

American Christian Academy

Middle School & High School Student Handbook 2026 - 2027

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Dual Accredited by:
Association of Christian Schools International
Cognia

Member of:
Alabama High School Athletic Association

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.

STUDENT HANDBOOK PURPOSE AND POLICY

The Student Handbook is provided to help students, parents, faculty, and staff understand the basic policies, procedures, expectations, and philosophy that guide life at American Christian Academy. It is not intended to address every possible circumstance or to explain the full rationale behind every decision. Rather, it is written to answer the questions that most often arise and to give our school community a clear, consistent framework for how we live, learn, serve, and respond to one another.

At ACA, our policies are not simply rules on a page. They are practical tools that help us carry out our mission as a Christian school. They help us provide a safe, orderly, consistent, and grace-filled environment where students can grow in wisdom, character, responsibility, and academic excellence.

Scripture teaches that parents carry the primary God-given responsibility for the training and instruction of their children. American Christian Academy exists as a partner with parents in that calling. We do not replace the home; we come alongside it. In shaping our philosophy of education, discipline, and student life, we seek to align our practices with biblical truth so that students experience consistency between what is taught at home, at church, and at school.

In that spirit of partnership, we ask our parents to support the school's expectations and to lead their children toward respect, obedience, self-discipline, and personal responsibility. As students mature, they should increasingly learn to govern their choices, accept responsibility for their actions, and live in a way that honors the Lord and serves others well. This is not merely a behavioral goal; it is a spiritual one.

During the school day and at all school-sponsored or school-supervised activities, students are expected to respond to faculty, staff, coaches, administrators, and adult supervisors with respect, cooperation, and obedience. These expectations help protect the learning environment, strengthen relationships, and allow our faculty and staff to care for students well.

When students, parents, faculty, and staff walk together in support of these policies and procedures, the school is able to function with greater clarity, consistency, and peace. Even more importantly, this shared commitment helps form students who understand that their choices matter, that their actions affect others, and that responsibility is part of discipleship.

The ultimate purpose of this Handbook is not simply compliance. Its purpose is unity. We desire for parents, students, teachers, and school leadership to be "of one mind" as we embrace the great privilege of helping students honor God with their whole lives.

The School Board approves the major policies and procedures of American Christian Academy and reviews them as needed. We welcome thoughtful written questions, suggestions, and recommendations from our school families. Please submit any written input to the Chairman of the Board or to the Head of School by January 31, 2027.

Current board members are listed on the school website.

PHILOSOPHY OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

We believe Christian education is a sacred calling. It is not simply the transfer of information from teacher to student, nor is it merely preparation for the next grade level, the next test, or the next college acceptance letter. At its highest and truest purpose, Christian education is the intentional formation of young people who know truth, love what is good, pursue excellence, serve others, and live their lives under the lordship of Jesus Christ.

We believe our work begins with a clear conviction: every child is created in the image of God and entrusted to us for a season of stewardship. Students are not products to be managed or statistics to be reported. They are souls to be shepherded, minds to be challenged, hearts to be shaped, and lives to be prepared for whatever God has planned for them.

ACA exists in partnership with parents. Scripture places the primary responsibility for the training and instruction of children in the hands of parents, and the Christian school comes alongside the home to support that God-given calling. We do not seek to replace the family. We seek to walk with families, strengthen families, and provide consistency between what is taught at home, at church, and at school. When home and school are aligned around biblical truth, students are given a stronger foundation for life.

We believe education must be rooted in truth. At ACA, truth is not something we create for ourselves or adjust according to culture. Truth is grounded in the character of God and revealed through His Word. Because of that, every subject has meaning. Mathematics reflects order and precision. Science reveals the wonder of creation. Literature helps students understand humanity, virtue, brokenness, and redemption. History reminds us that God is sovereign over time and nations. The arts reflect creativity because we serve a creative God. Athletics, leadership, and service teach discipline, humility, perseverance, and teamwork. Nothing is outside the reach of a biblical worldview.

We also believe Christian education must pursue excellence. Excellence is not perfection, and it is not pride. Excellence is stewardship and drive. It is the faithful use of the gifts, opportunities, and responsibilities God has given us. We should expect students to work hard, think deeply, write clearly, speak respectfully, solve problems, and grow in resilience. We should expect teachers to prepare well, teach with skill, love students individually, and model the character we desire to see formed in them. A Christian school should never use faith as an excuse for mediocrity. Our faith should compel us toward greater faithfulness.

At the same time, academic excellence must never be separated from Christian character. A student may earn honors, awards, scholarships, and admission to excellent universities, but if that student has not learned humility, integrity, self-control, compassion, courage, and reverence for God, then we have missed the deeper work. Education is not only about what a student can accomplish. It is about who that student is becoming.

For that reason, discipline is also part of education. Discipline at ACA should be firm, fair, consistent, and redemptive. The goal is not simply to correct behavior, but to help students grow in wisdom and responsibility. We want students to understand that choices have consequences, that authority is a gift when exercised rightly, and that obedience, respect, and self-control are part of maturity. As students grow older, they should require less external supervision because they are learning to govern themselves before the Lord.

We believe teachers are central to the mission of the school. Curriculum matters. Facilities matter. Programs matter. But the daily influence of a faithful teacher is one of the most powerful tools God uses in a student's life. Teachers at ACA are more than instructors. They are mentors, examples, encouragers, truth-tellers, and shepherds. They teach lessons, but they also shape culture. They help students see that learning is not disconnected from life, faith, worship, or calling.

We believe a strong Christian school must be both loving and courageous. We must love students enough to know them personally, encourage them consistently, and walk with them patiently. We must also love them enough to challenge them, correct them, and call them higher. Grace and truth must not be separated. A

school marked only by rules will become cold. A school marked only by affirmation will become weak. A Christ-centered school must hold both together.

We believe ACA should prepare students not just for college, but for life. College preparation matters, and we should continue to strengthen academic pathways, AP opportunities, college readiness, fine arts, athletics, leadership, and service. But our larger aim is to prepare students for faithfulness beyond ACA. We want graduates who can think biblically, communicate clearly, lead humbly, work diligently, defend truth graciously, and serve wherever God places them.

We believe culture is built through daily faithfulness. It is built in classrooms, hallways, chapels, practices, rehearsals, meetings, conversations, and quiet moments when no one is watching. The mission of ACA must be more than a statement printed in a handbook or displayed on a wall. It must shape how we make decisions, how we treat people, how we handle conflict, how we pursue improvement, and how we measure success.

