

2024 | GASTON CHRISTIAN SCHOOL | 2025

MIDDLE SCHOOL PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK



GASTON
CHRISTIAN
SCHOOL
East Cleveland Campus

PREPARE *People*
TEACH *Truth*
GLORIFY *God*

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A BRIEF HISTORY OF GASTON CHRISTIAN SCHOOL, INC.

Gaston Christian School, Inc. was established in 1979 by a group of seven area pastors and interested Christian parents who believed that a need existed for a school that would provide a program of academic excellence and spiritual development in an orderly, God-honoring setting. The first year was devoted to planning, with the school opening its doors the following fall (1980) with an enrollment of 105 students in grades K-9 in the educational facilities of Parkwood Baptist Church. A preschool program for three- and four-year-olds was added in 1985.

In August 1991 an additional elementary school campus was established in the Belmont/Mt. Holly area, using the educational facilities of Catawba Heights Baptist Church.

In 1994, the program expanded through grade ten on the campus of the former Sacred Heart College. Grades 11 and 12 were added the following two years with the school now providing a full college-preparatory program through the 12th grade. Acquiring 54 acres of land in March 1999 for future campus development, the school entered one of the most exciting phases of its history. In August of 2006, all elementary students moved to their new building on the Lowell campus. Students in grades 6-12 re-located to the consolidated campus in August of 2008. Campus development continued with the construction of the Fine Arts Center, which was completed during the 2018-2019 school year.

As set forth in the Articles of Incorporation and the Bylaws, Gaston Christian School is governed by a self-perpetuating Board of Trustees. The school is accredited by an independent oversight board; Gaston Christian is also approved by the North Carolina Department of Non-Public Instruction.

NON-DISCRIMINATORY POLICY

Gaston Christian School, Inc. admits students of any race, color, national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate in the administration of its personnel or educational policies, admission policies, scholarships, athletic activities, or other school-administered programs.



Dear Parents,

I would like to welcome you and your child to the Gaston Christian School East Cleveland Campus program. We are so grateful and thankful for the opportunity we have been given to serve you and your family in Christian education.

This is a very instrumental time in the life of your child where academic, spiritual, and personal growth are priority. We are excited about partnering with you throughout the year and want you to know that we are faithfully committed to the success of your child.

Please feel free to communicate with your child's teacher about any concerns, ideas, or feedback that may be helpful to the overall growth of your child. We are devoted to keeping you updated on your child's progress as well as communicating any concerns should they arise.

My prayer is that this year would have a lasting positive impact on your child as we all work together to provide the ideal environment for learning and for developing Christ-like character in your child.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Victoria Ahearn". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Victoria Ahearn
Principal – East Cleveland Campus

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom,
and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.
Proverbs 9:10

STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY, MISSION, AND OBJECTIVES

1.1 Philosophy

The Board, administration, faculty and staff of Gaston Christian School believe that education, like life, should be centered upon a personal relationship with God who is both our Creator and Redeemer. In Christian education, the Bible as the inerrant, infallible Word which reveals Jesus Christ is our philosophy, or foundational belief system, rather than man-centered philosophies.

1.2 Vision Statement

Soaring to Excellence in Christ

1.3 Mission Statement

Prepare People. Teach Truth. Glorify God.

1.4 Objectives

The School

- Believes that education must be personalized if it is to be effective.
- Views the student as created by God, in God's image and likeness. The student is somebody.
- Pledges to assist the student at each level of education to realize fully his undeveloped capacities for knowledge and wisdom apace with his maturing years.
- Takes a Biblical view of the student. Scripture teaches us that our students are unique individuals created in God's image yet possessing a morally corrupt nature. Our goal at GCS is to provide opportunities for spiritual growth through Biblical instruction, compassionate discipline and correction, and nurture and encouragement, thus allowing our students to know God and Jesus Christ which is eternal life.
- Takes a developmental view of the student. At GCS we recognize the many facets that contribute to the educational development of our students: personalities, degrees of readiness and motivation, stages of physical growth, environment of the home, spiritual maturity, and relationships to those in the world around them. Such recognition enables us to minister to our students on multiple levels.

The Teacher will:

- Be committed to the Lordship of Jesus Christ and set before students a noble example of Christian life and conduct.
- Follow the guidelines set before them in the GCMS Student/Parent Handbook.
- Seek to know each student's abilities, feelings, values, and hopes.
- Build many roads to success into the instructional program and assist students every day to taste success in an area of earnest endeavor.

- Communicate what is expected of students.
- Communicate how students can get assistance to achieve successfully what is expected of them.
- Respect each student as an image bearer of God, regardless of the student's performance.
- Lead the life of a Christian scholar in the vast and exciting worlds of fine arts, science, mathematics, language, literature, history, etc. The teacher will be a spiritual and intellectual model for students to follow and will have something rich and challenging to offer students.
- Carefully examine and prepare for the learning styles of students.
- Bring great enthusiasm to the teaching-learning transaction.
- Have a passion for learning and an ever increasing mastery of the subjects they teach.
- Set before students the rigorous requirements of the pursuit of academic excellence.

The Parents have:

- Primary responsibility for their students. Parents train by example as well as by precept.
- Responsibility to teach their students that education is an aided form of self- development over which the individual himself can never be relieved of the fundamental responsibility.
- Responsibility to encourage their students by carefully attending to the student's world of school. Parents must listen to and talk with students about the school day.
- Responsibility to support the school's and teacher's authority in the eyes of their students.
- Responsibility to stay abreast of their student's academic progress through FACTS/Renweb.
- Responsibility to resolve differences with the school or with a teacher in accordance with the scriptural principles outlined in Matthew 18 and Galatians 6.

The Student will:

- Take an interest; he will set himself to learn and obey.
- Aim high and strive hard. Whatever the student does, she will do with all her might as before the Lord's searching gaze.
- Know that man cannot live without taking sides, without making decisions and taking action, and will know that while he is free to make choices, he is not free to determine the consequences of his choices.
- Know that the scriptures are the comprehensive equipment of the man of God and fit her fully for all branches of her life's work.
- Understand that the diversity of insights in the greater Christian community does not represent the pettiness of a difference, but rather, is representative of the vastness of the subject.
- Recognize that bare facts, barely expressed, is not wisdom. He will understand that wisdom involves a feeling for facts, the realization of their meaning, significance, and application.
- Accept the rigor and discipline which is required to become a Christian scholar.

2. ADMISSIONS

2.1 General Admissions Criteria to GCS

Because Gaston Christian School deems a well-ordered environment as necessary to the fulfillment of its mission statement, it is selective in its admission of students. Students who are not in good standing with their previous schools are generally not offered enrollment.

All middle school student applicants are thoroughly evaluated as to their readiness for the GCS program. Prior conduct, attendance, and attitude are considered heavily in the application process. An invitation to enroll is not extended to every student that applies.

2.2 General Overview of the Student Application Process

Prospective parents initiate the application process by contacting the Director of Admissions to receive information about the school and the enrollment process.

The application process involves completion of electronic documents and references. Applicants generally need to have scored at the 50th percentile rank or higher on standardized tests in reading, language, and math in order to be able to have a smooth transition to the GCS academic program.

Student applicants are interviewed and evaluated by an Administrator. In support of the school's mission statement, an Administrator will also evaluate the student's desire to attend.

2.3 Decisions for Admissions

If the student is considered eligible to enroll, the parents will receive an acceptance letter which grants 10 days to accept the offer of enrollment. The school cannot guarantee available space after the 10-day period has elapsed.

In the event that the Administrator declines enrollment, the parent(s) will be notified in writing and an appeal of the Administrator's decision may be made to the Head of School.

3. GENERAL INFORMATION

3.0 Administrative Discretion

This handbook gives guidelines to be observed by students and parents and attempts to state expectations and consequences clearly. However, since the school cannot foresee and address all situations and circumstances in this document, the administration reserves the right to exercise its administrative judgment and prerogative in responding to new or extraordinary situations or circumstances within all sections of this Handbook.

3.1 Attendance Policy

3.1A Introduction

The entire process of education requires a regular continuity of instruction, classroom participation, learning experiences, and study to achieve the goal of maximum educational benefit for each child. Essential to this process is the regular contact of students with one another in an appropriate learning environment and their participation in planned instructional activities under the leadership of a teacher.

3.1B Maximum Absences

In specifying the maximum number of absences a student may have and still receive academic credit, the following are guiding principles:

1. The maximum potential benefit of schooling is available to the student with no absences.
2. Once a student has accrued excessive absences, he will not reach the minimum educational benefit available and, therefore, may not earn academic credit.

Students should have no more than 12 absences in a school year. If a student reaches this number of absences, any further absences must be only due to medical reasons, family emergency or school-related events. Absences for any other reason above this threshold would be cause for serious concern. Parents will be informed once a student reaches 8 total absences.

In the event that, due to medical reasons supported by documentation from a licensed medical provider, consideration may be given to a modified attendance and make-up work program overseen by an Administrator and School Counselors. However, once a student exceeds 16 absences for any reason, the student will be asked to pursue at-home learning or other educational opportunities for the remainder of the year unless the administration grants a special exception based on a case review. Gaston Christian is not equipped for and does not desire to be a distance learning environment.

3.1C Procedures and Issues

- a. If a student's attendance pattern becomes of concern, an administrator will arrange a conference with the parent(s) to review the reasons for the excessive absences.
- b. Any absence for whatever reason shall be charged against the student's record, except when a student participates in an approved school activity requiring his/her presence.
- c. In order to assist school personnel in discriminating between truancy and absence for good and sufficient reasons, it is required that parents submit to the school office a signed note which states the reason the student

was absent. This note should be presented to the office before school begins on the first day of the student's return to school. No note will be accepted after a period of 5 school days. If a note is not submitted, the absence will be coded unexcused until written notification is received. The excuse offered in the note will be given consideration by school administrators to determine what is and is not excused for academic purposes. Reasons such as vacations planned during the course of the year, outside extra curricular activities that take a student off campus during the school day, and other personal activities scheduled during the school day may be counted as unexcused absences.

- d. Teachers will provide students an opportunity to make up assignments that were missed during an absence. Such make-up work must be done promptly, and the student is responsible to make necessary arrangements for the makeup work and testing within the assigned time. Work should be made up within two days upon returning to school if one school day is missed. If more than one day is missed, students must establish a timeline for completing missed work with his/her teacher. If the work is not made up within two days or within a time frame assigned by the teacher not to be less than 2 days, an "F" grade may be recorded at the teacher's discretion. In unusual circumstances of long-term excused absences exceeding 5 days but not exceeding 16 days, teachers and/or administration may allow for making up tests and other work under a special plan overseen by the Academic or School Counselor.
- e. When parents are aware of special problems concerning their student, which are of a continuing nature and are related to patterns of absence, the parents must apprise the school of the special nature of the problem in order that school authorities can arrange for alternative educational experiences which ensure that minimum course requirements are met.
- f. A student must be in school by the beginning of third period of that school day to participate in any athletic or extracurricular activity or event.
- g. The school recognizes that some family-related events may impact school attendance. Please contact the school office when such special circumstances occur.
- h. If a student is absent a single day and a pre-announced test is given, the student may be responsible to take the test(s) on the day of return at the teacher's discretion.
- i. Students who arrive late to school and are absent during a test or other assessment may be required to take the assessment before departing at the end of the school day at the teacher's discretion.
- j. If a student is absent part of a school day, all homework due on that day must be turned into the teacher in which the class will be missed either before the student checks out or when the student checks in. A "0" will be entered for any homework assignments if this is not done.
- k. Long-term homework assignments (those given five or more days prior to the due date) must be turned in on the due date regardless of whether the student is in attendance. Family and personal medical emergencies may be exceptions. Unless the student is excused by an Administrator, a "0" grade will be given for assignments not turned in.

