

Student Handbook

American Christian Academy

2300 Veterans Memorial Parkway

Tuscaloosa, Alabama 35404

www.acacademy.com

PHONE: (205) 553-5963

FAX: (205) 553-5942

**Dual Accredited by
Association of Christian Schools International
and
Cognia**

**Member of the
Alabama High School Athletic Association**

2024-2025

American Christian Academy is a coeducational school operated as a non-profit, non-denominational, independent, Christian organization. The school is governed by a self-perpetuating Board of Directors. American Christian Academy admits students without regard to their race, color, religion, or national origin.

PURPOSE OF HANDBOOK

The Student Handbook provides students, parents, and staff with a clear, concise statement of the basic policies, procedures, and philosophy of American Christian Academy. Although the Handbook is not intended as an exhaustive statement on these subjects, it is written to answer the most frequently asked questions about the policies and procedures of the school. In the Handbook, no attempt has been made to explain the rationale for every policy or procedure; however, they provide ways to implement our goals in Christian education as well as to provide for a safe, orderly, efficient, and consistent approach to problems.

The Bible clearly indicates that parents are responsible for the training and instruction of their children. The Christian school exists to assist parents in their God-given responsibilities. In formulating a philosophy of education and discipline, the school has attempted to align itself as closely as possible with the Bible's instructions to parents so as to provide the utmost consistency for the child between training to be taught at home and at school. In that same spirit, the school likewise assumes parents will direct and discipline their children accordingly. God expects parents or other authorities to teach children to become more self-disciplined and require less supervision as they mature. American Christian Academy's philosophy of education exists to serve and further this ultimate spiritual goal. During school hours and at other school-related and school-supervised functions, students are to respond to school faculty and supervisory staff members with obedience, and respectfulness.

Commitment to these policies and procedures by students, parents, and staff enables the school to run on a smooth, orderly basis. Consistent support of these policies, however, will provide even more significant and lasting accomplishments for the students. These policies and procedures are basic guide-lines which should be viewed as one way we encourage and train students to recognize and assume responsibility for their actions. Therefore, the ultimate purpose of this book is to allow parents, students, and teachers to be "of one mind" in the great privilege we have of training children to honor God with their whole lives.

The School Board, which approves all major policies and procedures of the school, reviews policies as needed. Your written suggestions and input are invited. Please submit your written questions or recommendations to the Chairman of the Board or to the Head of School by January 31, 2025.

Current board members are listed on the school website.

PHILOSOPHY OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

American Christian Academy's philosophy of education stems from the belief that the Christian education is concerned with teaching attitudes and values as well as academic instruction. We believe that all teaching should come out of a Biblical worldview and woven into the fabric of everyday life. Rules and requirements are drafted for the smooth running of the school, but more importantly to help in the character development of the students.

In Luke 2:25 we read that as a young man "Jesus increased in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man." We believe this gives us the ideal balance in a child's development. We stress education in each of these four areas: **spiritual, academic, physical, and social.**

Our goal is to partner with parents in this endeavor by providing consistency in the child's instruction at home, church, and school.

PARENTS'/GUARDIANS' STATEMENT OF COOPERATION

1. We understand and acknowledge that to have an orderly environment for learning to take place and discipline to be most effective, it must be administered immediately. We hereby invest authority in ACA to discipline our child as deemed necessary by the school; including demerits with their accumulating consequences, detention, suspension, request to withdraw, and expulsion. We agree to abide by such discipline. (Proverbs 29:15, 17; Hebrews 12:11)
2. We understand and acknowledge that failure to meet all financial obligations **when due** may be grounds for expulsion .

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MISSION STATEMENT

*American Christian Academy
exists as a partnership with
parents to instill
Christian character and
academic excellence
for all students.*

VISION

It is with deep conviction that American Christian Academy desires to provide a safe learning environment, Biblical integration into challenging academic work, athletic events, and other curricular and extracurricular activities. We invite you to join us on this journey by being involved in classroom activities, athletic events, facility improvements and travel opportunities.

CORE VALUES

- To provide an enriched educational experience by application of biblical principles through intentional development of Christian character.
- To encourage thoughtful, logical, and analytically sound decisions that have a foundation in Scripture.
- To provide an environment conducive to gaining knowledge and skills needed to be a responsible citizen.
- To provide opportunities for growth in social skills through a variety of activities.
- To promote understanding of cultural differences and the worth of others.
- To provide opportunities for growth in physical strength and stamina necessary to engage in an active lifestyle.

EXPECTED STUDENT OUTCOMES

A. Spiritual -

- Understands who God is and His provision for eternal life through Jesus Christ.
- Successfully integrates Christian morals and values into their total lives.
- Applies biblical knowledge in developing and defending a biblical worldview.
- Understands global missions from personal experience and demonstrates a willingness to share the message of the Gospel to the world.
- Purposefully use God-given talents and abilities to enhance their lives and the lives of others.

B. Intellectual –

- Interaction in society as an adult capable of sharing knowledge in responsible and meaningful ways.
- Pursues lifelong learning as it relates to interests, career, lifestyle choices, and spiritual development.
- Development of critical thinking that are developmentally appropriate.

C. Social –

- Understands and respects the role of government in society.
- Values himself and others as being created in God's image.
- Demonstrates respect and kindness for others; including their opinions or abilities,

D. Cultural -

- Accepts and appreciates creativity in the arts, realizing that God's truth inspires artistic expression.
- Appreciates cultures different from their own while interpreting them through a biblical lens.

E. Physical –

- Demonstrates a physically active lifestyle and values healthy nutrition.
- Understands the value of maintaining the spiritual, emotional, and physical needs of their human body.
- Demonstrates an understanding and acceptance of a biblical standard for sexuality.

Statement of Faith

America Christian Academy is a non-denominational Christian school dedicated to teaching biblical truths related to the understanding of the Father God, Jesus Christ, His Son, and the Holy Spirit.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION FROM A BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE - The Matthew 18 Principle.

Matthew 18 sets guidelines for Christians on how to resolve conflict. We are to first go to our brother or sister who has offended us or where perhaps a misunderstanding has taken place to resolve the conflict at the lowest level.

Matthew 18:15-18 says, "If your brother or sister sins, go and point out their fault, just between the two of you. If they listen to you, you have won them over. But if they will not listen, take one or two others along, so that 'every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.'"

Parents are asked to go to the teacher, coach, staff member, or administrator when a conflict takes place to resolve things quickly, while not acting in anger.

Ultimately, God has entrusted the responsibility of raising and educating godly children to the parents. Parents have engaged ACA to help in the important task of training children. To the degree that we maintain this partnership will be the degree to which we will be successful in that. Let us join together for our children and the glory of God.

HISTORY OF AMERICAN CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

American Christian Academy was founded in 1979 by Kurt Porter. The school relocated from its original location on Greensboro Avenue to 701 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd. in Northport where enrollment grew to about 150 students. Dan Carden was hired as Head of School in the spring of 1989. Over the next thirteen years, the school grew until the facility was no longer adequate. On Dec. 20, 2002, American Christian Academy purchased and moved into the former Eastwood Middle School located on Veterans Memorial Parkway, with about 450 students. It took hundreds of parents, students, and other volunteers over the course of 5 weeks to accomplish the task of renovating our new home and moving everything from the Northport building. During the renovation, the entire Bible was read over the intercom while volunteers painted, cleaned, and waxed floors. The new facility is in a wonderful, centralized location for the school population.

The impact of the new facility with its larger capacity, changed the atmosphere of the school and attracted new families. Since being in this location we have added beautiful baseball and softball fields, installed artificial turf to our football field, and built field houses and indoor practice facilities. We have renovated and updated all student bathrooms, retiled the cafeteria and hallways, and paved the parking lots. In 2016 we were again in need of classroom space and updated science labs. The new Science and Technology Building added 9 classrooms including state of the art science labs and 6 additional classrooms. As God provides, we would like to build a new and larger gymnasium.

We have been fully accredited by Cognia (formerly AdvancEd and SACS) since 1990. Having successfully completed the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI) accreditation process Spring 2021, we are now dual accredited with ACSI and Cognia. We have passed the 1,000 student mark and are nearing capacity. Our students consistently perform well on standardized testing and each year our seniors receive large scholarships to major universities. God has been good to ACA.

Future goals include a gymnasium with classrooms and enhanced technology infrastructure.

Please be in prayer with us as we work together to provide an education for the hundreds of students God sends to ACAv each year. It is our desire that American Christian Academy always be a place that glorifies God and makes disciples for Christ.

HEAD OF SCHOOL'S WELCOME

Dear Students and Parents,

Welcome back to school as we begin another exciting year at ACA. I am writing this letter during my Interim term as Head of School. I was enjoying our retirement life, but God had other plans in mind. Although I did not anticipate myself back at ACA, Janie and I are at peace that God has a purpose in our return. We have been impressed with the incredible student body, faculty and families that call ACA 'home' and the welcome we have been given.

ACA has built a reputation in Tuscaloosa as being a well rounded school with strong academics, a band/music program that is second-to-none, and a huge array of athletic teams which consistently receive AHSAA recognition. I have always considered it a privilege to work alongside such a caring and professional group of educators, But the greatest joy for us is knowing that we are seeking to make an impact for eternity in these young people who are created in the image of Almighty God and therefore have immeasurable value.

Please understand that when we require assignments, attendance parameters, research papers, etc., it is from a desire to prepare you for a successful future. Someday you will appreciate it! Learn to use your agenda to plan your week and organize your time. Students who write down their goals are more successful than those who do not. Attend classes, do your homework, and work hard. It will be worth it!

Every aspect of our lives should honor God. I love the scene in the movie "Gladiator" where Russel Crowe says, "Men, what you do in this life, echoes in eternity."

I trust this year will be special for you. Mrs. Carden and I plan to come and visit you often.

Sincerely,

Dr. Dan Carden

ADMISSIONS POLICY AND PROCEDURES

American Christian Academy admits students without regard to race, color, religion, or national origin. However, academics are taught from a Christian worldview and students and parents should seek admittance with a full knowledge and acceptance of this policy. It is also required that students take Bible class each year they attend ACA and participate in weekly chapel programs. Students attending American Christian Academy are further expected to be obedient to and respectful of those in authority.

In general, students who have been expelled or asked to leave other schools because of poor disciplinary records will not be admitted to American Christian Academy. Such students must wait at least one year and compile a good disciplinary record before their application will be considered. Entering students will also be asked to take an entrance exam which will help us determine whether or not ACA will be able to meet the needs of the student. **All students admitted to American Christian Academy are placed under both academic and disciplinary probation for a period of one semester.** Students who fail to maintain academic and/or disciplinary standards will be asked to leave American Christian Academy at the end of the probation period or earlier if deemed necessary by the faculty and/or Head of School. Even after the initial probationary period has expired, students may be asked to leave ACA if their behavior is disruptive or detrimental to our environment.

