



**Grace Christian School  
Parent-Student Handbook 2011-2012**

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## *2011 – 2012 Grace Christian School Calendar of Events*

July 1 .....	Book Fees Due
August 1 .....	Registration / Building Fees Due
August 8 – 9 .....	Classroom Preparation Days (all faculty)
August 10 – 12 .....	Teacher Orientation
August 12 .....	Registration & Orientation 7 p.m.
August 15 .....	First Full Day Of School
September 5 .....	Labor Day - <b><u>No School</u></b>
September 6 – 9 .....	Fall Revival
September 22 .....	Fall Pictures
September 30 .....	Grandparent's Day
October 12 .....	PSAT for Juniors
October 14 .....	End of 1st Quarter
October 18 .....	Report Cards/PTF - 7 p.m.
October 27 .....	Make Up Pictures
November 3 – 5 .....	High School Camp
November 11 .....	Veteran's Day - <b><u>No School</u></b>
November 21 – 25 .....	Thanksgiving Break - <b><u>No School</u></b>
December 1 .....	Lower Elementary Christmas Program
December 9 .....	Upper Elem. & HS Christmas Program
December 16* .....	End of 2nd Quarter & 1st Semester
Dec. 19 – Jan. 2 .....	Christmas Holidays - <b><u>No School</u></b>
January 3 (Tuesday) .....	School Resumes - 8 a.m.
January 3 .....	Report Cards
January 16 .....	Martin Luther King Day - <b><u>No School</u></b>
January 23 – 27 .....	Spirit Week
January 27 & 28 .....	Homecoming Festivities

\*out at noon on Dec. 16<sup>th</sup>

February 15 – 19 ..... Missions Conference  
February 20 ..... President’s Day – **No School**

March 9 ..... End of 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter  
March 12 ..... K-5 Cap & Gown/Spring Pictures  
March 13 ..... Report Cards/PTF & Academic Fair – 7 p.m.  
March 15\*\* ..... Junior High Fine Arts  
March 16\*\* ..... Senior High Fine Arts  
March 27 ..... Honor Society Induction – 7 p.m.  
March 30 ..... Junior/Senior Banquet  
March 30 ..... Pre-Registration Deadline

April 2 – 6 ..... Spring Break – **No School**  
April 16 – 25 ..... Senior Trip  
April 20 ..... Elementary Field Day – **No School (Gr. 7 – 12)**  
April 27 ..... Elementary Fine Arts

May 8..... Sports Banquet  
May 10..... Kindergarten Graduation  
May 16..... Half-day of School  
May 17..... Senior Baccalaureate Service  
(7 p.m. at Grace Baptist Church)  
May 17..... Teacher Record Day – **No School**  
May 18..... **Last Day of School – Awards Chapel**  
May 18..... Senior Graduation – 7 p.m.  
May 29..... Summer School Begins  
May 31..... Early Registration Deadline

July 1 ..... Book Fees Due  
July 4 ..... Independence Day – **No School**  
July 10 ..... Last Day of Summer School

\*\* subject to change by GACS



**GRACE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL**  
“A Ministry of Grace Baptist Church”  
2915 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Columbus, GA 31904  
(706) 323-9161  
[www.gscolumbus.com](http://www.gscolumbus.com)

Superintendent - Dr. Jeff Amsbaugh  
School Administrator – Pastor James Horton  
High School Supervisor - Mr. Robert Nadaskay  
Elementary Supervisor - Mrs. Gayle Edmondson  
Disciplinary Supervisor - Mr. Bryan McDonald  
Board of Directors - Deacon Board of Grace Baptist Church

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

### **Philosophy**

Grace Christian School (GCS) is dedicated to the philosophy that education from a Christian perspective is the only valid form of education. There are two outstanding elements that make up the school's philosophy of education. The first element is a Bible-based, Christ-centered curriculum. The second is a staff of dedicated Christian teachers who are concerned about their student's physical, mental and eternal welfare.

The school's primary aim is showing children how to live rather than just how to make a living. The truths of the Bible are not substituted or separated from academics at GCS. Instead, they are integrated into the entire educational program. Standards of discipline and conduct are

Bible-based to develop Christian character and sound values. GCS strives to maintain a truly Christian philosophy of education, high academic standards, and the proper emphasis upon morals, discipline, and social development.

The desire of the school is for the home, church, and school to work together to train up children in the way they should go (Proverbs 22:6).

### **Statement of Faith**

Without apology, GCS holds to the entire Statement of Faith of the Grace Baptist Church, Columbus, GA. Following is a brief summary of the statement:

1. We believe in the verbal inspiration and authority of the Scripture.
2. We believe that the Bible reveals God, the fall of man, the way of salvation, and God's plan and purpose in the ages.
3. We believe in God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.
4. We believe in the deity, virgin birth, and the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ.
5. We believe that salvation is "by grace" plus nothing and minus nothing. The conditions to salvation are repentance and faith.
6. We believe that men are justified by faith alone and are accounted righteous before God only through the merit of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
7. We believe in the visible, personal, pre-millennial return of Jesus Christ.
8. We believe in the ministry of the local church as God's established instrument of carrying out the Great Commission.

