which is the English Standard Version.

## **GCA GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

### **DIGNITY**

In keeping with a Christian worldview, we believe that every human life is sacred, created in the image of God, and therefore possesses dignity and intrinsic worth. Every individual is to be treated with respect and appreciated for his/her unique contributions to our school, community, and world.

## **DISCIPLINE**

The code of conduct at GCA exists to ensure an optimum learning environment and is strictly enforced. A sincere desire to learn is an essential requirement for admission. Skills that develop self-control are taught to assist students in becoming industrious, in maintaining a high moral standard, and in achieving life goals.

## **FAITH**

GCA recognizes that *"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is insight"* (Proverbs 9:10). Our school community is built on biblical values that reveal God's love for us and our need to love and care for our neighbor as ourselves. Emphasis is placed on essential beliefs of the Christian faith, not on those differences regarding secondary doctrine that separate believers.

## **PATRIOTISM**

We encourage students to be subject under God to our governing authorities, understanding that God institutes authority, to learn about and appreciate our rich national heritage, and to become involved in strengthening our families, our churches, our communities, and our nation.

## **RESPECT**

Respect guides all interactions at GCA. Respect for authority is expected and nurtured, and those in authority treat students with respect. Student interactions are to be guided by respect for their teachers and one another.

## **RESPONSIBILITY**

Respect demands responsibility. Each student is held accountable for his/her actions. The integrity of the individual, who must learn to discern and apply right from wrong, is reinforced and affirmed.

## **ACADEMICS**

GCA upholds superior standards of academic excellence. Our goal is to enable our students to become well-grounded in academic content, to grow to intellectual maturity, to acquire skills of critical thinking, and to be prepared to continue on in erudition (profound knowledge). Students are encouraged to understand the intellectual honesty found in the central truths of Christianity. Our Christian faith must not be compartmentalized from "secular" subjects. Our faith reflects reality and provides intellectually defensible answers.

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **VISITORS**

All visitors and volunteers must sign in at the GCA office upon arrival and sign out when leaving. At the time of sign in a visitor's tag will be provided each visitor or volunteer.

### **LUNCHES**

Lunches are catered daily and students are billed monthly for meals they order. Parents are responsible to cancel lunches not needed. Students may also bring their own lunch. Effort should be made to provide a healthy lunch that is low in sugar content. Parents are

welcome to join students for lunch. In order to allow a special time for students and their visitors and to maintain our normal lunchroom routines, a special table is provided for students who have guests for lunch. To make this a special time for guests, no other classmates may sit at the guest table. The following is a list of basic expectations for the lunch period:

- Speak in conversational tones.
- Use good manners.
- Be considerate of others.
- Do not run or participate in horseplay in the lunchroom.
- Do not bring gum or hard candy in sack lunches.
- Clean your eating area by picking up all trash, food, and personal items from the table and floor where you were sitting.

## **PETS**

Pets should not be brought to school except by special advance arrangement with the teacher.

## **TELEPHONES AND COPIERS**

School telephones and copiers are reserved for official school business. Use of the telephone is limited to the faculty, staff, and student emergency needs.

## **WEATHER-RELATED SCHOOL CLOSURES OR DELAYS**

When harsh weather conditions prevail, our first concern is the welfare and safety of the students. Weather-related school closures will be communicated by an automated phone call and/or text message to the numbers on file in the office. GCA may be closed even if Springfield is not and vice versa. Knowing that we are making decisions for a wide range of families and locations, we will always defer to the judgement of individual families. Should parents feel conditions are too hazardous, students may be kept home (or picked up early) and an excused absence will be granted. ***Please do not call any school employee at home regarding school closures or delays.***

## **DISASTER PLAN**

In the event of a major disaster, students will remain at the school under the supervision of their teacher and available parent volunteers. A student will only be released to the adults listed on the student's current emergency information sheet.

## **SCHOOL PICTURES**

Individual faculty, staff, and student pictures, as well as class pictures, are taken by a private photography company. Faculty, staff, and families are not required to purchase these pictures, but all faculty, staff, and students will be photographed for the yearbook. Information on picture packages and prices will be provided in advance. Payment for pictures must accompany the orders.

## **SEMESTER EXAMS**

Teachers of grades 7-12 are required to administer a comprehensive assessment at the end of each semester for all classes in the following subjects: Christian studies, communication arts, foreign language, history/social studies, math, and science. Finals for all other subjects are at the teacher's discretion.



## STANDARDIZED TESTING

Each year, all students in grades 1-12 are given standardized tests. Students in 1<sup>st</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> grade take the Stanford Achievement Test. 8<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> grade students take the PreACT 8/9, 10<sup>th</sup> grade students take the PreACT, and 11<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade students take the ACT. (A separate fee based on the current ACT rate will be charged to each 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade student's account.) All high school students are required to take the ACT or SAT at least twice before they graduate and will take the ones given at GCA because this serves as our standardized testing for those years.