Our philosophy of education is ultimately mission first. Every program, policy, classroom practice, and leadership decision should be measured against our calling to partner with parents, instill Christian character, and pursue academic excellence for all students. That mission is worthy of our best effort because the students entrusted to us are worthy of our best effort.

American Christian Academy is more than a school. It is a family, a community, and a place of formation. Our prayer is that students who walk our halls will be known, loved, challenged, corrected, encouraged, and prepared. I want them to leave ACA with strong minds, steady hearts, disciplined lives, and a deep understanding that their lives belong to God.

PARENTS'/GUARDIANS' STATEMENT OF COOPERATION

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) We understand and acknowledge that failure to meet all financial obligations **when due** may be grounds for expulsion.

We understand and acknowledge that social media is not an appropriate outlet for dealing with school issues. We will refrain from making negative or disparaging comments about American Christian Academy, its staff, or students on social media sites.

American Christian Academy reserves the right to dismiss families who violate these requests.

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MISSION STATEMENT

American Christ 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

At American Christian Academy, our core values flow directly from our mission: to partner with parents, instill Christian character, and pursue academic excellence for all students. We believe these values should shape more than what we say; they should shape how we teach, lead, correct, encourage, compete, serve, and care for one another each day.

Relationships

We believe students are best formed in a school culture where they are known, loved, challenged, and supported. Relationships are at the heart of who we are at ACA because Christian education is deeply personal. We are not simply moving students through classrooms; we are walking with them as they grow in wisdom, character, faith, and responsibility.

Our commitment to relationships begins with our partnership with parents. God has given parents the primary responsibility for the training and instruction of their children, and ACA exists to come alongside families in that calling. We want our students to experience consistency between home, church, and school as they learn to follow Christ and live with purpose.

Relationships also shape the way our faculty and staff lead students. We want teachers, coaches, and staff members to know students by name, recognize their gifts, speak truth with grace, and help them become who God has called them to be. ACA is more than a school; it is a family and a community. That means we pursue trust, unity, accountability, encouragement, and care in every part of school life.

Growth

We believe every student has been created by God with purpose, potential, and responsibility. Growth at ACA means helping students mature spiritually, academically, socially, emotionally, and physically. We want students to develop strong minds, steady hearts, disciplined habits, and Christ-centered character.

Growth is not the same as perfection. It is the faithful process of becoming more fully formed in wisdom, knowledge, humility, resilience, and obedience to God. We want students to learn how to think deeply, work diligently, communicate clearly, solve problems, accept corrections, and pursue excellence. Academic growth matters because excellence is one way we steward the gifts and opportunities God has given us.

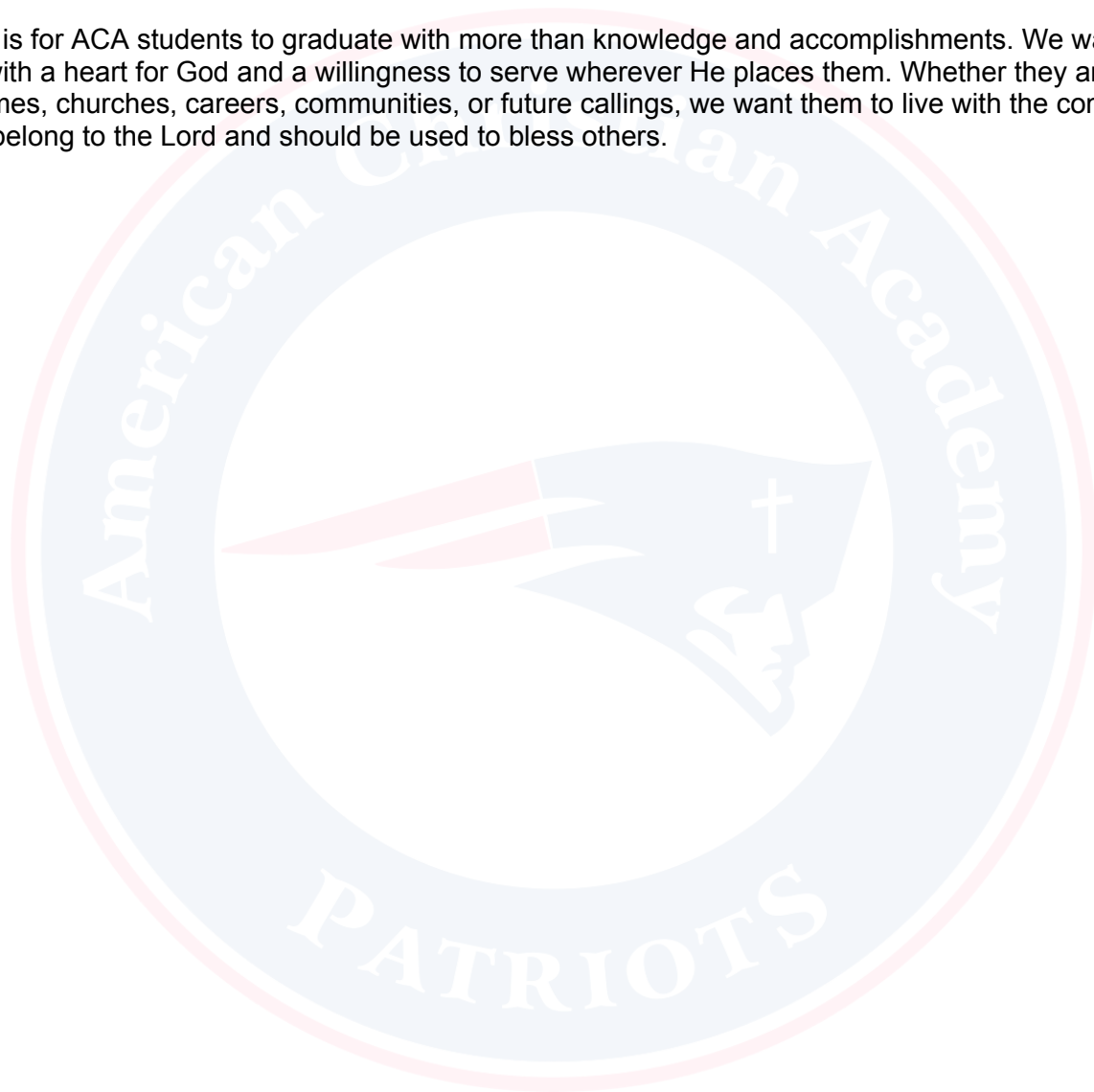
At ACA, we also believe growth requires challenge. Students need people who will encourage them, but they also need people who will call them higher. Whether in the classroom, on the stage, on the field, in chapel, or in moments of correction, our goal is to help students take the next faithful step. We want them to leave ACA prepared not only for college, but for life.