It is desired that students admitted to American Christian Academy possess the following characteristics:

1. A respect for God's Word, The Holy Bible
2. An attitude of submission and respect for those in authority,
3. Agree to adhere to the school policy of identification with birthed biological gender
4. An ability to admit and accept responsibility for wrongs committed
5. Courteous and polite behavior
6. A record of good behavior from their previous school
7. A desire to be taught in a manner that acknowledges the Lordship of Christ over creation
8. Not reported to engage in bullying
9. A well-rounded interest in activities beyond the classroom

Students who thrive in this kind of environment will do well at ACA.

Statement of Accomodation Resources

It is our belief that all children are created in the image of God and that He has a plan and purpose for each person. While it is our desire to be able to help all students, American Christian Academy operates as a private Christian school, and does not have the funds or resource personnel to provide the accommodations that may be needed for your child. If your child is to receive a

regular diploma from American Christian Academy it will be necessary for him or her to do the same level of work and complete the same course requirements as completed by all other students of their graduating class. Our teachers seek to employ 'best practices' in teaching, which may include **some** accommodations including but not necessarily limited to the following:

seating in the front of the class, additional and intentional cues to help keep the student focused, and extra time for tests (this is not always possible).

Again, we love all children and desire to provide a Christian education for students in our area. **However, we are not able to accommodate all special needs.**

Your decision to place your child at ACA necessitates that you understand our limitations. It is possible that you will have to seek resources such as tutoring or speech therapy, etc. outside of the school. In some cases, it may be necessary to choose a school which provides the special accommodations your child needs.

Students who wish to enroll in American Christian Academy must complete an online application. In addition to the online application, new students are required to submit the following information:

1. Teacher Referral for grades K4 - 12
2. Transcript or report card and most recent standardized test scores
3. School discipline report for grades entering 6 - 12
4. Medical information
5. Release of financial information if the student is currently attending a private daycare or school.
6. Updated blue immunization form and a copy of birth certificate.
7. An entrance exam will be required for all students entering 2nd grade through high school. K-4, K-5 and 1st grade will be required to have an assessment by one of our teachers.

All the above information must be on file before a student can begin school. When all are received, the Director of Admissions reviews this information and determines the student's eligibility. If there are questions about eligibility, they convene a meeting of the Admissions Committee for a final decision.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

The closing of school due to inclement weather will be announced as soon as possible. Sometimes the announcement can be made the evening before the closing of school, but most days the announcement cannot be made until the morning of the closing of school. When school is closed for inclement weather, all events for that day, including practices or evening activities, will be canceled. You will receive notification of dismissal by text messages and emails. The following station will officially report the closing or delay of American Christian Academy: ABC 33/40

2024-2025 ACA School Calendar

August 7, 2024 _____ 1st day of school
Sept. 2 _____ Labor Day - school closed
October 18 _____ Teacher In-Service
November 11 _____ Veterans Day, school closed
November 22 _____ Grandparents Day Program Elementary ½ day, HS no school.
November 25-29 _____ Thanksgiving Holiday, no school
December 13 _____ ½ day school
December 16-January 3 _____ Christmas Holiday, no school
January 6, 2025 _____ Back to school
January 20 _____ MLK Jr. Holiday, no school
February 17 _____ Teacher In-Service, no school
March 7 _____ Teacher In-Service, no school
March 10-14 _____ Spring Break
April 18 _____ Good Friday, School closed
April 21 _____ Easter Monday, School closed
May 23 _____ Last day of school, ½ day

High School Term Grading Periods:

August 07 – October 4, 2024
October 7– December 13, 2024
January 6– March 07, 2025
March 17– May 23, 2025

Report cards will be available on FACTS the Wednesday following the end of each grading period.

ACT TEST DATES

September 7, 2024
October 26, 2024
December 7, 2024
February 7, 2025
April 11, 2025
June 7, 2025
July 12, 2025

PSAT/NMSQT TEST – October 11, 2024

PreACT 9th – February 4, 2025

ASVAB – February 21, 2025

IOWA Achievement Test (1st -8th) – April 2025 (Dates TBA)

AP EXAMS- (Dates TBD in the first two weeks of May)

AP Government

AP Calculus AB

AP Literature

AP Studio Art

AP US History

AP Psychology

AP Language

AP Computer Science Principles

AP Statistics

Calendar of Athletic Events: As Athletic events change often due to weather or scheduling conflicts, please check the ACA website and calendar wiz for the most up to date information.

SECURITY CHECK-IN PROCEDURES

Security measures have been established to provide a safe environment for our students and parents. We appreciate the cooperation of our parents and students in the following measures. The building will be kept locked at all times. All parents and other visitors must come to **the front office or the elementary desk** in order to gain admittance. Students and teachers have been instructed NOT to open the doors but allow the front office to make that determination. If there are special limitations regarding who may pick up a child, ACA must have legal documentation on file in the main office.. **Students from other schools are not permitted to visit unless requesting admission and a visit has been arranged through the admissions office.**

ATTENDANCE POLICIES

Rationale

Students are learning much more from their school experience than textbook information. Habits of consistent attendance carry over to the work or career world. The administration has designed the following attendance policies to reinforce Christian values such as self-discipline, punctuality, consistency, and consideration for others. When students are out of class for any reason, they are missing information and material that could be difficult to make up. Makeup work creates difficulty for the student and the teachers. Parents are strongly encouraged to allow students to be out of school only when absolutely necessary. Each absence is designated EXCUSED or UNEXCUSED depending on the cause. Both have an impact on the overall learning experience of the student and will impact the grades earned as well. PLEASE READ AND CONSIDER THIS CAREFULLY. Excessive absences are considered truancy. We are legally responsible to report excessive absences to the authorities at DHR. **Students with excessive absences (more than 10 per semester) will have their grade lowered by a letter grade.**

EXCUSED ABSENCES

Absences due to personal illness, death in the immediate family, legal quarantine, court subpoena, obtaining a driver's license or a medical appointment are considered excused. Students should **bring in a note explaining the absence when they return**. If the absences were due to a medical appointment, a notification should be brought to school from the doctor's office. If the student experiences a **chronic** medical condition or a **catastrophic** circumstance that causes excessive absences, a letter from the attending physician describing the condition or written verification of the circumstance should be submitted for the student's records. All other excessive absences, excused or unexcused (10 or more per semester), will result in the grades being lowered by one letter grade in each class where excessive absences were reached. **Teachers may offer participation grades to encourage regular attendance. Due to the nature of "participation", students are not able to make these up.**

Students may obtain permission for an excused absence for other situations by meeting the following conditions:

- **Advanced (at least 48 hours) written notice to the front office.**
- Teachers notified to secure assignments that will be missed.
- **Absences do not exceed the 10 per semester limit.**
- Examples of approved situations: college visits, mission trips, family trips.

UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

Absences for reasons other than those listed above are **unexcused**. Work may not be made up for UNEXCUSED absences. Students are **not** permitted to leave campus for lunch unless the parent personally picks the student up. We ask that parents support our attendance policies and not allow students to check out for reasons other than sickness. **Examples of unexcused absences:**

- Haircuts,
- Changing clothes,
- Getting supplies or forgotten items,
- Lunch extended beyond the regular time,
- Staying home to finish schoolwork,
- Taking siblings or parents to an appointment,
- Try out preparation for dance/cheer.
- **Other errands, even with a parent's permission.**
- **Sleeping in for any reason**

ADDITIONAL ATTENDANCE POLICIES

Students involved in interscholastic sports may not participate in that sport (practice or game) on any day they are absent. Students must have attended at least one half of the school day (at least 3 classes) in which they are to **COMPETE OR PRACTICE**.

Procedures for Leaving Class

Students who need to leave for class should have their agenda signed by the teacher and carried with them. The pass must state where they are going and the time they left. Students may not interrupt other classes.

CHECKING OUT: PLANNED EARLY DISMISSAL

For planned early dismissal, students should bring a note from the parent/guardian stating the **reason** for checking out and the time the student is to leave. The note should be presented to the front office **before** school. The student will be issued an early dismissal slip which will be shown to the teacher at the time of check out. **They will not be permitted to leave the class unless they have a dismissal slip or have been summoned from the office.** The student will go to the front office to sign out when they leave. Students who leave campus during school hours without administrative approval or who do not follow proper procedures are considered skipping and will receive 6 demerits. **While the school does not have authority to keep a student from checking out when the parents have given permission, the school reserves the right to consider the reason “unexcused” and any work missed will not be allowed to be made up.**

For students who will be checking out during PE or other elective held in places other than a classroom, arrangements must be made ahead of time and the student **SHOULD NOT** go to that class as it is difficult to call them.

BEING ADMITTED TO CLASS AFTER BEING ABSENT

A **written** verification note signed by the parent, or a medical verification form must be presented to the school office to receive an Admit Slip the first day of their return to school (text messages are not acceptable). Without verification, the absence will be marked **unexcused**. Students who have missed a total of 5 consecutive days **MUST** present a doctor's excuse for **ALL SUBSEQUENT ABSENCES**. Students must obtain an Admit Slip from the front office for absence from a class or classes and should present it to each teacher upon return to school.

POLICY FOR MAKE-UP WORK

Students are permitted to make up the work missed due to **excused** absences. It is the responsibility **of the student** to obtain missed assignments and complete them within a reasonable time after returning to school. After a time approved (make-up days equal the number of days missed) by the teacher of the class, zeros will be given for work not completed. **If tests are scheduled prior to and given the day the student was absent the tests are to be made up the day a student returns to class or at the teacher's discretion.** Make-up tests will be

given at the convenience and discretion of the teacher and may require students to come to school early or stay after school to make up the test. The test may differ from the original test given in class. Teachers will not accept make-up work for homework or class work for unexcused absences. Teachers will not administer make-up tests for unexcused absences. Students may not miss one class to make up work in another.

TARDINESS TO SCHOOL

The beginning of the school day is very important and every effort should be made to be punctual. The school day begins at 8:00 AM and students will be marked tardy if they arrive after that. Everyone has occasions when they are late; however, for some individuals, being late is a habit pattern produced from poor planning and lack of self-discipline. Events, unplanned and beyond personal control, including traffic problems, may cause students to be late. Conversely, these events are usually rare. Medical appointments are excused with a note from the Drs. office and not included in the following directives. Students may be tardy to school 4 times with no penalty. On the 5th tardy the student will be issued 1 demerit and 1 demerit for each 5 tardies after that. These demerits will accumulate and carry the same consequences as other demerits. To encourage promptness the teacher may choose to give a participation grade. Students who are not present and are not able to 'participate', will have points deducted from the participation grade. Because participation requires the student's presence, students will be unable to make-up these points.

Students arriving more than 15 minutes late are considered to have been absent from the class, adding to excessive absences and grade reduction.

Class Attendance

Students who are present at school must arrive at each subsequent class before the 5-minute tardy bell. Students who are late will be issued 1 demerit by the teacher. Students who are more than 15 minutes late to class and the reasons are unexcused will be issued demerits at the discretion of the teacher. Students who miss the entire class are considered to be skipping and issued 3 demerits. Students who leave campus without permission and without checking out will be issued 6 demerits.