## LOST AND FOUND

Articles of clothing, uniforms, or other items found on school grounds are to be brought to the office. Students may check with the office for missing items. At the end of each month, unclaimed items will be given to a charity or put into the used uniform section for sale. ***Please label jackets, sweaters, lunchboxes, etc. that your student brings to school.***

## SPECIAL DAYS

**Birthdays:** Parents may send simple refreshments and needed paper goods for the class on their child's birthday. Birthdays will be celebrated at times designated by the teacher. Parents should email teachers in advance to let them know and make sure there are no conflicts in the schedule. To avoid distraction in the classroom, balloons, flowers, stuffed animals, etc. delivered to the school will remain in the office until the end of the day. No gifts should be exchanged. Private party invitations may be distributed at school if every student in the class (or of the same gender) is invited; otherwise, please mail or distribute invitations off-campus.

**Field Trips and Special Events:** Learning by experience—doing, seeing, feeling, and touching—provides meaningful and long-lasting learning. The individual teachers arrange field trips in conjunction with the school calendar. Students must wear uniforms unless otherwise communicated by the teacher. Any student under 8 years of age or under 80 pounds must have a car seat. Parent volunteers may be asked to drive. Students must wear seat belts in any vehicle. GCA requires all field trip drivers to provide the office with a copy of a valid Missouri driver's license and proof of current auto liability insurance prior to departure. Participation in these opportunities is a privilege, and students must demonstrate exemplary behavior while on such excursions. Loss of future privileges for such excursions will result for those whose behavior brings dishonor to Christ or the school in any way. All field trips related to the curriculum and that take place during the school day are required and will affect student grades if skipped unless a suitable reason is given. A makeup assignment may be required in lieu of the field trip. If the student has a suitable reason for not attending a field trip, that information needs to be communicated as early as possible so teachers can make final field trip arrangements such as drivers, final numbers, and cost.

## STUDENT CONDUCT AND EXPECTATIONS

Grace Classical Academy is a community of learners committed to growing in relationship with each other and with Christ. The guiding principles set the expectations of student attitude and conduct. **Anything that hinders learning or growth is out of place at GCA.**

Students attend GCA at the will of the administration. Attending GCA is a privilege which includes certain responsibilities. School policies include moral and biblical requirements as well as practical requirements needed for efficient functioning in a community. The first quarter is considered a probationary period for each new student. Students are enrolled for one academic year at a time. Students may return for the next academic year if they are succeeding academically and are supportive of the mission of the school. A student may be refused readmission for the following year if the administration believes the student to have educational or behavioral needs beyond the capacity or mission of the school. Because a Christian classical approach is different from other approaches, has high expectations, and actually begins at an early age, an older student may find it difficult to adjust as quickly as a younger student. Sometimes it takes up to one year to “get the feel” of classical education. Because of this adjustment period for older students, we do not accept any students in the high school years unless they themselves desire to learn by the Christian classical method. It would be counter-productive for a high school student to be forced to attend. All students entering high school will be required to write an explanation of why they wish to attend GCA and a statement of their personal goals for their high school years. A high school student who does not wish to attend will not be enrolled.

Grace Classical Academy requires a high standard of behavior from each student enrolled. Our students are expected to work diligently at the task of learning, cooperate with teachers and follow the Golden Rule in relationships. The faculty and administration of GCA seeks to work in partnership with parents in maintaining student accountability should attitude or behavior problems develop. Students need to know that parents are involved in the resolution of these types of problems. All behaviors that contribute to a positive learning environment are encouraged. Any behaviors that detract are unacceptable. GCA may discipline its students for infractions of the behavioral expectations (see Disciplinary Process) regardless of whether these occur on or off school grounds; before, during or after school hours; and whether or not they occur at school functions. All of a student’s life constitutes his testimony and affects his peers. Students are expected to acknowledge the authority of Psalms 101:2-4 and to guard the influences allowed into their lives. Parents and students are expected to uphold Christian values in the selection of movies, music, television, video or computer games, books, magazines, internet sites accessed, apps, social media, and other forms of entertainment.

## **BEHAVIOR GUIDELINES/EXPECTATIONS**

All students should be aware of and adhere to the following list of school rules:

- Students are expected to comply with basic Christian standards of behavior and conversation.
- Students are expected to dress in conformity with their biological gender (e.g. no cross-dressing, etc.) and use the restroom that conforms to their biological gender.
- Talking back or arguing with teachers or staff is unacceptable. Prompt and respectful compliance at the first request is expected.
- Students are not allowed to be in possession of guns or knives on the school grounds.
- Students may not chew gum while at school.
- Food is only to be eaten outside or in the lunchroom.
- Students will be held responsible for damage done to school property, including textbooks. Replacement or repair costs will be assessed and billed to your account.
- Public displays of affection are not permitted at school or school activities.