Service

We believe gifts are given by God to be used for His glory and the good of others. Service is central to Christian character because following Christ means learning to live beyond ourselves. At ACA, we want students to understand that leadership is not about status, recognition, or personal achievement; it is about humility, responsibility, and faithful service.

Service begins in the everyday moments: showing kindness, honoring authority, encouraging a classmate, helping without being asked, using words wisely, and putting others before self. It also extends into our broader community as students learn to see needs, respond with compassion, and use their abilities to make a difference.

Our desire is for ACA students to graduate with more than knowledge and accomplishments. We want them to graduate with a heart for God and a willingness to serve wherever He places them. Whether they are leading in their homes, churches, careers, communities, or future callings, we want them to live with the conviction that their lives belong to the Lord and should be used to bless others.



EXPECTED STUDENT OUTCOMES

At American Christian Academy, our desired outcome is not simply that students complete a course of study, earn strong grades, or gain admission to college. Those things matter, and we pursue them with excellence. But our greater desire is that students leave ACA prepared not just for college, but for life — grounded in truth, shaped by Christian character, equipped to think biblically, and ready to serve wherever God places them.

Because ACA exists as a partnership with parents to instill Christian character and academic excellence for all students, these expected student outcomes describe the kind of formation we are prayerfully pursuing in the lives of our students. We want students to be known, loved, challenged, corrected, encouraged, and prepared. We want them to grow in wisdom, responsibility, humility, courage, and service. We want them to understand that their lives belong to God and that every gift, opportunity, relationship, and calling should be used for His glory and the good of others.

A. Spiritual Formation

- I. ACA students will increasingly understand who God is, who they are as image-bearers, and how God has provided salvation through Jesus Christ. They will be taught the truth of Scripture, the message of the Gospel, and the story of creation, fall, redemption, and restoration.
- II. Students will be encouraged to develop a genuine and growing relationship with Christ marked by faith, repentance, worship, prayer, obedience, gratitude, and love for God and neighbor. We desire for students to understand that Christian faith is not limited to Bible class or chapel, but should shape the whole of life.
- III. Students will learn to think biblically and develop a Christian worldview that helps them interpret truth, culture, relationships, vocation, suffering, success, and decision-making through the lens of Scripture. They will be equipped to articulate and defend their faith with humility, clarity, courage, and grace.
- IV. Students will understand God's heart for the nations and the call of every believer to live on mission. Through instruction, service, missions opportunities, and personal example, students will be encouraged to share the hope of the Gospel and to see their lives as part of God's redemptive work in the world.
- V. Students will be taught to recognize their God-given gifts, talents, and opportunities as matters of stewardship. They will be encouraged to use those gifts not merely for personal advancement, but to honor Christ, strengthen others, and serve the needs around them.

B. Intellectual and Academic Growth

- I. ACA students will pursue academic excellence as an act of stewardship. We do not view excellence as perfection or pride, but as faithfulness with the abilities, opportunities, and responsibilities God has given.
- II. Students will develop the ability to read deeply, write clearly, speak thoughtfully, listen carefully, reason logically, solve problems, ask good questions, and engage ideas with discernment. They will be challenged to think critically and creatively in developmentally appropriate ways across every grade level and academic discipline.
- III. Students will learn that all truth belongs to God and that every subject has meaning within His created order. They will be encouraged to see biblical worldview connections in literature, history, mathematics, science, the arts, technology, athletics, and leadership.
- IV. Students will be prepared for college, career, and calling through strong academic habits, intellectual curiosity, perseverance, responsibility, and the ability to apply knowledge in meaningful ways. They will understand that lifelong learning is part of faithful living and should continue throughout their personal, spiritual, professional, and civic lives.
- V. Students will also learn to use technology, information, and communication tools wisely and ethically. They will be taught to seek truth, evaluate sources, communicate with integrity, and resist the temptation to use knowledge without wisdom.

C.

Relational and Social Maturity

- I. ACA students will understand that every person is created in the image of God and is therefore worthy of dignity, respect, compassion, and truth. They will be taught to value themselves and others according to God's design rather than the standards of culture, popularity, performance, or appearance.
- II. Students will learn to build healthy relationships marked by kindness, humility, honesty, self-control, forgiveness, and biblical reconciliation. They will be expected to treat classmates, teachers, coaches, staff members, parents, and guests with respect in both words and actions.
- III. Students will grow in personal responsibility. They will be taught that choices have consequences, that authority is a gift when exercised rightly, and that maturity includes learning to accept correction, make things right, and grow from failure.
- IV. Students will understand the importance of family, church, school, government, and community in God's design for human life. They will be taught to engage society as responsible citizens who respect proper authority, seek justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with God.
- V. Students will be encouraged to lead with humility rather than entitlement. Whether in the classroom, on a team, on the stage, in chapel, in student leadership, or in daily friendships, they will be called to use influence in ways that help others flourish.

D. Cultural and Creative Engagement

- I. ACA students will appreciate beauty, creativity, and artistic expression as gifts from God. They will understand that the arts can reflect truth, goodness, beauty, brokenness, longing, and redemption, and they will be encouraged to use creative gifts in ways that honor the Lord.
- II. Students will learn to appreciate cultures different from their own while interpreting all cultures through a biblical lens. They will be taught to engage people with humility, curiosity, respect, and conviction, recognizing that God's kingdom includes people from every tribe, tongue, and nation.
- III. Students will be equipped to engage culture without being shaped uncritically by it. They will learn to identify ideas, values, and assumptions in literature, media, history, entertainment, technology, and public life, and to respond with biblical wisdom rather than fear, pride, or compromise.
- IV. Students will grow in gratitude for the broader world God has made. Through classroom learning, travel, service, missions, fine arts, athletics, and community experiences, they will be encouraged to see beyond themselves and to understand their responsibility to love and serve others well.

