



2020 – 2021

PARENT/STUDENT

# HANDBOOK



**Gateway Christian Academy**  
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## **WELCOME TO GATEWAY CHRISTIAN ACADEMY**

Welcome to Gateway Christian Academy (GCA). You have enrolled in a school that is dedicated to providing a quality Christian education.

The policies and procedures contained in this handbook are the result of a concerted effort on the part of our faculty, administration and parents. This information has been carefully prepared so that it will be of great value in helping you become an integral part of the school. All parents and students are expected to know and follow the regulations in this handbook. The guidelines are designed with the best interest of the student in mind. Guided by dedicated staff and open to the direction of the Holy Spirit, these young people can achieve at their greatest potential.

God's blessings on you for a successful and rewarding school year!

### **MANAGEMENT STATEMENT**

Gateway Christian Academy is an educational institution owned by Gateway Christian Center. The Word of God is placed central in the education process. Biblical principles are woven into the very fabric of each academic subject. The mission and the vision of the school reflect those approved by Gateway Christian Center's leadership team and board.

### **NOTICE OF STUDENT NONDISCRIMINATORY POLICY**

Gateway Christian Academy intends to comply with all applicable laws. Our school admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students. It does not discriminate with regard to race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship programs, athletic and school-administered programs.

### **CODE OF ETHICS OF THE EDUCATION PROFESSION IN FLORIDA**

(Florida Department of Education)

Gateway Christian Academy adheres to the Code of Ethics of the Education Profession in Florida:

1. The educator values the worth and dignity of every person, the pursuit of truth, devotion to excellence, acquisition of knowledge, and the nurture of democratic citizenship. Essential to the achievement of these standards are the freedom to learn and to teach and the guarantee of equal opportunity for all.
2. The educator's primary professional concern will always be for the student and for the development of the student's potential. The educator will therefore strive for professional growth and will seek to exercise the best professional judgment and integrity.
3. Aware of the importance of maintaining the respect and confidence of one's colleagues, of students, of parents, and of other members of the community, the educator strives to achieve and sustain the highest degree of ethical conduct.

## MISSION STATEMENT

To prepare students for life as Christian role models and leaders who choose character before career, wisdom beyond scholarship, and service before self.

## VISION OF OUR SCHOOL

*“Where there is no vision, the people perish; but blessed is he who keeps the law.” Proverbs 29:18*

To be recognized and highly regarded for its solid Biblical foundation and academic excellence; preparing the next generation to effectively influence the community through a Christian worldview in the areas of morals, ethics, and family values.

## ETIQUETTE & PROTOCOL

It is the goal of every teacher to teach every student techniques and skills in the area of etiquette and protocol in order to empower a child to succeed in their relationships with others and to become productive citizens of their community. Children will learn skills such as proper greetings, respecting authority, building up self assurance, developing good manners and social skills, personal presence and appreciating traditional values.

## PURPOSE

The Great Commission  
Matthew 28:16-20

“Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. When they saw him they worshiped him; but some doubted. Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

The purpose of Gateway Christian Academy is to provide a Christ-centered, Spirit-filled educational setting dedicated to training young people to fulfill the Great Commission in whatever vocation they may choose, be it minister, teacher, business executive, scientist, doctor, world leader and more! We realize the solemn responsibility under God to carry out this purpose and look for parents and students who are in agreement. For without this agreement, our purpose cannot be fulfilled.

God is calling churches across America to build Christian schools. There is a price to pay, but the reward will be worth it. The next generation can be different if the people of God today will heed the voice of the Spirit.

## PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION...a deeper perspective

Noah Webster (1828) defined education as:

*The bringing up, as of a child; instruction; formation of manners. Education comprehends all that series of instruction and discipline, which is intended to enlighten the understanding, correct the temper, and form the manners and habits of youth, and fit them for usefulness in their future stations. To give children a good education in manners, arts and science, is important; to give them a religious education is indispensable; and an immense responsibility rests upon parents and guardians who neglect these duties.*

School should provide several things to the students who engage in the activity of learning. It should shape their manners and habits, prepare them for future employment, and equip them to be productive members of society. Learned protocol and proper etiquette basics should be evident in every child.

However, the chief purpose of education is to bring children to the realization of Jesus Christ and the Biblical principles by which they should live their lives. An education should show children and young people

how to face God and then with the vision of God in their hearts to face the present world and the world to come. When parents and educators fail in this area, they have not provided a complete education. Unless children first know God, they cannot know anything correctly.

The world of Christian Education is a fulfilling one. It is an opportunity to invest our time, talents, and treasures in God's Kingdom caring for those who are most precious to Him. As educational facilitators devoted to the care and education of students who represent cultural diversity, our desire is to help every student succeed. Our team wants to make sure collaborative settings remain the back drop of an environment where each student will receive the very best our school has to offer families and loyal friends that support our school each year.

Our goal is to help you understand our view of successful education based on biblical principles and cutting edge educational curriculum materials designed to empower every student to learn and reach new academic levels of achievement. We also desire a lasting partnership with everyone involved in the student's educational process.

The Gateway staff is devoted to embracing your child with acceptance, devotion to their work, kindness, trust, love, and a genuine desire to see each one excel. Every child has the right to a sound education!

Helping the student discover his/her best way to receive and retain information shared in and out of the classroom is a constant benchmark for educators. We desire to teach lessons that will embrace multiple intelligences such as kinesthetic, auditory, visual, and verbal linguistics. In this manner, each child will be able to have numerous opportunities to express their individual ideas in creative, constructive, and innovative ways. To see each student grow spiritually, academically, emotionally, socially and physically is the goal of our school team. The school has established an environment conducive to individualized learning as well as plenty of occasions to interact with one another.

As a student enters Gateway Christian Academy, s/he will feel accepted, be encouraged to participate in collaborative learning, and be valued for whom God created him/her to be. From the youngest to the oldest, students will be able to embrace the love of wisdom founded on God's biblical principles. They will spend time in a well-balanced learning environment where each will be challenged to reach their own potential. Students will be able to use their intellectual abilities for good, grow in knowledge, and ultimately reflect the beauty of God's glory discovered in Christian education. Gateway Christian Academy exists for good, growth, and God's glory in the lives of our students.

### **Biblical Pattern for Education**

"Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it" (Proverbs 22:6). While there is much debate as to how children should be educated, the Bible makes it clear that children are to be taught of God. The Bible presents a three-step process for education. The first step is the acquisition of knowledge or learning at the factual level. The next step is gaining understanding, which is the ability to process, analyze, and assimilate knowledge. The final step is applying what has been learned with godly wisdom. All three begin with the "fear of the Lord" (Proverbs 1:7; 15:33; Psalm 111:10). No one can be truly educated who does not begin with Jesus Christ as the foundation of learning.