3.2 Planned Absences

Absences, such as those for family trips, may be approved and excused by Administration if the student meets the following criteria:

- It must be applied for by the parents using a Planned Absence Request (available through the office) at least one week in advance.
 - For the request to be approved, a student must be in good standing with each teacher/class, must not have a problem with tardies, and must not be in danger of exceeding the number of absences allowed by policy in order to earn credit.

- Students are not usually granted excused planned absences during any exam week at the end of a semester.
- Due dates for homework, tests, and other assignments are to be arranged with the teacher on the student's initiative before the student departs on the planned absence. This includes school-sponsored events in which an entire team or class may be absent from school.

3.3 AFTER SCHOOL CARE

After School Care is a service for parents who are unable to pick up their student by 3:15. This program is provided for all students in grades 6th ONLY from 3:15 p.m. until 6:00 p.m. each day. Those who need regular monthly or part-time After School Care should complete the registration form available in the Middle School office. Students not picked up by 3:15 p.m. will be assigned to the After School Care Program. The parents account will be charged by the Business Office. (Fees are listed on the website.)

*Please note ON DAYS WITH EARLY DISMISSAL, SCHOOL IS CLOSED, OR DISMISSES EARLY DUE TO WEATHER, there will be NO After School Care. It is the responsibility of the parents to arrange transportation for their student on these days. Participation in the After School Care Program is a privilege and will be extended only to those students who establish patterns of acceptable behavior during this time. This time can be used for finishing homework, studying, and preparing for tests.

3.4 Tardy Policies

Regular attendance and punctuality to school are essential to success in school and later in the workplace. Students must be on time to school. Failure to attend school punctually interrupts the learning environment for teachers and students and is not conducive to an orderly academic environment.

The purpose of this tardy policy is to maximize instructional time and encourage students to use their time wisely. This policy is designed to provide clear expectations and consequences for tardiness.

General Guidelines:

1. Definition of Tardiness: A student is considered tardy if he/she is not in his/her assigned classroom/seat when the class period begins.
2. Opportunities for Restroom Use: Students have designated times to use the restroom, including:
 - Between class periods (every 45 minutes)
 - During break time
 - During lunch period
3. Restroom Use During Class: If a student needs to leave the classroom to use the restroom during class time, they will receive an unexcused tardy for that class period.
4. Exceptions: An exception will be made for students with documented medical conditions requiring frequent bathroom visits. A medical diagnosis from a licensed Medical Provider must be submitted to the administration to qualify for this exception each school year.

Unexcused Tardies: We cannot list all reasons for unexcused tardies; it is at the discretion of the administration to determine whether a tardy is excused or unexcused.

Consequences for Tardiness:

- Accumulation of Tardies: A student will only incur punitive actions once they have accumulated six (6) unexcused tardies within a nine-week grading period.
- For every six unexcused tardies in a quarter, an ASD will be issued.

This policy aims to:

- Ensure that class time is utilized effectively.
- Encourage students to manage their time appropriately.
- Reduce disruptions caused by frequent restroom trips during class.

Final Note: We understand that emergencies can occur. However, the structured times provided for restroom use are generally sufficient for most needs. By working together, we can create an environment that promotes responsibility, respect for instructional time, and overall academic success.

3.4A Students who arrive tardy to school must report to the office to receive an admittance slip.

- The excuse offered in the note should be specific and will be given consideration by School administrators to determine whether the excuse is valid. All tardies to first period will be considered unexcused after 8:15 a.m. in the middle school without a doctor's excuse.
- General statements requesting an excuse for a tardy without a specific and valid reason being provided will be considered an unexcused tardy.
- After the third excused tardy, excused tardies will not be given for repetitive tardies for the same reason, such as but not limited to traffic, oversleeping, delay caused by sibling, etc. as adjustments need to be made to the student's schedule to allow him/her to get to class on time.
- Unless the office receives a phone call, an email, or a written note from a parent or guardian requesting that the tardy be excused, the tardy will be accounted as unexcused. Requests for a tardy to be excused must be sent to the office no later than 8:15 a.m. on the third school day after the tardy occurs. *If there is a situation of an ongoing nature that will result in excessive tardies, the parent of the student should bring the situation to the attention of the school administrators to determine if the situation will be given special consideration due to extraordinary circumstances.

3.4B Consequences for Excessive Tardies:

- Each time a student accumulates 6 unexcused tardies in any class or among all classes in a quarter, he/she will receive an ASD.

3.5 Arrival and Dismissal

School hours for middle school students are 8:15 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Students are expected to be in their seats and prepared for class (have all necessary materials) when the bell rings.

Students may arrive at school as early as 7:15 a.m. Between 7:15 a.m. and 7:40 a.m., all students dropped off must report to before school care. Any misbehavior may result in the loss of this privilege.

After 7:45 a.m., students go directly to their lockers. All students must be picked up by 3:15 p.m. unless they are participating in an after-school event or detention. Any student not picked up by 3:15 p.m. will go directly to After School Care.

3.6 Sign In/Out Procedure

Parents are encouraged to schedule medical and dental appointments after school whenever possible. Understanding that this can be difficult, the school will permit early dismissals for infrequent appointments or emergency situations. Parents should pick up students during class change times so as to not interrupt classroom instruction.

Students who have a scheduled medical or other necessary appointment must present a note to the office prior to first period on the day of the appointment or a note from the provider's office upon return to school. The note must be signed by the parent or provider and indicate the specific reason for the "sign out" request.

Parents picking up students must sign them out in the Middle School office or send a note with their student in the morning indicating the reason and time of dismissal.

No student should leave the school campus for any reason without first obtaining permission from the middle school office. Students who leave campus without signing out may receive an ASD or suspension for skipping class, as deemed appropriate by administration.

Students arriving on campus after the beginning of the school day must sign in with the middle school office and must have a note from a parent or a provider within the time frame set out in 3.4A above.

3.7 Birthday Celebrations/Student Birthday Treats

A student birthday treat may be shared with a class if the teacher is contacted and if the treat is limited to one item that can be quickly and easily served (individually wrapped ice cream cup, cookie, brownie, rice krispie treat, or doughnut etc.). The treat should come to school with the student that morning, along with napkins, please. Birthday parties will not be held at school.

No balloons, flowers, or gift items may be delivered to a student in a classroom because of the disruption these items create.

3.8 Food in the Classrooms and the Halls

Students are welcome to bring a snack from home for morning break. Out of respect for school property along with individual Chromebooks, only water is permitted in the classrooms and must be in a container with a secure lid. Only plastic water bottles are allowed. Vending machines are only available during lunch. Students are not permitted to leave the classroom during morning snack time to go a vending machine. ***Parents are not permitted to use a meal delivery service to provide a lunch to their child.***

3.9 Visitors

3.9A Visitor Sign In

In the interest of school safety, all visitors must sign in at the front office.

3.9B Lunch Visitors

Visitors will be expected to wear appropriate attire that is consistent with the school's stance on modesty.

3.10 Lockers

3.10A Lockers for Personal Use

1. Students are assigned a locker for personal use. Lockers may be locked when not in use. The school is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged goods belonging to students.
2. Students should not enter anyone else's locker without permission from the student who is assigned to that locker.
3. Students must provide a carabiner (clip) that must close with the locker for the student's locker to close shut. If it does not shut, the student must clean his/her locker until it does shut.

3.10B Lockers Subject to Search

Lockers are the private property of the school, and as such, are subject to search/inspection by school administrators or School Resource Officer at any time.

3.10C Maintenance of Lockers

1. Students are not permitted to store opened food or drink in lockers.
2. Lockers must be kept clean inside and out. Stickers are not allowed on any part of the lockers.

3.12 Posters

Posters/banners/advertisements containing club, sports or other announcements must be initialed by an Administrator or Athletic Director prior to being displayed on campus.

3.13 Chapel

Weekly chapels are a very significant part of Gaston Christian School. Students are required to participate and are challenged from the Word of God to develop genuine Christian character. Failure to attend Chapel will be treated as skipping an academic class for purposes of punishment. There will be special chapels through the year that parents/guardians are allowed to attend.

3.14 Disaster Drills

Fire drills and other disaster drills are held at various times during the school year. Directions will be posted in each room, and instructions for leaving the room will be given at the beginning of the year. Students shall exit quietly, quickly, and orderly while listening for directions during such drills.

3.15 School Delays/Cancellations

Parents will receive notification by GCS App notification, email, posted on the GCS website, and social media (Facebook page, Twitter, and Instagram). This information will be available as soon as a decision is made regarding the closures/delays. Local TV stations will be informed after all direct communication has been sent.

To keep you informed of a school closing/delay, please download the GCS App for important notifications. <https://gastonchristian.org/hub/#text>

3.16 Problem/Concern Resolution

In any school (or other organization), it is inevitable that occasional disagreements or misunderstandings will arise between students and their parents and school personnel. As Christians, we find the principles for resolving such matters described in Matthew 18:15-17. This passage requires the person with the concern to go first and only to the other party. With a proper attitude and good communication from everyone, most, if not all, school problems can be resolved in this way.

An administrator who is approached with a concern that has not been first presented to the teacher or coach will direct the appropriate staff member to contact the parent to arrange resolution. By deferring to deal directly with the problem, the administrator is not trying to appear disinterested in the situation but is trying to uphold sound Biblical teaching. Board members, when approached by parents with a concern, will refer the parent back to the individual staff member involved without becoming entangled in the matter.

If approaching the staff member directly involved fails to bring satisfaction, then the student/parent should contact the Middle School Principal to arrange resolution. If the complaining party remains dissatisfied with following the outcome of the meeting with the Middle School Principal, the party may present the matter to the Associate Head of School.

Pursuing the matter beyond the authority of the Head of School requires the aggrieved party to put the concern in writing before the Board of Trustees will hear the matter. As a faculty and staff, we are very interested in helping you resolve any issue that may arise; however, we need your assistance to reach that goal.

The Parent Code of Conduct (Addendum D attached hereto and incorporated by this reference) lays out the procedures for reconciliation in the event a Parent or Family Member violates the Code of Conduct in dealing with students, staff, faculty or school administration. Parents agree to follow the guidelines of Section 3.16, 3.17 and Addendum D in matters of conflict with the School.