- Hats may not be worn inside the school building except on designated special dress days.
- Students may not run or yell inside the building.
- Students must notify the office and sign out before leaving school.
- Use of illegal drugs, tobacco, or alcohol is forbidden.

## **HONOR CODE**

Grace Classical Academy students are on their honor not to cheat, lie, steal, vandalize or do anything detrimental to the GCA community. By signing the GCA Enrollment Agreement, students agree to abide by and uphold these standards, whether on or off campus.

## **DISCIPLINARY PROCESS**

It is vital for parents and students to realize that maintaining an orderly atmosphere in the school and the classroom is critical to the learning process. GCA may discipline its students for infractions of the behavioral expectations regardless of whether or not they occur at school functions. All elements of a student's life constitute his/her testimony and have an effect on his/her peers. As in all other areas of education, *love and forgiveness* will be an integral part of the discipline of a student. This does not negate consequences for unacceptable behavior.

## **MINOR INFRACTIONS**

Informal discipline is handled and documented by the teacher.

## **MAJOR INFRACTIONS**

Formal discipline will result if behavior addressed in informal discipline continues to occur, after any of the six basic behaviors listed below, or any other serious misconduct. The headmaster will decide the course of action. This could include but is not limited to a meeting with involved staff members, a meeting with the parents, a suspension and/or expulsion.

### **Six behaviors that require formal discipline:**

1. Disrespect shown to any staff member
2. Dishonesty in any situation at school, including lying, cheating, or stealing.
3. Rebellion: e.g. outright disobedience in response to instruction
4. Fighting: e.g. striking in anger with the intention to harm another person
5. Obscene language or gestures
6. Public displays of affection

## **SERIOUS MISCONDUCT**

Serious misconduct includes willful acts endangering the lives or property of other students or staff members, gross violence, vandalism of school facilities, violation of civil law, or any act in clear contradiction of scriptural commands. Depending on the severity of the misconduct a student may be expelled or disciplined as outlined herein. Students may be subject to school discipline for serious misconduct that occurs when the student is away from the school campus.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE DISCIPLINE**

If for any of the above or other reasons, a student receives discipline:

- A student can be sent to the headmaster; the student's parents will be contacted and given the details of the visit. The parents' assistance and support in averting further problems will be sought.
- A meeting with the student's parents and the headmaster may be requested if deemed necessary.
- Suspension may be imposed.
- The student may be expelled from the school.

## **CHARACTER PROBATION**

7<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade students who are consistently disciplined for minor and mid-level infractions over the course of a school year, students who show a consistent apathy to school work, or students guilty of serious misconduct may be placed on character probation. This probation may include suspension before the student can return to school. Character probation gives the student time to consider their behavior and decide if they want to change. It is also a time to show grace to students as they are growing in their awareness of God's work in their lives and their own sin. Finally, it gives administration time to determine if the student can remain at GCA. While on character probation, students will have informal meetings with either teachers or members of administration to check in on their behavior. The length of time for the probation will vary and will be determined by administration. If a student continues to require disciplinary actions, the student may be unenrolled.

## **WEAPONS POLICY**

It is a violation of Missouri State Law for any student to carry any firearm or dangerous weapon onto school premises, school provided transportation, school facilities or non-school facilities being used by the school. A violation constitutes grounds for expulsion from GCA. School officials shall promptly notify law enforcement and the student's parent or guardian regarding any allegation or indication of such violation.

## **GUARDIANSHIP OF STUDENTS**

GCA assumes that the students' parents will consult with each other and make joint decisions concerning the health, welfare, and education of their children and that either parent may communicate those decisions to GCA. If a GCA student has a legal guardian or has only one parent who is authorized to make decisions on their behalf, that information, and a copy of the legal document that supports such a position, must be provided to GCA administration. If changes or problems arise with custody or decision-making authority during the school year, parents must notify the GCA office immediately and provide copies of any new or revised legal documents that apply to the situation. If a full or *ex parte* order of protection, restraining order, or Parenting Plan restricts the contact any person may have with a GCA student, a copy of that document must also be provided to GCA administration.

## **STUDENT DRIVING POLICY**

GCA is a closed campus and students must remain on campus during the school day. Driving

to school is a privilege and may be revoked any time a student fails to meet GCA standards. Violation of any of the following rules will be grounds for revoking the privilege of driving to school. Students who drive:

1. Must have a permanent driver's license and proof of insurance.
2. Must submit a Student Driver Contract, signed by both the students and parent(s), to the office where it is to be kept on file.
3. Must not be under school disciplinary action.
4. Must park in the designated student parking area. Cars may not be left on the street.
5. May not leave the campus during the school day except with special permission for appointments or school-related functions. Parents must call or students must present a note from parents before leaving campus for appointments.
6. Junior and Senior parents may sign a waiver allowing them to leave campus and/or ride with classmates if they have breaks throughout the day, but they MUST still check out in the office.
7. May not carry any passengers in their vehicle without express permission from the driver's parents and the passenger's parents.
8. Must not exceed 5 mph in school parking lot.
9. Must not drive in a reckless manner.