E. Physical, Emotional, and Personal Stewardship

- I. ACA students will understand that their bodies are gifts from God and should be treated with gratitude, discipline, purity, and care. They will be encouraged to develop habits that support physical health, including appropriate activity, rest, nutrition, safety, and wise decision-making.
- II. Students will learn that spiritual, emotional, mental, and physical health are connected. They will be encouraged to grow in resilience, self-control, perseverance, courage, and healthy dependence on the Lord and trusted adults.
- III. Students will be taught to honor a biblical understanding of identity, sexuality, marriage, gender, and the human body. These matters will be addressed with truth, grace, age-appropriateness, and a desire to help students live with conviction, purity, compassion, and obedience to God.
- IV. Students will be encouraged to make wise choices regarding habits, relationships, entertainment, technology, substances, and personal conduct. We desire for them to understand that private choices shape public character and that integrity is part of discipleship.

F. Service and Leadership

- I. ACA students will understand that gifts are given by God to be used for His glory and the good of others. Service is not an extracurricular add-on at ACA; it is part of Christian formation.
- II. Students will learn to see needs, respond with compassion, and serve with humility. They will be encouraged to practice service in everyday ways — helping a classmate, honoring a teacher,

encouraging a teammate, welcoming a new student, caring for younger children, and taking initiative without needing recognition.

- III. Students will be given age-appropriate opportunities to serve in classrooms, chapels, teams, clubs, fine arts, missions, community partnerships, and leadership roles. Through these opportunities, they will learn that leadership is not about status, but about responsibility.
- IV. Students will be challenged to develop the posture of a faithful servant-leader: humble enough to listen, hungry enough to grow, and wise enough to care for people well. We want ACA graduates to leave with the conviction that wherever God places them, they are called to love Him, serve others, and help make what they touch better.

ACA GRADUATE PROFILE

As students mature, we desire to see them increasingly become graduates who:

- I. Know Scripture, the Gospel, Christian doctrine, and the truth of God's redemptive story.
- II. Love God, their families, their church, their neighbors, their school community, and the people God places before them.
- III. Think with biblical wisdom about learning, culture, relationships, choices, vocation, and calling.
- IV. Practice habits of prayer, worship, repentance, forgiveness, diligence, stewardship, and obedience.
- V. Serve with humility, courage, compassion, and a willingness to use their gifts for others.
- VI. Lead by accepting responsibility, communicating with integrity, strengthening community, and helping others flourish.

Our hope is that ACA students will leave this place with strong minds, steady hearts, disciplined lives, and a clear understanding that they were created by God, loved by God, accountable to God, and called to live for His glory.

STATEMENT OF FAITH

American 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 AdvanceEd. As of this year (2026-27), we have passed the 1100 student mark and are nearing capacity of our strategic long term caps per section and grade. 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 ACA 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

Welcome to a new school year at American Christian Academy.

I am grateful for the privilege of beginning another year together, and I am excited about what God is doing in and through this school. ACA is more than a place where students attend classes, complete assignments, compete, perform, and prepare for the future. ACA is a family, a community, and a partnership with parents for the formation of students who are being prepared not just for college, but for life.

As we step into this year, I believe God is calling all of us forward. That includes our students, teachers, coaches, staff, and administrators. It includes our parents and families. None of us are called to stand still. We are called to grow in faithfulness, in excellence, in humility, in wisdom, in courage, and in love for one another. Moving forward does not mean chasing change for the sake of change. It means taking the next faithful step God has placed in front of us.

For our students, that means bringing your best to the classroom, the stage, the field, the court, the chapel, the hallway, and the everyday moments that shape who you are becoming. God has given each of you gifts, abilities, personalities, opportunities, and influence. We want you to use every ounce of what He has placed in you — not for pride, not for comparison, and not simply for personal success — but for His glory and the good of others.

For our faculty and staff, moving forward means continuing to teach, lead, coach, correct, encourage, and shepherd with excellence and grace. Our calling is not just to deliver content but to help form students. We are here to challenge minds, shape hearts, build character, and walk with students through the growth process. That work is sometimes clean and joyful, and sometimes it means stepping into the hard and messy places with students because we love them and believe they are worth it.

A wise Christian educator once told me that our calling is to be willing to get into “the pool of muddiness” with students. That has always stayed with me. All of us have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. Students will make mistakes. Adults will make mistakes. There will be moments this year when we get it right, and there will be moments when we need to seek forgiveness, make corrections, and grow. But by God’s grace, we will walk through those moments together with truth, gentleness, accountability, and love.

Colossians 3:23 reminds us, “Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men.” That truth should shape everything we do at ACA. It should shape how we study, how we teach, how we practice, how we compete, how we serve, how we communicate, and how we respond when things are difficult. Excellence at ACA is not about perfection. Excellence is stewardship. It is giving our best because God is worthy of our best.

*Our mission remains clear: American Christian Academy exists as a partnership with parents to instill Christian character and academic excellence for all students. That mission is not just a statement in a handbook. It is the reason we do what we do. It is the filter for our decisions. It is the heartbeat behind our classrooms, chapels, programs, relationships, discipline, service, and pursuit of growth. This year, we will continue to lean into our core values: **Relationships, Growth, and Service**.*

We will build relationships because students are best formed when they are known, loved, challenged, and supported.

We will pursue growth because none of us — student or educator — has arrived. God is still shaping us, stretching us, and calling us forward. We will serve because the gifts God gives are not meant to stop with us, they are meant to bless others.

There will be a drive this year to move forward together. That means we will ask more of ourselves. We will raise expectations where they need to be raised. We will strengthen what needs to be strengthened. We will celebrate what God is doing, and we will be honest about the areas where we need to grow. We will not settle for comfort when God is calling us to faithfulness.

At the same time, we will do this with a spirit that reflects Christ. Galatians 6 reminds us to restore with gentleness, to bear one another’s burdens, and to examine our own work before the Lord. That is the kind of community we want ACA to be — a place of truth and grace, conviction and compassion, high expectations and deep care.

Every student who walks our halls is created in the image of God. Every student matters. Every student has gifts. Every student has room to grow. Every student is worth our time, our effort, our prayers, our correction, and our encouragement.

I am praying that this year will be marked by spiritual growth, academic excellence, stronger relationships, meaningful service, and a renewed commitment to move forward together. I am praying that our students will become more disciplined, more courageous, more humble, more joyful, and more prepared for whatever God has in store for their lives. I am praying the same for those of us who lead them.

Thank you for the privilege of partnering with you. I am honored to serve this school, these students, and this mission. Let’s move forward together.