POLICIES FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT BEHAVIOR

Rationale

Appropriate student behavior aids in producing an environment that is conducive to learning. To maximize their learning potential, students should report to class **before the tardy bell rings**. They should be prepared, with pencil or pen, notebook with paper, their textbook, and completed homework assignments. They should enter the classroom quietly and should listen attentively as the teacher explains the day's activities. When parents enroll their student(s) in American Christian Academy they are choosing for their child/children a higher standard of conduct and performance. Parents and students must accept the responsibility of upholding these high standards. Regardless of the type of activity, our students are representatives of a Christian school, and even more, of the Lord Jesus Christ. Depending on the significance of any misconduct and its impact on the Christian environment of the school, students engaging in the misconduct will be in jeopardy of expulsion or being asked to withdraw.

Demerit System Rationale

The demerit system has been developed as a means to help children become aware of behaviors that are unacceptable. Excessive accumulation of demerits serves as a means to help the administration identify students whose conduct seems resistant to correction and could, therefore, cause the student to be dismissed from American Christian Academy.

DEMERIT PROCEDURES

Students are cited with demerits for misbehavior, poor habits (tardiness or lack of preparation), and/or un-Christ-like attitudes. Continued misbehavior or unacceptable attitudes will result in accumulation of demerits. Parents are requested to sign the demerit slip to demonstrate awareness of the offense. The student must return the demerit to the staff member who gave the demerit. If you, as the parent, have a question or concern, you are asked to email the teacher or the Principal. **Please do not use the demerit slip to communicate with the teacher.** As demerits increase, the level of discipline increases. The detention class will be conducted from 3:30 – 4:30 on a designated afternoon. **Students who are required to attend detention class may have to miss practices/games or other after school activities scheduled at this time. This is part of the disciplinary process and students will not be excused.** Students may be excused for medical, dental, or orthodontic appointments that are verified by the parent and if the office has been notified. The detention class will need to be rescheduled. Students who fail to report to the detention class will receive 1 demerit for failure to report to class. Accumulation of demerits which are accrued by semester will result in the following disciplinary actions:

- | | |
|----------------|--|
| 0 – 2 demerits | No penalty other than being responsible to have the demerit signed by parents and returned the following day |
| 3 demerits | The student will attend 1 hour of detention. The parents will be notified by email. |

- 6 demerits The student will attend two additional hours of detention. These may sometimes be served in the same afternoon but may require a 3rd afternoon. Parents will be notified by email.
- 9 demerits Students who reach this level are exhibiting disregard for the correct behavior. Students reaching this level in the disciplinary process will be required to fulfill 2 hours of community service to be completed within a two-week time frame. The student may not receive any monetary compensation for the service provided. The number of hours worked will have to be verified in writing and turned into the front office at the end of the two weeks. Suggestions for service opportunities are listed under the 12-demerit section. In addition, the student will write a 500 word essay on what they learned from the community service experience. Students at this level will have a meeting with the Head of School and the parents.
- 10 demerits Students will lose the privilege of participation in athletics, the Homecoming Dance, and Prom for the remainder of the semester in which these demerits are earned. Students who have reached this level of discipline are not allowed to go on the class trips. If the deadline for cancellation is passed, the school will not be able to refund the money deposited.
- 12 demerits Students reaching this level in the disciplinary process will be required to fulfill 5 hours of community service (in addition to the 2 hours served at 9) to be completed within a three-week time frame. The student may not receive any monetary compensation for the service provided. The number of hours worked will have to be verified in writing and turned into the guidance counselor at the end of the three weeks. Students may find opportunities for service at places like the following: churches, soup kitchens, RISE, tutoring, etc.
- Students and Parents will be asked to meet in conference with the administration when students reach this level. It is unusual for students to reach this level. There is serious concern about the student's ability to remain at American Christian Academy.
- 15 demerits **Student will be suspended from school and required to appear before the Board which may choose from these options:**
- a. Strict disciplinary probation which will extend until notified by the administration. Any serious misconduct during this time will result in immediate expulsion.
 - b. Strict disciplinary probation which will extend until notified by the administration plus professional counseling (reports required). Any serious misconduct during this time will result in immediate expulsion.
 - c. Immediate expulsion

d. Other measures as determined at the discretion of the Board.

Parents are urged to work with our faculty and administration in defining the student's problems. Our desire is a change of heart that will result in Christlike attitudes on the inside resulting in permanent changes in behavior.

The most commonly occurring forms of misconduct and the corresponding demerits are shown below. Teachers are not obligated and are actually **discouraged from issuing a "warning"** before giving a demerit. Students need to be aware of these behaviors so that they can avoid them. Students and parents should give serious consideration to the disciplinary process and the conduct expected of our students before signing the conduct contract. Please be aware that students may tend to "slant" information when communicating the details about the demerit received. If you have questions about the event or the consequences, please email the teacher.

Many of the demerits issued are for dress code violations. It would be helpful, and a sign of partnership, if parents would monitor dress code issues before the child leaves home each morning. Hair appointments should be scheduled BEFORE hair violates the policy.

Merits

Teachers and staff look for instances of positive behavior and award "Character Recognition" certificates. Students who receive these will be recognized at the annual Honors Day Program.

All discipline consequences will be subject to the discretion of the Head of School.

COPY OF DEMERIT SHEET

American Christian Academy

Student Name: _____

Date: _____ Time: _____ Period: _____ Teacher: _____

Attendance:

- 1- Unexcused Tardy
- 1- Being out of class w/out a pass
- 3- Skipping Class (more than 15 min late)
- 6- Skipping School (leaving campus w/out permission)
- 1 – Every 5 Morning Tardies

Attitude: 3-6 Demerits

- Disobedience
- Rudeness
- Crude, profane, vulgar speech
- Scoffing
- Disrespect

Behavior:

- 1 - Cell Phone Violation
- 1 – Dress Code Violation
- 3 – Disruptive behavior/annoying noises
- 3 – Cafeteria disorderly conduct
- 3-6 Harassment
- 6-12 Fighting
- 3-6 Being in cars during school hours without permission
- 1-6 Inappropriate physical contact
- 1 – 15 Other: _____

Character – 6 demerits

- Cheating
- Lying
- Stealing
- Forging Parent's Signature
- Gambling

1 -6 Traffic Offenses – Loss of campus driving privileges for a period of time determined by the administration.

SIGNED DEMERITS ARE DUE BACK THE NEXT SCHOOL DAY

White / Parent

Yellow/Teacher

Pink/Office

Demerit Procedure:

Demerits sheets are tricolor forms consisting of an original white sheet and two copies (yellow and pink). The white sheet is issued to the student who will have the responsibility to carry it home for a **parental signature. The white copy is to be returned the next school day.** We want to verify that parents have been informed. The teacher will give the pink copy to the appropriate staff person the day the demerit is issued so that it can be entered into FACTS. The teacher will retain the yellow copy as a reminder to collect the white copy from the student. Finally, the teacher will give the signed white copy and the yellow copy to the appropriate staff person who will retain the demerits on file until the end of the year. If there are extenuating circumstances that prevent the return of the signed demerit the next school day, students should communicate with the issuing teacher to make arrangements for later return.

In keeping with our mission statement, parents are urged to partner with us concerning issues of discipline. **Never criticize or speak in a disrespectful way about your child's teachers to the child. Please do not write statements of**

disagreement on the demerit. Be aware that students often have convenient memories about situations of misconduct and will usually “slant” the details to put themselves in the best light. Always sign the demerit and if you have questions or concerns contact the issuing teacher and find out from their perspective what occurred. You may make an appointment with the principal for a conference if you would like.

GUIDELINES FOR DEALING WITH SEVERE MISCONDUCT

Students who engage in behavior listed below (A-F) will be subject to severe disciplinary action which could include suspension and/or expulsion.

- A. Sexual Immorality** (Eph. 5:3; 1 Cor. 6: 13-18; Romans 1). It is expected that students at American Christian Academy will live a life that is sexually pure. Students who by deed or reputation cause reproach to the cause of Christ will receive 15 demerits and be suspended from school. Depending on action by members of the Board, expulsion may follow. Students may receive demerits for public displays of affection.
- B. Alcohol Use-** Students are expected to abstain from the use of alcohol. This is not only an ACA policy, but it is illegal for high school students to be in possession or partake of alcohol. **Parents are reminded that providing or permitting alcohol use is considered by law to be “contributing to the delinquency of a minor”.** Students whose parents allow alcohol use may be removed from the school.
 - Alcoholic beverages in any form are not allowed on school grounds or in the vicinity of school sponsored activities. Possession or consumption of alcohol on school grounds or in the vicinity of school sponsored activities is prohibited. Students whose conduct violates this policy will receive demerits with possible suspension or expulsion.
- C. Drugs** – Use or possession of drugs (other than prescribed medications) or the illegal use of prescription drugs on school grounds or in the vicinity of school sponsored activities may result in suspension or automatic expulsion.
 - Students taking prescription or over-the-counter medication **must** leave the medication in the nurse’s office to be taken under supervision.
 - Students should never share medications with other students. Giving prescription or illegal drugs to another student may result in suspension, and a parent and student meeting with the ACA school board, potentially leading to expulsion.
 - The Administration may conduct random drug testing of students for illegal drug use, alcohol, and tobacco products. Students who refuse to take the test will be asked to withdraw.. Any student having a positive

drug test will be suspended and will meet with the Head of School and ACA school board, potentially leading to expulsion.

- **ACA considers Delta 8, Delta 10, or other marijuana derivatives as illegal drugs.**
- D. Tobacco** – Possession and/or use of tobacco in any and all forms, including e-cigarettes (vaping, juuling, etc.) are not permitted at school or any school-related activities. Violators may be suspended for a first offense. Further offenses may result in suspension or expulsion. Partaking of tobacco for a minor is illegal. Parents are reminded that providing or permitting tobacco use is considered to be “contributing to the delinquency of a minor”. Random nicotine tests may be given.
- E. Cell Phone/Internet Misuse** – In recent years, many of the issues of misconduct have to do with cell phones and internet misuse. It is suggested that parents become informed and **regularly monitor student use**. Students in grades 6 – 8 will not be allowed to bring cell phones to the lunchroom, PE, or chapel. **All** students must place phones in a receptacle in the teachers’ room. Phones are NOT allowed to be used in the classroom except in special instances by teacher request. Further guidelines for cell phone usage are given in a later section.
 - Students who post immoral, lewd, or unkind things on social media may receive demerits and depending on the severity of the post, may be suspended.
 - Postings related to weapons, threats, intimidation, may result in legal or criminal investigation as well as suspension or expulsion from school..
 - Students are reminded that sending pictures of a sexual nature are not only immoral but illegal and may result in suspension or expulsion from school.
- F. Weapons** – Guns, knives, or any other instrument that could be hazardous to the well-being of our students will not be permitted on campus or at school sponsored activities. Students in possession of guns, knives, or other dangerous instruments at school may be suspended or expelled and subject to legal prosecution.
 - Pepper spray or Mace – These weapons of self-defense should not be brought into the school. Students who bring such items, or students who spray them will receive demerits and may be suspended.