### **Affiliation**

GCS does not seek or accept State or Federal Government funds. GCS holds membership in the Georgia Association of Christian Schools state organization and American Association of Christian Schools national organization for both academics and athletics.

## **Accreditation**

GCS is accredited by the Georgia Accrediting Commission, an accrediting agency recognized by the Georgia Board of Regents.

## **ADMISSIONS INFORMATION**

### **Admissions**

Parents and their students wishing to attend GCS are to pledge their support to the school in attitude and action. Loyalty to the school's standards and policies is necessary not only in dealing with the school, but also in defending its testimony in the community. Parents should discuss problems with the administration, not with others in the school or community. A transcript is required of all new students wishing to enter Grace Christian School. All students must demonstrate their ability to perform on the grade level in which they are placed, or they may be required to adjust to the grade level upon which they can do satisfactory work. All new students may be subject to individual evaluation testing.

As a part of our admissions policy and procedure we will assess each new student upon registration. The administration will interview all new families entering the 7<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup> grades before acceptance into Grace Christian School. There is always a transition period of adjustment for any new student coming into our school. Understanding this adjustment, incoming students may be placed on academic or behavioral probation. The first nine weeks will give the parents, students, and school an opportunity to work together.

### **Admissions Procedure**

Secure a registration form for admission from the school office. Complete the form and attach the registration fee. Upon completion of the application form, the school office will arrange an interview with each new student accompanied by one or both of his parents or guardians. The administration may also request an interview with returning students

requesting re-admission. New students entering 10th-12th grades must also bring a record of completed courses in order to determine course schedules.

### **Notice of Nondiscrimination Policy**

GCS admits students of any race, color, nationality, and ethnic origin to all rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to the students at the school.

## **BEGINNING OF SCHOOL**

Orientation is August 12<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. Parents and students will meet in the church auditorium at the start of orientation for general information and announcements. When directed, parents of elementary students will visit the classroom building to meet with the teachers. Parents of Junior High and Senior High students will visit Hodges Hall (the lunchroom) for class schedules and other academic information. All parents should visit the office to make sure the office has all necessary registration information and to make sure their accounts are clear in the business office. All parents should also visit Hodges Hall to secure necessary school supplies, P.E. uniforms, or other essentials.

The first full day of school is Monday, August 15<sup>th</sup>. The first bell rings at 7:55 a.m. and the tardy bell rings at 8:00 a.m. For the safety of the students and teachers, all exterior doors are locked at 8:00 except for the double glass doors by the office. Students who arrive after 8:00 need to go to this entrance and check in through the office. It is best for parents of young students to leave their children with the teacher. When the parent remains in the classroom, it makes the period of adjustment more difficult for both child and teacher.

# TRANSPORTATION

Transportation Director.....Mr. Matt Holt

## **School Transportation**

Any problems concerning bus scheduling should be brought to the attention of the transportation director. Bus transportation is available for specific areas in Columbus at \$40 per month (or \$20 for one-way service). Bus charges are included on the bill at the beginning of each month for the previous month's use. Students who want to add bus service in succeeding months may do so as space and time allow. All changes (including withdrawals) in service must go through the transportation supervisor. Students riding the bus one day or more of any month will owe the full month's bus service charge. It will be necessary to bring your child to school if he misses the bus.

Students are prohibited from using any electronic device during the operation of a school bus, including cellular phones, pagers, audible radios, audible tape players, audible compact disc players, audible MP3 players, or laser lights in a manner that might interfere with the school bus communication equipment or the school bus driver's operation of the school bus. The transportation director reserves the right to initiate specific policies during the school year.

GCS reserves the right to refuse transportation to anyone who violates the bus safety regulations. In such a case, parents will be notified and will be asked to transport their own children.

## **Car Students**

When arriving at school, drop your children off and move as quickly as possible so others can drop their children off quickly also. Students may enter the school building through the side doors until 8:00 when those doors are locked. Parents who are picking up their students by car should follow the instructions on the handout for after-school pickup points and

traffic flow that is available at orientation. If a child who usually rides the bus is to be picked up by car that day, the parent should call the school office or write a note and send it to the teacher. A teacher will not take the child's word concerning a change in his schedule. All students going home by car must be picked up by 3:15 p.m.

## FINANCES

Financial Advisor..... Mrs. Sara Hasty

GCS makes every effort to keep tuition expenses reasonable. For this reason, no student will be permitted to attend class with a past due balance.

### Startup Fees

All startup fees must be paid prior to the start of school, including registration fees, building fees, and book fees.

The following are the startup fees:

Application Fee (new student application) .....	\$25
Pre-registration (by March 31 for returning students)...	\$150
Early registration (by May 31 for any student).....	\$175
Registration (by July 31).....	\$200
Late registration (after July 31).....	\$225

### Book Fees (due July 1<sup>st</sup>; distributed throughout year)

K-3 .....	\$100
K-4 .....	\$125
K-5 .....	\$150
1 <sup>st</sup> -3 <sup>rd</sup> .....	\$175
4 <sup>th</sup> -8 <sup>th</sup> .....	\$200
9 <sup>th</sup> -12 <sup>th</sup> .....	\$225
Building Fee (due August 1 <sup>st</sup> ) .....	\$200

## **Paying in Full**

The full annual tuition is discounted 5% if paid by September 1<sup>st</sup>.

