



**PARENT & STUDENT
HANDBOOK**

2022-2023

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School Mission, Affiliations and General Information

MISSION

Greater Grace Christian Academy (GGCA) desires to disciple Christian youth, by word and example, in the Spirit of God, to love the Lord God with all their heart, soul, mind and strength. Our purpose is to minister to church-going parents by assisting them in fulfilling their God-given responsibility to train their children. Through a Christ-centered, Bible-based learning environment and curriculum, we provide our students with the necessary skills to succeed in life.

LICENSE AND AFFILIATIONS

Greater Grace Christian Academy (GGCA) is an affiliate of Greater Grace World Outreach of Baltimore, Maryland. We are licensed by the State of Maryland and adhere to all local and state requirements. We are a member of the Mid-Atlantic Christian School Association and are registered with the Non-public School Approval Branch of the Maryland State Department of Education as a bona fide church school. GGCA is authorized by the U.S. Justice Department to accept and enroll F-1 non-immigrant students.

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

GGCA is a Christian school and as such, believes that all members of our school community – staff members, students, and their parents – ought to live their daily lives by the biblical principles found in the Word of God. As Christians, we do not drink alcohol, abuse our bodies with drugs and/or tobacco, engage in promiscuous or immoral behavior, dress immodestly, curse and swear, treat others unkindly, or expose our souls to worldly influences as a lifestyle.

Romans 12: 2 says,

“And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.”

A GGCA student’s desire should be to love and honor our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Whether on or off school property, or during the summer months, students are to be a living testimony of Jesus Christ, and of our school, at all times. This includes all school sporting events, field trips, at work, at home, online, and wherever else he or she may go.

Regular attendance of a local Bible-believing church and active participation in a Christian youth group are two important aspects of a GGCA student’s lifestyle.

STUDENT HONOR CODE

- We will honor the one and true God.
- We will honor those given responsibility over us.
- We will honor each other with honesty, dignity, and respect.
- We will be truthful in every situation.
- We will honor and respect the personal and private property of others.
- We will use appropriate language in all situations.

TEACHER AND STUDENT INTERACTION

GGCA does not have a no-touch policy with regard to teacher-student interaction. In the course of a school day, there will be times when normal, human contact between teachers and students occur. A handshake, a pat on the back, a hand on the shoulder, leading a small child by the hand, a hug, are part of everyday school life. We screen our staff before they are hired and train them not to engage in contact that may be construed as sensual or inappropriate. In the rare case that a student acts in a way that endangers himself/herself, others, or his/her environment, GGCA reserves the right to allow a staff member to come into physical contact with the student in order to protect the student, others, or his/her environment.

PARENTAL SUPPORT

Parental involvement and support is vital for effective education. GGCA urges parents to stay in constant communication with their child's teachers. Parents are encouraged to visit the JupiterEd.com website weekly, even daily, to keep informed of grades and assignments.

GGCA expects parents will support the teachers and administration when dealing with their children and the school. Questions or concerns should be addressed first to the teacher and then to the office. We always welcome and consider your suggestions. At any time, you may call the school office to schedule an appointment with the Principal or any of the administrative staff. We truly want to communicate frankly and come to divine conclusions together through prayer, creativity, and especially God's guidance.

We strongly encourage parents to attend parent-teacher conferences, sporting events, and the following annual events: Parent Back to School Night (August); Christmas Concert (December); Spring Concert (May); GGCA at GGWO Night (June).

School Organization

ADMINISTRATION

GGWO Board of Elders

Principal: Pastor Barry Quirk

ADMISSIONS AND NON-DISCRIMINATORY POLICY

Greater Grace Christian Academy is a church-based private Christian school. Our primary mission is to serve the families of Greater Grace Church in Baltimore. Secondly we open our doors to the families of our neighboring churches who desire Christian education. We generally do not accept student transfers for the senior year.

GGCA admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities made available to the student body. We do not discriminate based on race, color, national or ethnic origin in our admission policies, educational policies, scholarship or loan programs, or athletic or other extracurricular school activities.

DAILY OPERATING PROCEDURES

School Hours *Don't be late! Arrive at eight!*

The school day runs from 8:15 AM to 3:00 PM for grades K-11 and from 8:50 AM to 3:00 PM for grade 12.

School offices are open from 8:00 AM to 3:30 PM, Monday through Friday. If you would like to make an appointment with a staff member, please contact the school office.

Arrival and Dismissal Procedures

Greater Grace Christian Academy officially begins the school day at 8:15 AM. Students should be in their homeroom class, seated at their desks and prepared for the school day before the morning announcements.

Students who arrive late to school prevent the efficient start-up of the school day and disrupt the entire class. For this reason we would ask parents to please plan for traffic, rain delays and other unforeseen delays to prevent late arrivals. Since lateness is a hindrance to school activity, late arrival students will receive an after-school detention. Any disputes about an instance of lateness will be resolved by the administration.

ARRIVAL PROCEDURES:

- Early arrivals go to the Family Center for Before Care, which opens at 7:30 AM. Elementary students remain in the Family Center until their teachers come to escort them to their classroom at 8:00 AM. Upper school students may go to their classroom on their own at 8:00 AM. *See Before Care and After Care for further information.*
- Morning arrival runs from 8:00 AM to 8:14 AM. Students may not enter their classrooms before 8:00 AM.
- Drivers should follow the parking lot patterns and use the appropriate parking and drop off zones.
- Our school is a no-phone zone. Cell phones, headphones, and any other personal electronic devices are to be turned off and properly stored before entering the building and remain so during the operating hours of 7:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. For students staying on campus for meetings, detention, etc., this extends until 4:00 p.m. *Please see Portable Electronic Device Policy for further information.*

LATE ARRIVAL PROCEDURES:

- Students should be in their seats ready for the school day to begin at 8:15 AM. All arrivals to the classroom after 8:15 AM will be considered tardy to class.
- A student is late to school if they have not entered the building by 8:14 AM. *Arrivals after 8:14 AM should park in the parking lot - not the drop off/ pick up zone.*
- When arriving late, the parent/guardian must go into the school and sign the student in with the receptionist. Students who drive themselves may sign themselves in.
- Elementary students who are late will receive a late slip, report to class, and students in grades 4-5 will also receive a lunch detention to be served the same day.
- Students in grades 6-12 will receive a late slip, report to class, and serve an after-school detention the next school day or within three detention days. *After-school detentions are held Tuesday-Thursday from 3:10 PM - 3:40 PM.*
- Students must have a doctor's note in order for the late arrival to be excused.
- Three unexcused latenesses in one quarter will result in an Office Referral. Six unexcused latenesses in one quarter will result in a parent meeting with the office. *Refer to discipline policy for further information.*

DEPARTURE PROCEDURES:

- Students must be picked up promptly at 3:00 PM.
- Students in grades 6-12 may not stay in the school building after 3:10 pm.
- Students who have contracted for After Care will be escorted by their teacher to the Greater Grace After Care (GGAC) promptly at 3:10 pm.
- Students in grades K-5 who are not picked up by 3:10 PM will also be escorted to the After Care program and parents will be charged accordingly. *See Before Care and After Care for further information.*

EARLY DISMISSALS:

- Early dismissals require notice from the parent or guardian giving a reason for dismissal, time of dismissal, and the time the student will return. Advance notice is helpful in making this process efficient.
- A parent/guardian must sign out the student at the Reception Desk.
- Students who arrive after 11:00 a.m. or are dismissed before 11:40 a.m. will be considered absent for the day. Students must be present for at least half the school day to be considered present. Either half of the day must include 4th period for grades 6-12 and lunch/recess for grades K-5.

BEFORE CARE AND AFTER CARE

Before Care

There is a small fee for our Before Care program. Parents who choose to utilize the Before Care service must contact the church Finance Office to set-up a contract. Alternatively, parents may drop their student off in the morning and their account will be charged.

A staff member will open the Family Center at 7:30 AM for our Before Care program. Upon arrival, a parent/guardian must sign their student in at the Reception Desk. Elementary students remain in the Family Center until their teachers come to escort them to their classroom at 8:00 AM. Upper school students may go to their classroom on their own at 8:00 AM.

Elementary students should not be left unattended outside the school. Upper school students are permitted to wait outside at the benches until 8:00 AM.

After Care

There is a fee for the After Care program. Parents who choose to utilize the After Care service must contact the school office to register and learn about schedule options. After Care will operate daily from 3:10 PM - 5:30 PM except on the scheduled days where school is dismissed at 11 am.

Students who have contracted for After Care will be escorted by their teacher to After Care promptly at 3:10 PM. Students in grades K-5 who are not picked up by 3:10 PM will also be escorted to the After Care program and parents will be charged fees accordingly.

