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# Grace Fellowship



# Academy

*A ministry of Grace Fellowship Church*

1300 North Miller Road  
Buckeye, AZ 85326  
Phone: 623-393-8883  
[www.gracefellowshipacademy.org](http://www.gracefellowshipacademy.org)

## 2023/2024

## Parent/Student Handbook

*"Watch, stand fast in the faith, be brave, be strong."  
1 Corinthians 16:13*

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*“Train a child in the way he should go, and when he grows up he will not turn from it.”*  
*Proverbs 22:6*

**Administration**

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**Principal**

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**School Office 623-393-8883**

**Office Hours**

**Monday-Thursday**

**7:00 AM-4:00 PM**

**School Hours**

**Monday-Thursday**

**7:30 AM-3:30 PM**

www.gracefellowshipacademy.org

**School Board**

David Lewis - President

Cheryl Sawyer - Vice President

Cash Veo - Treasurer

Jeana Holmes - Secretary

Michelle Dawson - Member

Morgan Ohlin - Member

Grace Fellowship Academy is a non-denominational Christian day school dedicated to giving the very finest Christian education possible to young people in Preschool through Eighth grade. GFA provides a sound academic education based on a Christian worldview. It provides the opportunity for all students to know Christ Jesus as their personal Savior and to acquire Christ-centered attitudes, desires, conduct, standards, and goals.

### **Mission Statement**

Equip minds, nurture hearts, and promote service all for the glory of God.

### **Vision Statement**

Preparing student's hearts to impact the world for Jesus Christ.

### **Statement of Spiritual Commitment and Doctrine**

We, the Board of Directors, administration, and faculty of Grace Fellowship Academy believe the school to be an extension of the Christian home and the Christian Church. Its purpose is to educate any student who has a desire to be educated in a Christian oriented atmosphere. Grace Fellowship Academy's view of life is based upon the Bible as God's only infallible, written revelation to man.

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**ABSENCE REPORTING**

Absence is defined as a student's non-attendance in his/her assigned classroom during an assigned period.

When an absence is necessary, the parent or guardian must notify the school, telling the reason for the student's absence. This should be done by contacting the school before 8:15 am. Messages can also be left on voice mail before 7:00 am or by emailing the office. **Students are not permitted to call.** Attendance emails are automatically generated when a student is marked absent to remind the parent to notify the school. Failure to communicate with the office with a valid excuse may result in an unexcused absence.

***Excused Absences will be allowed for the following:***

1. Student illness
2. Extended student illness-- reviewed by Administration on an individual basis
3. Family emergencies (catastrophic events, etc.)
4. Doctor, dental or other professional appointments which cannot be made outside of school hours. (Please make every effort to schedule appointments outside of school hours.)
5. Upon approval, special consideration for other reasons will be given to students.

***Unexcused absences are absences that are not on the excused absence list. According to Arizona State Statutes, a student with five unexcused absences can be reported and considered truant.***

### **ACADEMIC PROBATION**

Probation is defined as a specific length of time during which a student is expected to demonstrate his/her ability to perform satisfactorily. *All new students are placed on a 90-day probationary period for attendance, academic performance and disciplinary behavior.* GFA reserves the right to dismiss a student anytime during this period for any kind of non-compliance.

If any student is in danger of failing one or more courses at GFA, he/she may be placed on academic probation at the discretion of the classroom teacher and the principal. The student's parents will be notified of this probation. Terms for the length of the probation will be for one marking period, or a period established by the principal. Failure to meet specific academic goals will result in a meeting with the principal to discuss a further plan of action. The goal of academic probation is to foster and promote improved academic standing.

### **ACADEMIC STANDARDS**

In keeping with GFA's high academic standards, it is our goal to challenge each student at their appropriate level.

## **ACSI**

GFA holds membership in the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI). ACSI is a strong International Organization of Christian Schools with nearly 29,000 members. Its purpose is to provide guidance, research, curriculum, administrative policies and other resources enabling member schools to provide the best of Christian Education with high academic standards.