## **Payment Plans**

We recommend a nine-month payment plan so that payments begin and end with the school year. In this plan, payments are due monthly from September until May. However, we also offer a 12-month plan for those signing up in June, and a 10-month plan for those signing up in August.

## **Tuition Fees**

All tuition payments are automatically deducted from your banking institution by FACTS Tuition Management Program on either the 5<sup>th</sup> or the 20<sup>th</sup> of each month (or the nearest business day). For specific tuition rates, see the Financial Advisor in the school office.

Students entering during the school year will be charged a prorated amount for the portion of the first month that they are enrolled. Students entering during the school year before the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month will be charged for the whole month. Withdrawal after the first full week of school will require payment for the first month's tuition.

## **Tuition Discounts**

Multi-student discounts are available with the exception of half day kindergarten, which receives no discount. These apply only to tuition. The 2<sup>nd</sup> child discount is 10%, the 3<sup>rd</sup> child discount is 20%, and all additional children are tuition free.

## **Ancillary Fees**

Aside from tuition fees there are ancillary fees such as daycare, lunches, transportation, sports, camp, trips, excessive tardiness, school pictures, fundraisers, and various activities which you elect for your child's participation. All ancillary fees are added to the monthly statement. All prices are subject to change without advance notice.

For transportation and day care expenses, see those sections of the handbook. The fee that is charged for each High School graduate does not include announcements. These are ordered through the school.

The following are ancillary fees:

Lunch (per day) .....	\$4.25
K-5 Graduation .....	\$75
High School Graduation .....	\$100
Athletics (per sport) .....	\$75
Computer .....	\$75
P.E. Shirt .....	\$10
P.E. Shorts.....	\$15
High School Camp.....	\$80

### **Delinquent Accounts**

FACTS assesses a \$25 fee for each failed draft attempt, and reattempts on the next draft date (approximately two weeks later). FACTS will re-attempt for up to three times. At this point the account is over 30 days delinquent and the students will be removed from class until the account is current again. No report card will be issued to students whose accounts are past due on the last day of school. Report cards and permanent records will be held in the school office until payment in full is received. No reimbursement will be made of any kind if student is expelled.

Because GCS makes every effort to keep tuition reasonable, annual fundraisers are conducted. We kindly ask for each child and/or parent to participate in helping to raise additional funds needed for designated school projects. However, participation is voluntary and door-to-door sales is not required or recommended. The school receives no state or federal assistance other than a tax-exemption status - neither is it endowed or supported by any other organization under normal operations.

## ACADEMIC INFORMATION

### Grading

The purpose of our reporting system is to give parents and students an accurate indication of the progress which is being made. Report slips and report cards also function as an objective form of communication between the parents and teachers. Each student is evaluated in two areas: academics and citizenship. The academic grade is based upon the actual work done on homework, quizzes, tests, exams, etc. Academic grading is based on percentage of 100%.

A+	99-100	A	95-98	A-	93-94
B+	91-92	B	87-90	B-	85-86
C+	83-84	C	79-82	C-	77-78
D+	75-76	D	72-74	D-	70-71

The State Department of Education mandates that grades below 70 are failing.

Progress reports will be sent home four times a year for elementary students, at the middle of each marking period. Progress reports must be signed by the parents and returned to the teacher the following day.

Report slips for high school students will be sent home every two weeks. All quiz and test grades, as well as homework grades and comments, will be included. Parents must sign these slips and return them the following day. Failure to return report slips in a timely fashion will result in proper discipline. If a report slip is misplaced, the parent should sign and return a note indicating that he has seen the report slip. Homeroom teachers will check to see that every report slip is returned or accounted for.

Report cards are issued for all students after each nine weeks. For elementary student, the report cards themselves are to be signed by a

parent and returned the following day to the student's teacher. For Junior High and Senior High students, the parents may keep this copy of the report card, but must sign and return the envelope containing the report card the next day. This does not mean that the parent approves or disapproves of the report, only that he has seen it. If your child does not bring a card home or if the report is lacking some grades, please contact the school office immediately. If a report card is lost, this should be reported by a note from the parent to the office. A duplicate will be sent home at a charge of \$5.00 for each lost card. No report card will be issued to students whose accounts are past due on the last day of school. Based on the current school calendar, report cards will be sent home on the following dates:

1 <sup>st</sup> nine weeks:	October 18 <sup>th</sup>
2 <sup>nd</sup> nine weeks:	January 3 <sup>rd</sup>
3 <sup>rd</sup> nine weeks:	March 13 <sup>th</sup>
4 <sup>th</sup> nine weeks:	May 18 <sup>th</sup>

The citizenship grade on a student's report card evaluates the student's conduct and overall character development. The following is the scale for citizenship grade:

- 5 - Excellence in character
- 4 - Above average character
- 3 - Average character
- 2 - Below average character
- 1 - Poor character

Any student receiving a citizenship grade of one (1) in any course will be ineligible for sports, club activities, or class office.