3.17 Formal Reconciliation and Binding Arbitration/Mediation Agreement

One of the principles clearly set forth in Scripture is the instruction that believers are not to sue one another in public courts. Grievances between believers are to be settled within the body of Christ. (See 1 Corinthians 6:1-8 and Matthew 18:15-20.) The purpose for this instruction is that the Body of Christ is to be united and that the Name of Christ not be blasphemed due to the conduct of believers. We are to seek to be reconciled to each other rather than to triumph over one another.

In the event that conciliation is necessary, the Rules for Procedure of Christian Conciliation established by the Association of Christian Conciliation Services shall be the sole remedy utilized in pursuing arbitration/mediation. (Handbooks giving a full description of this process are available in the school office.) All families and students of GCS expressly waive their rights to initiate civil litigation against Gaston Christian School, its employees, administrators, and officers as a condition of enrollment.

4. HEALTH INFORMATION

4.1 Immunizations

State law requires that all immunizations and medical records be current and on file in the office. Please check with the School Nurse in fulfilling this requirement.

4.2 Medicine

Absolutely NO medications (non-prescription, over-the-counter, or prescription) will be administered by either school personnel or self-administered by students without written authorization of a PHYSICIAN and PARENT OR GUARDIAN. This is in compliance with NC state law and there are no exceptions. Medicine will be administered only by the school nurse with proper authorization. Parents must complete the Medication Administration form, which is available from the nurse or on the GCS website, before any of the aforementioned medications will be administered on campus.

Over-the-counter medications Acetaminophen (Tylenol), Ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil), Diphenhydramine (Benadryl), Tums, Pepto and antibiotic ointment will be available at Gaston Christian School. Dosing of all medications will be consistent with the recommended dose for age as defined on package guidelines unless otherwise indicated by a physician. The listed over-the-counter medications will be administered only with written parental AND physician permission via the Medical Administration form. Faxed physician permission will be accepted.

Prescription medication will be administered to students at school only on the specific written request of the student's physician and parent or guardian. Medication must be left at school in the original container that has the student's name, date prescribed, doctor's name and instructions. Asthma inhalers and EpiPens are the only exception to this policy of leaving the medication at school; these should remain with the student at all times if the physician indicates self-administration on the medication authorization form. The signed form must be on file in the Nurse's office in order for the student to carry any medication. Possession of any medication (over-the-counter or prescribed) without a Medication Authorization form will be considered a serious violation pursuant to Section 6.2B(5).

Copies of this form will be required to be completed before any overnight/day field trips. Forms are located for your convenience on the GCS website or school offices.

4.3 Excused from Class for Illness/Injury

4.3A Assessment by School Nurse

Students are allowed to leave class for illness in cases of emergency as determined by the teacher. The teacher or school secretary will refer the student to the School Nurse who will assess the student's illness and call a parent/guardian to arrange for the student to be picked up (if needed).

4.3B Parent Contact

Students who are ill and feel they need to call home should see the school nurse who will assess the student and contact parents if needed. Students are NOT permitted to contact their parents for pickup under these circumstances using their Chromebooks without seeing the nurse first.

4.3C Ill Student Pickup

Students will remain in the sick room or middle school office until a parent arrives.

4.3D Participation in Athletics or Extracurricular Activity

If a student is too injured or ill to participate in PE class, then the student will not be allowed to participate in an athletic practice, athletic game or other extracurricular event on that day.

5. ACADEMICS

5.1 Academic Requirements

The high academic expectations for the child set in a Christian environment tend to enhance student learning. Characterized by a predominately college-preparatory curriculum, Gaston Christian School has the ministry of equipping the student with the necessary skills and content to help him realize his full God-given potential.

5.2 Promotion Requirements

Students will be promoted when they successfully complete the previous year's course work. Students in grades 6-8 must earn a grade of "60" or above for the year in order to pass a subject. Students earning a grade below "60" in a core subject may be required to do other tutorial work before credit is earned. The student will be required to provide documentation for the work completed.

If a student fails any three (3) core subjects for the year, he/she WILL NOT be promoted to the next grade level. This will result in withdrawal of the student from Gaston Christian School for a minimum of one school year.

5.3 Middle School Course Requirements

(1 Credit Each)

6th Grade

Bible
English Language Arts
Math
Science 6
American History 1 (.5)
Civic/Economics (.5)
Computer Science

7th Grade

Bible
English Language Arts
Pre-Algebra or Math 7 or HS Algebra
Life Science
American History II
STEM

8th Grade

Bible
English Language Arts
H.S. Algebra or Advanced Pre-Algebra
Earth Science
H.S. Cultural Geography
H.S. Spanish
H.S. Geometry

Required Rotating Courses (.5 Credit Each):

Art
PE
MS Finance
Music
Percussion Class
Athletic Training & Wellness

5.4 Bible Class

Each student in regular attendance must take daily Bible class. Bible is intended to be a subject in which Bible content is studied and biblical philosophy is contrasted with worldly philosophies. The students are encouraged to discern the relevancy of the Bible by making personal, practical application. GCS holds the Word of God to be the rule of faith for daily living. The course emphasizes scripture memorization.

5.5 Grading Scale

Percentage Pts	Letter Grade	Reg. Grade Pts
100-90	A	4.0
89-80	B	3.0
79-70	C	2.0
69-60	D	1.0
59 and below	F	0.0

5.6 Academic Distinctions

GCS uses two distinctions in order to recognize outstanding student achievement:

- Distinguished Honor Roll
- Honor Roll

At Middle School level: The Distinguished Honor Roll is composed of students who earn a grade point average of 3.75 and above. The Regular Honor Roll is composed of students who earn a grade point average of 3.5 to 3.74.

Awards are given at the end of the school year for students earning these commendatory distinctions.

5.7 Progress Reports

Progress Reports will be at the midpoint of each grading period for every class in which the student's current grade is below 70. Parents are encouraged to review student progress through FACTS (formerly RenWeb) updates.

5.8 Report Cards

The middle school posts report cards on FACTS (formerly RenWeb) every nine weeks.

5.9 Semester Exams

Semester exams will be given in all core subjects in middle school.

Semester exams are weighted for 7th and 8th grade as follows:

Semester 1 Grade	Semester 2 Grade	Year Grade
Marking 1 40%	Marking 3 40%	Semester 1 50%
Marking 2 40%	Marking 4 40%	<u>Semester 2 50%</u>
<u>Sem. 1 Ex. 20%</u>	<u>Sem. 2 Ex. 20%</u>	100%
100%	100%	

Semester exams are weighted for 6th grade as follows:

Semester 1 Grade	Semester 2 Grade	Year Grade
Marking 1 45%	Marking 3 45%	Semester 1 50%
Marking 2 45%	Marking 4 45%	<u>Semester 2 50%</u>
<u>Sem. 1 Ex. 10%</u>	<u>Sem. 2 Ex. 10%</u>	100%
100%	100%	

Students will not be granted any excused planned absences during exam week at the end of the semester.

5.10 Test Days

Teachers will give students at least two (2) days notice for all major tests. Spelling and vocabulary quiz assessments are regularly scheduled and are not considered a part of the quiz calendar quota. Quizzes may be given at any time. No more than two major tests and two planned quizzes will be given on the same day.

5.11 Standardized Tests

All students in grades 6-8 take the Stanford Achievement Test and the Otis-Lennon School Ability Test in the spring of each year. The test results are available to parents to help them understand their student's progress. GCS utilizes these test results to evaluate student progress and to evaluate its overall educational program.

5.12 Homework

The school recognizes that students need to experience balance in their lives between school work, social activities, family participation, and church. In recognition of this needed balance, teachers assign reasonable quantities of homework and provide time at school to do some homework. Rarely will homework be assigned on Wednesdays with the exception of math. Homework may be assigned over weekends. Students are encouraged to record daily homework assignments in a planner or assignment book.

Homework is a major part of learning in that it takes practice to master any skill. Homework is assigned on a regular basis and is expected to be submitted on time. It is essential that every student keep current with assignments and be prepared for class.

Students may not call home for parents to bring in homework once school has begun (8:15 a.m.). If a student forgets his/her homework, a zero will be given. We will not accept late homework. There will be no homework grades dropped when figuring the quarter grades.

6. STANDARDS OF CONDUCT/DISCIPLINE

6.1 Conduct/Discipline General Guidelines

Because Gaston Christian School is a Christian ministry, the main purpose of the school includes teaching of the Christian faith and the development of Christian character and virtue in young people. In addition to obeying Scriptural principles and pleasing the Lord, some standards of conduct are also necessary for the safe, smooth operation of the school. It is our belief at GCS that the standards are Scriptural and neither burdensome nor unreasonable. Parents agree as a condition of enrollment to uphold and support the school and its policies at all times. In the event of a disagreement, please refer to section 3.16 “Problem/Concern Resolution.”

6.1A Scriptural Guidelines for Behavior and Discipline

Listed below are five Scriptural principles which the school has identified as having direct application in the daily lives of students. Below the supporting verses is a list of infractions which by nature could be a violation of that Scriptural principle.

Scriptural Principle #1: Live to Christ / put off evil

Examples of supporting verses: Col. 3:5-10, 1 Thess. 4:3, 1 Cor. 6:19

Ways this principle could be violated:

Sexual promiscuity/immoral behavior

Stealing/cheating/lying/plagiarism

Impure/unedifying speech

Use/possession of alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, and any other illegal drugs including the use of non-prescribed prescription medication or the misuse of prescribed medication

Possession of drug paraphernalia

Misconduct in or out of school

Scriptural Principle #2: Be gentle and kind to others

Examples of supporting verses: Gal. 5:22-23, Eph. 4:31-32, Phil. 4:5

Ways this principle could be violated:

Damaging another’s property to include school property*

Improper behavior toward other students

Instigating a fight, verbally or physically

Bullying other students (including hazing and initiation)

Insulting others

Scriptural Principle #3: Submit to authority

Examples of supporting verses: 1 Pet. 5:5, 1 Thess. 5:12-13, Rom. 13:7, Jude 1:8

Ways this principle could be violated:

Arguing with a teacher/showing contempt for his/her authority

Disrespect to a teacher by causing a distraction in class

Direct disobedience

Disrespect to faculty/staff (including body language/tone/expression)

Failure to obey specific classroom guidelines (according to teacher expectations)

Unauthorized (i.e., without school permission) absence from a detention

Scriptural Principle #4: Strive for excellence in your work

Examples of supporting verses: Col. 3:23-24, Gal. 6:7, Prov. 22:29

Ways this principle could be violated:

Being unprepared for class (without paper, pencil, books, homework)

Skipping class/school

Unexcused tardy

Unexcused absence

Consistent failure to participate in class discussions

Consistent failure to turn in required assignments

Scriptural Principle #5: Obey rules made for the good of the school

Examples of supporting verses: Rom. 13:1-2, 1 Pet. 2:13-14

Ways this principle could be violated:

Dress code infractions

Using cell phone during school hours (for calls or text messaging)

Food and drink in undesignated places

Going to or through off limit areas without permission

Leaving belongings around lockers

Littering the buildings and grounds

Negligent driving (speed/vehicle control)

Personal grooming during class

Displays of physical affection

6.1B Damage to Property

Damaging school property or an individual's property on school grounds will result in billing the parents of the responsible student for the replacement/repair costs incurred by the school or individual and, if warranted, disciplinary action for the student to restore the item damaged.