Extracurricular Consequences of Suspension

Students placed on suspension are removed from all school activities during the days for which they are suspended. Students may receive a zero on all academic coursework missed during the duration of the suspension.

Scorners and Mockers

Proverbs 29:8a says, “Mockers can get a whole town agitated....” And Proverbs 22:10 says, “Drive out a mocker and out goes strife”. We have discovered that classrooms and the entire school are agitated by the activities of a few scorners and mockers in our midst. Scorning and mocking are proud and arrogant attitudes and behaviors that hinder our purposes in academic excellence and Christ-like character. Because a few scorners and mockers can disrupt the entire school we are going to seek to identify and deal with them in a very purposeful way. The following are examples of these behaviors:

- Students exhibiting a mocking or disrespectful attitude.
- Students who exhibit behavior that denotes a mocking or cocky attitude, rolling eyes, muttering, profanity, etc.
- Students who do not respond to warnings and corrections.

These students will receive demerits. These behaviors are often noted in places other than the classroom; the cafeteria, hallway, etc. Children who exhibit these attitudes generally do not respond to discipline and if they continue to receive demerits, will be asked to leave the school.

Cheating

Cheating is a serious offense and is in direct opposition to Christian character and academic excellence. Cheating is the use of any unauthorized information, including information from AI sources.

- Copying homework, classwork, tests or quizzes from another student
- Making and using “cheat sheets”
- Asking for and receiving help from other students who have already taken the test or quiz.
- All electronic devices, including smartwatches, must be placed in the pocket holders at the beginning of each class.

Anything the teacher has not specifically given permission or approval of is unauthorized. Written work will be submitted electronically to **Turn It In**. Work identified as plagiarism or AI sourced will be disciplined as cheating. The discipline for cheating will be a zero on the assignment plus 6 demerits. This policy will be strictly enforced and is intended to encourage students to avoid cheating.

Nuisance Behavior (harassment, unwanted teasing or bullying)

We believe that every person is of eternal value. We believe that God has uniquely gifted and is equipping each of us for the things He has for us to do (Ephesians 2:10). We are going to diligently work to provide an environment that seeks to stop **nuisance behavior** and work toward a Biblical resolution. Nuisance behavior includes any activity (verbal or physical) directed at someone by an individual or group of individuals.

Parents are encouraged to help their children deal with the normal but unacceptable unkind behavior and realize that nearly all children have at one time or another been guilty of being unkind or unthoughtful. However, bullying is not tolerated. Bullying is **repeated** behavior that is annoying, or pestering. Nuisance behavior would include unwelcome, **unrelenting** teasing and name-calling. Words are powerful in their impact on others. (Proverbs 18:21 "The tongue has the power of life and death") Mean-spirited or profane words are unacceptable in any form of communication. This could include spoken words, text messages, emails, or social media platforms. Examples of bullying include:

- Sending repeated hurtful text messages
- Spreading rumors
- Making fun of others on social media
- Exclusion – groups that willfully seek to isolate an individual.
- Sexting

Because the school is unable to monitor all social media interactions, parents are responsible for their own child's posts or actions and should seek to resolve the situation before bringing it to the school. School discipline may follow. **Behaviors may be subject to legal intervention either by Civil Litigation or Criminal Law:**

Verbal harassment will be treated with the same seriousness as physical harassment which would include hitting, pushing, tripping, or any other behavior that would endanger the safety and well being of another student. Bullying would include any verbal or physical advances of a sexual nature. This would include any crude jokes or obscene gestures or use of profanity. It is recommended that parents be vigilant and proactive about cell phone and internet usage.

VANDALISM

Students are reminded that all facilities and properties of the school belong to the constituents of American Christian Academy. It is important that we are good stewards of what the Lord has provided. Students who litter, deface, or destroy school property will receive demerits and be held responsible for financial restitution.

Students vandalizing the cars of others, whether or not the vandalism is permanent, will receive demerits and **will be expected to make all necessary repairs.**

AFTER SCHOOL

Because of our sense of responsibility for the health and safety of our students we ask that students not arrive before **7:30 a.m.** or remain after **3:30 p.m.** If they have not been picked up by 3:30 p.m. they must report to the after-school study hall in a designated room. Students not in study hall must be out of the building by 3:30 and **at that time become the full responsibility of the parents.** Students participating in extracurricular activities should report by 3:30 p.m. to the person who sponsors the activity and should have taken **everything needed from the school before exiting the building.** Students in after-school study hall will be charged \$7.00 a day. Students are not allowed to be unattended in the building after 3:30 p.m. **Students violating this policy will be issued 3 demerits. Parents should not tell their children not to report to study hall.**

DRIVING ON CAMPUS

Students must register their cars with the front office and display a decal in the front window in order to bring them on campus. Tickets will be issued to students who fail to display a decal. Students who fail to respect the safety of others will receive demerits and lose the privilege of bringing a vehicle onto campus. Driving in the parking lots and around school should be at **15 mph** with attentiveness for safety. Loud music and engine noise are not acceptable. Students should not return to their vehicles during school hours unless they are leaving campus **or have received permission in the office. Students are not allowed to drive past the pre-school or to park by the baseball field at any time.**

Students vandalizing the cars of others, whether or not the vandalism is permanent, will receive demerits and will be expected to make all necessary repairs.

SEARCHES

ACA reserves the right to search individual students and their possessions, including cars, lockers, backpacks, and electronics, for items which are dangerous or violate other policies addressed in this agenda. A metal detector may be used to locate unacceptable items.

INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

There are in today's world life styles and choices that do not reflect or adhere to Biblical standards and necessitate our affirming those Biblical standards in our school policies concerning admission and dismissal. These policies are listed below:

Family Structure: American Christian Academy holds to the Biblical and traditional definition of marriage as one man and one woman joined under God into the holy state of matrimony. Any family unit that violates the Biblical definition of marriage would not be able to partner with us to instill Christian character into the children. ACA reserves the right to deny admission to any non- Biblical family unit. (Genesis 2:24; Proverbs 15:23; 1 Corinthians 7:2-40; 1 Timothy 3:2-4; 1 Timothy 5:14)

In our current culture, the physical aspects of relationships are emphasized. The physical nature of the relationships should not be obviously emphasized. Public displays of affection are unacceptable. Lasting commitments must incorporate an appreciation for a spiritual foundation, as well as physical attraction. We want to help prepare our students for marital relationships and homes that have a Godly, spiritual foundation.

Sexual Orientation: God created men and women as a reflection of His image and likeness. In His holy desire for a family, God placed one man and one woman in a marriage relationship that they might produce godly offspring. For a man or woman to deny their God-given sexuality is rebellion against God and His design. Each person is uniquely created from conception as male or female. Any student or parent who would actively hold a position that validates homosexuality or transgenderism is resisting the Christian character we desire to instill as a part of our mission. Students actively engaged in non-biblical sexual behavior or identity other than biological sexual identification will not be considered for admission. Any current student that openly demonstrates or advocates non-biblical sexuality in behavior or on social media will be asked to leave.

(Genesis 1:27-28; Genesis 19:5; Leviticus 18:22; 1 Kings 14:24; Psalms 139; Romans 1:26-27; 1 Corinthians 5:11; 1 Corinthians 6:9; Jude 7)

Slander and offensive language about sexual orientation will not be tolerated.

For off campus, school-sponsored activities students are not allowed to be alone with a member of the opposite sex.

INTERNET ACCEPTABLE USE AGREEMENT

Our goal in providing internet service is to promote academic excellence in our school by facilitating resource sharing, innovation, and communication. This access brings with it the availability of material counter-productive to our mission to instill academic excellence and Christian character in the students of our Christian school. ACA has taken precautions to restrict access to controversial materials. The privilege of internet access by students and teachers brings with it the responsibilities of moral, ethical, and legal utilization of network resources. Students who use the internet will have to meet with the IT Department to gain access.

Internet--Terms and Conditions of Use

1) **Acceptable Use** - The use of your account must be in support of education and research and consistent with the educational and Christian objectives of ACA.

2) **Privileges** - The use of the Internet is a privilege and inappropriate use will result in a cancellation of those privileges. There could also be disciplinary actions taken.

3) **Network Etiquette** - You are expected to abide by the generally accepted rules of network etiquette. These include (but are not limited to) the following:

1. Be polite and use appropriate language.
2. Do not reveal your personal address or phone numbers or those of other students or colleagues.
3. Note that email is not guaranteed to be private.
4. Do not use the network in such a way that you would disrupt the use of the network by other users.

4) American Christian Academy makes no warranties of any kind, whether expressed or implied, for the service it is providing.

5) **Security** - Security on any computer system is a high priority, especially when the system involves many users. If you feel you can identify a security problem on the Internet, you must notify Mrs. Hudson. Any user identified as a security risk or having a history of problems with other computer systems may be denied access to the Internet.

Personal Devices - Ipads, laptops, cell phones

Students using a personal device in the classroom must adhere to the following guidelines:

1. They may not use the device for non-academic purposes during the class period.
2. They may not video or record the class without the express permission of the class teacher each time it is to be done.
3. Any student who abuses the intent for which these devices are allowed will receive a demerit and lose the privilege of having one on campus.

CELL PHONES/OTHER MESSAGING DEVICES

We have found that a cell phone can be detrimental to the educational process. In addition to students being distracted by sending and receiving text messages, cell phones and other electronic devices are being used to gain unauthorized assistance on tests and other assignments. Students also gain access to web sites that we normally block on our school computers. More recently cell phone misuse has been responsible for harassment of other students and ACA staff. In order to maintain an optimal learning environment, American Christian Academy has adopted the following cell phone policy.

SECTION 1 – Limitation of Use

From the ringing of the tardy bell of each instructional period until the end of the period and the dismissal bell rings, the following prohibitions will be in effect:

- Cell phone use for any reason during class is prohibited except by express permission and under the supervision of the teacher.
- Students may not video or record the class without the express permission of the class teacher each time it is to be done.
- Phones will be **turned off** and placed in open view in a teacher designated area (Usually a shoe holder or basket on teacher desk)
- At break and at lunch students are encouraged to engage in positive personal interaction with friends rather than focusing their attention on cell phones. **Middle school students will not be permitted to bring cell phones to the cafeteria, chapel, or PE.**
- **Air pods or other listening devices are not to be worn from 8-3:15.** Students may be warned or have the devices taken up until the end of the day.

SECTION 2 – EXCEPTION

- Students who need to make an emergency phone call during the class time, with the permission of the classroom teacher, will step into the hall for a brief time (2 -3 minutes). Parents are reminded not to call or text children during class. If the phone goes off, even in the designated area, students will receive a demerit.

SECTION 3 – DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

Any teacher, staff, substitute teacher, or administrator becoming aware of any violation shall deal with it by issuing a demerit. The phone will be given to administration to hold until the end of the day. Students with continual phone violations will not be permitted to have a phone at school.