### **The Pursuit of Truth**

The purpose of Christian education is the pursuit of truth. Truth can only be found in the person of Jesus Christ (John 14:6). Education that is not centered around Jesus Christ and the Word of God provides opportunity for truth to be substituted by man's philosophies. Both the Old and New Testaments warn Christians to avoid the teachings and philosophies of men that ignore Christ. "Hear ye the word which the LORD speaketh unto you, O house of Israel: Thus saith the LORD, Learn not the way of the heathen, and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven; for the heathen are dismayed at them" (Jeremiah 10:1,2). "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ" (Colossians 2:8). An education that prepares children to live in a free society must be fully

integrated with the Word. It is reliance upon the Word that leads children to the truth, and it is the truth that makes them free (John 8:31-32).

### **Children's Education: The Responsibility of Parents**

The Bible is clear that parents have been given the authority and responsibility to direct their children's education. Parents are not given the responsibility to provide only an academic education for their children, but a godly education. Regardless of the activity in which children may be engaged, they are to be taught how it relates to God (Deuteronomy 4:9,10; 6:1-9; 11:18-23; Isaiah 38:19; Ephesians 6:4). Parental responsibility for a child's education is not only to be directed toward children, but also toward grandchildren and great-grandchildren (Psalm 78:1-8; Joel 1:3). It is a child's parents who nurture the proper attitude toward learning. They begin the process of learning as they nurture a heart-set within their children that appreciates and loves learning and places Christ at the center of all they do.

### **The Role of the Christian School and Teacher**

For a child's formal education to be in agreement with the Biblical principles of instruction, God cannot be left out of the equation. It is the desire to integrate academic learning with the Word of God that Christian schools exist. While the Bible does not instruct churches to open Christian schools, many do to help parents fulfill their obligation to provide their children with a godly education. Christian schools are not to usurp the authority and responsibility of parents. Instead, they share the responsibility of educating children by providing a Christ-centered learning environment and Biblically integrated curriculum.

Christian teachers play an important role in the education of children as they use their training to instruct students in the ways of truth. They accomplish this by first modeling godly lives before their students. Second, teachers are to be instructors of truth. This is teaching beyond the content of the textbook to where eternal truth based on the Word of God can be seen. Third, they are trainers who facilitate learning by providing academically sound instruction. Fourth, teachers become surrogate parents as they exhibit the nurturing care of parents throughout the school day. Finally, teachers are shepherds who fulfill this role by protecting their students from the enemy through intercession and guidance.

### **The Role of the Holy Spirit in Education**

Christian education is perfected when the Holy Spirit is allowed to work in the classroom. The need to understand the fullness of Christ is essential in having a complete education. Only when the Holy Spirit is given the freedom to touch the hearts and minds of students can they be considered truly educated. The Holy Spirit is responsible for teaching people about Jesus and guiding His followers into all truth (John 14:26; 16:13-15).

## **STATEMENT OF FAITH**

We believe the Bible is the inspired Word of God (2 Timothy 3:16), and that God's Word is Truth, it's His voice, it will endure forever. It is dependable and encouraging to those that read it and apply His words of wisdom to everyday living.

We believe in the Trinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, in His virgin birth, in His sinless life, in salvation through His death on the cross, in His resurrection, in His ascension to the right hand of the Father, and in His personal return in power and glory (1 Corinthians 15:3, 1 Peter 2:21-24, John 3:16).

We believe the Holy Spirit is essential for salvation (Romans 3:10, 23; Titus 3:5) in order to overcome the sinful nature of man. The Holy Spirit empowers God's children to live Holy lives.

We believe in baptism in water by immersion as a direct commandment of our Lord (Matthew 28:19), and is for those that choose to believe and accept Jesus Christ in their hearts as their personal Savior.

We believe the Baptism of the Holy Spirit is a gift from God, as promised by Jesus, to all believers, is received subsequent to salvation (Acts 2:38-39), and is evidenced by the speaking in other tongues as the Holy Spirit gives utterance (Acts 2:4), and by the working of Spiritual gifts within the life of the believer (1 Corinthians 12).

We believe in the resurrection of both the saved and lost; that they are saved unto the resurrection of life; and that without Christ there is no resurrection of life which He desires for all (John 5:24, 28, 29).

We believe in spiritual unity of believers in our Lord Jesus Christ (John 17:11, 20, 21; Galatians 3:28).

We believe in the creation account found in the book of Genesis and that God is the Creator of all things (Genesis 1 and 2; Revelation 4:11).

We believe God heals the sick by the power of God through prayer (Isaiah 53:4, Mark 16:18, James 5:14, 15).

We believe that when we know what our Heavenly Father has revealed to us in His Holy Word about the future, it gives us joy, peace and confidence in the present (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18).

Every Gateway Eagle will be trained (Proverbs 22:6) to believe in God and him/herself to become the very best God desires for their lives in order that they may become world changers for Christ!

Acts 14:27

God had used them to throw the door of FAITH wide open so people of all nations could come streaming in and come together in one accord. Welcome to Gateway Christian Academy.

## ADMISSIONS

Parents wishing to obtain information about the school and its program or to enroll their children in the school should contact the school registrar's office at 813-964-9800.

### Requirements:

1. Immunization. Florida law requires that parents or guardians of all minor children in grades K-12 for all public, parochial, or private schools in the State of Florida, must present a signed original or copy (form DH 680) of required immunizations (or immunization exemption – DH681), and signed original or copy (DH3040) upon school enrollment (see Immunization Requirement for School Entry Addendum).
2. Birth Certificate. Those enrolling in Kindergarten must be five years old on or before September 1.
3. Official school records of progress from previous school.
4. Completed application.
5. Non-refundable registration fee paid.
6. Parents need to be in agreement with the Mission, Vision and Philosophy of Education for the school. Applicants are selected from those whose attitude, lifestyle, academic history, moral and behavioral characteristics are compatible with Gateway Christian Academy.

**Placement:** Grade placement for all students will be determined by the administrative staff after reviewing the results of assessment tests. **GCA RESERVES THE RIGHT TO ADJUST AND/OR MODIFY COURSE SELECTIONS AND/OR COMBINATION OF CLASSES AT EACH GRADE LEVEL BASED ON FINAL ENROLLMENT.**

**Address Changes:** Whenever there is a change of address or telephone number, please call the office and notify us of the change. The same is true for changes in doctors and/or emergency numbers.

**Re-enrollment:** Re-enrollment applications for the upcoming school year will be accepted for students in good standing. **All fees are non-refundable.**

## FINANCIAL INFORMATION

**Tuition and Fees:** A non-refundable registration fee is due and payable when a student is enrolled for classes. Payment of this fee reserves a place on the class list; therefore this fee is non-refundable. All fees must be paid to the school registrar's office. Tuition is collected through F.A.C.T.S. Tuition Management Company and is due on the 5<sup>th</sup> or 20<sup>th</sup> of each month. **All accounts must remain current each month in order for students to continue attending classes. Tuition received after the scheduled F.A.C.T.S. payment date will incur a late fee of \$35.**

**Insufficient Funds:** A **\$35 fee** is assessed for all insufficient funds and charged to your account. Payment by cash, money order, cashier's check or credit card will be required after an account is assessed because of insufficient funds.