6.2 Disciplinary Action

6.2A Administrative Discretion

As stated in the Enrollment Agreement (incorporated herein by this reference) Gaston Christian School reserves the right to dismiss any student who persistently and willfully neglects his academic work, exercises poor citizenship, reflects adversely on the Christian principles of the school, or engages in behaviors or a lifestyle inconsistent with the Biblical guidelines promoted by the school. This policy applies to behavior on and off campus throughout the year, including summer vacation.

This handbook gives guidelines to be observed by students and parents and attempts to state expectations and consequences clearly. However, since the school cannot foresee and address all situations and circumstances that may arise in this document, the administration reserves the right to exercise its administrative judgment and discretion in responding to new or extraordinary situations. This discretion specifically extends to disciplinary action within Section 6 of the Handbook.

6.2B General Disciplinary Action

When misbehavior or other infraction of school/classroom standards (described throughout Section 6 and Addendums attached to this Handbook) occurs, a teacher may verbally correct the problem, conference with the student and/or parents, assign an after-school detention (ASD), or refer the issue to the Administration for further action. Redirective discipline alternatives (such as, but not limited to, research projects, work-based discipline, letters of

apology, etc) may be implemented as deemed appropriate upon consultation with Administration. Any disciplinary actions will be recorded in the student's Behavior section in FACTS/RenWeb to be available for viewing by the parent or guardian. Details of school disciplinary action are confidential and will not be shared with persons outside of the student's parents/guardians and relevant school personnel.

In general, when violations of the Conduct Policies contained in this Handbook occur, the following steps will be taken for disciplinary action:

1. Verbal Warning:

Upon the first conduct policy infraction, a student will receive a verbal warning. The warning will be entered into the FACTS/Renweb behavioral report, which will be sent to the parents/guardians.

2. Verbal Warning:

Upon the second conduct policy infraction, a student will receive a verbal warning. The warning will be entered into the FACTS/Renweb behavioral report, which will be sent to the parents/guardians.

3. Redirective Alternative:

Upon the third conduct policy infraction, a student will receive a Redirective Alternative. The consequence will be entered into the FACTS/Renweb behavioral report, which will be sent to the parents/guardians.

- a. If the Electronic Device policy is violated, the device will be held in the office until the end of the school day.
- b. If the Chromebook policy is violated, the Chromebook will be locked down for 1 day.

4. After School Detention:

Upon the fourth conduct policy infraction, the student will receive an After School Detention. The consequence will be entered into the FACTS/Renweb behavioral report, which will be sent to the parents/guardians.

- a. If the Electronic Device policy is violated, the device will be held in the office until the end of the school day and the student will turn in the device for 5 school days to be held in the school office from 8:15-3:00.
- b. If the Chromebook policy is violated, the Chromebook will be locked down for 7 days.

5. After School Detention:

Upon the fifth conduct policy infraction, the student will receive an After School Detention. The consequence will be entered into the FACTS/Renweb behavioral report, which will be sent to the parents/guardians.

- a. If the Electronic Device policy is violated, the device will be held in the office until the end of the school day and the student will turn in the device for 10 school days to be held in the school office from 8:15-3:00.
- b. If the Chromebook policy is violated, the Chromebook will be locked down for the remainder of the school year.

6. In School Suspension:

Upon the sixth conduct policy infraction, the student will receive an In School Suspension. Administration will hold a conference with the parents/guardians to discuss the ongoing disciplinary issues.

- a. If the Electronic Device policy is violated, the device will be held in the office until the end of the school day and the device will be banned from the school premises for the remainder of the year.
- b. If the Chromebook policy is violated, Chromebook privileges will be suspended for the remainder of the school year.

7. In School Suspension with Behavioral Contract:

Upon the seventh conduct policy infraction, the student will receive a 2-day In School Suspension. Additionally, the student will be placed on a Behavioral Contract. Further infractions may result in immediate dismissal from Gaston Christian School.

While these steps represent a common disciplinary process, the circumstances of the offense may lead to certain steps being modified or accelerated, up to and including immediate expulsion from enrollment. Furthermore, the administration reserves the right to modify these consequences depending on the severity of the violation.

6.2B(1) Redirective Activity

Redirective Activity is given as a consequence for a poor choice. The student will be assigned creative discipline, such as, but not limited to, research projects, work-based discipline, letters of apology, or service projects.

6.2B(2) After School Detentions (ASD)

A middle school student may be assigned a one-hour detention to be served after school from 3:15 to 3:55 on Wednesdays only for any infraction of the school/classroom standards. Time is a trust given to us; therefore, students will be involved productively during detention. Unexcused absence, tardiness or misconduct during detention will result in the issuance of an additional ASD.

Attendance in ASD is mandatory and supersedes any other GCS event such as athletic practices, games, rehearsals, or club activities, except by administrative approval. A detention may be rescheduled for medical appointments with a doctor's note.

6.2B(3) Suspension

Administration will determine whether a suspension is to be served out of school or in school. Students on suspension are prohibited from attending or participating in after-hours school activities until the suspension has been served. If the activity is primarily of a spiritual nature, an Administrator may grant permission.

Suspensions can result in a loss of leadership positions and/or awards.

Colleges, universities, and other high schools (if a student is transferring) may ask on the application if the student has been suspended or has been the subject of disciplinary action. GCS will provide the appropriate information upon request from the educational institution.

6.2B(4) Immediate Dismissal

Because the school exercises a high degree of selectivity in the admittance of students, it is unlikely that a GCS student would commit an offense such as those below; however, they are included in this policy manual as a matter of record.

The following offenses will result in a dismissal review from GCS along with the possibility of criminal charges being filed against the student by the school or District Attorney's office. Students who have been dismissed from the school will not be allowed on campus (during school hours or for after-school events) without permission from school administration.

- On-campus possession of a firearm or deadly weapon, or any item which looks like or is used as a weapon;
- Criminal misconduct (on or off campus)
- Theft
- Assaulting a staff member
- Assaulting another student

- Sexual assault of any person
- Blatant disrespect toward a student or staff member
- Verbal, written, electronic threats or any other means, including hand gestures, to a student or staff member
- Sexual misconduct (heterosexual or homosexual in violation of The Statement of Christian Beliefs Regarding Marriage, Sexuality and Gender, incorporated herein by this reference);
- Harassment of fellow students or staff/faculty members;
- Bullying of fellow students or staff/faculty members pursuant to Section 6.7 below;
- Trespassing on school property
- Vandalism of school property
- Possession of drugs including alcohol, electronic cigarettes, vaping devices or solutions, and tobacco (on or off campus at any time of the year); **
- Misuse or abuse of prescription medications **
- Positive result of any drug or alcohol screening test**

**A drug screening will be required at the expense of the student’s family before the student can return to school pursuant to Section 6.6 below. A student will be required to leave school pending the result of the drug screening. Nicotine screening may be administered on campus by the School Resource Officer or School Nurse. Parents must submit results of drug screening to Gaston School administration.

Special note: Gaston Christian School Administration reserves the right to suspend or expel a student immediately if circumstances warrant it.

6.3 Prohibited Items and Activities

6.3A Generally Prohibited Items

The following items and activities are strictly prohibited on campus:

- a. Weapons (guns, knives, etc.) or any other item which looks like or is used as a weapon such as airsoft guns, bebe guns, etc
- b. Unauthorized drugs and drug paraphernalia in any form including alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs, unauthorized use of prescription medication, or violation of Section 4.2 above.
- c. Tobacco products, electronic cigarettes, vaping devices or solutions and
- d. Fireworks
- e. Any item that does not promote instruction, such as but not limited to electronic entertainment devices, electronic games, or any other device that might distract from learning. These items will be taken and returned to the parent after 24 hours. Any item that dishonors God, is contrary to the mission statement of Gaston Christian School, or in any way distracts from an orderly environment or classroom instruction is also prohibited.

6.3B Use of Personal Electronic Devices

Students are given school issued Chromebooks for use at school. These Chromebooks are protected by School firewalls, GoGuardian monitoring system, and other safety protocols that are not available on personal devices. Therefore, personal electronic devices, such as but not limited to personal computers, iPads, tablets or other internet connected devices, are not permitted unless express permission is granted by an Administrator for a limited purpose and a limited time within the school day. The Administrator may ask a student to leave any personal electronic device in the school office when not being used for the approved purpose and time.

6.3C Use of Personal Listening Devices

Earbuds and headphones are allowed in the classroom for academic purposes only (including during study hall), and may only be used with permission from the teacher. They are not allowed in the halls (except for use with approved school curriculum).

6.3D Student Cell Phone/Smartwatch Policy

Our Middle School cell phone policy is “Bell to Bell No Cell.” This policy will promote meaningful face-to-face communication designed to protect students from distractions, the social media comparison trap and the temptation to make a bad decision with the phone as well as helping the student to focus during the school day.

Administrators and teachers have the responsibility to maintain order and to create a positive and respectful learning environment for GCS students. Cell phones/smartwatches can be a disruption to the educational environment on a day-to-day basis (interfering with learning); they also can be used for electronic cheating (text messaging or sending pictures during tests, plagiarizing from the Internet, etc.), violating privacy (inappropriate use of phones with cameras in restrooms or locker rooms), and cyberbullying.

Students and parents should adhere carefully to the following guidelines:

1. Although administration recommends that cell phones/smartwatches not be brought into the school building, these devices are permitted on campus provided that they are stored in the school’s lock boxes located outside the school office. Each middle school student will be given a box # and slot #.
2. Students will be required to turn off cell phones/smartwatches and put them in the lock boxes no later than 8:10 a.m. Our policy is “bell to bell no cell.”
3. All student phone calls, incoming and outgoing, should be made through the middle school office. Please know that you may call the office and leave a message at any time if you need to get in touch with your child. Students may call parents in the case of an emergency from office telephones. Parents may also reach their student via email.
4. Administration and staff members will take a cell phone/smartwatch if it is in the possession of a student during the school day.
5. **Consequences for cell phone/smartwatch violations:**
 - a. **First Offense:** At the time of the violation, the cell phone will be confiscated and held in the office until the end of the school day. The student may come to the office to get his/her phone/smartwatch back at the end of the school day. The student will receive an ASD.
 - b. **Second Offense:** At the time of violation, the cell phone will be confiscated and held in the office until the end of the school day. The student may come to the office to get their phone/smartwatch back at the end of the school day. This offense will be considered an act of insubordination and will result in an ASD.