### **COMPUTER AND INTERNET USAGE POLICIES**

The following computer policies apply to all students, faculty, and staff who use the computer resources at GCA.

1. Passwords are private and must not be shared with others. Individuals may not allow anyone else to use their account since they are responsible for what happens in their own account.
2. Accounts are subject to monitoring at any time and their use should not be considered private. This means that GCA may remotely observe what web sites are accessed, the documents in personal folders and what is being typed on screen.
3. Software should not be installed on any school computer. Executable files should not be copied or downloaded without explicit authorization from school personnel. Only authorized school personnel may install software.
4. Personal files should not be saved on the local hard drive unless directed to do so by authorized personnel. Authorized material may be saved to a data disk, the personal My Documents folder, or a class My Documents folder, which is stored on the main server. This folder is provided as a place to store school-related documents and may be accessed from any GCA computer. My Documents folders should not be shared with others and no changes to the settings should be made on it.
5. Students may only use the Internet with direct teacher permission and supervision.
6. Students may not shut down, restart, or turn off any computer or printer unless directed to do so by school personnel.
7. Any computer-based activities deemed by the school as non-educational can be disallowed. Downloading, installing, or playing unauthorized games of any kind is strictly forbidden. Students may only use the Internet to visit sites that are educationally relevant. Sending messages is strictly forbidden unless given specific authorization by authorized school personnel. Students are to use only those

programs and commands to which access is provided in the Start Menu programs or the desktop. This includes Microsoft Office and internet browsers. The use of other programs that may have been installed on the local machine is limited to what a faculty member has instructed students to use. Programs or commands to which access has been blocked in the standard Windows interface (e.g. "run") may not be accessed by students unless they have explicit permission from authorized school personnel. This includes programs that are installed, but to which students have not been given explicit access to in the Windows interface or by authorized school personnel.

8. **Students are to make no attempt to change any computer settings or properties.** This includes, but is not limited to screensavers, wallpaper, resolutions and colors, file and folder permissions, except where explicitly allowed by authorized school personnel. Unauthorized access to servers is strictly forbidden. Students may only log on to the GCA Domain using their student account.
9. Copies should only be made with permission from authorized school personnel.
10. No person may at any time visit, or attempt to visit, any site associated with pornographic materials. No person may visit a chat room (except with permission for specific projects), game site, or music site except as specifically authorized by authorized school personnel.

## **ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

**K-6<sup>th</sup>** No electronic devices may be used except paper-style readers (e.g. Kindle Paperwhite) and then only by approval of classroom teacher. Smart watches are only allowed if they are kept in school mode (a mode that silences all notifications during school hours). If watches are found to receive messages/notifications, students will be asked not to bring them back to school.

**7<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup>** Cell phones, iPods, headphones, and similar devices will be placed in lockers and will not be taken out and used by students at any time during the school day. Smart watches are only allowed if they are kept in school mode (a mode that silences all notifications during school hours). If watches are found to receive messages/notifications, students will be asked not to bring them back to school.

**Exceptions** Exceptions can be made through administration for students who require technology for medical reasons (blood sugar monitoring, etc.).

## **UNIFORMS**

Wearing uniforms is a visible reminder that the purpose of GCA is bigger than oneself. Wearing uniforms is an opportunity for us to put aside our own preferences and individual expressions so that we take our focus off of ourselves and put it on the important task at hand, which is engaging with what we are learning. Wearing uniforms promotes beauty and unity. Uniforms allow students to look like students, develop school spirit, and promote an understanding of school being a special place with special expectations. It also allows students to be seen by others on the basis of their unique personalities and not on the basis of their clothing, eliminate "dress competition," and present considerable financial savings. Uniforms should be clean and in

good repair. Students are expected to be in uniform every day unless otherwise specified.  
**Uniforms are for the above reasons only. They are not an attempt to judge between “right” or “wrong” ways of dressing.**

If a student does not follow these guidelines, we will do the following:

1. A student out of uniform will be sent to the office, and parents will be called to bring replacements for the variations.
2. Until the change of clothes is brought to school, the student will be allowed to work in the office.
3. If problems with uniforms continue, a conference with parents and the student will be arranged to see if an agreement can be reached on conformity to the guidelines.
4. If no agreement can be reached, the student will be asked to leave GCA.