### Before Care (see fee schedule):

6:30 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.

### After Care (see fee schedule):

3:30 p.m.– 4:30 pm. Homework time is an important component of our After Care program. Any student picked up after 4:30 p.m. will be charged a flat late fee of \$15.00 for the first 15 minutes and \$2.00 per minute after that.

**Student Withdrawal:** A student is not classified as withdrawn until the school business office receives written notification. All school books, materials, equipment and other school-owned property, including tuition and other financial obligations, must be finalized and turned in before withdrawal can be completed. ***If a student***

*withdraws after the first of the month, the parent remains responsible for the complete month's tuition.* Withdrawal letters will be returned to the principal's office for final clearance. **All obligations, including financial, must be cleared before final withdrawal.**

**Insurance:** The school's student accident insurance coverage is provided for those enrolled students as defined on the Certificate Schedule of Benefits and only for those who are affiliated with the policyholder. The school's policy is secondary to the student's parent/guardian policy and it is recommended that all families have their own family accident insurance.

**Fundraising:** Tuition payments do not cover all the costs. GCA is endeavoring to keep tuition rates affordable to make Christian education accessible to as many families as possible. Therefore, we depend on your support and God's blessing to keep our program operating. We have all-school fundraising projects throughout the school year. Your partnership is needed and appreciated in this endeavor.

## **ACADEMICS**

Through the power of God working in each individual, our school staff expects its students to develop their full potential in every area.

**Class Schedules:** Teachers will provide parents and students with a class schedule.

**Grading Scale:** GCA has adopted the following grading scale (subject to change) in order to fulfill our goal for mastery learning. The letter grades are based on the following percentage grouping:

A+ = 97-100	A = 94-96	A- = 90-93	B+ = 87-89	
B = 84-86	B- = 80-83	C+ = 76-79	C = 73-75	C- = 72-70
D+ = 67-69	D = 64-66	D- = 63-60	F = Below 60	

**Homework:** Believing that homework is an integral part of the school program, each teacher will give homework to aid the student to advance his/her studies. Therefore, each student is required to complete his/her homework assignments on time. Homework is given for several reasons:

1. **For Drill:** We believe that most students require solid drilling to master material essential to their education progress.
2. **For Practice:** Following classroom explanation, illustration, and drill on new work, homework is given so that the material will be mastered.
3. **For Remedial Activity:** As instruction progresses, various challenge points in a student's grasp of a subject become evident. Homework following instruction is given to overcome such challenges.
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.

We do request parents' cooperation in seeing that assignments are completed. Repeated delinquent homework could result in failure to perform well on tests, thereby resulting in a lower grade. Doing homework is part of preparation for the future. As much as one fourth of a student's grade could depend on homework. Correct spelling and neatness are required. Parents are expected to communicate to teachers when their children are having challenges with homework.

The student's classroom teacher will specify any special requirements for homework assignments. **Spiral notebook paper is not to be used on assignments that will be turned in for grading.** Students will be required to rewrite assignments turned in on spiral paper. Spiral notebooks are only approved for note taking, journals, etc. Only blue or black pens are to be used by students when doing assignments. Pencils are to be used in lower level elementary grades. Pencils are to be used on all math assignments unless otherwise indicated by the teacher.

**Student Planners:** Student Planners are provided for all Academy grades K5 – 12<sup>th</sup>. Parents are highly encouraged to review and sign planners daily. This is our primary communication tool between the home and the school.

**Progress Reports:** Progress reports will be provided in order to keep parents informed if their child's classroom performance is less than satisfactory. Reports will be sent home at the mid-point of each 9-week grading period. Parents are requested to review the report with their child. We request that parents with questions about the progress of their children contact the teacher directly.

**Report Cards:** Report cards will be sent home at the end of each 9-week grading period. The final report card will be published via email. Report cards will be withheld for any student with an outstanding school account.

**Testing:** All students will be given diagnostic tests prior to enrollment to determine performance level. The results will be used by the teachers as a basis to assess your child's areas of weakness. Areas of strength will be expanded upon. The **Stanford Achievement Test** will be administered in the spring in order to determine the quality of instruction at each grade level. This will help identify any problem areas that individual students might have. These tests will not affect the outcome of a student's final grade report, but will help better serve each student and is used as a measuring tool comparing our school students to others throughout the United States.

**Fine Arts:** A major portion of the educational materials used by the Gateway Christian Academy Fine Arts Program is Christian related literature, art, music, etc. Yet, because we know that God has created all things, quality materials from a classical or traditional background cannot be ignored. This material is (1) previewed, (2) edited, (3) and then approached from a Biblical perspective. We will be faithful to present all traditional classics from a Spirit-filled point of view.

**High School Guidance and Graduation Requirements:** All high school students will need to meet with the School Guidance Counselor/Principal prior to entering the 9<sup>th</sup> grade. This meeting is designed to communicate to both students and parents the required coursework and grade point average necessary for the successful completion of high school graduation as well as to plan for postsecondary goals. In addition to the academic goals outlined, **each high school student must complete at least 75 documented voluntary community service hours.** Community service hours must be approved prior to entering into service and will be arranged through either the high school teacher and/or Guidance Counselor/Principal.

Students registered for high school credits have one of three program options to earn a high school diploma. They are as follows:

1. **General Diploma (24 credits; minimum GPA 2.0):** The General Diploma program is the minimum course of study for a standard high school diploma and meets the requirements in accordance with the state of Florida's Department of Education. ***All General Diploma students must meet the 24 credit requirement and cumulative 2.0 GPA requirement to receive the General Diploma.***
2. **College Preparatory Diploma (26 credits; minimum GPA 3.0):** The College Preparatory course of study is designed to assist college-bound students. Students must complete 26 credits in the designated program, attain a cumulative GPA of 3.0, and demonstrate the ability to communicate effectively in written and oral presentations.
3. **Honors Diploma (27 credits; minimum GPA 3.50):** The Honors Diploma is the highest quality preparation for a college education. Students must complete 27 credits, attain a cumulative GPA of 3.50 in the designated program, and demonstrate the ability to communicate effectively in written and oral presentations.