*Sincerely,
Stephen Hooks
Head of School*

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. **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 Accommodation 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 has limited resources 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. If a student qualifies for accommodations, American Christian Academy will do our best to implement those accommodations. In order to qualify for a Student Learning Plan (SLP) a student must:

- Have appropriate and current documentation indicating a need for special consideration. Current and appropriate documentation is defined as a written evaluation from a specialist within three years and includes diagnostic test results from a licensed psychologist or psychometrist.
- Be struggling academically.
- Be determined by the academic team that the disability is having an adverse impact on the student's learning and will make appropriate recommendations regarding accommodations at ACA.
- Both parent/guardian and student show effort and do their part to succeed.

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 therapy, etc. outside of the school. In some cases, it may be necessary to choose a school which provides the special accommodation 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. All new K4-1st graders will be required to have an assessment by one of our teachers. If needed, an assessment may be necessary for any new student entering 2nd through 12th grade.
8. All new parents will have a personal interview with our administration.
Parents will be notified by email regarding their child's acceptance by the Admissions Director.

2026-2027 ACA SCHOOL CALENDAR

August 12, 2026 _____ 1st day of school, half day
 Sept. 7 _____ Labor Day, school closed
 October 12-13 _____ Columbus Day/Fall Break
 October 30 _____ Homecoming, ½ day
 November 11 _____ Veterans Day, school closed
 November 20 _____ Grandparents Day Program Elementary ½ day, HS no school.
 November 23-27 _____ Thanksgiving Holiday, no school
 December 16 _____ ½ day school
 December 17-January 5 _____ Christmas Holiday, no school
 January 5 _____ Teacher Prep Day
 January 6 _____ Back to school
 January 18 _____ MLK Jr. Holiday, no school
 February 15 _____ President's Day, no school
 March 22-26 _____ Spring Break
 March 29th _____ Easter Monday, school closed
 April 16 _____ Teacher Inservice, no school
 May 16 _____ Graduation
 May 19 _____ Last day of school, ½ day

High School Term Grading Periods:

August 12 – October 9, 2026
 October 14 – December 16, 2026
 January 6 – March 12, 2027
 March 15 – May 19, 2027

ACT TEST DATES

September 19, 2026
 October 17, 2026
 December 12, 2026
 February 27, 2027
 April 10, 2027
 June 12, 2027
 July 10, 2027

PSAT/NMSQT TEST – October 9, 2026

PreACT 9th – February 2, 2027

ASVAB – February 20, 2027

MAP Growth (1st -8th) – Fall 2026, Spring 2027

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

AP Government
 AP Literature
 AP Studio Art
 AP Language
 AP US History

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.

ATTENDANCE POLICIES

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 6 per semester - will have their grade dropped by one letter grade. If students have a doctor's excuse for their absences, then those absences will not be counted towards their 6 absences.**

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 within 3 days explaining the absence when they return. If the doctor's note is not brought within 3 days of the absence the absence will be unexcused.** 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 (more than 6), will result in the grades being lowered by one letter grade in each class where excessive absences were reached.

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 6 per semester limit.**
- Examples of approved situations: 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**

EXCESSIVE ABSENCES

Students with excessive absences will be required to have a meeting with administration regarding their path moving forward. This appointment will be set by the Director of Academics.

ADDITIONAL ATTENDANCE POLICIES

Students involved in interscholastic sports may not participate in that sport 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**.

PROCEDURES FOR LEAVING CLASS

Students who need to leave class must have a pass from a teacher. 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 be disciplined accordingly. **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.**

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 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. No makeup work or makeup tests will be allowed for unexcused absences. Students may not miss one class to make up work in another.

TARDINESS TO SCHOOL

The school day begins at 8:00 AM and students will be marked tardy if they arrive after that. 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.

CLASS ATTENDANCE

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

POLICIES FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT BEHAVIOR

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. 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 Saturday School. The parents will be notified by email. Saturday School procedures & details are listed below. |
| 6 demerits | The student will attend <u>2 additional hours</u> of Saturday School. These may sometimes be served in the same morning, but may require a 3 rd morning. 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 Head of School where he will inform them of requirements of a possible path forward. |

SATURDAY SCHOOL PROCEDURES:

1. Students who accumulate 3 demerits will be assigned 1 day of Saturday School
2. Saturday School will run from 8:00 AM to 9:00 AM.
3. A fee of \$10 per hour will be required for attending Saturday School with a minimum of five students in attendance.

4. The \$10 fee will compensate the teacher facilitating Saturday School.
5. The demerit system will remain unchanged; however, Saturday School will now replace after-school detention.
6. **Non-driving** students that receive 3 demerits for tardies will still have after-school detention.
7. Students that receive 6 demerits for tardies will be assigned 2 hours of Saturday School.
8. Students who miss Saturday school will be assigned an additional Saturday school, unless there has been prior approval from the principal.

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 Christ-like attitudes on the inside resulting in permanent changes in behavior.

MERITS

Teachers and staff look for instances of positive behavior and award "Character Recognition" certificates.

All discipline consequences will be subject to the discretion of the principal.

COPY OF DEMERIT SHEET:

AMERICAN CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

Student Name: _____

Date: _____ Time: _____ Period: _____

CLASS 1

☐ Tardy
☐ Disobedience
☐ Rudeness/Disrespect
☐ Profanity
☐ Lying

☐ Cell Phones
☐ Dress code
☐ Disruptive behavior
☐ Cheating

CLASS 2

☐ Out of assigned area
☐ Defiance
☐ Forging parent signature
☐ Inappropriate physical contact

☐ Harassment
☐ Fighting
☐ Gambling
☐ Stealing

CLASS 3

☐ Skipping
☐ Leaving campus w/out permission
☐ Possession of illegal substance
☐ Assault of student, faculty or staff

☐ Sexual harassment
☐ Repeated violations of Class 2 offenses

Other: _____

Teacher Comments: _____

Teacher Signature: _____

Parent Comments: _____

Parent Signature: _____

Administrative action taken _____

Administrative signature _____

SIGNED DEMERITS ARE DUE THE NEXT SCHOOL DAY

WHITE/PARENT

YELLOW/TEACHER

PINK / OFFICE

Demerit Procedure Continued:

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 may be suspended from school. Depending on action by members of the Board, disciplinary action will follow and expulsion is possible.
- 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. Fighting – A physical fight is defined as an exchange of blows or one student assaulting another student or a clear intent to harm or intimidate another person. Play fighting, hitting back, or hitting “because” will be treated as a fight. All parties involved, fighters, instigators, conspirators and provokers are subject to disciplinary action.
- F. 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. 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.
- G. 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.