SCHOOL CANCELLATIONS AND DELAYS

GGCA will follow the snow day cancellation schedule for both BALTIMORE CITY and BALTIMORE COUNTY Public Schools (NOT Hereford Zone), including late openings, but NOT including cancellation of Kindergarten.

If either BALTIMORE COUNTY or BALTIMORE CITY schools are closed, GGCA will close. Example: If Baltimore County schools are closed and Baltimore City schools have a 2-hour delay, GGCA follows the greater delay and in this example would close for the day.

School cancellations are routinely announced on TV channels 2, 11, 13, and 45 beginning as early as 6:30 AM on all the local radio stations. The ggca.org website will also post school closings.

Early closings due to snow and heat will NOT be followed by the school, but will be left to the discretion of parents who may have safety concerns or long distances to drive.

VISITORS AND COMMUNICATION

All visitors must report to the GGCA Reception Desk and sign in and out. All visitors must receive a visitor's pass before entering the school and wear it throughout the duration of their visit. We ask that all visitors schedule their visits in advance.

Parents wishing to visit a classroom during the school day must receive permission ahead of time from the teacher or the office. However, in an effort to minimize classroom disruptions, they are not allowed to go to the classrooms to deliver: lunches, gym uniforms, homework, projects, instruments, and other such items. Such items can be left with the school secretary at the Reception Desk for delivery at an appropriate time.

At no time should students who do not currently attend GGCA enter the school buildings unless pre-authorized by the Principal.

Please do not call or send text messages to your child while they are in school. **Students may bring cellphones to school, but are required to keep them turned off and stored in their locker for the duration of the school day - from 7:30am - 4:00 pm.** If you need to communicate with a student, please call the school office.

ATTENDANCE

All students are expected to be in school when school is in session and to be on time for all classes. If a student is too ill to attend school, the parent/guardian (not the student) must notify the school office *by phone or email before 9:00 AM.*

The ***Maryland Compulsory School Attendance Laws*** require all resident children between the ages of 5 and 16 to attend school unless excused with a lawful absence. (Current truancy laws impose criminal penalties on parents involving both fines and jail time!).

The following are acceptable excuses for absence:

- Death in the immediate family
- Illness
- Suspension
- Court summons
- Hazardous weather conditions

If a student's absence is unavoidable for reasons other than those listed above, the parent or guardian should submit a written request for work at least five days prior to the intended date of absence. This will give the teacher time to gather work for the truant student. Such absences are considered UNEXCUSED. As such, a student who has been absent because of a planned absence is expected to have all work completed by the time he/she returns.

Teachers are not able to re-teach material that the student missed while absent. It is the responsibility of the student and the parent to get the missed classwork and homework from the teacher and to arrange for the completion of make-up work and testing.

Chronic absenteeism may result in loss of credit or failure for that marking period. A student who misses 20% or more of a class may not receive credit for that class. Students who are absent ten or more days during one semester may not be allowed to re-enroll.

Decisions involving prolonged absenteeism associated with a documented medical condition will be determined on an individual basis.

A student whose absence is unexcused may be given a failing grade of zero for any assignment, project, test, etc. due that day. Parental permission for a student to be absent does not necessarily constitute an excused absence.

Vacations that do not coordinate with the school calendar are strongly discouraged. **Please do not schedule vacations for the last two weeks of school when students are preparing for and taking final examinations.**

Attendance and Homeroom Procedures

The Homeroom period starts at 8:15 am (Senior Homeroom time may vary). Elementary teachers take attendance once for the day during the Homeroom period. Middle and High School teachers will take attendance at the beginning of each class.

Students are expected to be in uniform by the start of Homeroom. Homework and other assignments are not to be done during this period, and as such must be turned in at the start of Homeroom. Daily announcements and the Pledge of Allegiance will occur during this period.

Students who arrive at the classroom after 8:15 AM with a tardy slip from the office, will be marked "Late for School." Students who arrive at school on time but report to the class after 8:15 AM will be marked "Tardy" for class. Skipping class will result in a Discipline Referral.

Students who arrive late to school are responsible to have the Receptionist stamp their homework at the time they arrive.

LUNCH AND RECESS

GGCA does not have a traditional hot food program. All students must bring their own lunch and are expected to eat it in the cafeteria. We do, however, offer hot lunch delivered by Chick-fil-A on Mondays and pizza on Thursdays. Parents must sign up in advance for this program. The school will email the order forms each month. We normally make these forms available from around the 5th of the month until the 20th of the month to give parents ample time to place their orders. Once the form is closed, we place a bulk order for the upcoming month, so it is not possible to add orders after the forms are closed. There is also a refrigerated vending machine with Lunchables and other lunch items as well as drinks and snacks. Microwaves are available for upper school students only. Change for vending machines should be sent in with your child in denominations of coins or dollar bills. We are not set up to make change.

Upon occasion, a student may forget his/her lunch. Students should notify their teacher or the Secretary as early as possible so we can contact the parent or guardian to resolve the issue. With a parent's permission, when there is no other option, the school will purchase lunch items from the vending machine for the student. Charges for these purchases are billed to the parent.

Food delivery services, such as Doordash or UberEats, are not permitted, due to campus set up and security reasons.

Elementary Lunch and Recess

Elementary lunch runs from 11:10 AM-11:40 AM. Students will be escorted by their teacher to the cafeteria for lunch and must remain there until the teacher returns to pick them up for recess. Due to allergies, students are not to share food. Specific cafeteria procedures will be posted and explained by the teacher. Lunch monitors are present to assist with needs in the lunchroom. Elementary recess times may differ depending on the individual class schedule.

Upper School Lunch and Recess

Upper school lunch runs from 11:45 AM-12:25 AM. Students go to lunch on their own and follow instructions given by lunch monitors. Students must remain in the cafeteria until dismissed. Twenty minutes after the start of the lunch period, upper school students may choose to go to recess in the Gym on designated days, but may not enter the playground while elementary students are at recess. Outdoor seating is for staff and twelfth graders only.

The middle and high school is off-limits during the entire lunch period; students may not be in the high school for any reason during lunch time, other than to serve lunch detention in the GGCA Chapel. When the bell rings to signal the end of lunch and recess, students may enter the high school through the Family Center. It is the student's responsibility to be on time for class, seated in the classroom, fully prepared to participate.

Dress Code

SCHOOL UNIFORMS

GGCA believes that a student's appearance strongly influences his/her behavior and academic success. Therefore, having appropriate grooming and dress are vital to school culture. The dress code and grooming requirements at GGCA serve several purposes: to encourage modesty, to promote unity, and to cultivate a scholarly environment. Students should arrive and remain in uniform for the duration of the school day and should always be clean, neat, and modestly dressed. The administration makes the final determination as to whether a student is in compliance with dress code standards.

If a student is dressed immodestly or is otherwise out of dress code, he/she may not be permitted to attend class until the problem is resolved. Parents may be asked to come in to resolve the issue, or take the student home for the day. Parts of the dress code are subject to change during the school year. Parents should contact the school office to discuss any dress code questions.

Grooming, Accessories, and Hygiene

GGCA's policies regarding student appearance, alongside the school uniform, play a valuable role in contributing to the ethos of the school and help in setting an appropriate tone. We believe that a student who learns to present themselves with decency and order will carry that trait with them as they grow beyond their GGCA years. Therefore, GGCA policy is that:

All students must have naturally-occurring hair colors and wear neat, appropriate hairstyles which are not distracting to themselves or others. Students' hair must be in compliance with school code for the first day of school and maintained throughout the academic year.

- Partially shaved heads, shaved designs and dreadlocks are not permitted.
- Shaved designs in eyebrows are not permitted.
- Boy's hair must be trimmed above the ears and shirt collar; it may not touch the top of, or hang down over, the eyebrows and may not be higher than three inches from the top of the scalp.
- Boy's braids, twists, and locks must be kept short and in line with the hair length policy.
- Man buns and ponytails are not allowed for boys.
- No facial hair permitted.

Accessories may not be a distraction and may not contain controversial writing or designs. Students must adhere to the guidelines as follows:

- Students may not have any visible tattoos - permanent or temporary.
- Nails may not be longer than one-half inch.
- Girls may wear makeup, but it must be natural-looking.
- Girls piercings are permitted in the ears only, with up to two quarter-sized earrings per ear. Boys are not allowed to have visible piercings.
- One necklace, one watch (smartwatches are not permitted), one bracelet, and one ring per hand are permitted.
- In addition to those available at our uniform shops, girls may wear headbands which are solid and match school colors.
- Boys may wear neckties or bowties matching school uniform colors.
- Headwear such as scarves, sunglasses, hats, bandanas, hoods, etc. are not permitted indoors.
- Middle and High School students should wear deodorant on a daily basis.