**All programs require a minimum of 18 core and non-core credits, attainment of the cumulative minimum GPA as outlined, with the remaining credits as electives. *Any student not able to attain the required GPA for the College Preparatory or Honors program but completes the required credits will revert to the program for which the GPA is noted as the minimum (i.e. 27 credits with GPA of 3.0 will receive a College Preparatory Diploma).***

<i>Subject Area</i>	<i>Graduation Requirements of 24-Credit General Diploma</i>	<i>Credits</i>	<i>Graduation Requirements of 26-Credit College Preparatory</i>	<i>Credits</i>	<i>Graduation Requirements of 27-Credit Honors Program</i>	<i>Credits</i>
<b><i>Core Subjects**</i></b>						
Math {4 credits}	<b>Algebra I</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Algebra I</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Algebra I</b>	<b>1</b>
	<b>Geometry</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Geometry</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Geometry</b>	<b>1</b>
	<b>Algebra II</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Algebra II</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Algebra II</b>	<b>1</b>
	Business Math	1	Business Math	1	Business Math	1
	Consumer Math	1	Consumer Math	1	Consumer Math	1
	Trigonometry	1	<b>Trigonometry</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Trigonometry</b>	<b>1</b>
English {4 credits}	English Skills	1	English Skills	1	English Skills	1
	<b>English I</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>English I</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>English I</b>	<b>1</b>
	<b>English II</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>English II</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>English II</b>	<b>1</b>
	<b>English III</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>English III</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>English III</b>	<b>1</b>
	English IV	1	<b>English IV</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>English IV</b>	<b>1</b>
Social Studies {3 credits}	<b>World History</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>World History</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>World History</b>	<b>1</b>
	World Geography	1	World Geography	1	<b>World Geography*</b>	<b>1</b>
	<b>American History</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>American History</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>American History</b>	<b>1</b>
	<b>U.S. Government</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>U.S. Government</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>U.S. Government</b>	<b>0.5</b>
	<b>Economics</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>Economics</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>Economics</b>	<b>0.5</b>
Science {3 credits}	<b>Earth/Space Science</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Earth/Space Science</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Earth/Space Science</b>	<b>1</b>
	<b>Biology w/Labs</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Biology w/Labs</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Biology w/Labs</b>	<b>1</b>
	<b>Physical Science w/Labs</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Physical Science w/Labs</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Physical Science w/Labs</b>	<b>1</b>
	Chemistry w/Labs	1	Chemistry w/Labs	1	<b>Chemistry w/Labs*</b>	<b>1</b>
	Physics	1	Physics	1	Physics	1
<b><i>Non-Core &amp; Elective Subjects**</i></b>						
<b>Bible</b>	4 years @ .05/year	<b>2</b>	4 years @ .05/year	<b>2</b>	4 years @ .05/year	<b>2</b>
<b>Fine/Performing Arts</b>	Art, Music, FLOCS	<b>2</b>	Art, Music, FLOCS	<b>2</b>	Art, Music, FLOCS	<b>2</b>
<b>Physical Education</b>		<b>2</b>	<b>Physical Education</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>Physical Education</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Health</b>		<b>0.5</b>	<b>Health</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>Health</b>	<b>0.5</b>
Foreign Language		1	<b>Foreign Language</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>Foreign Language</b>	<b>2</b>
Speech		0.5	<b>Speech</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>Speech</b>	<b>0.5</b>
Etymology		1	Etymology	1	Etymology	1
Typing		1	Typing	1	Typing	1
Computer Literacy		1	Computer Literacy	1	<b>Computer Literacy</b>	<b>1</b>
Journalism (Yearbook)		1	Journalism (Yearbook)	1	Journalism (Yearbook)	1
English Literature		0.5	English Literature	0.5	English Literature	0.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>Cumulative GPA of 2.0</b>	<b>24</b> <b>Credits</b>	<b>Cumulative GPA of 3.0</b>	<b>26</b> <b>Credits</b>	<b>Cumulative GPA of 3.50</b>	<b>27</b> <b>Credits</b>

\* *World Geography or Chemistry - either subject will qualify for Honors*

\*\* *Core and Non-Core Subjects in color are G.C.A.'s graduation requirements for each program.*

## ATTENDANCE

**Morning Arrival:** School hours are 8:30am – 3:00pm. Morning arrival for all GCA students should be no earlier than 8:00 a.m. unless they are involved in the morning care program.

**School Dismissal:** Since supervision concludes at 3:30 p.m., all students are asked to be off campus by this time. The only exception will be students who are involved in the After Care program or staying after school due to their involvement in after-school activities. ***Any student who is not involved in an after school activity and not enrolled in After Care should be picked up no later than 3:30 p.m.*** A late fee of \$15.00 after 3:30 p.m. will be assessed to your account for late pick ups of non-After Care students.

**Student Illness:** Parents will be notified if their child becomes ill during the school day. At no point during the day is a student to leave and go home ill without the parent/guardian signing the student out through the school office.

**School Pick-Up/Security:** Identification will be required for all non-parent/legal guardians picking up any child. All people designated to pick up your child must be listed on your child's emergency information form.

**Absentees:** When a student is absent from school, **a phone call** from the parent or guardian to the office by **9:00 a.m. that day is required** giving the following information:

1. Parent or guardian's name
2. Student's name
3. Grade
4. Reason for absence
5. Estimated date of return

Upon returning from an absence, **ALL STUDENTS WILL FURNISH A WRITTEN NOTE FROM THEIR PARENT OR GUARDIAN STATING THE REASON FOR THE ABSENCE, DATES OF ABSENCE, AND SIGNATURE OF THE PARENT OR GUARDIAN.** Students will give their parent's note to the classroom teacher.

**FLORIDA STATE LAW** requires that all school age children attend an approved education program be it public school, private school, or home school. **Excessive excused or unexcused absences beyond 10% of the quarter, with the exception of doctor verified extended illnesses, are grounds for a student failing a course or grade level.**

### **Excused Absences:**

1. Personal illness.
2. Appointments with doctors and dentists made **in advance** of the school day. We encourage these appointments to be made during school vacation or after school. **The signature of the dentist or doctor must be obtained at the time of the appointment and submitted to the office at the time of return.**
3. Death in family.

**School Tardiness:** The **third time** a student has an **unexcused tardy** to school, a conference with the parent will be requested to discuss excessive tardiness. **Being tardy three times constitutes one unexcused absence within each grading period. Unexcused absences and tardiness include:**

1. Students leaving the building without permission from the office.
2. Cutting classes, late rides, traffic (major accidents, exception).
3. Late to school, classes.
4. Personal business, i.e., applying for jobs, seeing friends.

**Special Absence Request:** Students who find it necessary to be out of class for any reason other than the excused absences listed above must clear it with the office and all teachers in advance. A special form may be obtained from the office and signed by parents and teacher before submitting it to the principal for approval. Please keep in mind that any absence (excused or unexcused) results in disruption of instruction and may prevent a student from obtaining the best grade possible.

**Make-Up Work:** It is expected that students will make up any missed work due to an absence. If a student missed work due to an unexcused absence, the teacher will still make the decision as to whether or not the work can be made up. Grades may be lowered for late assignments. If a student is absent one day prior to a test, he must make up the test within the week after returning to school. Any student receiving an Out of School Suspension for disciplinary reasons will make up work but receive no credit. **Teachers will provide missed work/class assignments within 24 hours of the student's return to class resulting from an absence.**

**Early dismissal:**

***Early dismissals are discouraged.*** Students leaving a few minutes early often miss important last minute instructions and/or reminders. Interrupting classes to call students to the office also distracts other students and interrupts the end of the day classroom routines. Early dismissals should occur only in emergency circumstances. Please make every effort to schedule appointments outside of school hours. **Students leaving early will be marked as early out. This is considered the same as a tardy.**

When it is necessary for a parent to take a child out of class for a doctor's appointment or other reasons during the day, release of the student must be made through the office. **Students who leave before noon and fail to return will be marked absent for one half day.** Students are accountable for all work missed. The absence will be counted as part of the State of Florida attendance law.