ACA recommends the following ideas for monitoring your child's cell phone:

- Have the students dock their phones with you after a certain time at night. We have found that some students are texting during the night and are sleepy during the day.
- Monitor the texts that your child sends and receives. You can have all messages sent to your phone. Many problems would be avoided for individuals if all parents would stay engaged.
- Take the phone if behavior or grades are unacceptable. In an emergency, you can call the office and we will get in touch with your child

LASER POINTER/ LIGHTS ARE NOT ALLOWED TO BE USED BY STUDENTS

Vandalism

Any action involving deliberate destruction of or damage to personal property of students or staff or to the property of American Christian Academy will be dealt with in a serious manner – including demerits, possible suspension, and restitution of property. It includes, but is not limited to graffiti, broken windows, writing on or defacing desks or walls, even the destruction of a person's website or social media sites.

CHEWING GUM

Students are permitted to chew gum at school. However, each teacher will set the standard for his or her own classroom. This means that some teachers may permit gum chewing in their classroom while others may not. Students will have to take the responsibility to discard the gum appropriately.

CANDY/FOOD/DRINKS

Candy or other food items, except for breath mints, **are not permitted in the classrooms of American Christian Academy**. However, bottled water or other bottled drinks with tops may be brought to class. Any exception to this policy must be approved by the administration.

GUIDELINES FOR THE GYM

1. Tennis shoes or soft soles should be worn when using the gym. If you are using other types of shoes, please walk near the edges of the playing floor in order to preserve the floor's surface.
2. Food and beverages should not be brought into the gym during the school day.
3. Students may NOT play in the gym unless there is an official practice or supervised activity, including before and after school. Students in the gym and not accompanied by a teacher or coach will receive demerits.

DRESS CODE POLICIES

Rationale

1 Corinthians 10:31 instructs us to do all for the glory of God. We are called to live lives that glorify God in our behavior and appearance.

- The appearance of our students communicates many things about our school to the community.
- There is an appropriate way to dress for school. Well-groomed students generally perform better in academics and have an effect on the overall decorum of the classroom.
- Our appearance should display modesty (1 Tim 2:9) and respect for others. Because modesty is a subjective standard, the board has endeavored to establish a dress code that is modest, while still allowing individual expression. The school reserves the right to determine the appropriateness of a student's dress.
- Any student observed by a staff member as not complying with dress code will receive a demerit. If the clothing is offensive, they will also be asked to change.
- As the need arises due to changing styles directives may be adjusted – EVEN MID-YEAR.
- If in doubt about some articles of clothing **don't wear them. Parents are asked to help monitor the clothing so the school does not have to.**
- The following guidelines are for ALL students and specified for boys and girls:

Applicable to Boys:

Boys may:

- wear collared shirts with no writing or pictures.
- wear ACA Tshirts that have been approved by the school and say ACA on the shirt.
- wear shorts that are no shorter than 2" above the knee with belt loops. No athletic shorts!!
- wear jeans that are not frayed, worn thin or have holes. They must not be sagging!
- May wear a variety of hair styles but must be **off the ears, off the collar and off the eyebrows.** Styles must not cause distraction. Students are expected to make hair appointments ahead of time and should not need to be reminded or warned.
- Hats or head coverings must not be worn in the building.
- No sweat pants, athletic shorts, or wind suits may be worn to school, even if part of an athletic team uniform.
- Facial hair must be kept trimmed and neat and no facial piercings.

Applicable to Girls:

Girls may wear:

- Modest shirts with high necklines front and back which stay in place have NO writing or pictures. **All shirts worn under jackets or sweatshirts must meet dress code standards.**
- Approved ACA T-shirts (Those sponsored by ACA) may be worn Monday through Friday;
- **Undergarments may not be visible** in the back, at the neck, or at the arms.
- Skirts, dresses and shorts must be no shorter than 2 inches above the knee.
- NO sweatpants, wind suits, leggings, or gym shorts even if considered part of an athletic uniform.
- Pants or jeans **may not be frayed, have holes (even with patches), worn thin, or ragged and sagging or excessively tight.** .
- Hair must not cause distraction because of style or color (only **natural shades** acceptable.)
- Girls are not permitted to wear nose jewelry or other facial piercings other than earrings.
- No hats or head coverings may be worn in the building.
- Sweatshirts with NO questionable or offensive writing or pictures may be worn.

ATHLETIC TEAM DRESS POLICY

Sports teams that desire to promote esprit de corps may dress in special team shirts that conform to dress code standards.

ACADEMICS

Guidance Program

The guidance program of American Christian Academy is provided to support parents and students in making the most of the educational opportunities available to them now and in the future. Please pay attention to information from the Guidance Counselor regarding due dates for application, testing dates, and scholarship opportunities.

College Readiness:

All of our high school students are encouraged to take the ACT and/or SAT (college admission test) beginning in ninth grade or earlier. When students enter ninth grade, their transcripts are checked annually to make sure they are earning the credits they will need for graduation. Parents and students are also expected to monitor credits. Students are regularly informed of scholarships that are available; but, it is the responsibility of the students and the parents to explore scholarship opportunities. It is important that students and parents take the time and effort to fill out forms and do searches of what will specifically meet the needs of the individual student.

The Guidance Counselor, Registrar, or Middle/High School Principal may be consulted to help determine which curriculum students should take by checking transcripts, administering standardized tests, and/or providing other academic information. Students who experience difficulty in a particular class may ask for an appointment with the subject teacher. Teachers are usually available during their preparation periods or after school. Students should take the initiative in seeking the help they need. Parents may contact teachers most efficiently by e-mail. If you are unsuccessful making contact, please call or e-mail the Guidance Counselor or Middle/High School Principal.

Students experiencing personal, emotional problems may talk with the Guidance Counselor or any of their classroom teachers who will pray with them and help them seek scriptural solutions to their problems.

Changing Schedules or Dropping Classes

Schedules may be changed if it is determined that the schedule change is essential for the academic well-being of the student as decided by the Guidance Counselor or Registrar. **No class may be added or dropped after the second Friday of a particular semester**, unless specific, exceptional circumstances arise and are considered by the Guidance Counselor and Administration.

1. Parents must send a written request or email for the schedule change.
2. Requested changes will not be made if the desired class is already at capacity.
3. In exceptional cases, the necessity of online class participation will be considered. Students must have parental and administrative permission

to enroll in an online class. To maintain true to the academic mission of the school, ACA discourages participation in online courses for students except in exceptional circumstances.

4. All students must be enrolled in the four core classes on campus, each year (6th through 12th grade).

Marking System

Our school uses a five letter grading system: A, B, C, D, and F. Students should inquire of individual teachers how grades are earned in their classes and seek to meet the requirements for the highest grade that they are capable of achieving. Report card and transcript grades are numerical.

A	90-100	Superior work
B	80-89	Above average work
C	70-79	Average work (minimum college recommending mark)
D	60-69	Below average work (lowest passing mark)
F	0-59	Failure to meet minimum requirements

High school students may check their grades on FACTS. The grades will be updated by the teacher on a weekly basis. Mid-term and semester grades will be available on FACTS on the dates listed at the front of this Handbook. You will receive information on accessing this information at the beginning of the year if you are not already familiar with the process.

Grade Point Average and Class Rank

Class rank is determined by the following quality point scale for final grades:

A - 4	B - 3	C - 2	D - 1	F - 0
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Only academic subject grades which are entered on the transcript at semester are included. Honors classes are weighted 0.1. AP, Dual Enrollment and Dual Credit courses offered at ACA are weighted 0.25. Non-academic courses (electives) are NOT included in the GPA..

All students in a particular grade level are ranked by their cumulative grade point average from highest to lowest. In the event of duplicate GPA scores the numerical average will determine the rank. Honors classes and college level classes receive more quality points. In many cases, numerical averages are used to determine eligibility to honor societies and class awards. Semester grades, reported numerically, are used in these calculations.

The Valedictorian and Salutatorian of the senior class are based on the class rank at the end of seven semesters of grades (in other words: after 1st semester of the senior year).

Honor Rolls

The A and A-B honor rolls for students in grades sixth through twelve are issued at the end of each year. The A-B honor roll requires that no grade be below an 80. The A honor roll requires that no grade be below a 90. Certificates for All A's and A's and B's will be awarded at the Honors Day Program near the end of the spring semester.

Final Examinations for Grades Seven through Twelve

A final examination will be administered in all academic courses for students in GRADES 7 - 12. The semester exam will be calculated at 20% of the final grade; with each nine-week term is calculated at 40%. Spring semester senior exams will be given the week before graduation during regular class periods because graduation is held the weekend before exams. All final exams for grades 7 – 12 must be given during the scheduled exam period unless the student is excused with written permission by the Head of School. **EXAMINATIONS WILL NOT BE ADMINISTERED EARLY.**

6th grade will participate in exam days but will take a modified chapter test to be counted in the test category.

If there is any evidence that a student has cheated on a final exam, the student will receive a zero (0) on the exam which will be averaged into the semester grade (20%). The student will also be subject to the regular disciplinary action for cheating.

Generally, two exams are given per day. If a student finishes their first period exam before the end of the period, they must sit quietly until the end of the period. After their first period exam, they must leave campus if they don't have a second period exam.

Students should not be on campus during a testing period unless they are testing. Otherwise, they are to make arrangements to be picked up, unless they have another school activity.

DEAD WEEK

Teachers have been asked to consider the week before exams as Dead Week. New Material, assignments, and projects **may not be excessive**. No field trips will be approved during this week.

Permanent Record Folder

Each student has a permanent record folder in the office. In it are placed the records of all standardized tests, elementary report cards, and custody verification, if necessary. Students are encouraged to do their best in classes and on standardized tests as these records will follow them in case of transfer and for college entrance requirements.

Recorded in the permanent record folder are attendance records, report card grades for K-5 through 6th Grade. Also included will be your scores from national standardized testing such as Terra Nova, PSAT/MNSQT, AP scores, SAT, and ACT.

Any legal documentation concerning a child including custody issues must be included in this folder.

Before any of this information is sent from the school, you, if you are 18 or older, or your parent, may review it upon requesting the material to be looked at.

Transcripts and Recommendations

When students move to another school, are seeking enrollment in college, or making application to the NCAA, they will need to have a copy of their transcript prepared. This request should be made in writing to the school registrar or Guidance Counselor at least 24 hours in advance. Requests for recommendation forms and letters should be presented to the appropriate faculty member or Head of School in adequate time for these forms and letters to be prepared. ACA will send up to three (3) official transcripts without a fee. However, because of the amount of time and effort involved, we will assess a minimal fee of \$5.00 for each additional transcript sent.

REQUIRED HEADING FOR ALL CLASSROOM AND HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS

For all class work and homework in all 6-12 grades the following MLA heading must be used.