6.5 Chromebook and Internet Policy

See Addendum G: Student Acceptable Use Policy

6.6 Drug Testing Policy

- a. Upon reasonable suspicion, credible reasons or credible report as determined by the Administration and/or School Resource office, a student may be required to submit to drug or alcohol screening. The expense of the screening will be incurred by the student's family.
- b. If the substance suspected is tobacco, tobacco and nicotine screenings will be conducted at the School by the School Nurse or School Resource officer.
- c. If a student over the age of 18 is required to take a drug screening, the Director of Security and a staff witness will take the student for the drug screening.
- d. If the student is under 18 years of age, a parent will be called to pick up the student and take the student to meet the Director of Security at the testing facility.
- e. Unless it is not possible to test the student on the date of request (testing facility closed), the student must be tested on that day. If testing is not available on that date, the student will be taken to the testing facility on the next day it is open. This must occur before the student attends any classes.
- f. A positive test of any drug or alcohol screening will result in disciplinary action, which can include expulsion; parents must submit results of drug screening to the middle school administration. If the student attempts to avoid, bypass, refuse, or by any other means attempts to alter the test, the test will be considered to be a positive test for the purposes of this policy.

6.7 Bullying Policy

Harassment or bullying of a student(s) by other students is contrary to God's Word and to the school's commitment to provide a physically and psychologically safe environment in which to learn. In John 13:34-35 Jesus commanded us to ". . . love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."

Bullying occurs when a person or group is intentionally intimidated, frightened, excluded, or hurt by a pattern of behaviors directed at them by others (Greg Griffiths, "Bullying in Schools-the Hidden Curriculum, 2003).

The following actions in an ongoing manner may be forms of bullying:

- a. Physical aggression (hitting, kicking)
- b. Teasing or verbal abuse (insults, name calling, or racial/sexual remarks)
- c. Damaging a person's property/possessions or taking them without permission
- d. Threatening gestures, actions, or words
- e. Written/verbal/electronic messages that contain threats, putdowns, gossip, or slandering
- f. Cyberbullying through any social media site, texting, or other electronic means

Bullying is not acceptable behavior; incidents will be assessed by the administration and addressed according to administrative discretion. Gaston Christian Middle School recognizes that not all conflict and/or inappropriate behaviors should be considered bullying or willful violation of this policy.

7. STUDENT APPEARANCE/DRESS GUIDELINES

**APPLIES TO ALL SCHOOL-RELATED FUNCTIONS (INCLUDING ATHLETIC EVENTS).*

7.1 Appearance/Dress Code - General

As a Christian School, we have a unique opportunity in our community. We should have a desire to attract others to Christ in every aspect of our lives, including our dress. Secular culture suggests that we follow whatever current culture says is fashionable or popular to feel personal value. However, at GCS we are training students to think differently about dress. We maintain our dress code for these reasons:

1. To emphasize GCS's seriousness of purpose by encouraging students to think of their attire as an aspect of academic professionalism and their work;
2. To avoid the negative self-consciousness and social competition that fashion culture tends to promote;
3. To promote a sense of identity with the school and among the students as a group;
4. To uphold biblical principles of modesty, appropriateness, gender distinctiveness and stewardship (Gen. 1:27, Rom. 12:2, 1 Cor. 10:31).

We believe that our appearance is important to our Christian testimony, and we expect all students to exercise good taste and judgment in their dress. Dress should not distract from the learning process or attract undue attention to one's appearance but to the inward character of the individual. "Your beauty should not come from outward adornment such as braided hair and the wearing of gold jewelry and fine clothes. Instead, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight" (I Peter 3:3-4).

The school staff and administration also believe that dress can influence the learning environment; a well-groomed student should come to Gaston Christian with an attitude that prepares him/her for neat, conscientious work. In addition to honoring the Lord, student attire should convey respect for oneself, for fellow students, for teachers and to maintain a professional standard for the learning environment. Parents are requested to review the dress code and assist the school in its implementation.

The GCS dress code should be maintained before, during, and after the school day not only on the school campus but also at off-campus activities (unless otherwise stated). Students may wear sweatpants to home sports games on any day of the week.

This dress code policy is not intended to be all-inclusive. All clothing and accessories should be clean, neat, modest, and not distracting to the school environment. **The administration reserves the right to make decisions on items not specifically mentioned in this policy.**

If you have clothing which you feel may be questionable, check with an Administrator before you wear it to school. **Final determination of appropriateness of attire or appearance will rest with administration. School officials have the authority and responsibility to determine whether a student's appearance satisfies the intent of this policy. Anything that disrupts the learning environment will be deemed unacceptable.**

Enforcement: Students may not be admitted to class if attire is inappropriate and students may be required to change clothes before entering class. Parent(s) may be called or student(s) sent home if the administration determines that it is warranted. Dress Code infractions will be enforced according to Section 6.2B above.

GCS HIGH SCHOOL & MIDDLE SCHOOL DRESS CODE POLICY 2024

The GCS dress code has been carefully selected with the primary goal of ensuring that it can be consistently and fairly enforced. While we do not want to constantly focus on dress code, it is important to adhere to the standards we have set. By signing the handbook agreement pages, both students and parents agree to abide by these guidelines. If a student breaks a rule, such as wearing shorts that do not reach the top of the knee, three times in a quarter, that student will not be permitted to wear shorts for the remainder of the quarter. This applies to any dress code rule, not just shorts. Should the same behavior continue into the next quarter, the item of clothing (ex. all shorts) may be prohibited for the rest of the school year. It is also the discretion of the administration to ask a student to wait in the office if an outfit needs to be changed. It is our expectation that parents and students help us maintain these standards to ensure a respectful and focused learning environment.

DRESS CODE:

- Attire for Physical Education classes (applies to all Physical Education Credits): Uniforms will be provided through the school to be paid through an outside provider. The link to purchase PE attire is www.cardinalscreenprinting.com/store. All students are required to wear this uniform during physical education classes and activities.
- Attire for all academic buildings needs to be neat, fit appropriately, and be worn modestly.
- All shirts, blouses, or sweaters must provide full coverage, reach below the waistline, and have a crew neck or collar. If the top has buttons, it must be buttoned to within two from the top button. No shirt should be excessively tight.
- All t-shirts should have messaging that is in keeping with the mission of the school. T-shirts displaying political messaging or candidates, drug images or messaging (including tobacco, vapes, and alcohol), or any artists/bands are prohibited.
- Dress slacks, casual slacks, or blue jeans may be worn to class. Blue jeans may have rips that do not extend above the top of the knee while standing. All pants must hit at the waist.
- Shorts must come to below or to the end of fingertip length. With shoulders relaxed, arms straight by the side, and fingertips extended, shorts must be at the fingertips.
- Hem length of dresses or skirts must be below or to the end of fingertip length. With shoulders relaxed, arms straight by the side, and fingertips extended, shorts must be at the fingertips. Slits in skirts are to meet the same criteria as skirt length.
- Clean, neat shoes appropriate for school are to be worn. There may be times when closed-toed shoes are required due to safety concerns and students should comply when instructed to do so. Bedroom shoes are not permitted.
- Students may wear **loose**-fitting sweatpants only to any home athletic event and on administration-approved casual dress days. Leggings, yoga pants, LuLu Lemon, exercise pants, breakaway pants, and pajama pants are not permitted.
- Only female students may wear earrings (piercings other places are not permitted). Any jewelry with messaging should be in keeping with the mission of the school.
- Hair must be neatly trimmed and styled with hair out of a student's eyes and face. Hair color must be a natural color and hair may not be a distraction to the learning environment. If a guy's hair extends to or below his shoulders, it must be worn in a ponytail while on campus for any purpose.
- All students must dress in accordance with their gender in the womb in a manner that is not a distraction in the learning environment to be determined by the school administration.
- Anything not expressly permitted in the dress code is prohibited, including but not limited to hats, hoods worn indoors, leggings, crop tops, exposed camisoles, and visible tattoos.

8. CAMPUS ACTIVITIES

8.1 Athletics

Gaston Christian School participates in several athletic leagues in order to provide maximum opportunity for wholesome athletic competition against other schools for fun and to provide students opportunities to develop skills best cultivated in co-curricular activities (including athletics). The ability of GCS to offer any particular sport is dependent upon sufficient student interest and successfully retaining a coach for that sport. Other sports may be offered in the future depending on student interest and school growth. The school presently sponsors the following sports (pending sufficient student interest):

Fall

Boys Soccer
Co-ed Cross Country
Girls Volleyball
Girls Tennis
Girls Golf
Skeet

Winter

Boys Basketball
Girls Basketball
Girls Cheerleading
Co-ed Swimming

Spring

Boys Baseball
Girls Softball
Girls Soccer
Boys Tennis
Boys Golf
Co-ed Track

8.2 Qualifications to Participate in Athletics

Academic Qualifications

In order to be eligible to participate in co-curricular athletic activities, a student should have an overall GPA of 2.0 or better and be passing all core subjects (Bible, Math, Science, English, History). The end-of-the-year GPA and status of earned credits for all core courses will determine the following fall and winter sports eligibility. The first semester's GPA of the current school year will determine eligibility for spring sports.

*The school does not hold openings on teams for athletes who are academically ineligible at tryouts. **Students who are academically ineligible during tryouts will be considered ineligible for the duration of the season for that sport.***

Student athletes whose previous year's final GPA falls below 2.0 will be re-evaluated for winter sports eligibility based on their report card for first marking period (minimum of 2.0 for GPA and not failing a core subject). Once the student has made the team, if he falls below the GPA requirement or is failing a core subject at the end of a marking period, he will have three weeks in which to bring his GPA to a 2.0 or better and to bring a failing grade up to a passing level. During these three weeks the student will be expected to be at all practices and games but will not be allowed to participate in the games. Any student not able to meet this standard will be ineligible to practice or play for the duration of that particular sport season.

Attendance Qualifications

A regular pattern of school absenteeism may negate eligibility to try out for GCS athletic activities.

Conduct Qualifications

Assignment of a third ASD and/or a DRS during a sports season will result in the student's removal from the team. Eligibility to try out/participate in other sports during the course of the year will be determined by administration and the athletic director. Students who demonstrate unsportsmanlike conduct before, during, or after a game may be dismissed from the team and may be subject to other disciplinary action. Unsportsmanlike conduct at athletic events by a parent or student may result in being denied the privilege of attendance at all athletic functions.

8.3 Attendance at Events

Athletes are expected to attend all awards' nights, all practices, and all games of that team. Absences can make a student ineligible to participate in the given sport.

8.4 Attendance at School

A student must be in school by the beginning of third period of that school day to participate in any athletic or extracurricular activity or event; students must have attended at least 6 of the 8 class periods and must be present for 7th and 8th period graduation credit classes in order to participate in athletic or extracurricular events. Students who have early dismissal documentation on file in the school office may leave after 7th period. Students absent from the entire school day are ineligible to participate in athletic events or other student activities on that day unless administration approved the absence in advance.

8.5 Field Trips, Overnight Class Trips, Retreats

Only overnight class trips which have educational or discipleship activities will be considered for approval by the administration.

Parents who accompany students and faculty on field trips, overnight class trips, or retreats will follow the GCS dress code guidelines outlined in this handbook.

Parents who chaperone any GCS trip or retreat will be cleared prior to the event through the Criminal/Child Abuse Clearance Form process.

ADDENDUM A

ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY

The administration and teaching staff at Gaston Christian School expect the students to approach their work seriously as a preparation for college and to maintain high levels of integrity, honesty, motivation, and respect. As a Christian school, we must do all things for the “glory of God” (1 Corinthians 10:31), and in this work we honor our parents (Exodus 20:12) and others in authority over us.