UNIFORMS - GRADES K-5:

Please refer to either our Lands' End or Flynn & O'Hara online uniform shops for approved school uniform items. Only school and gym logo shirts and outerwear available at our online uniform shops are acceptable. Options vary slightly at each store. Please note that Flynn & O'Hara also has a store where you can purchase items off the rack. **All uniforms must be clean, ironed, and free of rips and stains.** Please follow the guidelines below.

- **SHIRTS:** Oxford shirts must be tucked in, whereas polo shirts need not be. Undershirts must be short-sleeved or tank style and solid white.
- **PANTS:** Black chino or dress pants must be comparable to those available at our uniform shops and must be full length and without cuffs or a rolled hem.
- **SKIRTS:** Must be comparable to those available at our uniform shops and must be mid-knee to mid-calf length.
- **BELTS:** If worn, must be smooth black or brown leather belt with a standard buckle.
- **SOCKS:** Crew (mid-calf) or trouser (knee-length) matching solid black, white, or maroon socks must be worn. Must be free of Nike swoosh or other logos, etc.
- **TIGHTS & FULL-LENGTH LEGGINGS:** May be worn under a skirt and must be solid and opaque in black, white or maroon. School socks must be worn with and be the same color as the leggings.
- **SHOES:**
 - Black or brown smooth leather dress shoes or boots (not casual) with matching soles and laces or brown or tan leather boat shoes with matching laces. Dress boots must be no higher than just below the knee.
 - Solid black or brown tennis shoes with matching soles and laces.
 - Shoes must be closed toe and heel and free of decals and decorations. Heels must be no higher than one inch. Slip-on and/or Velcro closure shoes are encouraged for students who cannot tie their own shoes.
- **SWEATERS & FLEECES:** Approved school sweaters & fleeces may be worn in school. A school uniform shirt must be worn underneath. Coats, jackets, GGCA sports warm-ups or GGCA/GGWO sweatshirts, etc are considered outerwear and may only be worn to and from school. See Non-Standard Dress Code Guidelines for Game Day Attire policy.
- **GYM UNIFORMS:** Gym uniforms are worn to school on gym days.
 - Solid black sweatpants and shorts must be comparable to those available at our uniform shops. Sweatpants must be loose fitting and shorts must be mid-thigh or knee-length. If leggings are worn, they must be solid black and mid-thigh or knee length shorts must be worn over them.
 - Matching solid crew or knee-length socks must be worn.
 - Indoor athletic shoes with non-marking soles are to be kept in school.

UNIFORMS - GRADES 6-12:

Please refer to either our Lands' End or Flynn & O'Hara online uniform shops for approved school uniform items. Only school and gym logo shirts and outerwear available at our online uniform shops are acceptable. Options vary slightly at each store. Please note that Flynn & O'Hara also has a store where you can purchase items off the rack. **All uniforms must be clean, ironed, and free of rips and stains.** Please follow the guidelines below.

- **SHIRTS:** Oxford shirts must be tucked in. Undershirts must be short-sleeved and solid white. NOTE: Polo shirts are for dress down days only and must have the school logo. See Non-Standard Dress Code Guidelines for Game Day policy.
- **PANTS:** Black or Khaki chino or dress pants must be comparable in color and style to those available at our uniform shops and must be full-length and without cuffs or a rolled hem.
- **SKIRTS:** Must be comparable to those available at our uniform shops and must be mid-knee to mid-calf length.
- **BELTS:** Smooth black or brown leather belt with a standard buckle is required with pants.
- **SOCKS:** Crew (mid-calf) or trouser (knee-length) matching solid black, white, or maroon socks must be worn. Must be free of Nike swoosh or other logos, etc.
- **TIGHTS & FULL-LENGTH LEGGINGS:** May be worn under a skirt and must be solid and opaque in black, white or maroon. School socks must be worn with and be the same color as the leggings.
- **SHOES:** Black or brown smooth leather dress shoes or boots (not casual) with matching soles and laces, or brown or tan leather boat shoes with matching laces. Dress boots must be no higher than just below the knee. Shoes must be closed toe and heel and free of decals and decorations. Heels must be no higher than one inch.
- **SWEATERS & FLEECES:** Approved school sweaters & fleeces may be worn in school. A school uniform shirt must be worn underneath. Coats, jackets, GGCA sports warm-ups or GGCA/GGWO sweatshirts, etc are considered outerwear and may only be worn to and from school. See Non-Standard Dress Code Guidelines for Game Day Attire policy.
- **GYM UNIFORMS:** Students change into and out of their gym uniforms in the gymnasium locker rooms on gym days. For 9th-12th grades, in addition to gym shirts available at our uniform shops, any GGCA, GGYM, or GGWO t-shirt may be worn.
 - Solid black sweatpants and shorts must be comparable to those available at our uniform shops. Sweatpants must be loose fitting and shorts must be mid-thigh or knee-length. If leggings are worn, they must be solid black and mid-thigh or knee length shorts must be worn over them.
 - Matching solid crew or knee-length socks must be worn.
 - Indoor athletic shoes with non-marking soles.

NON-STANDARD DRESS CODE GUIDELINES

The following non-standard dress code days are scheduled by the school and announced in advance. These days are a privilege and should be treated as such. Modest apparel is always required. If a student is out of dress code, parents will be called to bring a change of clothes and a uniform code violation will be issued. Students who repeatedly violate this code may lose their privilege.

Game Day Attire: This is a day for team members to show their team spirit on game days. On game days, students on the current season's team may wear their own assigned GGCA sports jersey or warm-up in place of their school uniform top. A solid white, short-sleeved undershirt must be worn. If the jersey is sleeveless, a school uniform shirt must be worn underneath. ***Jerseys and warm-ups must correlate with the current sport and may only be worn by current team members.*** School sweaters and fleeces may be worn over jerseys or warm-ups. All other school uniform guidelines must be adhered to.

Dress Down Day / Field Trips: Unless otherwise communicated, acceptable clothing for dress down days and field trips include:

- School logo polo shirts (6th-12th grades) or, when specifically instructed otherwise, shirts that are appropriately and modestly fitting (no inappropriate slogans or pictures; no tank tops or sleeveless shirts).
- Jeans, khakis, or slacks in good condition (no rips or holes, no patches, designs, or writing; nothing baggy or too tight fitting). ***Shorts, leggings, jeggings or tight fitting pants or skirts are not permitted.***
- Casual or athletic shoes in good condition.
- School logo outerwear or GGCA athletic sweatshirts.
- Hats are only permitted when instructed for specific events.

Dress Up Day:

- Boys must wear a dress shirt and professional necktie or bowtie, dress pants with a belt and dress shoes.
- Girls may wear dresses that go to the knee or lower.
- Girls may wear a blouse with a knee-length skirt or dress pants.
- A professional blazer or jacket, vest or cardigan may be worn.

Banquet Attire: This is a formal occasion with the expectation for students and their guests to dress appropriately for an event representing a Christian school. All apparel should be free of political, provocative or pop-cultural imagery or words. Boys must wear a dress shirt, necktie/bowtie, and dress pants. Ladies dresses should be knee-length or longer and may not be translucent, reveal the back, midriff, thighs, or cleavage, with no slits or cutouts below the traditional bra line. All students must wear dress shoes.

Student Health and Safety

STUDENT ILLNESS AND INJURY

In the course of the many hours a student spends at Greater Grace Christian Academy, illness or injury may occur. Greater Grace Christian Academy and Greater Grace World Outreach do not take financial responsibility for such health issues and strongly recommend that all families purchase and maintain a health insurance policy for their children enrolled at Greater Grace Christian Academy.

Parent Consideration

Students with fevers or contagious illnesses/conditions may not attend school. Parents must inform the school office regarding any infectious or contagious diseases such as pink eye or head lice so that appropriate notification may be made to protect the student body.

In-School Illness and Injury

Students who do not feel well or suffer an accident will be sent to the school office for examination. The parents will be contacted promptly and an incident report will be filled out. Students who are ill or injured during school hours will need to be picked up by the parents as quickly as possible to ensure the wellbeing of their child. If the office is unable to reach the parents, we will contact whomever the parent has listed as the emergency contact. In cases of serious injury, 911 will be called.

Prescription Medications

The school will allow students access to their prescription medications only with written consent and directions from a medical doctor. Please pick up an authorization form from the Front Office. **Prescription medicines must be in the original container with the exact dosage specified.** Any changes or PRN orders must be in writing from the doctor. This policy is without exception and students are not allowed to carry medicines during school - except by special permission for inhalers. GGCA does not provide over-the-counter (OTC) medications such as cough-drops, aspirin, etc.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

GGCA staff is trained in emergency procedures and encouraged to maintain up-to-date CPR licensure.