### **Graduation Requirements**

Twenty-four credits are required for graduation for the College Preparatory program. Twenty-two credits are required for the High School Diploma. Required credits are outlined on the following page:

4 credits in English/Language Arts

4 credits in Social Studies

1 credit in Geography

1 credit in World History

1 credit in U.S. History

1/2 credit in American Government

1/2 credit in Economics

4 credits in Math

1 credit in Algebra I

1 credit in Algebra II

1 credit in Geometry

1 credit in Pre-Calculus or Consumer Mathematics

4 credits in Science (3 required for HS Diploma)

1 credit in Biology

1 credit in Physical Science

1 credit in Chemistry

1 credit in Physics

2 credits in a foreign language (none required for HS Diploma)

1 credit in Spanish 1

1 credit in Spanish 2

1/2 credit in Physical Education

1/2 credit in Health

4 credits in Bible

1 credit in electives (3 required for HS Diploma)

### **Dropping a Course (High School)**

It is the desire of the administration that every student complete his assigned class load to the best of his ability; however, in some cases, approval may be granted for a high school student to drop a particular class. Any parent who wishes for his child to drop a course for any reason must contact the high school supervisor to receive permission. After the second week of school, a student dropping a course will receive a failing grade for that particular course.

## **Academic Honors**

GCS recognizes and encourages scholarship through a Principal's List and Honor Roll. Both lists are compiled at the close of each nine weeks and are not cumulative from the prior quarters. Any half-unit courses are weighted accordingly in determining the average. The Principal's List and Honor Roll will be determined by numerical averaging from the following 4-point scale:

A (100 – 93)	4.0	C (84 – 77)	2.0
B (92 – 85)	3.0	D (76 – 70)	1.0

A student with a GPA of 3.80-4.00 qualifies for the Principal's List, and a student with a GPA of 3.00-3.79 qualifies for the Honor Roll. A failing grade in any subject or a citizenship grade of one (1) in any class may disqualify a student from either list.

At the end of each year, the cumulative average for the year determines eligibility for the Principal's List Certificate and the Honor Roll Certificate. A student that has a grade point average of 3.80-4.00 for the year qualifies for the Principal's List Certificate. A student that has a GPA of 3.00-3.79 for the year qualifies for the Honor Roll Certificate. For elementary students, any final citizenship grade of one (1) disqualifies a student from either list. For Junior High and Senior High students, a citizenship grade of one (1) in any class in any nine-weeks disqualifies a student from either list.

Academic honors at graduation are determined based on the grade point average earned for all courses taken in high school as calculated through May 1<sup>st</sup> of the senior year. The valedictorian must have attended GCS for at least two full years and have the highest overall GPA. The salutatorian must have attended GCS for at least two full years and have the second highest overall GPA. If there is a tie in the GPA calculation, numeric averages will be used to determine the honors.

## **Honor Society**

Honor Society Chapter Director .....Mr. Robert Nadaskay

In order to reward scholarship and encourage service, GCS may induct students into the GACS Honor Society who excel academically and are examples of leadership outside of the classroom. High School students are eligible for induction if they have a cumulative GPA of 3.00 or above and have been recommended by their teachers for character and leadership. See the Honor Society Chapter Director for more specific details.

## **Homework**

Believing that homework is an integral part of the school program, each teacher is at liberty to give a reasonable amount of homework to help students advance in their studies. Therefore, each student is required to complete his homework assignments. Homework is given for several reasons:

1. For preparation: Students profit more from classroom explanation and discussion when preparatory reading assignments are given.
2. For practice: Following classroom explanation, illustration, and drilling on new work, homework is given so that the material will be mastered.
3. For remedial activity: As instruction progresses, various weak points in a student's grasp of a subject become evident. Homework is given to overcome such difficulties.
4. For special projects: Book reports, compositions, special research assignments, and projects are some of the activities that are frequently the subject of homework attention.

## **Attendance Requirements**

The school year includes 180 instructional days. A student in any Muscogee County School who misses more than 15 days in any class shall not receive credit. The parent or guardian may appeal a decision to withhold credit for an individual student based on excessive absences.

Appeals must be made to the administration in writing within two weeks on the basis of hardship, extenuating circumstances or other extreme emergencies.

Regular attendance is essential to successful class work. **Any student who has been absent from school must bring an excuse note *signed by a parent* the day he returns to school.** The only excused reasons for school absences are:

- Verified illness of the student
- Bereavements
- Verified medical, dental, or optical appointments
- Pre-approved personal reasons

Absence for personal reasons must be approved by the office prior to the absence, or the absence will not be excused. All school work must be made up in advance. Unexcused absences for which no permission slip is granted will result in zeros in all classes. If unexcused absences total more than three (3) per semester, the attitude of cooperation between school and parents is obviously in doubt and the student may be dismissed.

There are no refunds on tuition because of absences. **Much thought should be taken before a student is asked to stay home for any reason besides illness.** Students who arrive after 11:00 a.m. or leave school before 12:00 p.m. will be counted absent for the day.