Plagiarism:

- Plagiarism is the taking of another person’s ideas or writings and presenting them as one’s own or without proper acknowledgment. Plagiarism is stealing (Exodus 20:15) and a serious violation of academic honesty.
- To prevent such theft, teachers will instruct students on proper documentation procedures for research assignments.
- Electronic, high tech, or Web-based plagiarism can be a significant problem in the Internet era. Downloading or “cutting and pasting” information directly into a paper from the Internet or other electronic sources without quotations or citations of that source is yet another form of plagiarism.
- The Internet may not be used for obtaining a research paper from sites such as Paper ‘R Us.
- Use of online foreign language translators is prohibited unless approved by the instructor.
- Students may not use “Cliff Notes,” “Spark Notes,” or any other non-academic hardcopy or online source of literary analysis.
- When preparing lab assignments for any science course, the student is to collect his own data for any experiments unless working with a lab partner. When using another’s data, proper credit must be given. The purpose, answers to experiment questions, and all conclusions must be in the student’s own words.
- Also prohibited is self-plagiarism, the submission of the same piece of graded work in more than one course without explicit permission of both teachers involved.

Cheating:

- Cheating damages the evaluation process and includes the following:
- Communication during a test or quiz by talking or signaling
- Having notes/answers visible during an assessment
- Unauthorized collaboration during an assessment
- Unauthorized use of notes or books on tests and quizzes
- Working with another on assignments when independent work is required
- Copying someone else’s homework answers
- Obtaining test or quiz questions and/or answers in advance through unauthorized means. The person who provides access to this information is also guilty of cheating.
- Willfully damaging the academic work of others
- Submitting, in whole or part, any work by another student.
- Electronic cheating (sending or receiving text messages that contain answers for a test, retrieving answers for a test from iphone)

Consequences for plagiarism and cheating:

Any plagiarism or cheating violation on an exam, test, quiz, report, homework, or other assignment will result in disciplinary action. Discipline will be carried out for any student who cheats in any manner as well as any student who willingly provides answers for another student.

It is the student’s responsibility to learn what is required in his academic work. If there are any questions relating to an assignment, the student should consult the teacher before presenting the work. The student should assume all work is to be individual unless expressly stated otherwise. When in doubt about proper documentation or research sources, a student should always consult his teacher.

ADDENDUM B

LIBRARY ETIQUETTE

- Each student has a library barcode number and may check out items using his or her account.
- Students may borrow 3 items at a time and renew items 1 time, unless the item has been requested.
- Students may borrow non-reference books and back issues of magazines.
- Overdue items are \$.10 per school day per item. Students must return the items and pay all overdue fines before renewing or checking out anything else; this measure prevents students from being overwhelmed by fines!
- Students will be responsible for books that are lost or returned damaged.
- Do not give another student your book while it is checked out to you! You are responsible for all damages, losses, or fines for all items checked out to you.
- Students must have a library pass to visit the library during the school day (including students coming from a study hall).
- If students are using the library computer lab to type a paper, their work may be saved to a public folder or to a USB flash drive.

ADDENDUM C

PARENT/GUARDIAN CODE OF CONDUCT

*MISSION: THE MISSION OF GASTON CHRISTIAN SCHOOL IS
“PREPARE PEOPLE. TEACH TRUTH. GLORIFY GOD.”*

Purpose of Policy: Gaston Christian School (hereinafter “the School”) values the partnership between parents/guardians, students, and the school to achieve the stated mission and recognizes that parents have the primary responsibility for their children. Partnership includes open communication between all parties (parents, students, teachers, and administrators), mutual respect among the parties at all times, and appropriate conflict resolution when a dispute arises among parties. The parents and the School agree to work together toward the best interests of the student insofar as possible within the mission and purpose of the School.

From time to time, the School recognizes that conflict may arise between the parents/guardians and the School. The School further believes that children learn by example as well as from precept. Therefore, it is imperative that disputes are handled among the parties with respect and Christian grace. The purpose of this policy is to set forth clear expectations and implement healthy practices when such conflict arises. The School holds that disagreements can and should be handled within the parameters of Scriptural principles; at the same time, the School must be able to maintain its integrity to implement necessary procedures for furtherance of the safety and distinctly Christian mission of the Institution. It is solely within the discretion of the School to determine standards of conduct and academic achievement as well as best practices to achieve the safety and mission of the Institution.

This Code of Conduct is applicable to all Gaston Christian School sponsored events, including but not limited to, the school day, athletic events, field trips, banquets, and other special events not herein listed.

Expectations: As partners in Christian education, Gaston Christian Parents agree to:

- Treat others with dignity and respect at all times;
- Commit themselves to conflict resolution based on Matthew 18 principles as set forth below;
- Teach their students that education is an aided form of self-development over which the individual can never be relieved of the fundamental responsibility;
- Encourage their students by carefully attending to the student’s world of school. Parents must listen to and talk with students about the school day;
- Support the School’s and teacher’s authority in the eyes of their students;
- Stay abreast of their student’s academic progress through FACTS/Renweb;
- Read and agree to follow the Gaston Christian School student handbook relevant to your student’s grade level;
- Respect and follow the School’s rules, calendars, and deadlines including but not limited to starting times, personal cell phone use, and dress code;
- Communicate respectfully, whether in person or in writing, with members of the School community, especially when there is a conflict and/or your student is present;
- Build a bridge of acceptance and understanding among the different cultures represented at the School;
- Allow 24 hours for School staff to respond to emails and voicemails and understand that messages left after 3:20 pm may be responded to the following day;

- Follow the on-campus speed limit, parking rules, and pick-up guidelines;
- Conduct themselves with dignity and respect at all athletic or other school sponsored events and to treat others outside of the School community who may be present, whether referees, students or parents of opposing teams, staff members, etc. with respect.

Unacceptable Behavior: In order to support a respectful, peaceful and safe school environment, the following parent behavior will not be tolerated:

- Shouting / raising voice at members of school staff either in person or over the telephone;
- Disrespectful, harassing, abusive or threatening emails, text messages, voicemail, phone messages, or other forms of written or verbal communication;
- Breaching the School's security procedures;
- Undermining or interfering with school sponsored events including but not limited to hosting competing events at the same scheduled time of the School event, encouraging students outside their immediate family not to attend a School sponsored event, and allowing or encouraging students not to follow School rules and policies at School events.
- Disruptive behavior which interferes or threatens to interfere with the operation of the classroom, office area, staff's office, or any other area of the school grounds or the School sponsored events and activities, including athletic events.
- Defamatory, offensive, abusive or harassing comments regarding the School or any staff member, teacher, parent, guardian or student in the School community posted on Social Media sites or other internet forums.

Major Events: Behavior including, but not limited to, the following will be considered a major event and may result in Third Offense consequences as listed below:

- Physical intimidation or violence towards teachers, staff, other parents or students of the School as well as referees or opposing teams parents, staff, or students whether on the School campus or at an away campus;
- Cursing, using profane language, or other insulting remarks towards teachers, staff, parents or students of the School as well as referees or opposing teams parents, staff, or students whether on the School campus or at an away campus;
- Causing disruption on campus or at school events through speech or conduct that are offensive or contrary to the school's dignity, purpose and sincerely held religious beliefs;
- Attending school sponsored events on or off campus under the influence of drugs or alcohol or allowing students to attend events under the influence of or in possession of drugs or alcohol;
- Threats of physical violence or harassing behavior towards teachers, staff, parents or students of the School as well as referees or opposing teams parents, staff, or students whether on the School campus or at an away campus;

In the event of threatening or harassing behavior, the School may feel it necessary to involve the School Resource Office or contact appropriate authorities and may ban the offending parent from the school grounds and/or grounds of School sponsored events and activities.

Procedures for Conflict Resolution of Parent with Teacher/Staff Member:

In any school (or other organization), it is inevitable that occasional disagreements or misunderstandings will arise between students and their parents and school personnel. As Christians, we find the principles for resolving such matters described in Matthew 18:15-17. This passage requires the person with the concern to go first and only to the other party. With a proper attitude and good communication from everyone, most, if not all, school problems can be resolved in this way. The procedure is as follows:

- An administrator who is approached with a concern that has not been first presented to the teacher or coach will direct the appropriate staff member to contact the parent to arrange resolution. By deferring to deal directly with the problem, the administrator is not trying to appear disinterested in the situation but is trying to uphold sound Biblical teaching. Board members, when approached by parents with a concern, will refer the parent back to the individual staff member involved without becoming entangled in the matter.
- If approaching the staff member directly involved fails to bring satisfaction, then the student/parent should contact an Administrator to arrange resolution. If the complaining party remains dissatisfied with following the outcome of the meeting with the school administrator, the party may present the matter to the Head of the Upper School
- Pursuing the matter beyond the authority of the Head of School requires the aggrieved party to put the concern in writing before the Board of Trustees will hear the matter. As a faculty and staff, we are very interested in helping you resolve any issue that may arise; however, we need your assistance to reach that goal.

Procedure for Conflict Resolution of School with Parent:

If parents or guardians violate this Code of Conduct, the following procedures will take place to resolve the conflict:

First Offense:

- A meeting will take place between an Administrator and parties involved in accordance with the Procedures for Conflict Resolution set forth above.
- The Head of the Upper School will be notified.

Second Offense:

- A meeting will take place between the Associate Head of School and parties involved in accordance with the Procedures for Conflict Resolution set forth above.
- The Associate Head of School will be notified.

Third or Major Offense:

- Offending party and family members, if appropriate, will meet with the Head of School or Associate Head of School.
- The Board will be notified.
- The Head of School reserves the right to take appropriate action including but not limited to:
 - Banning offending party from school grounds and school sponsored activities;
 - Asking the family to consider removing themselves from the GCS Community;
 - Refusing re-enrollment for the following year;
 - Immediately removing the family and its children from enrollment at GCS for failure to support the school and comply with policies as stated as a condition of enrollment in the family's Enrollment Agreement;
 - Contact appropriate authorities to pursue legal action including but not limited to obtaining a restraining order and/or criminal charges.

Final Statement: Although the School and its employees make every effort to avoid it, this policy recognizes that we live in a fallen world where mistakes, misunderstandings, and oversights will happen. The School acknowledges that these situations may result in emotional hurt, frustration, confusion and anger and that those feelings are legitimate and need a proper outlet. The purpose of this policy is to effectively allow for all sides of an issue to be given a full hearing and for the parties to resolve differences in a way that honors Scripture, maintains unity among the School community and glorifies God.

All parties to this Agreement agree to abide by Section 3.16 and Addendum C of this Parent/Student Handbook.