**School Closing/Early Release:** School will be dismissed in case of a severe weather warning and parents will be notified. GCA follows the decision of the School District of Hillsborough County when closing for hurricanes and severe weather. Parents must listen to the Emergency Broadcasting System or major local news channels for updates.

## **STUDENT CONDUCT & DISCIPLINE**

***Gateway Christian Academy is not an alternative reform school for disciplinary challenges.***

Parents should not enroll their children thinking that we will overcome the difficulties parents may have experienced in fulfilling their roles. We are here to serve as an extension of the Christian home by providing a learning environment that honors God and strives to develop godly, self-disciplined children. To accomplish this, we are guided by several principles:

1. All authority is established by God (Romans 13).
2. Discipline is profitable for the individual (Proverbs).
3. Both positive (encouragement) and negative (consequence) discipline is used.
4. Policies and procedures should be clear and have a definite purpose.
5. Clear communication of policies and procedures is paramount to maintaining good discipline.

Parents and teachers must cooperate fully with one another and anything said or done which undermines the authority, respect or confidence of either one will have an adverse affect on the child. If a misunderstanding or complaint should occur, please consider the following:

1. Give the school the benefit of the doubt.
2. Consider your child's interpretation may be emotionally biased and may not include the full account of the situation.
3. Support the teachers and administration and contact the school for all the facts.

Attending Gateway Christian Academy is a privilege and as such students are expected to treat their teachers, classmates, personal and school property with respect. Students are expected to meet and/or exceed the following:

**Code of Conduct:**

1. Demonstrate respect for teachers, staff and other students at all times.
2. Abide by all school and classroom policies and procedures.
3. Show proper respect toward school and others' property.
4. Refrain from any profane or obscene language or gestures, fighting, public display of affection (i.e. holding hands, kissing, embracing, etc.).
5. Refrain from running or playing in the hallways, stairs, restrooms, and lunchroom.
6. Students are to abide by any policies or procedures concerning conduct at school whether or not it is contained in this handbook.

In order for optimal learning to take place, students are expected to come to school prepared to learn and participate and must follow all classroom procedures such as:

1. No student is to talk or be out of seat without permission.
2. No student is to be idle and refuse to work on classroom assignments.
3. No student is to disrupt the class and prevent others from learning.
4. No gum chewing is permitted on the school campus, school bus or during school sponsored events.
5. No student is to leave the school campus without permission.

**Infractions Resulting in Verbal & Written Warnings, Re-direction or Detention:** Students will begin the day on a positive note. If a student refuses to follow a policy or procedure, the teacher will be the first level of student intervention (re-direction or detention in order to assist the student in making right choices). Additional infractions will cause the student to be removed from the classroom and sent to administration with a class referral (generally all students are given anywhere from one to three opportunities to make the right choices). Once a referral has been issued, Administration may call the parents to discuss a course of action or consequences depending on the infraction. The following are examples of infractions:

- Disturbances in classroom (i.e. excessive talking, out of seat, etc.)
- Disturbance in Chapel
- Incomplete homework
- Notices not returned with parent signature
- Non-Compliance of Dress Code Policies

**Infractions Resulting in Probation, Suspension, or Expulsion:** There are some infractions that cannot be tolerated because of their severity and ability to break down authority; when a more severe form of discipline needs to be administered to insure the overall integrity of the school. When any of these occur, the teacher will write a referral and send the student to the office immediately.

**Examples of Behaviors that may ultimately result in probation:**

- Repeated referrals for the same or similar infractions
- Disregard of school policies and procedures or breaking the school Code of Conduct
- Verbal attacks on other students or school personnel

Administration will determine (with the teacher's input) based upon the student's age, grade level, etc., any infractions that may ultimately lead to probation, suspension, or expulsion.

**Examples of Behaviors that may ultimately result in suspension:**

- Disrespect for any teacher or staff member
- Verbal attacks on school or school policies or procedures

- Any action contrary to the Mission, Vision, Philosophy of Education or Code of Conduct of the school as deemed so by the administration

Students will not be readmitted until after a conference with administration, teacher, parents and student.

**Severe Clause - Examples of Behaviors that will result in expulsion:**

- Immoral communication or activities on school grounds and/or outside of school (i.e. use of the school internet, text messaging, e-mail, etc.)
- Physical attacks on any staff or student
- Use of tobacco, alcohol, or illegal drugs or bringing any items on campus that may directly violate GCA's Code of Conduct or have a serious adverse impact on the students of our school
- Continued disregard for GCA's Policies and Procedures and Code of Conduct

Students will not be considered for re-admittance until they have demonstrated a repentant heart and have sat out an entire academic year. A conference with the headmaster, administrator, teacher, parents, and student will also be required in order to **determine if a student who has been expelled may re-enter** another school year at Gateway Christian Academy.

**Universal Classroom Management Policies & Procedures:**

GCA has adopted Universal Classroom Management Policies & Procedures that apply to all classes from grades K5 – 12<sup>th</sup>. All students have been advised of these policies and procedures and have been given a two week "trial period" to understand how they are implemented. **Copies of the Policies & Procedures and related forms are attached.**

**Individual Rewards:**

Students will receive one reward (stamp, sticker, star, ticket, etc.) for each class period they have received no consequence beyond a warning. Students may redeem their rewards at the end of each week/month as outlined by the classroom teacher. At the end of each month, students may also redeem their rewards in the GCA store.

**Class Rewards:**

Teachers will individually decide what reward will be given to their class as they reach their class goals.

## **BEFORE & AFTER CARE CONDUCT**

Gateway Christian Academy provides Before and After Care services for families in an effort to assist and support various work and personal schedules. For those enrolled in these services (Kindergarten – 5<sup>th</sup> grade), the following behaviors are expected of all students:

1. Students must obey and respect those in authority by:
  - a. Following Before/After Care policies and procedures
  - b. Listening and following directions the first time
  - c. Displaying a positive attitude
  - d. Exhibiting “self-control”
  - e. Always telling the truth
  - f. Showing respect for school property
  - g. If corrected, take “ownership” of wrong behavior
2. Students are to show respect to fellow school mates by:
  - a. Speaking kind and encouraging words
  - b. Showing respect for other’s possessions
  - c. Showing respect for other’s personal space
  - d. Keeping hands/feet to oneself
  - e. Refrain from shoving, pushing, or fighting
  - f. Refrain from making fun of others
  - g. Asking for and extending forgiveness

Referrals will be given for the following behavior:

1. Constant disobedience
2. Disrespect for teachers and/or students
3. Vulgar or inappropriate language or behavior
4. Inappropriate use or destruction of school equipment/property
5. Defiance to authority
6. Fighting or physically abusing students or teachers

Depending upon the age and severity of the actions of the child, consequences for referrals will follow this pattern:

1. Time out
2. Written assignment
3. Phone call to parent
4. Parent conference to determine further action/consequence
5. Suspension from Before/After Care for as much as one (1) week
6. Expulsion. Student would not be allowed to return to Before/After Care for the duration of the school year.