**In order to be consistent with each of our families and to simplify conformity to the dress code, all uniforms must either be purchased through GCA or from the approved lists through Land’s End or Empire Printing.**

GCA is happy to credit a family’s account if they would like to bring in used uniforms in good repair; however, we do not accept all used uniforms, and we do not give cash or refunds for used uniforms.

### **Boys, All Grades**

- Plain khaki, navy, or grey slacks with appropriate fit.
- Plain belt must be worn in belt loops unless solid-color suspenders are worn in black, brown, tan, navy, or grey.
- White, navy, grey, or maroon oxfords, turtlenecks or polos (long or short sleeve) with collars.
- All shirts must be tucked in.
- Appropriate ties or bow ties may be worn.
- **Solid** navy, black, white, grey, or tan socks must be worn at all times. (Although some socks have a small logo, the logo must be in a school color. No other stripes or accents are allowed.)
- Enclosed heel and toe leather dress shoes or tennis shoes or high tops in black, brown, navy, burgundy, grey, tan, or white (or any combination of these colors). No other colors can be present even as accent colors on shoes. (Metal pieces such as eyelets, zippers, etc. may be present as long as they are metal-colored.)
- Boots may be worn in black, brown, navy, burgundy, grey, tan, or white (or any combination of these colors).
- Jackets, sweaters, or sweatshirts (button, pullover or vests) with logo may be worn in maroon, white, grey, or navy. A collared uniform shirt must be worn underneath.
- No other coats or jackets may be worn in the building without special permission.

### **Additional Options for 7<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> Grade Boys**

- Light blue uniform shirts (with logo)
- Light blue shoes
- For PE or sporting events:
  - Shirts: Students will need to purchase GCA PE shirts.

- Shorts and pants: Students may wear any athletic shorts or pants in black, navy, white or gray as long as they are appropriate for the activities given and modest for the community. Students will be asked to change their shorts/pants if the clothing is deemed too tight or too short. (Rugby shorts, volleyball shorts, or only wearing leggings would be examples of shorts and pants that would need to be changed.)
- During cold weather, students may wear athletic leggings under PE shorts, or athletic pants or sweats in black, navy, white, or gray.

### **Girls, All Grades**

- Grey, white, maroon, or navy collared and buttoned blouses, turtlenecks, or polos (long or short sleeves) with collars and logos.
- All shirts must be tucked in.
- **Solid** white, navy, maroon, black, grey, or tan socks, tights, or leggings, or natural color hose may be worn. (Although some socks have a small logo, the logo must be in a school color. No other stripes or accents are allowed.)
- Enclosed heel and toe dress shoes, tennis shoes, or high tops in black, brown, navy, burgundy, grey, tan, or white (or any combination of these colors). No other colors can be present even as accent colors on shoes. (Metal pieces such as eyelets, zippers, etc. may be present as long as they are metal-colored.)
- Boots may be worn in black, brown, navy, burgundy, grey, tan, or white (or any combination of these colors).
- Jackets, sweaters, or sweatshirts (button, pullover or vests) with logo may be worn in maroon, white, grey, or navy. A collared uniform shirt must be worn underneath.
- No other coats or jackets may be worn in classroom without special permission.
- Plain, fit-at-the-waist, loose-fitting, culottes, or skirts in khaki, burgundy-plaid, grey, or navy.
- Belts may be worn.

### **Skirt Lengths:**

GCA has intentionally chosen skirt styles that are modest in length. Skirts should fall near the knee (or below) and should be worn as intended. Skirts deemed too short by GCA will need to be changed. Leggings in school colors can be worn under the skirt when wanted/needed for cold weather but no sweatpants or casual pants may be worn that make the uniform look sloppy.

- PreK-3<sup>rd</sup>: Shorts or tights must be worn under skirts at all times.

### **Additional Options for 7<sup>th</sup> -12<sup>th</sup> Grade Girls**

- Light blue uniform shirts (with logo)
- Light blue plaid uniform skirt (from *Land's End*)
- Light blue shoes
- For PE or sporting events:
  - Shirts: Students will need to purchase GCA PE shirts.
  - Shorts and pants: Students may wear any athletic shorts or pants in black, navy, white or gray as long as they are appropriate for the activities given and modest for the community. Students will be asked to change their shorts/pants if the clothing is deemed too tight or too short. (Rugby shorts, volleyball shorts, or only wearing leggings would be examples of shorts and pants that would need to be



- changed.)
- During cold weather, students may wear athletic leggings under PE shorts, or athletic pants or sweats in black, navy, white or gray.