Crisis Communication

The campus is staffed with uniformed armed security and has an Incident Preparedness Protocol (IPP). Campus security monitors for potential threats and attacks. In the event of a credible threat or attack, the crisis team will immediately convene to take action. The school staff has been trained to quickly and calmly follow our campus Incident Preparedness Protocols and the leadership of the crisis team.

GGCA families will be notified, as events allow, using available means as the situation dictates. Depending on the nature of the crisis, staff may not be able to answer incoming calls to the school. We will make every effort to establish contact with parents as soon as the situation becomes safe and stable.

GGCA encourages parents to subscribe to Emergency Alerts in their Jupiter Grades school information system account.

Evacuating GGCA

In the rare event of a school evacuation, students will be taken away from the campus and reassembled in a safe location. The faculty has been trained to follow the directions of the security staff and/or the Baltimore City Police and Fire Department personnel. Note: It is absolutely imperative that you provide us with 3 valid emergency contacts in the event that we cannot reach you and must remove your child from the premises so that you can be made aware where your child is located.

Academics

ACADEMIC COMMUNICATION AND PROBATION

GGCA uses JupiterEd (jupitered.com) for grading and communication. Progress reports are sent out mid-quarter and report cards are sent out at the end of each quarter. A link to your child's report will be sent home electronically via JupiterEd.

Parents are strongly encouraged to check grades weekly via Jupiter ed. Parent-Teacher conferences may be scheduled at any time throughout the year upon request. Parents are encouraged to communicate directly with the teacher via JupiterEd or phone regarding even the smallest of concerns.

Academic Probation

The administration will review students' grades at the time of Progress Reports. Any student in grades 6-12 who fails to achieve at least a 65 in any subject may be placed on academic probation. Academic probation is a formal acknowledgement of an unacceptable level of student achievement, and places the student under the oversight of the office of the Principal. The Principal or his designee may meet with the students and determine what kinds of interventions may be appropriate, and sports and other extracurricular activity privileges may be suspended.

- Academic probation lasts at least 2 weeks, after which the school administration will determine if the student is ready to be removed from academic probation.
- If a student has still failed to achieve at least a 65, the probationary period may be extended.
- Students who are placed on academic probation will be required to attend Academic Probation Sessions, which take place in the same classroom and time as after-school detentions (Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday from 3:10 to 3:40 pm). Students must attend 2 out of the 3 sessions each week of academic probation.
- Students will be required to communicate with their teachers regarding work to be completed and will be required to spend the Academic Probation Session studying and working on the academic subjects that they are failing.
- Failure to attend the assigned Academic Probation Sessions may result in loss of extracurricular activities and/or in-school suspension.

Sports Eligibility and Extracurricular Activity Policy

In general, students must maintain a passing average in all subjects to participate in school sponsored activities. Students who have been placed on Academic Probation may not be allowed to attend practices or any other activities related to their sport or extracurricular activity. The rationale is that students who are failing or in danger of failing need time to better prepare and focus on schoolwork. At the end of the two-week probation, the school

administration will determine if students are ready to return to their team or activity. In the event that a student is failing two or more subjects, he or she may be permanently removed from the team for the season. If a student is failing a subject for two quarters, he or she may be suspended from sports and other activities for the remainder of the school year.

Student Retention

- Retention of students in kindergarten will be at the discretion of the Principal and Assistant Principal in consultation with the teacher.
- Any student in grades 1 & 2 who receives an “N” in any 2 categories in the 3rd or 4th quarter may be retained.
- Any student in grades 3-12 who fails two subjects for the school year may be retained.
- Any student in grades 9-12 who fails a Bible, Math, English, History, or Science class for the year will be required to retake the course under the supervision of the GGCA administration. When the course is completed, the student will be promoted to the subsequent grade level.

HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA REQUIREMENTS

Graduation Requirements

- 4 credits English
- 4 credits History
- 4 credits Math
- 3 credits Science
- Bible every year while attending GGCA
- 1 credit Computer
- 1 credit of Physical Education
- 2 credits Foreign Language
- MOS Certification in Word and Excel
- Senior Year Practicum (Community Service)
- ½ credit Apologetics
- ½ credit Leadership
- A 65% final grade is required to pass a subject. The final grade is calculated by averaging the semester grades.

Early College Admission Program

It is possible for the very bright and highly motivated student to receive a diploma after his/her 11th grade year if they have fulfilled all the requirements for graduation as listed above.

In addition to completing the above course requirements with a minimum 2.5 GPA, the student must prove that he/she has been admitted into an approved college or university PRIOR to finishing the 11th grade year. Please note that not all colleges or universities allow this early enrollment, and few students will qualify. A student who pursues early college admission will receive a High School diploma but will forfeit his/her senior year. This means he/she will not be included in senior activities and trips, but may be allowed to participate in the formal commencement ceremony.

TRANSCRIPTS

- All graduates receive one unofficial transcript upon completion of twelfth grade.
- Prior to graduation, official transcripts will be sent to the college of the student's choice at no charge.
- After graduation, official transcripts will be issued for a fee of \$10.00, providing that all GGCA financial obligations are met. Transcript request forms can be found [here](#), online at ggca.org.
- When a student transfers out of GGCA, the school records will be forwarded to the receiving institution when a request from that school has been received. When all financial obligations are met, transcripts will be released.

GRADING

Grades K - 2 Grade Key:

CD = Consistently Demonstrating
S = Satisfactory
P = Progressing
NA = Not Applicable
N = Needs Improvement

Grades 3 – 12 Grading Scale:

98 – 100	A+
95 – 97	A
92 – 94	A-
89 – 91	B+
86 – 88	B
83 – 85	B-
80 – 82	C+
77 – 79	C
74 – 76	C-
71 – 73	D+
68 – 70	D
65 – 67	D-
Below 65	F

Honors

At the end of each quarter, the Principal's List and Honor Roll are posted. Honors will be determined as follows:

- Principal's list: 92% or above in every subject (All A's and P's)
- Honor roll: 83% or above in every subject (All A's, B's, and P's)

GGCA Graduation Honors

Students who are graduating with a cumulative GPA of 3.500 - 3.744 will receive **honors** during our graduation ceremony.

Students who are graduating with a cumulative GPA of 3.750 and above will receive **high honors** during our graduation ceremony.

Valedictorian and Salutatorian honors will be determined based upon the following criteria:

- Eligible candidates must be GGCA students for at least two of their four high school years.
- Only grades earned for original GGCA coursework will be accepted to determine valedictorian and salutatorian honors. Students may repeat classes outside of GGCA and submit grades to strengthen their GPA. However, only the grade earned originally, and

not a grade submitted for GPA improvement or credit recovery, will be used to calculate valedictorian and salutatorian honors.

- While dual enrollment programs (i.e. college courses taken for both college and high school credit) are a welcome means for a student to enrich their educational profile, those courses will not receive higher weighting towards a student's GPA (see student handbook for grade weighting). Also, transcripts will reflect a direct transfer as high school credit earned. For example, if a student attends CCBC to earn a credit in English 101 (3 credit hours), the GGCA transcript will reflect the class earned at CCBC for 1 GGCA credit.
- Valedictorian and Salutatorian will be determined after students take their Senior Final Exams.
- GPA is calculated to the thousandth place.
- In the rare case of a tie in GPA for honors awards, the following criteria will be employed to determine award recipients:
 - Total number of credits earned at GGCA.
 - Numeric value of grades recorded in each qualifying GGCA class (percentages/grading units).
 - School attendance records.
 - GGCA Academic review board decision based upon criteria such as extracurricular involvement, disciplinary records, leadership qualities.

HOMEWORK

Homework is an important part of the curriculum and is thoughtfully assigned to complement in-class instruction, according to valid teaching principles. We do not assign homework on Wednesdays to honor and encourage attendance at our mid-week GGWO church service. The exception to this policy is that Math assignments may be issued daily, with the Wednesday night assignment not to exceed 30 minutes. Homework may be assigned during long weekends, but it is not assigned during the Christmas and Spring Break vacations.

Homework will generally be assigned with a "10 minutes per grade level" principle in mind, i.e. K-2nd grade = approx 10-20 mins, 3rd grade = approx 30 mins, 4th grade = approx 40 mins, etc.

In addition to assigned homework, work may be issued for the following reasons:

- The student failed to complete his/her work during the day
- The student needs extra drill and practice
- The student has a test the following day, or has a special project or report to complete

As students progress in years, the homework load will increase proportionately. If you believe your child is overburdened with work to complete at home, please do not hesitate to speak with his or her teachers.