Sickness resulting in five or more days absences will require a doctor's slip for re-admission and excuse.

### **Class Sessions**

Classes will be in session during the following times:

K-3 & K-4	8:00 - 12:00
K-5 - 6th	8:00 - 2:50
7th - 12th	8:00 - 3:00

The school will not be responsible for students before 7:45 a.m. or after 3:15 p.m. Early morning and after school care is available at extra cost through our Day Care. No students are to be in the school building after 3:10 p.m. unless they are serving detention or being tutored. For safety reasons, all students remaining on campus after 3:15 p.m. not being tutored will be required to be in after-school Day Care. **There will be no exceptions.** A \$3 charge will be made for this service. Parents who arrive to pick up their student after 3:10 should look for them in after-school Day Care.

Since education is more than reading, writing, and arithmetic, parents should also encourage attendance at school-related functions. Several programs and performances are scheduled throughout the year and the sports seasons provide many opportunities to build school spirit by supporting Crusader athletics. Since certain programs are a required part of class participation, appropriate grades may be affected for non-attendance.

### **Tardiness**

GCS desires to instill the qualities of promptness and preparation. Promptness ensures that the student is in his place on time, and preparation ensures that the student is ready for class each day at the beginning of class.

Tardiness to school is discouraged. If a student is tardy to school a total of five times in a semester **a charge of \$5 will be added to the school bill for each tardy** beginning with the 6th tardy and for following tardies until the conclusion of the semester. Any student who comes to school late must sign in at the office and get a pass before going to class.

Students in the junior high and high school are expected to be on time for their classes and chapel. A student is tardy if he is not in his room when the bell starts ringing or if he is not in his seat when the bell stops ringing. Discipline will be given for students who are late to any class or to chapel.

## **Promotion:**

If a student is in danger of failing a class, the parents, teacher, and student should communicate with each other about promotion to the next grade level. Students in grades 1 through 8 who fail either arithmetic or language may attend summer school in an attempt to raise their grade provided they scored at least a 60 in that course. If a student fails more than two core classes or if he fails to score at least a 60 in all classes, it is the recommendation of the administration that the student not be promoted to the next grade level without receiving credit for those courses. GCS is not interested in ruining the academic career of students by promoting them without sufficient mastery of the subject matter.

If a High School student fails a particular course, he will not receive credit for that course. He may make up the missed credit either by attending summer school classes, completing ACE paces, or by retaking the course the following year.

Any GCS student who wishes to attend summer school at a different school must receive permission from the administration.

## **Summer School**

GCS offers a six-week summer school program for Language (Grammar) and Mathematics. Students who did not pass either of those classes are eligible to enroll for summer school in the office based on the recommendation of the teacher. Please be aware that a student may enroll for only one course.

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **Automobile Policies**

It is a privilege to be able to bring a car to school. All student drivers must register in the office immediately when the student begins driving to school. All students riding with student drivers must also register with the school office. Each driver should demonstrate courteous, careful driving

habits. Cars are to remain parked until students leave for the day. Students should not sit in parked cars while waiting for school to begin or after school dismisses. Failure to observe these policies will necessitate cancellation of the privilege of bringing your car to school.

### **Address or Phone Number Change**

For the safety of the students, any time an address or phone number (home, cell, or work) is changed, *please notify the school office*. In the event of an emergency, the school would need to contact the parent as quickly as possible.

### **Before and After School Care**

Before and after school care is provided for GCS students. A cost of \$3.00 per hour will be charged for this service based on the current Day Care Financial Policy. Day Care is open for elementary students from 7:00 - 7:45 a.m. and 12:00 - 6:00 p.m.

A study hall is available before and after school for students in 7<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grades. From 7:00 - 7:45 a.m. this study hall is free of charge and is supervised by one of the teachers. All students who remain on campus between 3:10 and 6:00 p.m. will be required to attend study hall in the brown house across the street until picked up by their parents. This after-school study hall will function under the same financial regulations as the Day Care.

Day Care is available on regular school days only, not during any school holidays. A student who shows repeated behavioral problems or who is continually picked up late will not be permitted to remain in Day Care.

Day Care bills are mailed out around the tenth of each month and are due by the first of the next month.

### **Books**

The school provides necessary textbooks. The book fee is due July 1<sup>st</sup> and pays for use of all books necessary for all classes as well as the paper the school uses for class work and tests that are duplicated and distributed throughout the year.

## **Boys and Girls Club**

All students may go to the Columbus Boys and Girls Club on 29<sup>th</sup> Street after school if there is a signed permission slip from the parents on file in the school office for this school year. The club is open every day after school and all day on most school holidays.

## **Cell Phones/Electronics**

All elementary students who bring cell phones to school must turn their cell phone in to their teacher before 8:00. The phones should be clearly marked with the student's name. The teacher will return the phones to the students after school.

Any elementary student who fails to turn in his cell phone in the morning will not be permitted to bring the phone to school for the remainder of the school year.

All high school students **must turn off their phones upon entering the school** building in the morning and should keep phones in their lockers. Each student's phone is to remain in the locker until the student exits the building at the end of the day.