Student's Name
Teacher's Name
Subject, Class Period
Date

CURRICULUM FOR GRADES SEVEN THROUGH TWELVE

Description of Curriculum Offered

ACA's basic curriculum is designed to prepare our students for entering a four-year college or university. Also, Honors, AP, and Dual Credit classes will be offered to students who are highly motivated. The selection process for these classes varies and may include teacher recommendation and administration will have the final say.

Students in the honors math program take Algebra I in the eighth grade in order that they may take Calculus or another high level math course in the twelfth grade. An Algebra 1 grade earned in the 8th grade will be placed on the High School transcript and will impact the cumulative GPA. Only if the Algebra 1 is retaken in the 9th grade will the 8th grade score be excluded. In order to keep math skills sharp for college, students will be required to have a math credit for each year of attendance at ACA (9-12). All research indicates that students that place themselves under the most rigorous academic demand in high school will have greater college success.

Advanced Placement Courses:

Students today have more options than ever before to earn college credit prior to graduation and to take higher-level courses that can better prepare them for college. One option offered at American Christian Academy is the Advanced Placement (AP) program, which students can start taking in their junior year. A student's academic record is one of the most important parts of his or her college application. Success in challenging courses is the surest sign of college preparedness. By making the decision to take an AP course, a student is letting colleges and universities know that he or she has what it takes to succeed in an undergraduate environment. AP courses signal to admissions officers that a student has undertaken the most rigorous classes that ACA has to offer.

College level AP courses are currently offered in the following subject areas: AP Studio Art and 2D Design, AP United States History, AP Government and Politics, AP Literature, AP Language, AP Psychology, and AP Computer Science Principles. Students are encouraged to take honors level courses prior to enrolling in AP courses; however, a prospective student should discuss potential prerequisites with the instructors prior to enrolling. There is an application procedure for each course that also must be adhered to when applying for the courses. Summer reading is a mandatory component of AP English Literature and AP English Language.

Students enrolling in an AP course have two choices regarding potential college credit and GPA weighting.

Option 1: Students take the AP exam in May, potentially earn college credit based on their score, and receive AP weighting for that course on their transcript. Each AP course has an exam with a fee of approximately \$100. Students are responsible for contacting colleges to determine required scores to receive credit, or if that college/university accepts AP credit.

Option 2: Students elect to NOT take the AP exam and instead take the semester exams for the course. Students receive honors weighting for the course.

For additional information, students and parents are encouraged to research Advanced Placement courses on the College Board website at www.collegeboard.com.

Dual Credit

Academically sound students may elect to take Dual Credit courses through Shelton State Community College or University of Alabama Early College. Students must register directly with the desired school. Families who choose for their students to pursue an atypical course of study by taking Dual Credit courses will pay tuition as determined by the institution. Students may enroll in only one of the Dual Credit Programs at a time:

Shelton State Dual Credit

1. Dual Credit is offered through Shelton State. Students will register for courses through Shelton State and some of them will be taught on ACA campus under the instruction of an ACA faculty member who has been approved as an adjunct professor through Shelton State. All other courses will be taken online.
2. These courses are available to students that:
 - a. Who have completed 10th grade.
 - b. Who have a 3.0 GPA or higher and at least a 3.0 GPA in the subject area of the class they will be taking with teacher approval in that subject area.
 - c. A minimum ACT composite score of 21 to take Dual Credit classes.
 - d. Who have completed the Shelton State student application and Dual Credit application by all deadlines.
 - e. Who have completed the ACA Dual Credit Application. by the Guidance Counselor.
 - f. Per Shelton policy, first time Dual Credit students are only allowed to take one course.
 - g. Per Shelton policy, returning students are allowed to take ONLY two courses per semester.
3. Regarding Dual Credit courses, students will:
 - a. Be expected to work at the academic level required by a college-level course.
 - b. Receive the highest GPA weight for course completion (0.25):
A = 5.0 GPA Points | B = 3.75 GPA Points

UA Early College Dual Credit

1. UA Early College Dual Credit is available through the University of Alabama. All courses are online. Students will register for courses through UA Early College.
2. In order to be approved for UA Early College Dual Credit courses, students must
 - a. Who have completed the 10th grade.
 - b. Who have a GPA of 3.0 or higher. (UA standard) and a 3.0 or higher in the subject area they plan to take with approval from that teacher.
 - c. Have a composite score of 21 or higher on the ACT.
 - d. Who have completed the UA Early College application by all deadlines.
 - e. Who have completed the ACA Dual Credit Application by all deadlines.
3. Regarding UA Early College Dual Credit, students will:
 - a. Successfully completed the college readiness course (UAEC 200) (Formerly Gateway)
 - b. Be limited to two dual credit courses per semester.
 - c. Receive dual enrollment weight for course completion (0.25):
 - i. A = 5.0 GPA Points | B = 3.75 GPA Points

Regarding ACA Dual Credit Programs & Policies:

1. Students should not take a dual credit course in a subject in which they are weak.
2. The student must have the approval of the subject area teacher (ACA) before registering to take a Dual Credit course.
3. A one semester dual-enrollment college course earns half-credit toward high school graduation in the particular subject.
4. Students are expected to be actively involved in an educational activity during their dual credit class period
5. Parents and students sign a written contract indicating their acceptance of the greater responsibilities involved with dual-enrollment classes as a part of the ACA Dual Credit Contract.
6. Students are required to have all online courses approved by the counselor prior to enrollment and, if approved, must provide proof of enrollment in the class .
7. Students must bring a laptop to school daily to participate in dual credit courses.
8. Students must earn an A , B, or C to remain in the dual credit program. A semester grade of 69 or below will discredit students from dual credit

privileges Shelton State students who choose to withdraw from a Dual Credit class will be prohibited from returning the following semester.

- 9. Remember, earned grades are recorded on both high school and college transcripts.**

Atypical Course of Study

Students enrolled at ACA are provided an outstanding educational opportunity. We provide curriculum necessary to prepare students for admission and success in college if students apply themselves. Our previous graduates attest to this. Families who choose for their students to pursue an atypical course of study by taking courses through Early College at U of A, Dual Credit at Shelton State, or other approved courses will pay tuition at the regular rate.

Students who desire to receive an American Christian Academy diploma will be expected to adhere to the following guidelines:

- **A minimum of four full-year courses per academic year must be taken on the ACA campus under ACA faculty.**
- The courses taken on campus must include at least three core courses and Bible.
- Rare exceptions for this are granted in cases of documented health issues requiring students to miss an extraordinary amount of days.

Credits Required for Graduation

We offer a Regular College Preparatory Diploma and an Honors College Preparatory Diploma.

General Diploma Guidelines:

The following number of credits must be accumulated by a graduating senior:

English	4
Math	4
Science	4
History	4
Bible	4
Fine Arts or AP CSP	1
Foreign Language	1* (2 years for honors diploma)
Career Prep	1
Other electives	5

Total Credits Required 28

Regular College Preparatory Diploma:

Students who are awarded a regular college preparatory diploma must follow all credit requirement guidelines as outlined in General Diploma Guidelines, above.

Honors College Preparatory Diploma:

In grades nine through twelve, students attempting an honors diploma must follow all credit requirement guidelines as outlined in General Diploma Guidelines, above. In addition, they must:

1. Complete two years of the same foreign language
 - a. The second year of a foreign language also counts towards the student's five credit hours of "other electives."
2. Complete at least eight honors-level courses.
 - a. This can include Honors Algebra I, which students take in the eighth grade.
 - b. Honors courses include classes designated as: honors, dual credit, and/or AP.
3. Have a cumulative GPA of 3.5 at the time of graduation.

All Students:

- Students may earn elective credits for participating in sports activities at the rate of half a credit per semester, maximum.
- Classes that are taken more than once may not count towards diploma credits multiple times.
- Students and parents are encouraged to take ownership of their educational experience by keeping grades up and looking periodically at their transcript.

Credits Required for College Admission

Due to the wide range of colleges that our graduates attend, it is the responsibility of the student and their parents to verify college acceptance requirements that will specifically meet the needs of the individual student.

Granting Credit

Students in the ninth through twelfth grades are earning credits toward graduation. One Carnegie unit of credit is given for the successful completion of a course that is normally scheduled for at least 135 class hours a year. This requirement is the standard held by Cognia, formerly AdvancEd, and ACSI, our accrediting agencies. Students who do not pass a course necessary for graduation will be required to make up the credit through an approved online course. Please check with the Guidance Counselor for the sign-up process. Student athletes must complete make-up credit by the first week of school in order to be eligible according to AHSAA. **Core courses taken through Ignitia or any other high school course provider may not be accepted by the NCAA Clearinghouse.** It is your responsibility to investigate these policies as you pursue your degree.

Online Classes

1. Online classes will generally be offered only for elective or enrichment courses unless there are scheduling conflicts that cannot be resolved by a regular class.
2. Only students that have demonstrated self-discipline and motivation will be allowed to take online classes.
 - a. Approval of administration
 - b. Probationary period to see if they are able to handle the online environment.
 - c. Students must have a personal laptop computer and are expected to be actively involved in educational activities during the online class period.
 - d. As part of the academic initiative, a student who is not up to date with an online class will be ineligible for sports participation.
- 3.—Students will be required to complete appropriate portions of the course.
4. Students interested in playing collegiate athletics are advised to take traditional classes for core courses (English, Math, Social Studies, and Science) rather than online classes.

AR (Accelerated Reading)

Your success in high school, college and further, to a large extent, depends on your skill at reading. Reading, like playing the piano, karate, or tumbling, is a skill that can only be improved through practice. The wonderful thing is that it can also be an enjoyable and lifelong pastime. While there is no magic number of points that is “enough”, we have adopted the following requirement to assess your progress.

Students in grades 6-12 are required to accumulate reading points for which they will receive an AR grade in their English class. Each 9 weeks students will receive a grade, recorded in the test category. You may earn points on books which you read in some classes. However, in order to accumulate the necessary points, you will need to read books other than what is required for these classes. It is recommended that students read something that interests them, as well as reading classics required for English or other classes. If you are a struggling reader, do not choose long or difficult books until you are more proficient in reading ability. Your comprehension, speed and vocabulary will improve, helping you be more successful in all subject areas.

The chart below tells how many points a student must earn each 9 weeks to receive an A+:

1st Term: 30 pts = 100%

2nd Term: 60 pts = 100%

3rd Term: 90 pts = 100%

4th Term: 120 pts = 100%

****Please note the following guidelines:**

1. Students may receive credit for any books read within their “interest level”. Books in our library are divided accordingly, and the interest level for each book may be found on arbookfind.com
2. Students may take tests on books read during the summer.
 - a. Tests on these books may be taken during summer library hours or within the first two weeks upon return from summer break.
 - b. Points earned during the summer will be banked for the upcoming school year
 - c. Summer hours will be announced in May each year
3. The library is open Mon-Thurs 7:30am to 3:30pm & Friday until 3pm during the school year. Please respect closing times.
 - a. Tests may also be taken during break or study hall with teacher's permission. No tests may be taken during their lunchtime.
4. Students who are caught cheating or sharing information on tests will be issued demerits and lose the points earned. No cell phones are allowed during test taking.