## **PERSONAL APPEARANCE**

- Boys' hair is to be neat and clean. It must not be over the collar or in the student's eyes. Boys are not allowed to wear ponytails of any kind. If you have to be told to get a haircut, you will be expected to have it noticeably shorter by the following day.
- Girls' hair must be neat and clean and must not be over the eyes.
- Hair should be a natural color.
- Girls under 13 years of age should not wear make-up. Young ladies 13 years old and older may wear make-up in moderation.
- Girls may wear earrings, but students are not allowed to wear any jewelry that requires piercing of any other part of the body. Earrings should be age- and size-appropriate for safety and activity. No gauges are allowed.
- Students are not to wear stickers, stamps, tattoos, painting, or marking of any kind on their bodies.
- Hats/caps are not to be worn in building unless authorized by the administration.
- Other issues related to cleanliness or neatness of the uniform, hairstyles or color, or general appearance of students, although not specifically addressed in the school dress code can be judged appropriate or inappropriate by the administration. If it is determined that a student's appearance is a distraction or diminishes the reputation of the school, the student will be expected to make recommended modifications.

## **ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS**

### **Grace Classical Academy meets Tuesday through Friday from 7:40 a.m. to 3:50 p.m.**

Regular, consistent attendance in school is required by the State of Missouri and is conducive to high academic achievement. All students are required to remain on campus during school hours unless they are on a GCA-sanctioned event or have parental request to leave. Doors will be opened at 7:20 a.m. **Students should arrive no later than 7:40 a.m.**

## **TARDIES**

Punctuality is a parental responsibility and is considered a vital part of training for GCA students. Being on time instills self-discipline and respect for others. Any student who arrives after 7:40 a.m. will be considered tardy, must sign in at the office, and will receive a hall pass before going to class. In fairness to the class, students arriving after classes have started may be asked to remain in the office until the next class period begins. The parents of students who are tardy more than three times in a quarter may be asked to meet with the headmaster. Three tardies are equivalent to one absence. Continual tardiness may be grounds for dismissal from the school.

## **SIGN IN/SIGN OUT**

Students arriving after morning gates have closed must sign in at the office upon arrival. If for some reason the student leaves and returns during the school day, the student is required to sign out and sign back in upon return. Only those listed on the authorization

form may pick up a student.

Only in case of an emergency are teachers and students to be interrupted during school hours. If an emergency occurs, please check in at the school office before going directly to your student's classroom. Parents are asked not to call their student at school or on their cell phone unless there is an emergency.

### **PICK UP LINE**

Parents will be sent pickup/drop-off procedures each year through email. Please read thoroughly and follow procedures. Students should only be picked up in main line or in office (with arrangements through the office). No students should be picked up in any other parking lots. Please do not text your students to come to your car before they are dismissed to do so.

### **EARLY DISMISSALS/LATE ARRIVALS**

Those students requiring an early dismissal must present a note to the teacher or the parents must call the office. **Please schedule appointments on Mondays or after school.** If appointments cannot be avoided during school hours, the afternoon is best. Please call the office and notify of late arrivals due to appointments as well. Students may not be taken out of school on a weekly or bi-weekly basis for appointments, lessons, or other activities.

### **SHORT-TERM ABSENCES**

If a student needs to be absent from school for one or more days, the parent or student should contact the school by note or phone by 9:00 a.m. In the event of a planned absence, the assignments that were due during the absence will be due upon return to school or before. In the event of an unplanned absence (such as a sickness), the due date for assignments will be extended the same number of days the student is absent.

### **LONG-TERM ABSENCES**

If a student needs to be absent for three or more consecutive days, the parent or student should notify the school in writing explaining the circumstances. Extended trips and vacations are difficult for the student and teacher. Please arrange these during school holidays if at all possible. Any time a student is absent, it is the student's and the parent's responsibility to get the student's makeup work and to get the student caught up. The teacher will assist as much as is reasonable. All missed assignments are due upon return.

### **MAXIMUM ABSENCES**

In the event that the total number of planned (that is, parent-approved) absences is equal to or exceeds four days in one quarter or eight days for the semester, GCA may take truancy action. Seventh through twelfth grade students missing ten days in a semester in any course may not receive credit for that course. Confirmed medical excuses may be considered for exemption from this rule.

### **LATE ASSIGNMENTS**

Assignments that are late will be reduced by 10 percent for each day that assignments are submitted past the due date and will receive a grade of 0 after the fourth day late. This

means if an assignment is due on Tuesday and not received by Monday, no credit will be given. Work missed for planned absences is due the day the student returns to school unless the teacher requires that it be sent in by the previously-established due date. In case of absence due to illness, students will receive one day for every day absent to complete missed work that was assigned while they were away. Parents of 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade students should send a note (or email the teacher) if an illness occurs.

## **ADMISSION**

### **NON-DISCRIMINATORY STATEMENT**

Grace Classical Academy admits students of any race, color, national or ethnic origin and extends to them all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students of the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, and other school-administered programs. However, Grace Classical Academy reserves the right to select students on the basis of academic performance, religious commitment, and personal qualifications including willingness to cooperate with Grace Classical Academy's administration and abide by its policies. The first quarter is considered a probationary period for all new students.