Students who fail to turn off their phones while in the building, or who have their phones out of their lockers during the school day (8:00 am – 3:00 pm) will have their phones confiscated and held at the school office until a parent picks up the phone. For the first offense, the phone will be held for three school days. For the second offense, the phone will be held for five school days. For the third offense, the phone will be held for two weeks. The fourth and all subsequent offenses of the cell phone policy will result in a suspension.

These policies apply to other electronic devices including (but not limited to) PDA's, iPod's, MP3 players, etc.

## **Conduct and Discipline**

A Christian school must provide an environment conducive to the spiritual growth and development of its young people. We believe that Christian students should avoid practices which cause the loss of sensitivity to the spiritual needs of the world and loss of the Christian's physical, mental, or spiritual well-being (Romans 12:1-2). The desire for spiritual growth in every student has led the school to adopt high standards of conduct for its students.

Since the teacher is responsible to maintain appropriate classroom behavior, it becomes necessary to correct any behavior that hinders the teacher or students in the classroom. If there are repeated offenses of misbehavior, students will be sent to the office for counseling and/or corporal punishment, depending on the offense. There will be appropriate discipline for minor work infractions such as working on unrelated material or being unprepared for class (no book, paper, pencil, etc.).

When misconduct occurs, corrective measures will be used to help the student change his behavior and attitude. No student will be out of his seat or communicate in class without permission. There will be no unnecessary noise or disruptions, passing or reading notes, throwing objects, or defacing school property. Students must be in class on time and should not be out of class without permission for any reason. Students must abide by the school dress code while on school property and will be dressed appropriately and modestly at all school activities. There will also be discipline for dress code and hair infractions; littering; eating without permission; eating food or candy other than during lunch; chewing gum on school property; misbehavior, slouching, or inattention in chapel; and re-entering the building after school. **Physical contact between boys and girls is strictly forbidden and will be dealt with severely.**

Actions that threaten or harm another individual's ability to function rightly and safely will require further corrective measures. Please consult with the office about any problem or question that concerns the welfare of

students. In everything, students must maintain high standards of courtesy, kindness, morality, and honesty with teachers, administration, as well as other students. Students must always address and reply to those in authority with utmost respect. Students will be expected to behave themselves as ladies and gentlemen.

The administration will not tolerate fighting, cheating, stealing, lying, profanity, smoking (or any other use of tobacco), use of indecent language, immoral conduct, gambling, dancing, listening to rock music, use of intoxicating beverages, or drugs. Students involved in any of these activities may be subject to suspension or withdrawal.

A student may be also be suspended or expelled for willful disobedience to authority or possession of pornography, firearms, fireworks, or any object that could be used as a weapon. In addition, a student may be expelled for any action or statement associated with violent behavior including a joke which could be interpreted as a threat.

Disobedience, disrespect to authority, and questionable behavior or conversation either at school or on school-sponsored activities may be grounds for severe punishment or dismissal. Students' lockers, book bags, vehicles, or other student possessions such as pocketbooks which could hold or transport drugs, alcohol, stolen property, weapons, or other dangerous substances or all articles in violation of the school's behavior and discipline policy shall be subject to searches.

While discipline is basically positive training in the right direction (Proverbs 22:6), there is a negative side of correction. The administration of Grace Christian School does not desire punishment of any kind, but at times, the misbehavior of students makes it necessary. It is always the desire of the school that students conduct themselves in accordance with the rules. When discipline is necessary, there is a general procedure that is followed. For minor problems in classroom attitude or behavior, the teacher may discipline the student with demerits, detentions, loss of

privilege, extra work, etc. For problems that are serious or repeated offenses, the student will be sent to the office. When this occurs, the administrator or supervisor will meet with the student and teacher.

For repeated minor problems or inappropriate major infractions, the administration may deem it necessary to administer corporal punishment. The administration determines when the need for corporal punishment is appropriate in any circumstance only after other corrective measures have been tried. The corporal punishment shall not be excessive or unduly severe. If this is necessary, the student will receive no more than three firm swats with a wooden paddle. Corporal punishment is administered only by an administrator, pastor, supervisor, or appropriate authority. When corporal punishment is necessary, a witness of the same sex as the student will also be present and will be informed beforehand of the reason for the punishment. Parents are encouraged to come to the school to administer the corporal punishment as long as an appropriate school authority is present. At GCS, we would prefer not to use corporal punishment, but we understand that sometimes, it may be necessary.

Any time a student is disciplined in the office, a notice will be sent home to the parent that must be signed and returned to the school the following day. This form gives the name of the teacher, the name of the witness, the nature of the offense, the previous discipline tried to correct the behavior, and what discipline was used on this occasion.

In this atmosphere of defined and positive Christian standards of conduct, there is a fine opportunity for the development of strong and stable Christian character. Parents and students must understand the importance of cooperating with the school and upholding the school's authority in all matters affecting the overall program of the school. Parents and/or students found not to be in harmony with the principles, rules, standards, philosophy and overall program of the school will be asked by the administration to withdraw from the school.