Guidelines Affecting Promotion

Seventh and Eighth Grades

1. The numerical average of the first and second semesters must equal 60 or the student is considered to have failed that particular course.
2. Students who fail three core courses including English, Math, Science, and/or History will not be promoted to the next grade level.
3. Students who have not successfully completed a particular course are not academically sound to progress and must repeat the subject during the summer. Students who performed poorly in a subject are encouraged to do reinforcement work in the summer. This is especially true for Math and English. Online classes are available in the summer through Ignitia at very reasonable fees.

Ninth through Twelfth Grades: Students begin in the 9th Grade to build their permanent transcript which will follow them to college and possibly a job.

1. Both semesters must be successfully completed in order to earn the full credit for a particular subject. Each semester of work earns $\frac{1}{2}$ unit of credit.
2. Any course in which a student earns less than a 60 for the semester will have to be made up through an approved online course or from an accredited school.
3. All high school courses required for graduation must be passed with an average of at least 60.
4. Once a grade is entered on the transcript, it cannot be changed without a special procedure and permission of the Head of School.
5. **Seniors must have earned all required credits in order to receive a diploma and participate in graduation exercises.**

ATHLETICS

Christian Principles and Athletic Competition

Numerous Christian principles are illustrated in athletic competition. We expect our students to incorporate the following principles into their athletic activities.

1. Be prepared. This means practice, practice, practice.
2. Do your very best in competition.
3. Put the teams' interest above your own. If another player is in a better position to score, pass the ball to him/her.
4. Referees and umpires are designated figures of authority that God expects us to respect. However, referees and umpires are human and will make mistakes, **but in a Christian school there is no place for "booing" or sarcastic calls and remarks from coaches, players, or spectators.**
5. Because student athletes are frequently viewed as student body leaders, they must accept the responsibilities that accompany their position. Student athletes are expected to exhibit Christian behavior and principles, both on and off the playing field, as well as in the classroom. Students who receive 10 or more demerits in a semester are prohibited from participation on any athletic team for that semester. It is the responsibility of the student athlete to inform his or her coach concerning his or her demerit status.
3. In a Christian school all victories do not appear on the scoreboard. A scoreboard loss can be turned into a spiritual victory if the team discovers its weaknesses and strives to correct its mistakes.
4. Students ejected from competition because of conduct will be responsible for the monetary fine and will receive school discipline as well.

Guidelines Affecting Sports Eligibility

We follow the Alabama High School Athletic Association guidelines in addition to ACA rules. In part AHSAA eligibility rules state: "Students entering the 10th, 11th and 12th grades must have passed during the last two semesters in attendance and summer school, if applicable, at least six new Carnegie units with a minimum composite numerical average of 70 in those six units. Four core courses must be included in those units passed and averaged. English, mathematics, science and social studies are core curriculum courses. Students entering the 8th and 9th grades must have passed during the last two semesters in attendance and summer school, if applicable, at least five new subjects with a minimum composite numerical average of 70 for those five subjects. Students entering the 7th grade for the first time are eligible." For more complete information visit the AHSAA website.

ACADEMIC INITIATIVE POLICY

In addition to the AHSAA eligibility rules students who wish to enjoy the privilege of participating in various sports at ACA are expected to maintain a strong academic standing in all classes during the current year. Because student athletes are sometimes excused from classes for sporting events the athlete must take the initiative to consult with the teacher/teachers of the class/classes missed to get assignments and missed work. The regular policies for make-up work are to be followed. **Any student athlete whose grade for any class falls below passing will not be permitted to participate in sports until the grade is raised to a passing level. Grades will be checked each Monday beginning the third week of each quarter. Online courses must be up to date to participate as well.**

Students may earn only $\frac{1}{2}$ credit for each semester of sports participation regardless of the number of sports played. The maximum number of credits they may earn in a year for sports is one.

OTHER GENERAL POLICIES

Accidents

If you are injured at any time during the school day or at any school-sponsored event, use the following procedure:

1. Report the accident to the nearest teacher or staff member. The school nurse should be consulted in injuries of a more serious nature.
2. The teacher will advise the school office of the injury. Someone from the office will accompany you to the nearest hospital or doctor if deemed necessary.
3. An accident report will be filled out and the parents will be notified.

MEDICAL INFORMATION

1. **Medication at school** – The nurse must have an authorization form for each student who takes prescription or over-the-counter medication at school. Once completed, the over-the-counter form will be active for the entire school year. For prescription medication, the completed form must accompany the prescribed medication. Students should never be sent to school with medication without first consulting with the nurse and having the appropriate form completed. Students should not carry any medications (prescribed or over-the-counter) on their person while at school. **All medication should be dispensed by the school nurse.**
2. **Student Illness** – Sick students who are contagious must not be sent to school. When a student becomes ill at school, the parent must arrange

for the student to be taken home. Students must be fever free and/or have no vomiting for 24 hours before returning to school.

3. **Head Lice** – Students discovered to contain head lice or nits are required to remain at home during treatment and must be cleared by the school nurse before returning to class. We exercise a “no nit” policy at ACA.
4. **Pink Eye (conjunctivitis)** – Students may return to school after 12 hours of prescribed medication.
5. **Strep Throat** – Students may return to school after prescription medication has been taken for 12-24 hours and the student is fever free (without the aid of fever medication) for 24 hours.
6. **Current Medical Problems** – If your child has asthma, food allergies, seizures, or any other medical problem, please fill out the applicable form and turn it in to the front office. This will ensure that your child gets the proper treatment in case of an emergency.

Forms are available in the front office or on our webpage at www.acacademy.com under the Parent Resources tab -> Nurse's Corner.

Care of Books

Books found out of student lockers will be turned in to the office and can be redeemed for \$1.00. If the books are not redeemed, the book will be turned back into the book room to be resold.

If a student loses a book, he should check with the front office to see if it has been turned in. If the book is not located, the student must purchase another book.

During the school day because of safety issues backpacks may not be left in the main downstairs hallway. That hallway is the primary evacuation route in emergencies. It is also the “safe area” in inclement weather. Students that leave backpacks in the main downstairs hallway will be issued a demerit. Exception is made for chapel.

Students are to take their back packs home each night. Those left at school in the hall, in bathrooms, or in the gym may be taken up and must be retrieved from the front office. A demerit will be issued.

Care of Furniture, Fixtures, Facilities, and Grounds

Students of American Christian Academy are expected to share the responsibility of stewarding, caring for, and preserving the schools' furniture, fixtures, facilities, and grounds. As a private organization on a limited budget, A.C.A. cannot allow students to destroy desks, deface walls, etc. Students who choose to destroy the property of the school or of other students will be given demerits and required to pay for the items destroyed or defaced.

Students who attend A.C.A. are also expected to share in keeping the cafeteria, restrooms, gym, classrooms, and outside grounds litter-free.

Tornado and Fire Procedures

Instructions and procedures for fire and tornados will be posted on the wall near the doorway. It is important to follow your teachers' instructions in regard to those procedures.

Crisis Management Plan

In addition to day-to-day events on our campus, there can be unusual emergency situations that occur. As student safety is our top priority, it is the responsibility of all ACA employees to take steps to identify, notify, and then act as soon as possible to provide that safety.

Faculty and staff are trained annually to ensure employees know how to provide safety for the students in emergency situations such as fires, tornadoes, and intruders.

Library Procedures

The purpose of the school library service is to widen, deepen, and intensify learning. The library contains a collection of instructional materials, including audio-visual and reference materials, selected to meet curricular and recreational needs of students and teachers. Parents should be actively involved in the oversight of the books their children select. All reading material is not appropriate for all grade levels.

Guidelines for use of the library will be handed out at the beginning of each year. If there are questions, see the librarian.

All library books must be turned in by the end of the school year. Library fees will be assessed for lost or damaged books.

Lockers

As a courtesy, each student is assigned a locker. The locker is school property and must be cared for as such. The following guidelines are to be followed in order to retain the privilege of using a locker.

1. Lockers will be assigned to each student. Each student is responsible for the locker assigned to them. Lockers may not be changed or swapped without permission of the administration.
2. All personal belongings that are not being carried by the student should be placed in their locker. All unattended items found outside the lockers will be removed.
3. Lockers are not to be defaced (inside or outside) and are to be kept clean. Permanent decals, stickers, pictures, etc. are not to be put on or in lockers.
4. Students caught opening lockers that belong to others or communicating combinations of locks to other students will be subject to disciplinary measures.

5. **Make sure your locker (including gym locker) is securely locked at all times** with a personal lock. A student may choose not to put a lock on his/her locker; however, the school cannot be responsible for the contents.
6. Students must clean out their lockers before they leave on the last day of school. Contents left in lockers become property of the school and will be disposed of in whatever manner seems appropriate.

Lost and Found

Lost and Found is located in the hallway near the library. Lost clothing or other personal items will be held for a period of time and donated if not claimed. Lost books will be in the front office and must be redeemed for \$1 per book.

Lunch

General information

Lunch is served every full day of school. In addition to the posted lunch menu, limited numbers of pre-made salads and sandwiches are available on a first come, first served basis.

Payment

Every child enrolled in ACA has a lunchroom account. This is a **debit** system; a positive balance is required to make purchases. Payments may be made in the form of cash, check or credit card. Checks should be made payable to ACA, with your child's name in the memo section. Cash should be sealed in an envelope with the child's name on the outside. Credit card charges must be made with the business office. Credit Card payments cannot be made in the lunchroom. Payments can be taken into the office or lunchroom. Students may not withdraw money out of their lunch accounts.

Menus

Menus are available on the website about a week before the new month begins.

Lunchroom Behavior

1. All students are required to sit with their grade level during break and lunch time. This is for teacher supervision, safety, dismissal times, and clean-up duty.
2. Students should form a single file line for lunch. "Breaking" and "saving a place" are not permitted.
3. Please understand that for 6th -12th lunch some items may not be available due to demand. We will do our best to accommodate everyone.
4. Students should leave the table as clean when they leave as when they arrived. Please place trash in the proper container and clean up any spills that occur.
5. Each student should use proper table manners when eating. Demerits will be given for unruly behavior.
6. Please do not put food or beverages in lockers.
7. Students are not permitted to order food to be delivered from off campus establishments; however, parents may bring lunch from off campus.

8. Parents may eat lunch with their child at school. If you take your child off campus to eat, please do so during their lunch period by signing them out in the front office.
9. Seniors are allowed to leave twice a week for lunch with a permission slip on file in the office. They must not be late for their class after lunch.
10. **Other students are not allowed to leave campus for lunch, even with a parent's permission.**

Traffic Flow

Because our school enrollment has increased significantly in recent years, we are having to monitor traffic flow and parking areas. By following the guidelines given below, you will help minimize problems we have experienced.

1. When dropping off children at the front of the school, ask them to be ready to get out as soon as you stop.
2. Do not block traffic in the drop-off areas by parking and leaving your car. If you must enter the building, park away from the drop-off lanes or in the front parking lot.
3. Please take extra care when pulling away as the pick-up and drop-off times are quite congested.
4. Students are not allowed to move cars between fields after school because of traffic congestion.