It is important that assignments are done completely and turned in on time. In Middle School it is required that students bring to class and use a homework planner. Parents of students in grades 6-12 should check their child's assignments and grades on a regular basis online at the JupiterEd.com website. Upper school students turn in all their assignments during homeroom.

MISSED ASSIGNMENT, TEST AND QUIZ POLICY

Student absences are either excused or unexcused. See the Attendance Policy for definitions.

When absent, students are responsible to consult Jupiter Ed and their teachers about missed assignments. If an absence continues for multiple days, parents and students are encouraged to contact teachers to discuss make-up work deadlines.

Excused Absences

Generally students with an excused absence will receive an amount of time consistent with the number of days missed to make up missed work. Extended absences will be considered on a case by case basis.

When a student is absent on the day of a test or quiz, he/she is expected to make it up the next school day during the coach class period. In general, if a student misses more than one day of school, he/she may be given an equal number of days to make up the quiz or test, but the student should expect and plan to make up all quizzes and tests within 3 school days after returning. The teacher and student will need to work together to arrange the make-up testing time. If a student does not make up the test or quiz in the timely manner described above, the student may be assigned a zero grade, which may greatly hurt his or her average.

Unexcused Absences

If a student has an unexcused absence on the due date of an assigned homework, it becomes due the day he/she returns to school. Class homework policy for late assignments may apply for homework passed in upon return from an unexcused absence.

All tests and quizzes will be taken as scheduled or on the first day back during the coach class period. If a quiz or test is not taken, a zero grade will be given, and the student will not be allowed to make it up. Possible exceptions should be discussed with the teacher directly or with the office of the Principal.

Band students may require special consideration in scheduling missed tests, and may need to remain after school to test. There may be a situation where a student has several tests and assignments to make up and the student will need to diligently communicate and work with teachers and administrative staff to successfully complete all make-up work in a timely manner.

Please note that it is the responsibility of the parent and the student, not the teacher, to arrange for the completion of make-up work and testing.

Athletics

ATHLETICS PHILOSOPHY

GGCA considers athletics to be an integral part of the school's educational program. The athletic program provides experiences that will help students physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. Students are urged to win and excel, but the principles of good sportsmanship and maintaining a godly testimony must prevail at all times. We believe that participation in athletics as a player and/or a fan is a vital part of a student's school experience. Such participation is a privilege that carries with it responsibilities to the school, the team, the student body, and the athlete's family and church, as we represent the name of Christ.

ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT STAFF

Athletic Director: Patrick Lynch
Athletic Secretary: Jen Lynch

GENERAL ATHLETIC INFORMATION

GGCA is a member of the Maryland Independent Athletic Conference (MIAC) and also participates in the Maryland Christian State Tournament. In addition to playing the MIAC teams, we schedule non-league games as well.

Only currently enrolled GGCA students shall be allowed to participate in the GGCA middle school and high school sports teams. This includes practices and games.

All students must remain in good academic and behavioral standing to remain eligible to play.

Fall

Boys Varsity Soccer
Boys Middle School Soccer
Girls Varsity Volleyball
Girls Middle School Volleyball

Winter

Boys Varsity Basketball
Boys Middle School Basketball
Girls Varsity Basketball
Girls Middle School Basketball

Spring

Boys Varsity Baseball
Boys Middle School Baseball
Girls Varsity Soccer

Varsity (grades 9-12)

Middle School (grades 6-8)

JV Teams have been available when needed.

STUDENT ATHLETIC GUIDELINES

Middle School: Grades 6-8

Middle School sports are competitive and therefore students must try out for these teams. While all players may make the team, they are not guaranteed to receive the same amount of playing time. Coaches will instruct players in the fundamentals, and seek to give playing time to each child, but still play to win. Players will be expected to attend all scheduled practices and games.

Varsity: Grades 9-12

On the varsity level, the commitment is more serious. Players are expected to attend all scheduled practices and games. The teams will always play to win, but never at the expense of being a godly testimony. Students must understand that although they are all expected to make the same commitment to practices and games, playing time is at the coach's discretion.

Attendance

Students who try out for a team are making a commitment to attend all practices and games, unless there is a medical reason. This is also a commitment made by the parents. Routine doctor appointments, dental appointments, vacations, etc. should be scheduled to avoid conflict with practices and games. Should an athlete miss a practice or game, it is their responsibility to communicate with the coach beforehand.

Absences

Students may not practice or play in sports on the day they are absent from school. The Athletic Director and school administration together may waive this rule if a valid excuse is submitted in writing, in advance.

Tardiness

Students are expected to be on time for school. Any student who arrives at school later than 11:00 AM is not eligible to play that day.

Academic Probation

Students that have been placed on Academic Probation may not be allowed to attend games, practices or any other activities related to their sport or extracurricular activity until the probationary period has ended. *See the Academic Probation Policy in the Academics section for details.*

Drugs, Alcohol, Tobacco

The Athletic Department strictly adheres to the school's guidelines regarding the use or possession of drugs or alcohol. Use of these substances is strictly forbidden both on and off the school campus. Students who violate these school rules are subject to immediate dismissal from the sports team and may be subject to additional school penalties.

Travel & Transportation

Athletes must ride in the team bus or van to and from games. In the event that they are permitted to drive their own vehicle, all school and team rules are still in effect, including music selection. Only when there is no other option, will students ever ride with other students. The school will always provide transportation back to the school if games are away or off campus. Parents are responsible to pick up their own children from the gym immediately following the game or arrange transportation for them. Parents may also pick up their own children from the field.

Occasionally, students who are not on the team may be allowed to ride with the team to the game. The school must receive advanced parental permission in order for a student to be dismissed early to leave with the team.

Injuries

All injuries are to be reported to the head coach immediately. After an athlete has been injured, only a doctor, *not a coach*, will decide when the player may return to play or practice.

PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITIES

As a parent, you have several responsibilities. First, you must help to endorse the school's rules and regulations by checking on your child's grades, behavior, and attendance. Please do not assume the school will make exceptions to the rules.

Along with the students, parents are expected to represent our school in a positive, godly way. Rude, disrespectful behavior is not tolerated. As adults, we must set good examples for our children. Please leave the coaching to the coaches and the officiating to the officials. Let's keep a godly testimony for our school and church.

Parents have the responsibility to support your child's team and coaches. Negative comments about coaches or team members only undermine the athletic department.

Parents are encouraged to attend games whenever possible to cheer on the players. For your convenience, schedules and directions to games are given out at the beginning of each season. (Please note that schedules are subject to change).

There is no charge to attend our home games, but other schools may charge.

Parents should understand that any child who goes out for a sports team makes a commitment to attend all scheduled practices and games. Coaches cannot do an effective job if their players miss practices or games.

Be prompt in picking up and/or making arrangements for students to be picked up after practices and games at the field/gym. After away games, the students will be taken back to the gym. Due to the variables of sports (game length, traffic, etc.), only approximate times are given on schedules.

Ensure that uniforms are turned in within 30 days of the end of the season. Uniforms that have not been turned in will result in a fee.

Parents can help their children by the following:

- Be sure your child knows that win or lose, you love and appreciate their efforts.
- Try your best to be completely honest about your child's ability.
- Be helpful, but do not over-coach your child.
- Don't try to relive your athletic life through your child in a way that creates pressure.
- Do not compete with the coach.
- Do not compare your child's skill with that of other members of the team.
- Take time to get to know and understand the coach. If you have a difference with the coach, talk to the coach first before you talk about it to your child.

GGYA (GREATER GRACE YOUTH ATHLETICS)

GGCA does not offer a sports program for elementary students. Many of our students, however, participate in GGYA, an extracurricular sports program that takes place on Saturdays. Greater Grace Church sponsors the GGYA program, so it does not fall under the guidance or supervision of the GGCA administration. The purpose of GGYA is to foster an interest in sports and encourage kids to learn the fundamentals of sports, as well as what it means to be a part of a team. In GGYA, all players are played a significant amount of the game if not equally. For the most part, it is a once a week commitment without significant practice time. There is a registration form and fee required for each sport. For information, go to ggwo.org/ggya

Fall (Sep - Oct)

Soccer (K4 – 7th)

Winter (Dec - Feb)

Basketball (K – 6th)

Spring (Apr - Jun)

Baseball/Softball/T-Ball (K – 6th)

School Discipline

GENERAL INFORMATION

The Board of Elders of Greater Grace Church has established the following policies and procedures to regulate matters of student behavior that will apply to all students in Greater Grace Christian Academy. These policies and procedures are in effect while students are on school property or while they are participating in any school-sponsored event.