### **LEARNING DISABILITIES**

At the present time, GCA does not have the resources to adequately provide for students with learning disabilities that require a separate classroom, program, or additional staff in order to provide the educational services desired by the parents or needed by the students as determined by GCA. Neither can we always accommodate students who are taking mind-, mood-, or behavior-altering medication. Please discuss your situation with administration during enrollment interview or as changes occur.

### **GENERAL ADMISSION**

Admission is based on test scores, academic and personal recommendations, school records, and an in-person interview. To be eligible for PreK Explorers, applicants must be 4 years old by August 1<sup>st</sup>; for Kindergarten, applicants must be 5 years old by August 1<sup>st</sup>.

### **REFUSAL OF RE-ENROLLMENT**

A student may be refused re-enrollment for the following school year. Such refusal is not considered a direct disciplinary act requiring accumulated office visits in order to be taken. Refusal for re-enrollment is not the equivalent of suspension or expulsion.

## **COURSE CHANGES**

Upper level students will be permitted to drop/add courses during the first two weeks of each semester.

## **ACADEMIC INFO FOR SENIORS**

Seniors (who have met all previous requirements) are not required to take a full load of classes unless they choose to take extra classes that are offered. This means that on some days, seniors will not be required to be on campus for the full school day. **(We do not guarantee that a**

**student will be able to leave early every day, as each student's schedule is different. We also do not guarantee the same schedule each year.)** The extra time will allow students to fulfill the senior independent choice requirements. After deciding on their plan, seniors and their parents must fill out a senior-year plan and meet with administration to go over their plan the summer following their junior year.

This means that seniors must choose to do one of the following each semester of their senior year:

- Participate in an internship or work-study program
- Volunteer and document the service hours (These can include A+ hours.)
- Work a part-time job
- Take up to two college classes (These can be the dual enrollment classes we offer that are not a requirement.)
- Volunteer in a GCA classroom on a regular basis (based on need and ability)
- Other options may be considered for approval by meeting with administration

### **GRADING POLICY**

Students will be graded on work, class participation, and demonstrated understanding. Percentage grades will be given according to the following standard:

GRADE	PERCENTAGE	GPA
A	94% - 100%	4.0
A-	90% - 93%	3.7
B+	87% - 89%	3.3
B	83% - 86%	3.0
B-	80% - 82%	2.7
C+	77% - 79%	2.3
C	73% - 76%	2.0
C-	70% - 72%	1.7
D+	67% - 69%	1.3
D	64% - 66%	1.0
D-	60% - 63%	0.7
F	0% - 59%	0.0
Inc	Incomplete	

Students are required to maintain at least a 70% average in all core classes. Because our goal is mastery of subject matter, any class on the high school level in which a student receives below a 70% final grade must be repeated. This policy is intended to provide additional motivation to students with academic achievement below their capability. A student may be placed on academic probation within a grading period if they have demonstrated persistent low achievement or failure to meet class requirements.

Grade averages for students are calculated each quarter. Any student with a cumulative average falling below 70% in any core course may be placed on academic probation during the following quarter. A parent-teacher conference will be arranged at this time. If the student's average has not risen to at least 70% in core courses, he/she may be advised to withdraw. Any class failed

will have to be retaken if the student is to remain enrolled in GCA.

Students who wish to receive a scholarship must maintain an 80% average. Any student whose grades fall below 80% for two consecutive quarters will forfeit the scholarship.

## HOMEWORK

Homework is an important part of a classical education; however, home life is also an important part of the student's education. Kindergarten-4<sup>th</sup> grades will have very little homework. Students in 5<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> grades should have light to occasionally moderate homework. Students in 8<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grades will have times with heavier homework loads, but if students use their class time efficiently, homework should not be excessive for extended periods of time.

Some of the key learning strategies that we desire upper students to acquire are:

- collecting information
- organizing information so as to be most readily used or learned
- responding with what has been learned in various forms (tests, reports, essays, etc.)
- evaluating information learned, as well as the learning process itself, for further use or study

## GRIEVANCE POLICY

### GUIDELINES

Grace Classical Academy is committed to work with parents on any problem that may arise; however, parents must direct their concerns in the following order:

1. All concerns about the classroom should **first be presented to the teacher** by the parents or, if the student is mature enough, by the student himself. In either case, a respectful demeanor is required at all times.
2. If the problem is not resolved, the parents or student may bring the concern to the headmaster.
3. If the parents have a grievance or dispute about the general operation of the school (apart from the operation of classrooms), they should bring their concerns directly to the headmaster. If there is no resolution, concerns may be brought to the board of directors. Concerns that need escalation to the board of directors should be submitted in writing to [directors@graceclassical.org](mailto:directors@graceclassical.org).