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.
-

Anything the teacher has not specifically given permission or approval of is unauthorized. Work identified as plagiarism or AI sourced will be disciplined as cheating. The discipline for cheating will be a zero on the assignment and disciplinary action according to the principal.

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 **bullying** and work toward a Biblical resolution. Bullying 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

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.

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

Vandalism does include the senior prank.

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 and on the school grounds after 3:30 p.m. **Students violating this policy may be subject to disciplinary action per the principal. 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 lifestyles 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. ACA reserves the right to deny admission or reevaluate the partnership standing for 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)

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 could 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

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, any inappropriate use will result in 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.

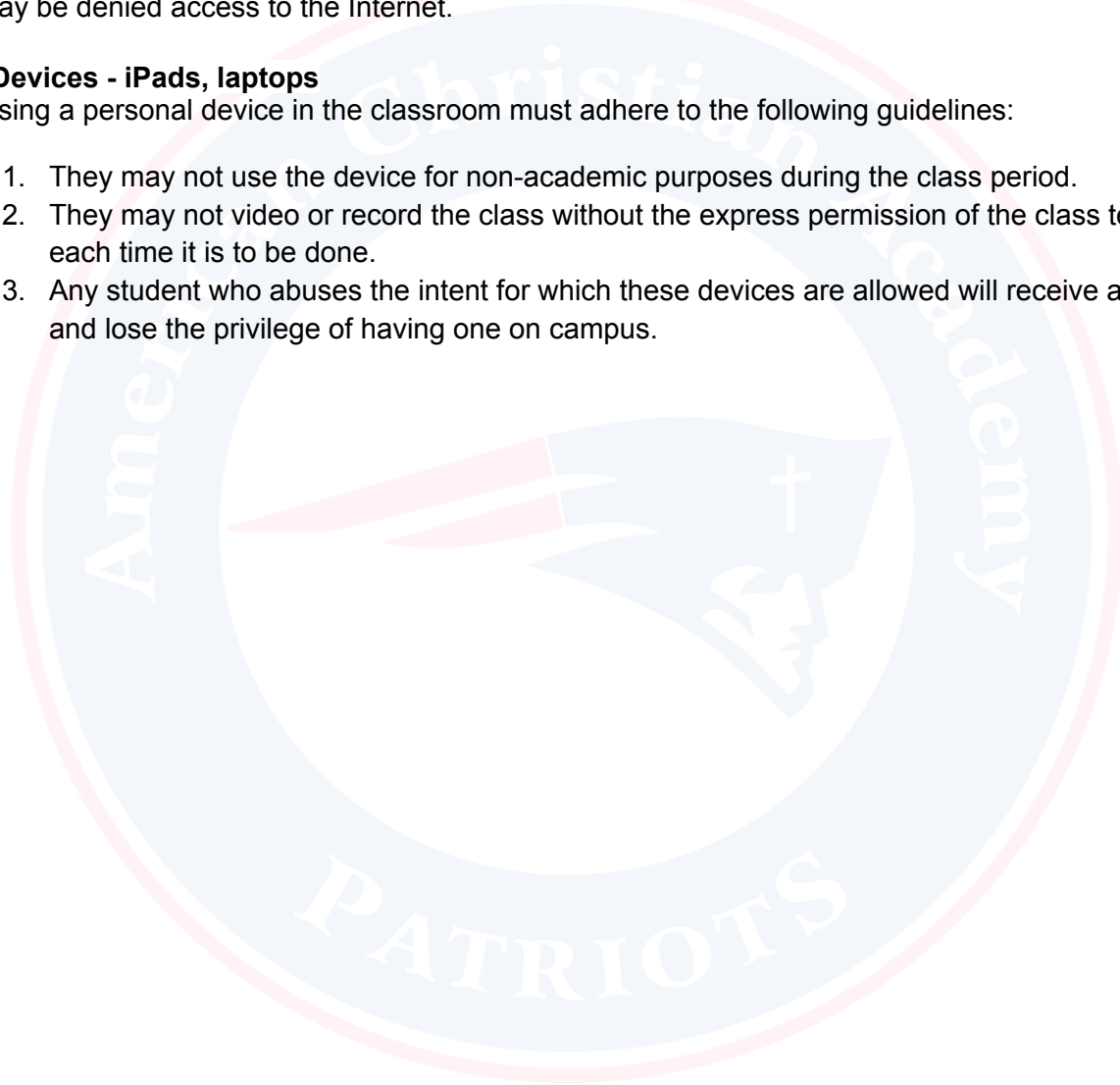
4) American Christian Academy makes no warranties of any kind, whether expressed or implied, for the service it is providing.

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 the Director of Technology, Tanner Russell. 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

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.



STUDENT CELL PHONE & PERSONAL DEVICE POLICY

PURPOSE AND STANDARD

American Christian Academy partners with parents to form students who are spiritually mature, academically focused, and socially responsible. Personal technology can be useful, but during the school day it often disrupts attention, relationships, safety, and the classroom environment. For that reason, ACA maintains an away-all-day standard for student cell phones and personal electronic devices.

This policy is written to protect instructional time, student dignity, campus safety, and ACA's mission.

DEVICES COVERED

This policy applies to any personal device capable of communication, recording, internet access, gaming, music/audio, or electronic messaging, including but not limited to:

- Cell phones and smartphones
- Smartwatches and wearable communication devices
- Earbuds, headphones, AirPods, Bluetooth devices, and similar accessories
- Tablets, personal laptops, gaming devices, cameras, and any other non-school-issued electronic device

BELL-TO-BELL EXPECTATION

From 8:00 a.m. until 3:15 p.m., student devices must be powered off and stored completely out of sight in a backpack, purse, locker, or other approved location. Students may not carry, display, check, use, or access a covered device during the school day unless a staff member gives explicit permission for a specific school-approved purpose. Visibility alone is a violation regardless of intent or use. Students may not keep a covered device in a pocket, waistband, or otherwise on their person during the school day.

This policy applies in every school setting during the school day, including classrooms, hallways, restrooms, locker rooms, cafeteria, chapel, assemblies, office areas, athletic areas, outdoor spaces, and during transitions between classes.