The school principal has the right and authority to discipline students including suspension and further action. Further, students may be disciplined, including suspension or expulsion, for behavior that has taken place off school property and/or beyond the school day/school year.

If the behavior of a student is determined by the Principal to impact:

1. the educational/spiritual environment of the school,
2. the safety and/or welfare of other students and/or staff,
3. the maintenance of school order and discipline,

the Principal may suspend the student for up to ten school days. If the nature and severity of the off-school property behavior warrants it, the Principal may refer the student to the Board of Elders with the recommendation for further disciplinary action. If the Board of Elders concurs with the findings of the Principal, a long-term suspension/expulsion may be imposed.

DISCIPLINE OVERVIEW

GGCA does not practice any form of corporal punishment or physical interventions of any kind. In general, teachers are able to handle most discipline problems with verbal **correction** and **instruction**, using classroom management techniques and implementing the strategies outlined below. The careful tracking of violations of behavioral policy will reveal chronic problems that can then be addressed by the administration. The overall strategy for these policies and procedures is to always maintain a positive learning environment in the classroom.

The Principal's office is responsible for the management of the Student Discipline System. The faculty receives training in the behavioral/discipline system under the leadership of the Principal's office.

Parents and students should communicate quickly and clearly any questions or problems regarding the Student Discipline System. Our desire is to have behavioral standards that are clear, concise, consistent, and enforced.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

Minor Misbehavior

When minor misbehavior interrupts the rights of others to teach and learn or shows disrespect, verbal warnings will be given at the teacher's discretion. If the behavior does not stop, the student will be asked to leave the classroom and a Discipline Referral will be issued. The student will report to the school office.

Serious Misbehavior

If a serious misbehavior happens—one that is very rude and/or may be dangerous – the student will be issued a Discipline Referral immediately and be sent to the school office.

Discipline Referrals

Students sent to the school office on a Discipline Referral will need to meet with the reporting teacher later that day. At this time, any necessary apologies are made and any misunderstandings are cleared up. The goal is to resolve the problem and to take steps to prevent its occurrence in the future.

The following procedures are followed each time a Discipline Referral is issued. Please remember that ten lunch detentions are equivalent to a Discipline Referral.

1st Referral: Conversation between the school office and the student with a possible phone call to the student's parents. The disciplinary action assigned may include, but is not limited to, lunch detention or after-school detention.

2nd Referral: Same as the first above.

3rd Referral: At this time, the Principal will review the behavioral problems and consider how they might be resolved. The Principal may seek the counsel of the student's teacher(s) and the School Pastor. If the offenses have been mean-spirited or egregious, the student may be placed on probation for 25 school days. Students and parents are notified of the outcome of the meeting.

4th Referral: The student is automatically placed on probation for the next 25 school days. If a student is involved in an infraction of a major rule, e.g. stealing, vandalism, physical or verbal abuse, leaving campus without permission, continued harassment, anything to do with illegal substances or weapons, etc., the student may be expelled or suspended and placed on probation for the following 25 school days.

Probation

A behavioral probation runs for 25 school days from the last offense. It is a time for the student to undertake serious changes in behavior with the help of parents, faculty and the school administration. If the student successfully completes the probationary period, she/he will be returned to regular status. Probations should be a clear message that without a change in behavior, the student will be asked to leave GGCA.

If there is misbehavior during the probationary period, the parents will be asked to conference with GGCA at each infraction. Because a student will have shown lack of responsibility by continuing to misbehave, each additional Discipline Referral will result in the following consequences:

5th Referral: The student will serve a one-day in-school suspension.

6th Referral: The student will serve a three-day out of school suspension.

7th Referral: The student may be asked to leave GGCA.

Lunch Detentions

Lunch detentions are an immediate disciplinary action taken by teachers for the short list of specific infractions listed here:

- Late for Class
- Uniform Code Violation
- Unprepared for class (failure to possess the proper books, assignment, and materials required for instruction)

- Misuse of personal space (failure to keep assigned space organized and free from clutter; ie. lockers)
- Eating in Class / Chewing Gum
- Minor Disruption (any action or interaction that distracts from the learning environment)

The school office, at their discretion, may issue a lunch detention as a disciplinary consequence for other infractions.

Ten lunch detentions in one quarter convert to one Discipline Referral. Three lunch detentions for the same offense in one quarter will convert to one after-school detention. This strategy is universally enforced in grades 6-12.

Lunch Detention Procedures

GRADES K-5:

Students who commit certain infractions will sit and eat at a silent table in the lunchroom, with the possibility of time off of recess and no early dismissal to recess available to them.

GRADES 6-12:

- Teachers and faculty, upon witnessing the violation, will issue and document the event immediately by completing a Lunch Detention form.
- One copy is given to the student; another copy is given to the administrators who will administer the detention.
- Students report to the GGCA Chapel by 11:50 AM with their lunch. Students are to sit in silence, without eating, until dismissed to lunch by the lunch detention monitor at 12:05 PM. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of their own lunch detentions. The student must be aware of what lunch detentions they have served and what lunch detentions they have yet to serve. It is the student's responsibility to check the lunch detention list.
- Students who are late or skip lunch detention are subject to additional discipline, such as being assigned an additional lunch detention and/or an after-school detention, and they will be required to still serve the skipped lunch detention.

After-School Detention

It is the student's responsibility to be aware of their own after-school detentions. In addition to the infractions listed below, students may be assigned an after-school detention as a disciplinary consequence, at the discretion of the school office.

- Late arrival to school (grades 6-12)
- Violating the cell phone policy

- Skipping lunch detention or after-school detention. Further disciplinary action will occur if multiple detentions are skipped.
- Students with five unserved after-school detentions will receive an office referral and possibly an in-school suspension. Students are still responsible to serve any outstanding after-school detentions.

After-school detentions are held Tuesday-Thursday from 3:10 PM - 3:40 PM.

Afterschool detentions are to be served within 3 after-school detention days. Students report to the after-school detention room and sit in silence at the table or chairs designated.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

School-Sponsored Activities: All curricular and extracurricular activities that are part of the school's overall program. These activities include field trips; athletic, music, and theatrical events, club meetings, banquets, retreats, conferences, class trips, and all other activities for which the school provides supervision.

Suspension: A significant period of school time will be lost by the student. Depending on the length of the suspension, the student may or may not be permitted to make up work lost during the suspension period. While suspended, the student shall not be permitted to participate in any school activity on school property or any off-site, school-sponsored activities. A short-term suspension lasts no more than ten school days in length. A long-term suspension is greater than ten days, but less than forty-five school days in length. A student who receives a long-term suspension must enroll in an alternative education program or be expelled.

Expulsion: The student is excluded from school for at least the remainder of the school year. No alternative education services are provided. The student may be required to repeat the school year. High school students will not earn full credit for any subjects in which the student is enrolled at the time of expulsion. The administration of GGCA reserves the right to expel a student for a single infraction or a pattern of lesser infractions.

BEHAVIORS AND CONSEQUENCES

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- **Absences:** Leaving school grounds without permission, unexcused lateness to class or school, unexcused absences from class or school, persistent or excessive absences from school, and habitual truancy (unlawful absence for a number of days in excess of 20 percent of any marking period). This offense can result in short-term suspension.
 - **Academic Dishonesty:** If a student is found to be cheating or plagiarizing, he/she will receive a failing grade for that assignment and/or receive a short-term suspension or, possibly expulsion. *See Academic Dishonesty Policy below.*