The School must be kept informed of current phone numbers (home, cell and work), addresses, and adults allowed to pick up your child. Medicine cannot be administered without proper written consent from parent/guardian (forms are available in the school office). All students enrolled in Before Care receive breakfast and those enrolled in After Care receive a snack. Homework time is also an important part of After Care and students should take advantage of this opportunity.

## **PLAYGROUND CODE OF CONDUCT**

The playground provides a special setting for the training and development of character and conduct as well as having fun! The following behaviors are expected of all students.

1. I will play cooperatively with other students, which will be displayed by:
  - a. Following playground policies and procedures.
  - b. Following rules of a game.
  - c. Involving others in activities rather than leaving them out.
  - d. Putting others before myself.
2. I will show respect for others that will be demonstrated by:
  - a. Speaking kind and not hurtful words to others.
  - b. Showing respect for others property/possessions.
  - c. Refraining from shoving, pushing, and fighting.
  - d. Meeting other's needs unselfishly.
3. I will show obedience to those in authority by:
  - a. Doing what I/we are told the very first time.
  - b. Obeying with a good attitude.
4. I will tell the truth by:
  - a. Exhibiting the courage to tell things as they really are.
  - b. Refraining from deceit or lying.
5. I will demonstrate forgiveness by:
  - a. Forgetting an offense committed against me/us.
  - b. Refusing to try to get even.
  - c. Refusing to hold a grudge.
  - d. Asking for and receiving forgiveness from others.
6. I will demonstrate responsibility by:
  - a. Following rules and procedures without continuous adult monitoring.
  - b. Complete assigned tasks within a given time frame.
7. I will demonstrate patience by:
  - a. Exhibiting "self-control".
  - b. Waiting until it is my/our turn, not crowding in front of others.
  - c. Exhibiting a joyful spirit and not showing irritation while waiting.
8. I will be an encourager by:
  - a. Building up one another.
  - b. Refraining from making fun of others or ridiculing others.
9. I will demonstrate empathy toward others by:
  - a. Trying to help others.
  - b. Showing real concern for someone hurting.
10. I will display courteous behavior by:
  - a. Exhibiting proper responses such as, "Excuse Me," "I'm sorry to interrupt, but...," "Thank You," "Yes Ma'am," "No, Sir," etc.
  - b. Listening when others are giving directions.

## STUDENT DRESS CODE

The Bible does tell us that man looks at a person's outer appearance, but God looks at our hearts (I Samuel 16:7). We know that how we are viewed by God is the most important thing! Nevertheless, man does look at our outward appearance. Even as we have an obligation to see that our hearts are clean and pleasing to God, we also have an obligation to see that our appearance is clean and pleasing to man.

There is a close relationship between performance and appearance. It is our belief that students will achieve and develop their potential in proportion to how they view themselves. Students should dress in a way that will honor God and adhere to school guidelines. In accordance with this underlying belief, we at GCA expect the students to observe the guidelines presented for young men and women. The administration, staff and teachers will maintain and enforce the Dress Code Policies at both school and school related functions. ***It is the school's belief that parents will accept their responsibility and students will show their respect for the school by honoring the guidelines expressed below.***

***We encourage parents to inspect the dress of their child(ren) before leaving for school.*** All students are expected to be in compliance with GCA's Dress Code Policies while on campus or involved in school related activities. Any student **NOT** in compliance with GCA's Dress Code Policies will receive a "Notice of Non-Compliance of Dress Code" which will require a parent/guardian signature. Students wearing or displaying improper or questionable dress will be sent to Administration who will review matters in question. ***If a student consistently exhibits non-compliance with GCA's Dress Code Policies, a parent conference will be required.***

The school has standardized Dress Code Policies for the purposes listed below:

1. To train students to dress in a modest fashion
2. To create a positive, respectful, disciplined environment in the school
3. To help students in concentrating on academic achievement rather than clothing competition
4. To eliminate offensive fashions
5. To help reduce peer pressure and distractions
6. To help parents and students with financial pressure
7. To create a positive image in the community
8. To eliminate accidents and/or injury caused by excessive length and/or style

### Dress Code Policies:

1. **Hair:** Hair must be clean and groomed neatly and in styles appropriate to the school setting. Colors/dyes of unnatural colors (i.e. pink, red, blue, green, purple, etc.) are not allowed. Styles such as dreadlocks, mohawks, spikes, shaved initials/lines/shapes, etc. are not allowed. Boys' hair must hang above the collar of their shirt with a portion of the ears visible and out of their eyes. Facial hair and pony tails are not permitted on boys.
2. **Jewelry:** (For Girls: Any item such as rings, earrings, necklaces, bracelets, etc. should be worn in moderation. No more than one ring on each hand; one earring in each ear lobe; one watch or bracelet on each wrist; and one necklace. ***Hoop or dangle earrings larger or longer than the size of a quarter are not allowed for safety purposes.*** Earrings for boys are not allowed. Any jewelry item that is unsafe or causes a distraction in the class will be confiscated and returned to the parent at the end of the day. ***BOYS' EAR PIERCING, BODY PIERCINGS (NOSE, EYEBROW, LIP, TONGUE RINGS, ETC.) AND VISIBLE TATOOS (TEMPORARY OR PERMANENT) ARE UNACCEPTABLE.***
3. **Make-up/Nails:** Girls' make-up shall be worn in moderation. False eyelashes, bright red lipstick, dark/black nail polish or multiple colors and designs are not allowed. Fingernail length may not be more than 1/8 inch over fingertip.
4. **Head Coverings:** Scarves, hats or caps are worn outside the building and only if the weather requires or for medical reasons.
5. **Outerwear:** Any outerwear, **other than school approved uniforms and/or spirit wear**, such as sweatshirts (with or without hoods), coats or jackets **worn inside the building** are to be plain white, grey, black, navy or burgundy with no graphics/logos/designs other than school approved logos (i.e. Gateway Eagle, spirit wear logos, etc). When wearing hooded sweatshirts, the **hoods are not to be worn** on the head while inside the school. ***Other than above, no other outerwear is to be worn inside the classroom during the school day.***

***Outerwear worn to school that is not a school approved item MUST BE REMOVED PRIOR TO ENTERING THE CLASSROOM.*** All students have an assigned cubby and/or locker to secure outerwear.