ADDENDUM D

GASTON CHRISTIAN SCHOOL STATEMENT OF FAITH

1. We believe the Holy Bible, as contained in the Old and New Testaments, to be the only inspired, inerrant, authoritative Word of God, perfect in all it affirms and sets forth. The truth of scripture is dependent wholly on God and not on the testimony of any man or church. Scripture interprets scripture. II Timothy 3:16-17, II Peter 1:20- 21, Hebrews 4:12
2. We believe that there is one God, eternally existent in three Persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Genesis 1:1, John 1:1, Hebrews 1:1
3. We believe in the perfect Deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, in His virgin birth, in His sinless life, in His miracles, in His vicarious and atoning death on the cross through His shed blood, in His bodily resurrection, in His ascension to the right hand of the Father, and in His personal return in power and glory to judge all mankind. Luke 2, the Gospel of John, Hebrews 10:5-27
4. We believe in the work of the Holy Spirit to call man unto salvation and to indwell the Christian and empower him to seek and to live a godly life. I Cor. 3:16, Colossians 2:4-10, I John 3:1
5. We believe that all men/women are created by God in His image. Having fallen, man is sinful in his present state before God and can be saved only by the redeeming grace of God. Romans 3:10-18, 23, Ephesians 2:1-22
6. We believe that faith in Jesus Christ alone, as both Lord and Savior, by the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit is the only way of Salvation for a lost and sinful person. John 14:6, Acts 4:12, John 4:24, Hebrews 11:1-6
7. We believe in the resurrection of all mankind--those who are called and saved unto the resurrection of eternal life and those who are lost unto the resurrection of damnation. John 5:29, Colossians 3
8. We believe in the spiritual unity of all true believers who call on Jesus Christ alone to be their Lord and Savior. Romans 1:11-12, Ephesians 4:4-6, Ephesians 1:15- 23, I Corinthians 2
9. We believe that according to the Bible, a Christian shall by his/her life testimony, be a member, supportive and involved in a local church of his/her choosing. Hebrews 10:19 -25

ADDENDUM E

STATEMENT OF CHRISTIAN BELIEFS REGARDING MARRIAGE, GENDER AND SEXUALITY

For the purposes of this statement, the school holds to the definition of “sex” and “gender” as both meaning the biological condition of being male or female as determined at birth by one’s physiology and chromosomal makeup.

We believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God (Gen. 1:26-27). Rejection of one’s biological sex is a rejection of the image of God within that person. Therefore, the school does not condone intentional attempts by a person to change one’s biological sex nor will the school refer to students by gender-specific pronouns other than those in alignment with their gender in the womb.

We believe that the term “marriage” has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in a single exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture (Gen. 2:18-25). We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other (I Cor. 6:18; 7:2-5; Heb. 13:4). We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman.

We believe that any form of sexual immorality (including adultery, fornication, homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, and use of pornography) is sinful and offensive to God (Matt. 15:18-20; I Cor. 6:9-10).

We believe that in order to preserve the function and integrity of Gaston Christian School as a Christian ministry and to provide a Biblical role model to the Gaston Christian School students and the community, it is imperative that all persons employed by Gaston Christian School in any capacity, or who serve as volunteers, agree to and abide by this Statement of Christian Beliefs Regarding Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality and that the conduct code requirements of students enrolled at Gaston Christian School also reflect and comply these beliefs. (Matt. 5:16; Luke 6:14; Phil. 2:14-16; I Thess. 5:22).

We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ (Acts 3:19-21; Rom. 10:9-10; I Cor. 6:9-11).

We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity (Mark 12:28-31, Luke 6:31). Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture nor the doctrines of Gaston Christian School.

ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY RELATED TO GASTON CHRISTIAN SCHOOL'S STATEMENT OF FAITH AND STATEMENT OF CHRISTIAN BELIEFS REGARDING MARRIAGE, GENDER & SEXUALITY

The Gaston Christian School (GCS) Statement of Faith as well as the Statement of Christian Beliefs Regarding Marriage, Gender & Sexuality is a summary of our core Christian beliefs which are derived from the Bible and which are also based upon historic, orthodox, Christian consensus. We believe God’s attributes are described in the Bible, including that He is loving, holy, and unchanging. We believe all people have a sinful and broken nature which manifests itself in various ways in various people. These sinful behaviors are contrary to God’s will as it is explained in the Bible. The Bible also gives us wisdom for holy living, and God has given us His Holy Spirit to grow us in sanctification so that behaviors which please God are possible. Our student body at GCS comes from a wide variety of denominations and churches which have statements of faith which may differ from the school’s position contained herein. Therefore, this statement serves to clarify the school’s views on marriage, sexuality, gender, and

the resulting impact this position has on the school's expectations for employees, students and parents.

We believe that there are circumstances in which a school must react to an employee or student's behavior when it does not align with our beliefs. We believe that in order to preserve the function and integrity of Gaston Christian School as a Christian ministry and to provide a Biblical role model to the Gaston Christian School students and the community, it is imperative that employees agree with and abide by this statement, and that parents and/or guardians agree that their students will abide by this Statement of Christian Beliefs Regarding Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality (Matt. 5:16; Phil. 2:14-16; I Thess. 5:22) while enrolled at Gaston Christian.

Our policies and practices flow from our sincerely held religious beliefs as expressed in our Statement of Faith and our Statement of Christian Beliefs Regarding Marriage, Gender and Sexuality and are also intended to guard against instructional disruptions at school (see Parent/Student handbook for specific policies). When a student is behaving in ways which contradict our purpose as a school and our conduct policies for students, the school's administration will take the following approaches:

We will focus our partnership with parents on discipling, mentoring, and helping students understand biblical thought and actions regarding marriage, sexuality, and gender, as well as the school's policies relevant to the situation.

While we believe sexual behavior outside of God's design as mentioned above to be sinful and contrary to what is ultimately best for each individual's good, we also believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ (Acts 3:19-21; Rom. 10:9-10; I Cor. 6:9-11). We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity (Mark 12:28-31; Luke 6:31). Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture nor the doctrines of Gaston Christian School. Sinful treatment of any student by another is not tolerated (see Parent/Student handbook for conflict, harassment, and bullying policies).

Student instruction, discipline, and counseling will be administered in accordance with their God-given gender in the womb. We will refer to students using pronouns aligned with their God-given gender in the womb. Students must dress, use the bathroom and locker room, and participate on athletic teams which align with their God-given gender in the womb (see Parent/Student handbook for further language and context).

I have read Gaston Christian School's Statement of Faith, Statement of Christian Beliefs Regarding Marriage, Gender & Sexuality, and the Administrative Policy related to these sincerely held religious beliefs of the school. Furthermore, I understand, support, and agree that my student will be taught these Christian beliefs as revealed through the Scriptures and that my student will be required to abide by a conduct code based on these Christian doctrines held by the school.

ADDENDUM F

STUDENT ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

Definitions

Technology: As used in this document, technology encompasses all GCS-owned computing devices and all personal computing devices used at GCS campuses, GCS buildings, and GCS-sponsored events. This technology includes but is not limited to all IT infrastructure devices, network equipment, software platforms, cloud platforms, email, laptops, chromebooks, workstations, iPads, monitors, software, door access control systems, security cameras, phones, speakers, computer peripherals, and personally owned mobile devices such as cell phones, smart watches, iPads, and laptops, especially personally owned devices that access the GCS network and/or use GCS IT accounts.

Cyberbullying: Cyberbullying is bullying, defined as unwanted, repeated, aggressive, negative behavior, that takes place over digital devices like cell phones, tablets, and computers. Cyberbullying can happen anywhere online, including but not limited to, over email, through texting, on social media, while gaming, on instant messaging, and through photo sharing.¹

PII: Abbreviation for Personally Identifiable Information, defined as any representation of information that permits the identity of an individual to whom the information applies to be reasonably inferred by either direct or indirect means. Examples of PII include one's full name, email address, phone number, social security number, and government-issued ID number.²

GCS: Abbreviation for Gaston Christian School

AUP: Abbreviation for Acceptable Use Policy

Purpose and Scope

This AUP outlines the guidelines governing technology and the behaviors students are expected to follow when accessing and using technology at GCS.

GCS believes technology plays an integral part in a holistic education experience. GCS's vision is that students acquire the skills necessary to select and manage digital tools that will empower them in research, problem-solving, content creation, communication, and collaboration. To fulfill this goal, students are responsible to use technology in a way that honors God and meets the best digital citizenship practices. When using technology, each student is responsible to meet God-honoring, biblical standards of behavior.

The use of technology at GCS is a privilege and not a right. Any violation of this policy may result in lost privileges.

¹ National Bullying Prevention Center: <https://www.pacer.org/bullying/info/cyberbullying/>

² National Institute of Security Technology (NIST): <https://csrc.nist.gov/glossary/term/PII>

School-Issued Student Devices

For students in grades 6-12, GCS assigns a chromebook and charge cord to each enrolled student. Each assigned chromebook and cord has a unique asset tag.

Students in grades 6-12 are expected to bring their chromebooks to school every day. Devices should be fully charged every day before coming to school. Neither chromebooks nor charging cords will be loaned by GCS.

Only school-issued devices are allowed to be used during the school day.

Students are responsible for proper care of the school-issued devices including but not limited to:

- Devices should not be stored in extreme heat or cold for extended periods of time.
- Devices should be protected from extreme pressure on the screen.

- Devices should not be marked on and stickers should not be placed on the device.
- Devices should be protected from exposure to liquids including rain, drinks, cleaners, etc.
- Devices should not be transported in the open position.
- Devices should not be left unattended.
- Devices that are lost or stolen must be reported to the Director of Technology immediately. If the device cannot be recovered, parents and student are responsible for paying replacement cost of the device.
- Devices that are damaged must be reported to the Director of Technology immediately. If the device can be repaired, it will be repaired and the parents and student will be responsible for paying for the repair of the device.

GCS reserves the right to search and seize personal electronic devices and technology when used on GCS property or at GCS events upon reasonable suspicion of criminal activity or activity which would violate the Parent Student Handbook and/or student code of conduct.

Student Accounts

GCS will create accounts for students that should be used for educational purposes. Student accounts can include but are not limited to, Google account, which includes email and a google drive. When a student graduates, withdraws, or separates from GCS, the domain account, Google account, and other accounts will be immediately locked and scheduled for deletion. GCS does not keep backups of student email, Google drive data, or other data created on student accounts. GCS and the IT Department will not be responsible for lost or deleted student data.

Network and Monitoring

GCS reserves the right to govern, monitor, and log any and all technology used at GCS. GCS does monitor and logs all devices connected to GCS networks, including personal student devices. GCS also monitors student GCS accounts, including email.

The GCS network is protected with a variety of web content filtering, monitoring, logging, and cybersecurity tools to create a safe, secure learning environment and maintain compliance with the Children’s Internet Protection Act (CIPA). While these tools are reliable, powerful, and CIPA-compliant, no filters or tools can provide complete accuracy or security. GCS provides these tools as a “best effort” for student safety and security. Thus, students are still responsible to be cyber-aware and practice ethical behavior in cyberspace, as outlined in the expected student behavior section below.

GCS has the right to search all computing devices on our network, including personal student devices, external storage devices, and cell phones.