Substitute Teachers

Substitute teachers have the same authority as regular members of the faculty and should be accorded the same respect given to a regular teacher. They are to make assignments, award grades, indicate their judgment of each student's success in completing assignments, and carry out proper classroom discipline.

Substitute teachers may fill out demerit forms, and the classroom teacher will turn them in. It is understandable that substitute teachers face an out-of-the-ordinary situation in taking up the responsibility of class work on relatively short notice.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Chapel Services

Chapel is a weekly event. There are times that this period will be used as an assembly, but generally these services are set aside to focus on a theme for the spiritual development of our students. Students are expected to listen attentively and have an open heart to what God may be saying to them. Phones should not be brought to chapel and must not be out at all. It is expected that students recognize the contributions of presenters by clapping as appropriate.

Homecoming

Homecoming is held during football season in the fall. It is a week full of events for elementary and high school students. During the week, students and teachers are encouraged to participate in the 'dress-up' days chosen by Varsity cheerleaders. Thursday evening is a family-friendly 'non-fire' event where Homecoming court is introduced, and parents have fun in presentations to their seniors. Friday is a half day of school during which a parade and pep rally are held to celebrate this special time. Saturday evening the school sponsors a dance for 9th – 12th grade students. Girls' dresses are to be modest and must have prior approval according to information given with the registration for the event. Students who attend must stay until the end of the dance.

Junior / Senior Prom Policies

Prom is an exciting event at ACA providing memories for a lifetime. Prom is held each spring for juniors and seniors. Students who choose to participate in prom must abide by all the rules as given in pre-prom instructions. Young men generally wear a tuxedo but are not required to do so. Girls' dresses must be modest and be pre-approved according to the information given in the 'prom information' registration. Other behavior standards will be discussed, and students are expected to follow all directions. Those who do not follow the rules will be issued demerits either at the event or at school following the event. Students' guests must be 10th grade or older to attend the prom and must submit a 'good behavior' report from their school. Guests must also follow all standards and demerits will be awarded to the ACA student for any behavior or dress standards violations of their guest.

- Attire: Clothing must be modest and appropriate for the event. Dresses must be modest and pre-approved according to the registration information given at the time of the event.
- Dancing: Behavior must not be vulgar or offensive. Chaperones may ask students to sit out if deemed inappropriate.

Students who do not wish to follow all the rules are encouraged not to attend.

Honors Day

Each spring near the last day of school, the faculty and administration of ACA recognize those students who have excelled academically during the year. Listed below are some of the categories that are recognized. Individual teachers will give specific awards in their classes:

1. Academic Achievement
2. Christian Service
3. Christian Character
4. Christian Leadership (usually, one boy and one girl from 6th through 12th grades)
5. Perfect Attendance
6. Bible Scholar
7. All A's
8. All A's & B's
9. No Demerits

...and many others

Awards for excellence in athletics, band and other extra-curricular activities are usually presented at athletic banquets throughout the year.

Class Trips

In keeping with our mission, class trips and other special events are planned for the spiritual development and educational enrichment of our students. Parents are asked to partner with us in fully supporting these events and understanding the importance of the high level of behavior required.

Rationale:

Field trips are an integral part of the education at ACA. We feel that travel is one of the greatest educational tools in the world.. Our students learn how to budget money by having the responsibility for purchasing food and other items. They learn behavior characteristics that will help them in life. This includes knowing how to behave in hotels and restaurants, in museums, and even on public transportation. Our students develop a level of confidence through travel that gives them a definite advantage when they leave home. Some of the greatest educational stories about ACA happened on our field trips. We hope you will be able to participate in many of the trips. A change of locations may change year to year depending on circumstances.

The following criteria apply to those who wish to go:

1. Students may not have more than 6 demerits in the semester their trip is scheduled.
2. Because school-sanctioned trips are part of the academic program students who **elect not to participate** will be required to attend regular classes, do a written assignment, and/or take scheduled exams.

3. All school rules apply while students are on the trip.
4. Trips must be paid in full before the date of departure.
5. Students are not allowed to be alone with students of the opposite sex.

6th Grade trip to Washington, D.C.

All 6th grade students and parents are encouraged to travel together to observe the great landmarks symbolizing our country. Special activities are planned, as well as free time to explore this beautiful city and all it holds.

7th and 8th Grade Spiritual Retreat

The off-campus retreat for our 7th and 8th grade students is a wonderful time for students to focus on their spiritual development. It is a great balance of exciting and fun activities and biblical teaching and encouragement. Many students deepen their walk with the Lord and some even begin their new life with Christ.

9th Grade DAUPHIN ISLAND

The annual trip for our Biology classes is a fabulous introduction to Marine Biology. We explore salt marshes, the Explorium, Historic Fort Gaines, go out on a boat into Mobile Bay, and enjoy time on the beach.

10th Grade – NEW YORK

The 10th grade plans a trip to NYC. We visit Ground Zero, Wall Street, many museums, take a boat trip around Manhattan, watch a Broadway play, and have free time to explore and shop. This has been a great educational and cultural trip for ACA.

11th Grade – College Visit, Boston, Chicago, San Antonio

The 11th grade usually takes a trip the last week of school. In the past we have taken college tours in the south or visited locations like Boston or Chicago.

Senior Trip/Spring Break Trip

The senior trip generally takes place over spring break and is often an international travel experience. We have taken students to places like Greece, Italy, France, England, Argentina, and Spain. We are strong believers in the value of travel, especially international travel.

Mission Trips

We encourage our students to take advantage of mission trips held during the school year and during the summer. Students experience the joy of giving back and serving people in other countries.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES FOR HIGH SCHOOL

Rationale

Club activities, class activities, publications, musical groups, and sports activities play an important part in the life of American Christian Academy students. Students are urged to balance their educational program carefully so that it includes both academic and extracurricular activities. Clubs are formed as students indicate an interest and offer opportunities for developing qualities of leadership, character, service, and cultural appreciation. **Students must have attended ACA for at least one year to be eligible for faculty selected honors.**

List of Student Clubs

French Club: Open to all students taking any level of French. Students will have the opportunity to learn about and sample French cooking and food. They will also design a T-shirt which they will be able to purchase.

Scholar Bowl: For academically oriented students in grades seven through twelve who would like to compete with students from other schools.

Beta Club: ACA provides opportunities for students to participate in this service organization. Students must have maintained an 80% academic average. The selection process is made available to students each spring.

Fishing Club: ACA has added a very active fishing club. Students who miss school must keep in mind the number of absences and be responsible for all missed work.

Spanish Club: Spanish Club is open to all students currently taking Spanish.

HOSA: Open to all students involved in Medical Careers I and II courses.

Fellowship of Christian Athletes: Open to all students regardless of involvement in sports or not. Thursday morning meetings encourage student's walk with Christ.

Philosophy Club: See Dr. Quay for more details.

Student Government Association (SGA): There will be voting each year to determine officers. Students are encouraged to participate.

Honor Society

The American Christian Academy Chapter of **National Honor Society and National Junior Honor Society** was begun in 1992. Our chapter has grown dramatically from the initial group of eleven members. Selection will now follow these guidelines: Announcements will be made each morning alerting students who have a cumulative numerical average of 85 or greater and are in 10th –12th grades that they are eligible to seek membership in NHS. Students who have a cumulative numerical average of 90 or greater and are in 8th - 9th grade are eligible to seek membership in NJHS. The higher numerical average requirement for NJHS considers the more rigorous courses required in grades 9 – 12.) They must complete the information form and turn it into the office. Student information sheets must contain a reference letter from an adult and a list of at least 10 community service hours performed during the previous school year. Only those students who turn in the necessary information will be considered for membership in American Christian Academy chapters of NHS and NJHS.

National Honor Society: Candidates for NHS must have achieved sophomore, junior, or senior status at the time of selection in the spring. They must have a cumulative numerical average of 85 or above, have fewer demerits at the time of selection, must fill out a student candidate form which will include a reference letter and verification of 10 community service hours. Students who meet these qualifications will then be evaluated by the faculty and reviewed by the Head of School for approval. The students who are selected will be notified at school but will be inducted at a formal ceremony in the evening.

National Junior Honor Society: Candidates for NJHS must be in the eighth or ninth grade. They must have a cumulative numerical average of 90 or above, have fewer than 10 demerits at the time of selection, must fill out a student candidate form which will include a reference letter and verification of 10 community service hours. Students who meet these qualifications will then be evaluated by the faculty and reviewed by the Head of School for approval. The students who are selected will be notified at school but will be inducted at a formal ceremony in the evening.

French Honor Society – Students completing level 3 of French will be eligible. Admission to the society will be based on GPA and class performance.

Math Honor Society: Open to all students who meet club requirements and are invited by the sponsor.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Rationale

School activities require much of a student's time and are a very important part of the student's life. School activities such as athletics or band may also increase a student's potential to receive recognition and college scholarships. Parents naturally want to guide and direct these activities and to be involved in ensuring their success.

Policies

1. "All activities associated with the school shall be under the sponsorship of the school" (ACSI accreditation standards). If the school's name is involved, students who participate represent the school.
2. Any activities under the sponsorship of the school which involve students "must be based on the philosophy and objectives of the school" (Standards for Unit Schools, Cognia).
3. "All activities, including those commonly classified as extracurricular, shall be controlled by the administrator of the school or by school personnel designated by the school or central office administration" (Standards for Unit Schools, Cognia).
In activities involving the school and its students, all Board policies are applicable.
4. "Any funds generated by school activities shall be under the control of the principal or Head of School". All fund-raising activity must be approved by the Head of School. Any funds collected from school activities should be handled according to Board policy.

FUNDRAISING ACTIVITIES

All efforts to raise funds for our non-profit organization are greatly appreciated. Student clubs, parents, teachers, and staff contribute significantly to programs that are not supported by student tuition. Even though fundraising activities are greatly appreciated and needed, the Board recognizes that they may offer opportunities for misunderstandings and division unless they are conducted under specific guidelines. The following policies are offered not to control, squelch, or hinder fundraising activities, but to protect these efforts so they may continue to contribute to our many needs.

Policies

1. Any fundraising activity that involves the students representing ACA or its school programs must be approved by the Head of School.
2. All funds generated to be used in the school's programs or by its students are under the control of the Head of School and Board of Directors.
3. All funds collected must be handled according to procedures outlined in the School Board's Policies and Procedures Manual.
4. The disbursement of all funds should be handled according to procedures in the School Board's Policies and Procedures Manual.

WITHDRAWAL PROCEDURES

When students and parents realize that they are leaving ACA, they should follow these outlined procedures:

- See the registrar for withdrawal papers.
- Get financial clearance from the business office.
- Leave forwarding addresses for residences and future schools with the school secretary.

NO RECORDS WILL BE RELEASED UNTIL A STUDENT HAS PROPERLY TAKEN CARE OF ALL THE DETAILS OF WITHDRAWAL.