- **Alcoholic Beverages and Drugs:** Possession, use, distribution, or conspiracy to distribute alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs in any quantity is prohibited, as is possession, use, or distribution of controlled paraphernalia as outlined in the Criminal Law Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland. Students who violate this policy shall be suspended ten school days and referred to the Board of Elders for further disciplinary action. This may include expulsion, depending upon the student's school record. *See Drug Testing Policy.*
- **Attack on Student:** Hitting, kicking, or punching another student without warning or provocation will warrant a level of disciplinary action that depends on level of injury. Bodily injury may result in short-term or long-term suspension, or expulsion.
- **Bomb Threat:** Long-term suspension or expulsion.
- **Bullying, including Cyber-bullying, and Harassment:** Intentional conduct including verbal, written, or physical conduct, as well as, electronic communication, that is threatening or seriously intimidating and substantially disrupts the orderly operation of the school will result in counseling and possible short-term suspension. Serious bullying, which occurs repeatedly over time, or engaging in intentional negative behaviors that adversely affect another student's ability to participate in, or benefit from, our school's education or extracurricular programs, will result in suspension and possible expulsion. *See NO BULLYING POLICY below.*
- **Classroom Disruption:** Behaviors such as talking out in class or talking out of turn, throwing objects, picking on, bothering, or teasing other students, and other behavior that distracts from student learning could result in a 1 or 2 day suspension for repeat offenders.
- **Defiance of Authority and/or Insubordination (nonviolent/nonphysical):** Failure to follow directions and/or failure to respond to school staff questions or requests could result in a 1 or 2 day suspension for repeat offenders. Refusal to do assigned work or to serve detention may result in short-term suspension.
- **Disrespectful Behavior:** Making inappropriate gestures, symbols, or comments or using profane or offensive language could result in a 1 or 2 day suspension for repeat offenders. Using verbal insults or put-downs or lying to, misleading, or giving false information to school staff could result in a 1 or 2 day suspension for repeat offenders.
- **Dress Code Violations:** Corrective action must be taken before returning to the classroom, or students may be sent home.
- **Extortion:** Taking or attempting to take from another person, money or property by threat of force, expressed or implied, can result in suspension or even expulsion for repeat offenders.
- **False Activation of a Fire Alarm:** This results in suspension at minimum, possible expulsion and referral to police authorities.
- **Firesetting/Arson:** Expulsion and referral to police authorities.
- **Fighting:** Physical aggression with another student(s) including shoving or pushing, may result in short-term suspension. Fighting may include incidents resulting in minor injuries may result in suspension and referral to the Board of Elders.
- **Gambling:** Requiring the use of money or exchangeable goods may result in a 1 or 2 day suspension.
- **Hallway Misbehavior:** Running, making excessive noise, or loitering is dealt with by in-school discipline, and counseling.

- **Inappropriate Physical Contact:** Hugging, kissing, handholding, tickling, back rubbing, sitting on another's lap, riding on another's back – all of these are considered inappropriate physical contact and could result in suspension and counseling or expulsion for repeat offenders.
- **Inciting or Participating in a Disturbance:** Causing a large disruption to the atmosphere of order and discipline in the school outside of a general classroom, including using a personal communication device to attract others to initiate a disturbance, could result in anything from general school discipline to suspension or expulsion, depending on its severity.
- **Physical Contact with School Personnel:** Unintentional contact with school personnel merits a warning. An attack against school personnel, physically attacking an employee or another adult, including striking a staff member who is intervening in a fight or other disruptive activity, will result in suspension at the least, and possibly expulsion and referral to police authorities.
- **Portable Electronic Devices Used at Unauthorized Times:** Use of cellphones, PDAs, tablets, smartwatches, electronic game devices, etc. are not allowed to be used during the school day or on the school premises. GGCA is a "No Phone Zone." If a phone or other device is discovered, the student will receive an after-school detention. Further infractions result in a meeting with the parent(s) and the possible banning of the student's device. Further infractions will result in parent meetings and possibly banning of the student's device.
- **Property Damage/Graffiti:** Disciplinary responses depend upon the monetary level of the damage and could include expulsion and referral to police authorities.
- **Serious Bodily Injury:** Causing substantial risk of death or causing permanent or serious disfigurement, loss of function of any part of the body or impairment of the function of any part of the body will result in long-term suspension at minimum but also expulsion and referral to police authorities.
- **Sexual Assault or Offense:** Forced sexual acts result in long-term suspension at minimum but can also result in expulsion and referral to police authorities.
- **Sexually-based Infraction:** Sexual harassment, sexting, sexually suggestive language or behavior, indecent exposure, sexual activity or sexual misconduct will result in suspension or expulsion.
- **Theft:** Less than \$500 can result in suspension; greater than \$500 will result in suspension or expulsion with referral to police authorities.
- **Trespassing:** Students on school property without permission while on suspension will be expelled. Students on school property without permission who have been expelled will be referred to police authorities.
- **Weapons, Firearms, and Explosives:** Possession of such will result in automatic long-term suspension or expulsion with referral to police authorities

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY POLICY

A GGCA student should not cheat, plagiarize, or otherwise engage in academic dishonesty, but rather do all academic work in honesty and integrity to the glory of God.

Academic dishonesty falls under the categories of lying and stealing and violates the GGCA Student Honor Code as well as Word of God. There is never any excuse for academic dishonesty, especially if a student is making time to study, do homework, and be prepared for school. Academic dishonesty often results from poor study habits which include laziness and procrastination and from poor communication with the teacher when one is struggling in a class.

A student who commits an act of academic dishonesty will receive no credit for his or her work. The student could be suspended or expelled.

Academic dishonesty takes on various forms:

- **Cheating** is the theft of information from another student with or without that other person's knowledge. Cheating also includes stealing answers from answer keys, as well as bringing information in written or digital form into the classroom during a quiz or test. *Cheating is stealing.*
- **Plagiarism** is the passing off another's ideas, images, language, or work as one's own. Plagiarism is copying another student's homework and handing it in as if it is your own work. Plagiarism is going to the Internet, cutting and pasting together a paper, and handing it in as your own work without properly citing your sources. Plagiarism is taking a writer's words, perhaps changing a few of them, and then passing them off as your own thoughts and words. *Plagiarism is lying* that the work you hand in is your own.
- **Deception** is providing false information to the instructor in order to gain academic advantage. It is saying you were sick and could not do your homework when you actually stayed up half the night watching movies or playing video games. It is changing the answer on your test and saying that the teacher marked it wrong and you should get the points. Deception is saying you handed in your work on-time, when you actually did not, in order to avoid getting points deducted for lateness. *Deception is lying.*
- **Aiding and Abetting** is providing material and information to another person with the knowledge that the person will use it to cheat, plagiarize, or deceive. It is when you give your homework to another student to copy. It is when you "help" someone on a quiz or test by signaling the correct answer or letting them look at and copy your answers. It is when you corroborate another student's lie and say that you saw them hand in their work when you know they actually did not. *Aiding and abetting is dishonesty.*
- **Obtaining an Unfair Advantage** is stealing, reproducing, and/or distributing materials or information in order to gain an unfair advantage over other students' work. It is when you tell a student who skipped school because he did not study for the test, what the questions on the test are, so that he has an unfair advantage on the test when he takes it the next day. It is when you sneak a copy of the quiz out of the room and show it to

the other section of the class who will take the quiz next period. *Obtaining an unfair advantage is dishonest and involves lying and stealing.*

DRUG TESTING POLICY

GGCA students commit to not using illegal drugs and/or alcohol. When GGCA reasonably suspects a student of drug or alcohol use, GGCA reserves the right to remove the student from school and deliver the student to an independent, professional, third party, to administer a drug and alcohol test after notifying the student's parents. By enrolling their child in GGCA, parents give permission to GGCA to take the above action at its discretion. The Administration will respond to a "positive" drug test with appropriate action, which may include expulsion. Parents who object to such testing have an option of immediately withdrawing their student from the school.

NO BULLYING POLICY

It is the policy of the Greater Grace Christian Academy to maintain a safe environment that is free from bullying. Students and staff are expected to conduct themselves in a respectful, Christian manner, and demonstrate a level of respect and dignity towards others at all times. We prohibit all forms of bullying. We define bullying as intentional harmful behavior initiated by one or more students and directed toward another student. For our purposes, we are addressing bullying that takes place in the school, on school property, or on school field trips.

The GGCA staff will receive annual training in bullying awareness and reporting procedures. Parents and students are asked to report concerns to the teacher or the principal immediately to prevent escalation.

1. **Bullying, harassment, and intimidation** is prohibited at GGCA.
2. Reprisal or retaliation against individuals who report acts of bullying, harassment, or intimidation is prohibited at GGCA.
3. Individuals who commit acts of bullying, harassment, or intimidation will be addressed by the school administration and may be referred to a professional counselor. Depending on the severity of the offense, individuals may be subjected to an acceleration of our discipline policy and/or immediate expulsion.
4. Persons found to have made false accusations will be subject to the same sanctions and/or penalties as those who commit acts of bullying, harassment and/or intimidation.
5. Acts of bullying, harassment, or intimidation are to be reported to the responsible adult in the case of supervised school activities. Cases of bullying, harassment, or intimidation not occurring under adult supervision but falling into the category under the definition above will be reported to the school principal.

6. The school administration will conduct prompt investigation of acts of bullying, harassment, or intimidation by interviewing alleged participants, victims, and witnesses, and by consideration of relevant physical evidence.
7. Victims of bullying, harassment, or intimidation will be protected from additional acts of bullying, harassment, or intimidation by the suspension and/or expulsion of repeat offenders from GGCA.
8. Support services to a student bully or victim and any bystanders are provided by the trained counseling staff of GGWO.

Bullying, Harassment, and Intimidation means any intentional written, verbal, or physical act, including and electronic communication, that:

1. Physically harms and individual;
 2. Damages an individual's property;
 3. Substantially interferes with an individual's education or learning environment; or
 4. Places an individual in reasonable fear of harm to the individual's person or property;
- and
- a. Occurs on school property, at a school event, or on a school bus/vehicle; or
 - b. Substantially disrupts the orderly operation of a school.