## FACULTY AND STAFF

As a Christian school, all our administration, faculty, staff and board members must meet the following spiritual criteria:

He/she must be a person who has personally exercised faith in Jesus Christ for his/her only hope of salvation (Acts 16:31), whose life demonstrates that relationship at home and through active participation in a local body of believers, and who understands and wholeheartedly embraces the GCA Statement of Faith. It is our goal to have a faculty that desires to give caring, intelligent, professional instruction to each student and who is articulate, enthusiastic, and desirous of teaching students rather than subjects from a Christian classical philosophy of education.

When there is a need to contact a teacher, please use the following guidelines:

Each teacher has an email address at GCA and will respond as soon as possible. A

message may also be left with the office during business hours. Our teachers invest an incredible amount of time, effort and energy in our students. ***We ask that all contact be made through the school during normal business hours or by email in order to respect the teacher's personal time.***

## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Grace Classical Academy is a private, non-profit organization registered as such with the State of Missouri. Because you have selected a private school to meet the unique needs of your student, you want to make sure your school stays on course. In private schools, the final responsibility for such consistency belongs to the board of directors, which is obligated to support and further the general direction or mission originally set for the school. The basic work of the board is to make sure that the founding vision still lives within the school. The board is entrusted with keeping a particular kind of educational vision current and viable. To that vision it must remain true.

In public schools, the board is elected by the residents and is responsible to them. In private schools, however, educational principles, not popular opinion, dictate direction. Board members are chosen by the sitting GCA Board. Because the private school board does not have to deal with politics, it is free to focus on the future.

The board members are responsible for keeping their eyes on the big picture; they leave the school's daily operation to the headmaster. The board's work does not include, for instance, deciding on textbooks and curriculum, hiring, supervising, and dismissing faculty, or setting employee salaries. As a last resort, they may hear serious concerns (such concerns should be submitted in writing to [directors@graceclassical.org](mailto:directors@graceclassical.org)). The board provides financial and school-direction accountability, and also offers a pool of expertise and vision. **The GCA Board of Directors reserves the right to revise the handbook at any time.**

## **MEDICAL**

### **IMMUNIZATION**

All students are required to be immunized according to Missouri State standards (with immunization verification on file at school) or have an official waiver of immunization on file based on religious or medical contraindications. In the event of a vaccine-preventable disease, students who are not immunized may be asked to stay home until the outbreak has ended. Tuition will not be reimbursed for time missed because of this reason. A medical history report is to be completed and on file for each student with specific health conditions.

### **SICKNESS**

A student who is not well should stay home to speed recovery and protect students and staff. Please contact the school first thing in the morning if it is known that the student will be staying home with an illness. If a student becomes ill during the school day, he/she will be taken from class, and parents/guardians will be notified to pick up the student. Students who are sick must be picked up as soon as possible after parents are alerted. If parents cannot be reached, the emergency contact will be called. **A student must be free from fever for 24 hours before returning to school.**

## **MEDICATION**

Before the school will issue any medication to a student, we must receive written parental permission. We have a form available for parents to grant a year's general permission to the school to issue acetaminophen or ibuprofen to a student. No other non-prescription medicines or prescription medicines will be dispensed without written parental permission. Permission/instructions must include medication, identification, dosage, time, method of administration, how long it is to be taken, and possible side effects of the drug. All medications should be brought to the office. All medications must be in the original container, labeled, and kept in the office. Students must be responsible to come at the scheduled time to for their medication. A record will be kept of all students taking medication. For students who receive prescription medication routinely, parents must provide written authorization to allow students to self-administer medication.

## **EMERGENCY MEDICATIONS**

GCA does not provide medical personnel or emergency medication for asthma, diabetes, allergies, or other medical conditions. Any student with such a condition is allowed to bring prescribed medication that might be needed in an emergency to be kept at school. These medicines (when sent by parents) will be kept secure in the school office so that it is accessible in case of emergency. Inhalers for asthmatics may be carried by the student (4<sup>th</sup> grade or older) and self-administered. Any remaining medicine will be returned to the parents at the end of the year. It will be the parent's responsibility to keep track of the expiration dates and replenish as needed.

In the case of an emergency, the following steps will be taken:

1. 911 will be called.
2. The student will administer emergency medication for himself/herself if necessary and able.
3. If the student is unable to administer needed emergency medication, faculty may help upon the direction of 911.

## **INJURIES**

If a child is injured at school, the child's parent will be notified. In the event of a major medical emergency, 911 will be called first, followed by a call to the child's parent, guardian, or family physician. Parents of a student who receives a slight injury will be given a note or phone call informing them of the incident/injury and action taken.

## **INSURANCE**

Student accident insurance is provided for all students and is included in the tuition. This is a secondary policy and will not duplicate payment by any policy providing primary coverage.