UNAUTHORIZED USE OR POSSESSION

A violation occurs when a covered device is visible, audible, handled, accessed, or used without permission during the school day. Unauthorized use includes, but is not limited to:

- Texting, calling, messaging, social media, gaming, browsing, or app use
- Taking photos, recording audio or video, livestreaming, or sharing images or recordings
- Using earbuds, headphones, or Bluetooth audio devices without staff permission
- Possessing a phone on the student's person in a restroom, locker room, or testing environment
- Using a device to avoid school communication channels or to contact a parent directly during the school day for routine matters
- Using a device in any way connected to cheating, harassment, bullying, intimidation, disruption, or violation of another student's privacy

CONSEQUENCES

Consequences are cumulative for the school year. ACA reserves the right to assign a stronger consequence when the conduct involves dishonesty, defiance, recording, privacy concerns, academic dishonesty, harassment, bullying, or disruption.

Offense	Device Response	Disciplinary Response	Return of Device
1st offense	Device confiscated and documented. Parent/guardian notified.	Administrative warning and conduct documentation.	Returned only to parent/guardian or approved adult at the end of the school day.
2nd offense	Device confiscated and documented. Parent/guardian notified.	Detention assigned. Student may be required to check device into the office for a period of time.	Parent/guardian pickup required.
3rd offense & beyond	Device confiscated and documented.	Loss of phone privilege for the remainder of the quarter or semester; suspension may be assigned at the principal's discretion.	Parent/guardian pickup required; student may not bring a device back until privilege is restored in writing.
Refusal to comply	Failure to surrender a device when requested will be treated as insubordination.	Immediate office referral; ISS or suspension may be assigned.	Device held for parent/guardian pickup and administrative conference.

SEARCH, CONFISCATION, AND PRIVACY

When a device is confiscated, ACA staff will secure the device in the school office or another designated location. ACA may require a student to power off the device before it is stored. If there is reasonable concern that a device contains evidence related to a safety issue, bullying, harassment, academic dishonesty, illegal activity, or violation of school policy, administration may hold the device while the matter is reviewed and may involve parents and/or appropriate authorities as circumstances require.

EMERGENCY AND PARENT COMMUNICATION

Parents should contact the school office for urgent messages during the school day. Parents should not contact students directly during the school day. Students who need to contact a parent for a legitimate reason should report to the office and use the school's approved communication process. Students are not permitted to use personal devices for routine parent communication during the school day.

EXCEPTIONS

Limited exceptions may be approved only in the following circumstances:

- A verified emergency as directed by ACA staff or administration
- A documented medical accommodation, health plan, or approved student support plan
- A specific instructional use authorized by a teacher for a defined classroom purpose; once that purpose ends, the device must be put away again

Convenience, end-of-day or other transportation coordination, forgotten items, extracurricular plans, or parent preference do not create an exception to the bell-to-bell standard.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR DEVICES

Students are strongly encouraged to leave personal devices at home or in their automobiles. Students bring personal devices to school at their own risk. ACA is not responsible for lost, stolen, damaged, misplaced, or confiscated devices or accessories. Families who do not want a device subject to confiscation should keep the device at home.

IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW

This policy is effective beginning Fall Semester 2026 for the 2026-2027 school year and applies to all students in grades 6-12. ACA administration may clarify implementation procedures as needed to maintain consistency, safety, and alignment with the school's mission.

GUIDELINES FOR THE GYM

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 AND APPEARANCE POLICY

At ACA, our desire is to partner with parents to instill Christian character and academic excellence in every student. Scripture teaches, *“Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God”* — 1 Corinthians 10:31. That includes the way we conduct ourselves, the way we treat others, and the way we present ourselves.

The purpose of a dress code is not to measure a student's spirituality by clothing. Clothes do not bring us closer to Christ. Our desire is to help students think biblically, walk wisely, dress modestly, and participate in a school environment that is orderly, respectful, and free from unnecessary distraction.

There is an appropriate way to dress for school. Students are expected to come to school clean, neat, modest, and prepared to learn. Modesty is expected of every student. It is not the responsibility of one gender to manage the thoughts or choices of another. Each student is personally responsible before the Lord for purity, self-control, respect, and wisdom. We want our dress expectations to reflect the truth that every student is created in the image of God and should be treated with dignity.

Because modesty can involve judgment, the school has established guidelines that seek to be clear, fair, and consistent while still allowing appropriate individual expression. The administration reserves the right to determine whether a student's dress is appropriate for school.

Rules are necessary, but they must serve the mission. We are here to educate and disciple students. Dress code enforcement should not become a source of unnecessary distraction, lost instructional time, or damaged relationships. When correction is needed, it should be handled with clarity, humility, consistency, and care.

Parents are asked to help their students make wise clothing choices before they arrive at school. When in doubt, students should ask a parent or a trusted ACA adult before wearing an item to school.

As styles change, the administration may clarify or adjust dress code expectations, including during the school year when necessary.

GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR ALL STUDENTS

- Students may wear clothing that is neat, modest, clean, and appropriate for a school setting.
- Approved ACA shirts may be worn Monday through Friday.
- Clothing may not contain questionable, offensive, inappropriate, or distracting writing, pictures, symbols, or messages.
- Clothing may not be frayed, worn thin, ragged, sagging, excessively tight, or have holes.
- Undergarments may not be visible.
- Shorts, skirts, and dresses must be no shorter than two inches above the knee.
- Sweatpants, wind suits, athletic shorts, gym shorts, and similar athletic wear may not be worn as regular school attire, even if the item is part of an athletic team uniform.
- Leggings are acceptable as long as they are covered in a way that is modest and school appropriate. When leggings are worn, the shirt, dress, skirt, sweater, sweatshirt, or outer layer worn over them must provide appropriate coverage in the front and back and must remain in place during normal school activity. Leggings should not be worn in a way that draws unnecessary attention or becomes a distraction from the learning environment. As with all dress code matters, students and parents are encouraged to make wise choices rooted in modesty, respect, and the desire to honor Christ.
- Joggers are not banned as a category. Like all pants, they must be modest, neat, school-appropriate, not sagging, not excessively tight, and not function as sweatpants or athletic wear.
- Hats and head coverings may not be worn inside the building unless approved by administration for a specific reason.
- Hairstyles and hair colors should not be distracting. Hair color must be a natural shade.

GUIDELINES FOR BOYS

- Shirts may not contain questionable, offensive, inappropriate, or distracting writing, pictures, symbols, or messages
- Boys may wear shorts that are no shorter than two inches above the knee and have belt loops. Athletic shorts are not permitted.
- Boys may wear jeans or pants that are not frayed, worn thin, torn, sagging, or otherwise inappropriate for school.
- Boys may wear a variety of hairstyles, but hair must be off the ears, off the collar, and off the eyebrows. Hairstyles must not be distracting. Students are expected to plan haircuts ahead of time and should not need repeated reminders.
- Facial hair must be kept trimmed and neat.
- Facial piercings are not permitted.