## **Dress Regulations**

Appropriate dress standards are an integral part of Christian character training. We wish to stress the Biblical principles of modesty, neatness, and distinct differences between men and women. Casual dress leads to casual attitudes which adversely affect the disciplined educational environment. These standards play a vital role in keeping GCS a pleasant and positive place. Due to the constant change in fashions and the variety of dress that is accepted today, all GCS students must wear full uniforms. New students or transfer students are allowed one week to meet all dress regulations and uniform requirements.

**Boys** must wear uniform clothing according to school requirements listed on the uniform information sheet. Cargo pants are not allowed. They must keep their shirts tucked in at all times. Hats are not to be worn inside the buildings. Shirts collars must remain turned down. Belts must be worn on all pants. Boys may wear tennis shoes. Socks are to be worn at all times. Boys' hair must not cover any part of the ear, nor should it touch the collar or eyebrows. In addition, boys' hair may not be artificially colored, bleached, braided, nor have designs cut into it. Boys must be clean-shaven at all times. Sideburns should extend no lower than the middle of the ear. Boys are not to wear bracelets, earrings, or necklaces. (Identification and medical tags are permitted if worn inside the shirt.)

**Girls** must wear clothing that is properly fitted. Tight-fitting clothing will not be allowed. Girls' hemlines are to be modest in length. (K-3 - 2nd grade: skirt lengths should not be more than three (3) inches above the knee cap. 3rd - 4th grade: skirt lengths should not be more than two (2) inches above the knee cap. 5th - 12th grade: hemlines are not to be above the middle of the knee. Slits in skirts cannot be above the skirt regulation length. Girls' necklines must be modest, no more than one inch below the collarbone. Girls may wear no more than two sets of earrings which should be worn in the ear lobes only. Facial make-up is not allowed for elementary girls.

As the weather becomes cooler, students may wear coats or jackets to or from school as long as they do not endorse people or ideas that do not align with the school's standards. All heavy coats must be placed in lockers before homeroom and must remain there until the end of the school day. Students may wear long-sleeved shirts underneath their school uniform shirt. Jackets may also be worn during the school day provided they meet the following requirements:

They must open (buttons or zipper) and must remain open.

They must be lightweight (not a heavy coat).

They must not have a hood.

Students may lose the privilege of wearing a jacket while at school if they use their jacket to conceal items that are not permitted at school.

Casual sandals and flip-flops are not acceptable footwear for school.

Body piercing is not permitted and tattoos are not to be visible.

Backpacks and lunch boxes must not endorse people or ideas that do not align with the school's standards.

The same standards of conduct and dress required of students at school are also required for students on school-sponsored activities. Students must also dress modestly and appropriately at all school-related functions such as sporting events or school programs.

The school administration reserves the right to initiate policies on fads and changes in style during the school year.

### **P.E. Uniforms**

The P.E. uniform for 5<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grades (GCS t-shirt and shorts) must be purchased from the school office. Students are graded daily on whether they are dressed in proper school P.E. uniform. During winter months, boys may wear sweat pants or wind pants at the discretion of the P.E. teacher.

## **Field Trips**

Classes take field trips at various times during the school year to places of educational interest. The students are required to maintain the same level of self-discipline on these school-sponsored activities as is required at school. These trips will be chaperoned by the teachers and parents with each adult responsible for no more than ten children. Parents who are asked to chaperone are required to follow the same standards of dress and conduct as the students.

## **Health**

All students who take medication must turn in their medicine to the office. Medicine must be properly labeled. No student can receive medication of any kind unless a medication request form is signed on file in the school office for this school year. **No medication will be given unless sent from home, including aspirin, Tylenol, or Pepto-Bismol.** If your child requires medication during school hours and we do not have signed authorization, it will be necessary for you to stop by and personally give it to him. Teachers cannot be held responsible for carrying out these duties. Any time a student brings required medication, he must turn it in to the office and should never administer it himself in class or at lunch. This includes any short-term need for pain medication or allergy medication.

If a student's temperature is 100 degrees or above, the parents will be called to pick up the student. Students with communicable illness must be kept home until the possibility of contagious infection is passed. A note from the doctor may be required for re-entrance. Head lice, though not a disease, is contagious. For this reason, any student diagnosed as having lice will not be permitted in the classroom until it is remedied. All students must have the required up-to-date immunization shots, and a record of these must be in the student's file.

Students are not allowed to miss Physical Education activities without a parental note of explanation. An additional note from your doctor may also be also required.

## **Lost and Found**

Students who find lost articles are to give them to one of the teachers or take them to the school office. Students may retrieve their lost articles from Lost and Found for \$0.25 per item. We urge you to clearly mark all personal belongings with permanent ink for clear identification. The Lost and Found is kept locked, but teachers can open it (at their availability) to check with a student. Retrieving items from Lost and Found does not excuse a student from being tardy to class. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that he has ample time before visiting Lost and Found. At Christmas and at the end of the school year, GCS will donate all articles left in Lost and Found to the Valley Rescue Mission.