Electronic communication means a communication transmitted by means of an electronic device (including a telephone, cell phone, computer, tablet, etc.), or via social media and apps.

PORTABLE ELECTRONIC DEVICE POLICY

Our school is a **no-phone zone**. This includes cellphones, smart watches, MP3 players, handheld video games, headphones/AirPods, and any other personal electronic devices which must remain off and be kept in a locker or teacher designated area until school ends and the student is off school property. These devices must be turned off and properly stored before entering the building and remain so during the operating hours of 7:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. For students staying on campus for meetings, detention, Aftercare etc., this extends until 5:30 p.m. Failure to honor this policy will result in items being confiscated and held at the office for safekeeping and may result in a parent meeting and possible loss of the privilege of bringing such devices on school property.

Cellphones are capable of text messaging, accessing the Internet, taking digital photos, and playing digital music and electronic games. Cellphones can be a distraction, aid and abet cheating, and bring into the school undesirable visual and auditory influences that do not promote godliness or spiritual unity.

GGCA recognizes that parents may wish to have their children bring cellphones to school for communication after school or in emergency situations, so we allow cell phones to be brought into school for those reasons.

Bringing a cell phone to school is both a privilege and a responsibility – it is not a right. Students may bring cell phones into the school, but must abide by the rules governing their use. Parents must realize that GGCA will not be held responsible for lost or stolen cell phones and that there is always the risk that a cell phone may be lost or stolen if a student is not responsible for its whereabouts.

The Rules: Students must keep cell phones silenced/turned off and stored in the student’s locked locker for the duration of the school day as described above. Cell phones are not allowed to be used as watches or calculators. Students who bring phones to school in grades that do not offer lockers do so at their parents' risk.

The Consequences:

First Offense – The cell phone will be surrendered to the school office for safekeeping and an after-school detention will be issued. The student may retrieve his or her phone at the end of the school day.

Second Offense – The cell phone will be surrendered to the school office for safekeeping and an after-school detention will be issued. The parent may retrieve the phone at the end of the school day.

Any subsequent offense – The cell phone will be surrendered to the school office for safekeeping and a Discipline Referral will be written. Parents will be called and notified that they must come in for a meeting with the school administration before the phone will be returned to the parents. Students may lose the privilege of bringing a cell phone to school or may have to surrender their phones to the office at the beginning of each day.

ACCEPTABLE USE OF TECHNOLOGY POLICY

The use of technology in school is a privilege that extends the classroom beyond the confines of the school building by providing access to information from a variety of resources found on the internet. Simply stated, our policy at Greater Grace Christian Academy is that technology be used for educational purposes only, not personal use.

Precautions by the staff and GGCA administration will be taken to ensure that the internet is a safe learning environment. Computer networks used by students comply with The Children’s Internet Protection Act, which requires that we block or filter internet access to pictures that are: (a) obscene; (b) child pornography; or (c) harmful to minors. Students will be supervised while using it, and instructed in the appropriate use, selection, and evaluation of information. However, ultimate responsibility for their actions rests solely with the student.

Every student is expected to adhere to the Acceptable Use of Technology Guidelines as described below. Violation of these guidelines will result in the loss of privileges and disciplinary action.

Technology as described in this document refers to, but is not limited to: both personal and school-owned laptops and desktop computers, tablets, personal communication devices such as smartphones, cellular devices, smart watches, Smart Boards, e-readers, mp3 players, digital cameras, and video recorders.

GGCA's Technology Acceptable Use Guidelines:

1. GGCA is not liable for personally-owned technology that is lost, stolen or damaged. GGCA will not reimburse for lost or stolen technology, nor will GGCA be able to fix or troubleshoot damaged technology. Technology that is brought into GGCA is solely the responsibility of the student and his/her parents.
2. Students will reimburse the school for any damage to computers, laptops, or any other equipment that occurs as a result of malicious or negligent actions. The school or its designee will carry out repair or replacement of equipment.
3. Students may not go online via the school internet or their own wireless data plan without the consent of a teacher and only for academic purposes. Access to Jupiter Grades, myGGCA.com and school email is allowed when directed to so by a teacher, but students may not go online at GGCA for any other reason. 4. Instant Messaging and texting is prohibited unless it is for academic purposes and is approved by the classroom teacher.
5. **Access to any social networks is strictly prohibited.** This includes, but is not limited to: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, YouTube, etc.
6. Students are expected to be extremely protective of their identity while online. Students will not reveal their address or telephone number, nor will they knowingly allow anyone else to do so. Students will not reveal another's name, address or telephone number. Students will not transmit or use pictures of others without their consent.
7. Cyber-bullying - disrespecting, mocking, gossiping, or speaking rudely or inappropriately about another person (student, teacher, friend or adult) online is prohibited.
8. Sexting or any other form of lewd communication is strictly prohibited. Students will not submit, publish, or display any defamatory, inaccurate, abusive, obscene, profane, sexually oriented, threatening, racially offensive or illegal material; nor will they encourage the use of controlled substances, alcohol or tobacco.
9. Students will not use another student's technology, computer account or password. Students will not allow another student to use his/her technology, computer account, or password under any circumstances. Students will not impersonate another's identity.

10. Students will respect the privacy of others. Deletion or tampering with files not created or owned by the student is prohibited, unless the supervising teacher directs such deletion.
11. Computer and networked games, including role-playing and fantasy games, are prohibited.
12. Students will not change computer settings, download programs from the internet or attempt to install programs on any school computer.
13. Students will not take apart or remove any computer or any other piece of technology.
14. Students who bring in computer media (including CD's, DVD's, USB drives, or any other media containing a file) from outside the school will make every effort to ensure that it does not contain a computer virus. a student who receives a virus warning from any school computer, must immediately stop whatever he or she is doing and inform the supervising teacher.
15. Students will respect the laws of the United States of America concerning copyrighted material.
16. Students may not take pictures or videos of any student, teacher, staff member, or GGCA guest without the individual's consent and without an academic reason or pursuit (such as the yearbook).
17. Students may not utilize any piece of technology in GGCA's bathrooms or locker rooms.
18. Students will not partake in video/audio-streaming or recording of any kind (without specific permission).
19. Due to continuous advancements in technology, additional restrictions and use guidelines may be instituted throughout the school year. If it becomes necessary to amend the Acceptable Use of Technology Policy, parents and students will be notified.
20. GGCA Administration has the authority to override a supervising teacher if network integrity and/or student cyber-safety could be impaired or compromised by any action.

Any violation of this Acceptable Use of Technology Policy will be considered serious and could result in a suspension and/or expulsion depending upon the particular violation.

Miscellaneous Policies

STUDENT AND LOCKER SEARCHES POLICY

GGCA reserves the right to search students or lockers if a student is suspected of possessing stolen property or illegal substances such as cigarettes, chewing tobacco, marijuana, illegal drugs, alcohol, or weapons of any kind. Proper authorities will be notified of any illegal activity.

VALUABLES AND PERSONAL PROPERTY POLICY

GGCA advises students to leave valuables of any kind at home. GGCA is not responsible for lost valuables or money that is brought to school. GGCA is not responsible for clothing that may be torn as a result of recess play. Students with lockers are expected to keep valuables locked in their lockers. Elementary classrooms have designated areas for personal items.

All bags, including purses, should be stored properly and not kept at students desks or on their person while in the classroom.

To prevent distractions from the learning environment, all gadgets, devices, and non-school related items are not permitted in the classroom or other school designated areas including the lunch room.

BOOK REPLACEMENT POLICY

GGCA textbooks are the property of GGCA; workbooks need not be returned. Students borrow the textbooks for the year and they must be returned in good condition at year's end. Parents are responsible to pay for any textbooks that have been lost, damaged, or misplaced for a period of two weeks. Parents will be billed directly through the business office. Occasionally, students will need to purchase paperbacks, which they will keep at the end of the school year.

GRIEVANCE POLICY

Any student or parent who feels they have been unfairly or unjustly treated has the option of pursuing the issue through a formal grievance process.

1. Request a meeting with the teacher. If satisfaction is not achieved then...
2. Request a meeting with the Principal and all parties involved. If satisfaction is not achieved then...
3. Request a meeting with the GGWO church executives.



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GGCA.org

Education WITH
AN *Eternal Purpose*

GGCA Handbook Signature Page

Please sign and return to the office by the end of the first week of school.

I/We, _____, parent(s)/guardian(s) of:

have read and understood the GGCA Parent & Student Handbook.

Signature(s): _____

Date: _____