GUIDELINES FOR GIRLS

- Girls may wear modest shirts with appropriate necklines in the front and back. Shirts must stay in place during normal school activity.
- All shirts worn under jackets, sweaters, or sweatshirts must meet dress code standards.
- Girls may wear approved ACA T-shirts sponsored or approved by the school.
- Undergarments may not be visible at the neck, arms, back, or through clothing.
- Girls may wear skirts, dresses, and shorts that are no shorter than two inches above the knee.
- Girls may wear pants or jeans that are not frayed, worn thin, torn, ragged, sagging, or excessively tight.
- Girls may wear leggings as long as they are covered in a way that is modest and school appropriate. The garment worn over leggings must provide appropriate coverage in the front and back and must remain in place during normal school activity.
- Sweatpants, wind suits, athletic shorts, gym shorts, and similar athletic wear may not be worn as regular school attire, even if the item is part of an athletic team uniform.
- Girls are not permitted to wear nose jewelry or other facial piercings. Earrings are permitted.
- Sweatshirts may be worn as long as they do not contain questionable, offensive, inappropriate, or distracting writing, pictures, symbols, or messages.

DRESS CODE ENFORCEMENT

Dress code enforcement lies under the purview of administration.

Teachers and staff members are not responsible for making final dress code determinations, issuing dress code consequences, or engaging students directly over subjective dress code concerns. If a staff member observes a possible dress code concern, the concern should be communicated to administration.

Administration will determine whether the student's dress is appropriate and, when necessary, will address the concern with the student. Depending on the situation, the student may receive a demerit and may be asked to change.

Dress code concerns should be handled in a way that protects the student's dignity, promotes fairness and consistency, preserves relationships, and minimizes disruption to instruction. When there is a concern, it should be handled with dignity, consistency, and care. The goal is not to create unnecessary conflict over clothing, but to help students learn to make modest and mature choices while preserving the academic and discipleship mission of ACA.

The goal is not to destroy a relationship over a rule. The goal is to help students grow in wisdom, modesty, maturity, and respect while maintaining a school environment that supports ACA's mission.

ATHLETIC TEAM DRESS POLICY

Sports teams that desire to promote unity and esprit de corps may wear special team shirts that conform to dress code standards and have been approved by the school. Team apparel must still reflect modesty, neatness, and school appropriateness.

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. 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 and Academic Directors 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 Academic Directors.

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 Academic Directors. **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 should 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

Only academic subject grades which are entered on the transcript at semester are included. Honors classes are weighted 0.1. AP 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 the 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 7-12

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.

Exam Exemption Policy

Middle school students are required to take all exams in the first and second semester.

High school students are required to take all first semester exams. High school students may exempt their second semester exams if they meet **ALL** of the following criteria:

1. Students have a C average (69.5) or better in their class.
2. Students have 5 or fewer demerits for the **year**.

- Students have 6 or fewer non-doctor's excused absences for the **year**. As a reminder doctor's excuses must be submitted within 3 days of the absence.

Teachers have been asked to consider the week before exams. New Material, assignments, and projects **should 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 the Pre-ACT, 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 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.

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 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 Government and Politics, AP Literature, AP Language, and AP US History. 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 a fee.. Students are responsible for contacting colleges to determine required scores to receive credit, or if that college/university accepts AP credit.

Option 2: Students electing NOT to take the AP exam will only receive honors weighting for the course, not AP weighting.

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 online through Shelton State. Students will register for courses through Shelton State
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 provided 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. **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.

GUIDELINES AFFECTING PROMOTION

Grades 7-8

1. The numerical average of the first and second semesters must equal 60 or the student is considered to have failed that particular course.
 - a. If a student fails a course in middle school they are required to complete an ACA approved summer school course either online or in person. There will be a cost for the summer school course. Failure to complete the summer school course will result in the student repeating the grade.
2. Students who fail three core courses including English, Math, Science, and/or History may 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.

Grades 9-12:

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.. 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.
2. Students ejected from competition because of conduct will be responsible for the monetary fine and will receive school discipline as well. The fine must be paid in full before returning to competition.

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.

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(s) 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 in a timely manner (≤ 1 hr). Students must be fever free without medication and/or have no vomiting for **24 hours** before returning to school.
3. **Head Lice** – Students discovered to have 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 at least 12 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(s) and turn it into the nurse. This will ensure that your child gets the proper treatment in case of an emergency.

Forms are available on our webpage at www.acacademy.com or contact the school nurse to request medical forms.

CARE OF BOOKS/BACKPACKS

If a student loses a book, he/she should check the lost/found 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 or freely in the gym floor (must be secured in the bleachers). That hallway is the primary evacuation route in emergencies. It is also a “safe area” in inclement weather. Students that leave backpacks in the main downstairs hallway may be issued a demerit.

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.

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. Students who choose to destroy the property of the school or of

other students will be disciplined accordingly and required to pay for the items destroyed or defaced. Students who attend ACA 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.

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.

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.

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** 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.**

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. A student may choose to put a lock on his/her locker.
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.

LUNCH

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 by using your FACTS Family payment portal. All payments are paid online to the "Lunch Pre-pay Account."

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. Please do not put food or beverages in lockers.
6. Students are not permitted to order food to be delivered from off campus establishments; however, parents may bring lunch from off campus.
7. 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.
8. 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.
9. **Other students are not allowed to leave campus for lunch with seniors on off-campus lunch days, even with a parent's permission.**

TRAFFIC FLOW

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.** 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. It is expected that students recognize the contributions of presenters by clapping as appropriate.

Homecoming

Homecoming is held during football season in the fall. There will be information distributed in the fall.

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. Other behavior standards will be discussed, and students are expected to follow all directions.

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.

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 may 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 / 11th Grade

These grades have typically visited major cities (Boston, NYC, Chicago, etc.) within the continental United States or attended a college campus tour together as a group.

Senior Trip/Spring Break Trip

The senior trip generally takes place over spring break and is often an international travel experience. 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 to others.



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.

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 interested in a medical career.

Fellowship of Christian Athletes: Open to all students regardless of involvement in sports or not.

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

HONOR SOCIETIES

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, AdvancEd).
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, AdvancEd).

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 activities 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, 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 students representing ACA or its school programs must be approved by the Head of School or his designee.
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.

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.

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