Expected Student Behavior

- Accessing or distributing abusive, harassing, libelous, obscene, offensive, profane, violent, pornographic, threatening, sexually explicit, or illegal material from any device, even if the device is not on the GCS network, will constitute a violation of this AUP.
- Cyberbullying of any kind, whether on personal or school devices, whether on or off GCS property, and whether during school or after school, will not be tolerated.
- Students are strongly discouraged from posting or distributing personally identifiable information (PII) about themselves or any other staff or students online. Students are expected to use discretion and follow data privacy best practices when posting or distributing information using social media platforms, chats, email, blogs, or any other online digital communication.
- Students must report any requests for PII from unknown individuals to a school administrator.
- Students must not arrange meetings with an online contact without school and parental approval.

- Students must not share passwords or account credentials with anyone except their designated parent/guardian.
- Students should not digitally impersonate or log in as any other student, staff, or faculty. Account sharing with anyone other than a student's parent/guardian is strictly prohibited.
- Students must not plagiarize, which includes online content. Students must not violate copyright or intellectual property laws.
- Students must not record or photograph other GCS students or staff for non-instructional purposes without their explicit permission.
- Students must not attempt to circumvent, reverse-engineer, hack, attack, or otherwise compromise the integrity of GCS's IT infrastructure, including, but not limited to, content filtering systems, servers, networks, cloud platforms, databases, and IT accounts.
- Students must not attempt to access restricted data and databases, nor should they attempt to download, share, change, alter, tamper with, delete, or destroy said data.
- Students must treat the facilities with respect at all times and not damage or destroy GCS assets, including all technology at GCS.
- Students must not use their devices for gaming during school hours. Students are not allowed to bring gaming devices to school.
- Students are not permitted to print from personal devices at school.
- Students must not use technology for illegal activity.
- Students are expected to report any violation of the AUP to the principal or appropriate school administrator.

Computer Lab Guidelines

The following applies to computer labs at GCS:

- Students are not permitted in the lab without staff supervision.
- No food, beverages, or gum is allowed.
- No personal software or hardware (including external drives, USB drives, etc.) may be brought to school or loaded on any school computer.

Media Center Computers Guidelines

The following applies to desktop computers in the Media Center at GCS:

- Students are allowed to print from the desktops to the Media Center printer.
- No food, beverages, or gum is allowed when using the desktops.
- Students are responsible for signing out of his/her Google account when finished using the desktops.

Consequences

If a student is found to be in violation of this Acceptable Use Policy, GCS may take disciplinary action determined by school administration. A violation may result in any or all of the following:

- Parental Notification
- Reimbursement for damaged property
- Suspension of GCS IT accounts
- Suspension of technology, network, and/or computer privileges
- Disciplinary action, including detention or suspension, in accordance with school policies
- Potential expulsion from school
- Legal action and/or prosecution

Damages and Security

Responsibility to keep devices secure rests with the individual owner. GCS, its staff, and its employees are not liable for any device stolen or damaged on campus. If a device is stolen or damaged, it will be handled through the administrative office similar to other personal effects that are impacted in similar situations.

Indemnity Clause

Gaston Christian School and the IT department bear no responsibility whatsoever for any legal action threatened or started due to the conduct and activities of staff, faculty, or students. All staff, faculty, and students indemnify Gaston Christian School and the IT department against all damages, costs, and expenses suffered by actions arising out of any unlawful or improper conduct and activity, and in respect of any action, settlement or compromise, or any statutory infringement. Legal prosecution following a breach of these conditions may result independently from any action by Gaston Christian School.

AI (Artificial Intelligence) Policy

Use of AI is considered a tool now available to students in the same way technological resources are available (i.e.: YouTube tutorials, Khan Academy, Wikipedia, etc.). The heart of the issues of AI-generated content is one of academic honesty. The goal is to use AI as a tool to enhance learning rather than to replace the genuine teaching and learning process. Students are permitted to use AI-assisted resources, unless otherwise directed by the teacher, in the same way a student might appropriately use other technological resources such as Google, Wikipedia, tutoring services, or even a calculator.

Students must cite AI-generated content by submitting AI conversations alongside the student work, if AI was used at any point in the creation process.

Copying and pasting any amount of text from AI-generated content, unless otherwise directed by the teacher, is considered plagiarism.

Suspicion of uncited AI-generated content will disqualify the assignment. Each disqualified assignment is subject to a review by the teacher and Academic Dean. After this review, if suspicion of AI-generated content is upheld, a plan will be created for the student to complete the assignment within the parameters given by the teacher. Confirmation of AI-generated content, whether through an online AI Detector or other means, will result in standard plagiarism consequences.

Acknowledgment

By signing page 44, I acknowledge that I have read and understand GCS's Acceptable Use Policy and agree to follow this policy governing the use of GCS technology. I also agree that violation of this policy may result in disciplinary and/or legal action.

AGREEMENT SIGNATURES

The school requires the following agreement to be signed by every middle school student and both parents (or guardians). Parents should initial by each yes.

___ Yes, I have read the Gaston Christian Middle School Student/Parent Handbook, and my signature indicates that I pledge my full support and cooperation with Gaston Christian School by making our commitment to honor and adhere to these policies and Addendums, including Addendum D, The Parent Code of Conduct, and Addendum E, Statement on Sexuality and Gender.

___ Yes, I have read the Student Acceptable Use Policy (Addendum F), and my signature indicates that I pledge my full support and cooperation with Gaston Christian School by making our commitment to honor these policies.

___ Yes, I have read the GCS Statement of Faith, the GCS Statement of Christian Beliefs Regarding Marriage, Gender and Sexuality, and the GCS Administrative Policy on these matters (Addendum E) and my signature indicates I understand, fully support and agree that my student will be taught these doctrinal views as revealed through the Scriptures and that my student will be required to abide by a code of conduct based on these Christian doctrines held by the school.

Student's Printed Name	Grade
Student's Signature	Date
Parent or Guardian	Date
Parent or Guardian	Date

Signed form must be returned to the middle school office by August 30, 2024. Students will not be admitted to school following August 30, 2024 until the signed forms are received.



GASTON CHRISTIAN SCHOOL - 2024-2025

STUDENT INFORMATION/HANDBOOK SIGNATURE PAGE

Student Information: _____

First Name	Middle Initial	Last Name:	Goes by:
Entering Grade: _____ Home Address: _____			
Street	City	State	Zip

Birthday: ____-____-____ Gender: Male Female

T-Shirt Size: S M L XL 2XL 3XL *(No youth sizes/only adult sizes)*

List those adults who have your permission to pick up your child from school. Please list in order of preference (i.e. you can't be reached and your child is sick, who do you want us to call first, second, and so on). For the safety and well-being of our students, please notify these people to be prepared to show their drivers' license for identification purposes.

Name _____	Home Phone #	Cell Phone #	Relationship to child
Name _____	Home Phone #	Cell Phone #	Relationship to child
Name _____	Home Phone #	Cell Phone #	Relationship to child
Name _____	Home Phone #	Cell Phone #	Relationship to child

Do you have any special pick-up arrangement? (Carpools, etc.) _____

Who does NOT have permission to pick up your child?

Name: _____
 Name: _____
 Name: _____

Indicate any court ordered custody arrangements regarding your child. _____

Please visit our web site, www.gastonchristian.org, to read our Student Handbook. The school requires the following agreement to be signed by every middle school student and both parents (or guardians). **PLEASE RETURN SIGNED FORM BY FRIDAY, AUGUST 30, 2024.**

 Mother's signature or Guardian Date

 Father's signature or Guardian Date

 Student's signature Date

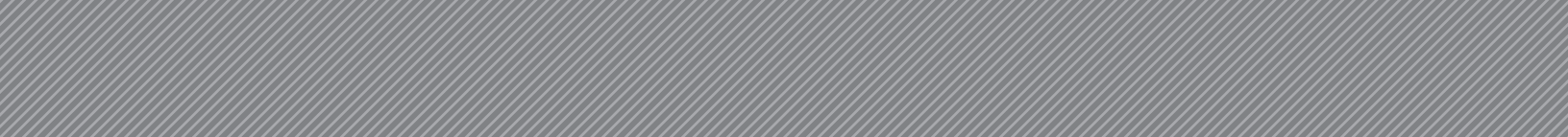
 Student's printed name



ADDENDUM G: GUIDELINES FOR COMMON ILLNESSES

ILLNESS	INCUBATION PERIOD	MODE OF TRANSMISSION	RESTRICT FROM SCHOOL?	RETURN TO SCHOOL	PREVENTION OF TRANSMISSION
Temperature over 100°			YES	Once fever free for 24 hours without fever reducing medications	Handwashing and dependent on underlying cause
Vomiting and/or diarrhea			YES	Once it has been 24 hours since last episode of vomiting and/or diarrhea	Handwashing
Common Cold	12 hours to 5 days	Respiratory tract, droplets, indirectly by contaminated hands or surfaces	NO	N/A	Hand washing, covering nose and mouth when sneezing or coughing
Conjunctivitis (pink eye)	24-48 hours	Contact with discharge from eyes	YES	24 hours after the start of antibiotic therapy	Treatment of the affected eye, hand washing, disinfecting contaminated surfaces, avoid contact with eye drainage
Influenza	24-72 hours	Droplets, Respiratory tract	YES	When fever and symptom free for 24 hours without Fever reducing meds	Good hand washing, covering nose and mouth when sneezing or coughing, Immunization unless contraindicated
Head Lice (Pediculosis)	7 days for eggs to hatch.	Direct contact with infested person is most common	NO	After application of effective pediculicide	Avoid head to head contact; do not share clothing, hats, combs/brushes, or towels.
Chickenpox (Varicella)	From 2-3 weeks; commonly 14-16 days	Person to person by direct contact, droplet, or airborne spread of secretions	YES	After all vesicles become dry/crusty	Avoiding contact with infected person; covering coughs and sneezes. Immunization unless contraindicated.
Rash			YES	Once evaluated and cleared to return to school by physician	Avoiding contact with the affected person
Strep Throat		Person to person contact	YES	24 hours after beginning antibiotic therapy	Avoiding contact with the affected person

Revised 07/20/20





GASTON
CHRISTIAN
SCHOOL
East Cleveland Campus

PREPARE *People*
TEACH *Truth*
GLORIFY *God*

GASTON CHRISTIAN SCHOOL - EAST CLEVELAND CAMPUS

105 E. RIDGE ST., KINGS MOUNTAIN, NC 28086 | WWW.GASTONCHRISTIAN.ORG/EAST-CLEVELAND-CAMPUS

ELEMENTARY (PS4-6th Grade)

Phone: (980) 484-3888

GASTON CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

1625 LOWELL BETHESDA ROAD, GASTONIA, NC 28056 | WWW.GASTONCHRISTIAN.ORG

EARLY CHILDHOOD
(PS3-Kindergarten)

Phone: (704) 824-9893

FAX: (704) 824-9895

ELEMENTARY
(1st-5th Grade)

Phone: (704) 824-9011

FAX: (704) 824-9013

MIDDLE/HIGH SCHOOL
(6th -12th Grade)

Phone: (704) 349-5020 (HS)

Phone: (704) 349-5030 (MS)

FAX: (704) 349-5027