6. **GCA Logo Polo Shirts:** Shirts are expected to be tucked in at all times. Short-sleeved shirts are not to be rolled up. During cooler weather, long sleeved shirts such as turtle necks may be worn **underneath** the polo shirt. **Plain** (no designs), long sleeved, turtle neck shirts may be **white, grey, black, navy or burgundy only**.
7. **Uniform Bottoms:** All pants, capri's, shorts, and P.E. shorts **shall be secured at the waist** and **belts must be worn** if belt loops are present. Uniform bottoms are to be worn comfortably and loosely, but not in a sloppy manner. Uniform bottoms that are "form-fitting" are unacceptable and not allowed. Cargo-type bottoms (several pockets, zippers, etc.) are not considered as uniforms. Girls' hemlines **shall be at least knee-length**.
8. **Shoes & Socks** – All students must wear a **dark, closed style shoe on uniform days (no high heels/pumps** are permitted). **Tennis shoes/sneakers are permitted on P.E. days only**. All shoes must be laced or tied, as designed, to fit securely on the feet. Socks, tights and/or nylons must be worn at all times and **may be white, grey, black, navy or burgundy only**. No other colors or designs are allowed. During cooler weather, leggings may be worn to school; however, they must be removed prior to entering the classroom. **Heelies, sandals, flip-flops, open-toed or backless shoes, or bedroom slippers are not allowed**. In the event of a foot injury, medically prescribed footwear is allowed with a doctor's note.
9. **P. E. Uniform**. All students will dress for P.E. in an **approved GCA P.E. uniform**. A student's grade is partly dependent upon being in proper uniform. During cooler weather, **plain grey, black, navy or burgundy sweat pants** are permitted for P.E.
10. **Chapel Dress** – On Chapel days, **boys** must wear **long uniform pants** (and belts if belt loops are present) and GCA polo shirts. **Girls** must wear skirts, long pants or skorts jumpers with GCA polo shirts (no shorts or capri's). **All students** must wear a **dark (black/brown/navy)** closed style shoe – **NO tennis shoes/sneakers are permitted**.
11. **Spirit Dress Days** – On certain designated days, students will be allowed to wear special "Spirit Day" clothing approved by Administration. **No designer labels or logos** (i.e. Polo, Izod, Tommy Hilfiger, etc.) are permitted.
12. **Personal items:** All personal items, including shoes, should be marked with student name and grade.

School-approved uniforms may be purchased from Education Outfitters. **Uniform bottoms in khaki and navy are also available at Target and Wal-Mart**. If you or your child(ren) have a question regarding an "approved" item, please check with administration prior to wearing to school. This will help alleviate any questions or challenges for the school, the student and the family.

GCA reserves the right to amend, revise and/or change the Dress Code Policies at any time. GCA also reserves the right to deem the acceptable or unacceptable dress of the student's clothing, whether or not it has been specifically outlined in the Dress Code Policies. Any student's consistent failure to comply with the established guidelines may ultimately result in the loss of the privilege of attending Gateway Christian Academy.

## STUDENT AWARDS

### Honor Roll

Quarterly Honor Roll recognition is based on the following academic and conduct achievements:

1. Principal's Honor Roll: All A's
2. Honor Roll: A's and B's
3. School Code of Conduct/Dress Code: No Detentions, Referrals, Suspensions, etc.

### Perfect Attendance

Quarterly Perfect Attendance recognition is based on the following criteria:

1. No unexcused absences
2. No unexcused tardies over three in any nine week period
3. Excused tardies not to exceed three in any nine week period

### Christian Character

This award is presented to the student in each class who has demonstrated the most consistency and growth in and out of the classroom in the areas of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. These students know the difference between right and wrong and choose right 95% of the time. Their actions are not motivated by what they can get, but what they can give.

### GCA's Eagle Award

GCA's Eagle Award recipients (1<sup>st</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade) will receive this top award based on the following criteria:

- **Academic Scholarship:** A cumulative grade point average of an "A" (GPA= 3.80) or higher.
- **Character:** Upholds principles of morality and ethics; is cooperative and responsible; demonstrates high standards of honesty and reliability; shows courtesy, concern, respect for others, and submissive to authority; and generally maintains a positive outlook on life.
- **Citizenship:** Understands the importance of civic involvement; demonstrates participation and responsibility through involvement in activities such as church groups, community organizations or school events.
- **Leadership:** Resourceful, a good problem solver, involved in and promoting school activities, dependable, organized and a good organizer.
- **Service:** Exhibits the quality of voluntary contributions to his/her class, teachers and school with the expectation of receiving nothing in return.

## **FOOD SERVICES**

**Breakfast:** Breakfast will only be provided to students who are a part of the Before Care program. The serving of breakfast ends at 8:00 am. However, parents are strongly encouraged to provide a nutritious breakfast for their children before bringing them to school. When children begin their day with a healthy breakfast, they are able to perform better in the classroom and learning is increased.

## **HEALTH SERVICES**

**Sickness:** Please refrain from sending your child to school within 24 hours of illness, i.e., vomiting, diarrhea, fever, rash, etc. If you are called to pick up a sick child, please have them remain at home until symptoms have subsided for 24 hours.

**Medicine:** Ideally, all medication should be given at home. GCA recognizes that some students may have special needs that require a prescription to be administered during school hours. ***All medications including prescription and nonprescription must be given to administration with a signed medication form and will be kept in administration.*** Prescription medication must be in the original container with doctor's name, student's name, dosage amount to be given and expiration date. Nonprescription medication such as Tylenol, Advil, cough drops, etc. must be accompanied with a medication form with clear directions as to dosage and time to be given. The student will be called from class at the time medication should be given. Please note the school does not have a doctor and/or registered nurse on campus. **Please do not send medication with your child.** It must be turned in at the front desk for the protection of every student.

**P. E. Excuses:** When any student has a physical challenge that limits activity or prohibits a particular activity, the school requires a note from the family medical doctor indicating the reason for limitation and the period of time for which the limitation is valid. Parent requests for exemption (sore throat, nausea, etc.) will be honored within reason.

**Staying indoors during P.E. or Recess:** Students are not allowed to remain indoors during P.E. or Recess without a note from their parent(s) or guardian(s). Teachers will honor a parent/guardian's request, for medical reasons, if the child is to remain indoors.

**Vision and Hearing Screening:** Vision and hearing screenings are conducted each year on various grades initiated by the School District of Hillsborough County. If you suspect your child has a challenge in this area, please contact the school office.

## PARENT MINISTRY

We welcome involvement of our parents in the activities of the school. When parents register their children, they will be asked to identify areas in which they feel they would like to help. **It is expected that parents will attend all Parent-Teacher Fellowship events.** These events may consist of special teaching and training on topics important to parents. Room parents, class sponsors, and daily prayer for the children are important responsibilities of our parent volunteers throughout the year.

**Parent-Teacher Conferences:** Regularly scheduled Parent-Teacher conferences will be held during the first and second semester of the school year. However, any parent who wishes to have a conference with a teacher is encouraged to do so. The parent may call the school for an appointment with the teacher. Should a conference with an administrator be desired, the same procedure should be followed.