## **Leaving School**

All parents coming during the school day to pick up students for medical appointments or other excused absences must report to the office and **not to the student's classroom**. If a student must leave school early, the parent must call the school office or bring a written note of excuse. The parent of an elementary student will sign the student out in the office and the school office will call for him there. High school students must sign out in the office when leaving school and may only leave campus with parental permission. Parental permission for a student to leave school does not constitute an excused absence. GCS requests all parents entering school buildings to abide by the school dress code.

## **Lunch Program**

Students are encouraged to participate in the county lunch program, which receives no federal aid. The Muscogee County School District provides lunches at the school at a cost of \$4.25 per day. They also set the menu for lunches each month. Students need to let their homeroom teacher know in the morning if they are ordering lunch for the day. Lunch charges are included on the bill at the beginning of each month for the previous month's charges based on the number of lunches ordered. It is necessary to pay for each lunch that your student orders regardless of whether or not he eats it. No student is required to order a lunch.

## **Office**

The school office will be open from 7:45 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. daily. Parents and other visitors are welcome at the school, but when a visit to the classroom is necessary, **all visitors must sign in at the office first. Do not go directly to the classroom.** If you wish to talk to your child's teacher, please arrange for a private conference by calling the office. Do not meet the teacher before or after school or detain the teacher from his or her previously scheduled conferences with other parents.

Lunches, homework, books, and other forgotten items may be left in the school office to be delivered to your student. School phones are for business only. The office secretary regulates use of the phone. If you wish your student to stay after school or to meet you at a different time, please call the office, and the proper arrangements will be made.

Students should make an effort not to walk through the area by the offices or enter/exit the double glass doors by the office. The office staff is responsible for taking phone calls, meeting with current and prospective students and parents, and performing daily administrative duties that require a quiet atmosphere. All exterior doors are open before school and the students should seek entrance in one of those other doors. During the school day, the only time students should walk through this office area is if they need to go to the office for a specific reason. After gathering up their belongings after school, students should exit one of the other exterior doors unless they need something in the office. This will allow the office staff to perform their duties more efficiently.

## **Parent-Teacher Conferences**

GCS recognizes the importance of working together with the home to obtain spiritual and academic growth for each student. Please feel free to consult the school office regarding any problems or questions that concern your child. It is the desire of the administration and faculty to be of service to both parents and students, and each teacher welcomes a visit from any parent. We do request, however, that such conferences be made

by definite appointment with the teacher at a convenient after-school hour. Parents should schedule all conferences by calling the school office. Every Parent-Teacher Conference is private and confidential. If you need to talk with a member of the faculty, please call during office hours and your call will be returned as soon as possible after school.

Parent-Teacher Fellowships (PTF's) are held at the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> nine weeks. These dates are October 12<sup>th</sup> and March 15<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. Parents are encouraged to attend these meetings for the benefit of the child and to obtain information concerning the school program. These meetings are designed to give parents a chance to ask general questions. If you wish to discuss a specific matter, please schedule a conference with the teacher so that the teacher is available to all parents.

### **Property**

GCS is God's property. Respect for the appearance and care of our school is part of our Christian testimony. Defacing school property is not permitted and will be dealt with severely. All damage must be paid for, whether willful or accidental. Students should report any damaged school property to the office immediately.

### **School Closing**

When severe weather creates hazardous conditions, regular school scheduling may be suspended. The first concern for making a decision to suspend school system operations is the safety of our students. The decision for closing schools is made by the school administrator. Any time a school closing is a possibility, parents should listen for information on the local television or radio stations. This information may also be posted on the school's website at [www.gcscolumbus.com](http://www.gcscolumbus.com).

### **Sports**

Athletic Director ..... Mr. Joey Harmon

GCS maintains an active sports program, competing in interscholastic sports with other Christian schools in the surrounding area. Boys may

participate in interscholastic sports in basketball and baseball. Girls may participate in sports in volleyball, basketball, and softball. The Crusaders are developing a winning tradition, as evidenced by a few of our most recent accomplishments listed below:

- 2009 Boys' JV Basketball State Runner-up
- 2009 Boys' Varsity Basketball State Champions
- 2010 Boys' JV Basketball State Champions
- 2010 Boys' Varsity Basketball State Champions
- 2011 Boys' JV Basketball Region Champions
- 2011 Boys' Varsity Basketball State Final Four

We believe athletics to be an avenue to develop Christian character, high moral values, and a healthy body that is better able to serve Christ. It is our desire that our athletes understand not only the physical but also the spiritual responsibilities and privileges of being a Crusader.

Only eligible students may participate in this program. Standards for athletic eligibility will be announced in tryouts for each sport. In general, a student must maintain at least an overall C average while participating in a sport, and must not carry a failing grade in any class during the season. In addition, excessive discipline may render a student ineligible to compete in athletic competition or participate as a member of a sports team. For more specific information, please contact the athletic director and/or the administration.

Athletes who do not attend school or are tardy the day following a game, will receive zeroes in the classes missed and will not be allowed to play in the next game. **Athletes must attend the entire day of school on the day of an athletic event in order to participate in that event.**

Athletes will be charged a participation fee for each sport to help defray the cost of transportation, uniforms, officials, etc. All students participating in athletics are required to carry personal accident insurance.