**Parent Issues:** We encourage our staff and parents to utilize the *Matthew 18 Principle*. Most of your issues can be resolved by going directly to your child(ren)'s teacher. If you have a question or challenge concerning your child(ren)'s grades, homework, class behavior or activities, please contact their teacher first, before bringing it to the attention of the administrative staff.

**Parental Visits:** It is the desire of the administration and faculty to be of service to both parents and students. We welcome parents who wish to visit; however, any visit to a classroom must be made by appointment with the office. ***It is the policy of the school that all parents/visitors must sign in at the front desk and receive a "Visitors Badge" to be able to enter the classrooms, lunchroom, playground area, etc.*** Unless a visit is arranged with the teacher prior to the start of the day, parents are requested not to visit the classroom or request to speak with the teacher. It is important to understand that the teaching staff has a schedule to fulfill for the benefit of all students.

**Parent Volunteer Hours:** The school desires and needs the partnership of every parent in order for the school to succeed! All parents are required to follow the guidelines established by School Administration regarding donated hours (minimum of 10 hours). Please see Parent Commitment page for further details.

**Parent Teacher Fellowship (PTF):** All parents are encouraged to participate in the PTF throughout the school year. The officer categories are as follows:

1. President
2. Vice-President
3. Secretary/Treasurer

(Duties of the PTF officers will be included in the student orientation packet. If interested, please contact the school's main office to indicate which category you may be interested in for the new school year).

## MISCELLANEOUS

**Cell Phones and/or Electronic Devices:** No cell phones and/or electronic devices are to be brought to the school campus. Gateway Christian Academy follows the guidelines set forth by Hillsborough County schools: “***We see it...we take it.***” Any student cell phone or electronic device confiscated during the day will be brought to Administration and returned to the parent upon student pickup. If the student continues to bring the electronic device to school, it will be held in Administration until the end of the school year.

**Student Messages:** Students are called to the office telephone only in extreme emergencies. In case of illness in the home or some emergency which the parent can explain to the receptionist, students will receive the message. Students are encouraged to take care of all business and other arrangements before or after school.

**Mail:** No mail or parcel package will be delivered to the students in the building. Mail addressed to students is forwarded to the home address. This regulation protects our students from the outside influence of those attempting to bypass parental supervision.

**Visitors:** Students may be called from class to see parents or visitors who can satisfactorily explain their business. No visitor is to be permitted to see a student without permission from the office and parent. All visitors must sign in and out in the Visitors Log located in the school lobby.

**Curriculum Materials & Building Care:** Students are responsible for all materials checked out to them. Students who lose or mistreat materials resulting in more than normal wear and tear (water damage, ripped covers, broken bindings, etc.) will be fined an appropriate replacement or repair cost. Writing is permitted only in workbooks as assigned by teachers. Teachers will periodically check the condition of materials that have been checked out. **Report cards, transcripts and standardized testing results will be retained as a result of unpaid fines.** Students will be expected to care for campus property and fines will be imposed upon students who cause damage/destruction of school property.

**Driving Instructions:** In order to ensure the safety of our students please adhere to the following traffic policies.

1. **Do not park and leave your car unattended under the school canopy area or block the entrance to the school.** You may stop to drop off or pick up students. Please park in the school parking lot if you need to meet with school faculty, staff or administration. Students should exit and enter vehicles using doors closest to the school building.
2. Traffic should flow westward in front of the door. Please do not go against the flow of traffic which may block others who may be waiting to drop off or pick up their children.
3. Please do not allow children to cross traffic areas without supervision.
4. Entering via N. Florida Avenue: please use extreme caution when approaching the building and drive your vehicle around the outer perimeter of the parking lot in order to line up and drive under the canopy where all parents pick up their children.
5. When exiting from the canopy parent pick up drive-way, please exit using the first parking lot opening. **PLEASE DO NOT ATTEMPT TO EXIT AT THE END OF THE PARENT CANOPY PICK UP DRIVEWAY BY DRIVING STRAIGHT AND THEN ATTEMPTING TO MAKE AN IMMEDIATE RIGHT TURN FOR THE SAFETY OF INCOMING TRAFFIC.**
6. Our school may at times utilize the assistance of Safety Patrols during morning drop offs and afternoon pickups. Please adhere to the directions of all Safety Patrols.

**School Closure:** In the event that Gateway Christian Academy should permanently close, all student records will be transferred to the Hillsborough County Department of Education and will become the property thereof.

## PARENT/GUARDIAN COMMITMENT

1. We have read and understand the school’s Christian philosophy of education and its Statement of Faith and are in agreement with the Mission, Vision, Purpose and Philosophy of Education of Gateway Christian Academy. **We agree that we have read and will read all information provided by the school.**
2. We understand and agree that we will faithfully pay all tuition and fees according to the school policies and procedures. Should there arise a financial challenge and/or concern, we will immediately inform Administration to prevent any undue financial burden upon the school.
3. We as parents accept the challenge to “train up a child in the way he should go” (Proverbs 22:6), and do state that this training will be carried out in the home. We place our trust in Gateway Christian Academy to extend that training more completely.
4. We understand that we have an obligation to be actively involved in the education of our children. We agree to uphold and support the high academic standards of Gateway Christian Academy by providing a place at home for our child to study and to give our child encouragement in the completion of homework assignments.
5. We will faithfully support the school through our prayers and positive attitude, and in keeping with Matthew 18:15. We are committed to giving a good report by sharing any complaints and negative comments only with the people involved. Unresolved issues will be taken care of by using the school’s chain of command.
6. We understand that the standards of Gateway Christian Academy do not tolerate profanity, obscenity in word or action, dishonor of the Holy Trinity and the Word of God, disrespect to the personnel of the school, or continued disregard and/or disobedience of the established policies and procedures of the school.
7. We believe that discipline is necessary for the benefit of each student as well as for the entire school, and we give permission to the teachers and administration to make and enforce school regulations in a manner consistent with Christian principles, Gateway Christian Academy and the School District of Hillsborough County handbook (no corporal punishment is permitted).
8. We pledge that if for any reason our child does not respond favorably to the school, we will do everything in our power to cooperate and partner with the school to help our child make the necessary adjustments. If those adjustments cannot be made, then we agree to quietly withdraw our child.
9. We understand that assessments will be made to cover damages to the school, including breakage of school property, book damage, and abuse of other personal property. This also includes charges for pulling the fire alarm.
10. We will support the school by involvement in Parent-Teacher Conferences, Open House, Parent-Teacher Fellowship activities, workdays, volunteer hours (minimum of 10 hours) and other school-sponsored activities to the best of our ability and to remember our commitment to our child(ren)’s school.

We, as parents of Gateway Christian Academy students, do sincerely give our pledge that we have read and understand the contents of this handbook and this parent commitment. We understand that failure to comply with the established regulations of Gateway Christian Academy or failure to meet our financial obligations will forfeit the student’s privilege of attending.

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Parent/Guardian Signature

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Date

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Parent/Guardian Signature

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Date