## **ADMINISTRATION**

GFA is a ministry of Grace Fellowship Church under the direct authority of the GFA School Board, who answers directly to the Grace Fellowship Church Elder Board. The School Board is responsible for establishing school policy. The School Principal is responsible to the Board for the daily operation of the school.

## **ADMISSION POLICY**

**The following admission policies have been adopted to assure consistent standards of admission in agreement with the mission and vision of the school:**

1. Kindergarten thru Eighth grade parents must be born-again, Bible believing, Christ-honoring Christians. (An exception may be made when only one parent is a born-again believer, provided the non-believing spouse agrees not to oppose the biblical teaching of the school.)
2. All parents must sign that they have read and agree with the statement of faith of the school, and both parents must agree to have their children educated in accordance therein.
3. All parents must agree that:
  - The school has full discretion in the discipline of their children within the bounds of the discipline policy.
  - The school has full discretion for the grade placement of children.
  - They will meet all tuition and other financial obligations to the school.
  - They will willingly support the school in prayer and in lending practical help as required by the school.
  - They have read, agree with, and will perform according to the Parent's Covenant.
4. The school principal must interview each prospective student and at least one parent.
5. Families should be active attendees of a Bible-believing church.
6. All prospective students in grades 1-8 will be given an entrance exam to determine if the student fits the educational capabilities of the school.
7. The principal may refuse to admit a student with severe disciplinary, psychological, or learning problems.



8. The student must have satisfactory attendance and behavior records for the previous school year.
9. No failing grades on the most recent report card and a minimum of a 2.0 grade point average on a 4.0 grade scale.

### **ADMISSION PROCEDURE**

Applications for Preschool-8<sup>th</sup> grade are available for submission online at [www.gracefellowshipacademy.org](http://www.gracefellowshipacademy.org).

Siblings of existing families are considered first, followed by Grace Fellowship Church and Preschool families. Children of staff will be given special consideration. Open enrollment begins February 1 each year. Returning students are given priority until March 15. Beginning March 16, enrollment will be considered on a first come, first served basis.

Preschool students are not guaranteed acceptance into kindergarten; all admission policies and registration procedures must be followed. The tuition fee must accompany all applications. Acceptance of new students will be based upon completion of the following requirements:

1. Online submission of application and fee
2. Payment of tuition fee after acceptance
3. Birth Certificate
4. Immunization records
5. Recommendation Forms (Teacher, Principal, Pastor)
6. Signed Form for Parent/Student Handbook
7. Previous transcripts including report cards and standardized test scores (1-8 grade)
8. Parent/Student Interview
9. Placement Exam (grades 1-8)

### **ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE INFORMATION**

The school day begins at 7:30 am and ends at 3:30 pm, Monday-Thursday. Playground supervision **starts at 7:15 am**, please do not drop off your student(s) before this time. All students must be dropped off using the North parking lot. Please use the designated drop off site and follow the flow of traffic. You may also park in a parking space and walk your child to the playground. Students will be called to line up for Prayer and Pledges at 7:30 am.

At dismissal time, all students need to be picked up from their classroom. Doors will open **at 3:30 pm**. After 3:45 pm, a late charge of \$1.00 per minute will apply

(after 4:40 pm for clubs). **A parent or guardian must sign out the student in the office.**

### **ATTENDANCE/TARDY POLICY**

Punctual and regular attendance at school is a shared responsibility between the student and his/her parent or guardian. Regular attendance prepares the student for the world of work and adult responsibilities. GFA expects all students to attend school, to be punctual to school and to classes, and to bring appropriate materials with them.

Attendance is taken at 7:45 am; a student is tardy after that time. If your student arrives late, **a parent or guardian must accompany the student to the office to be checked in.** The student will be given a tardy pass for entry into class. Students who arrive after 9:00 am or leave before 2:00 pm are recorded absent for one-half day rather than tardy. This policy is in effect even on field trip days.

A student will not be allowed to participate in extracurricular activities (sport, after school club, school function, etc) if he/she goes home early or is absent due to illness the day of the activity. The parent will need to contact the principal **prior** to an absence for other reasons as special consideration may be given to the student.

Excessive absences and/or tardies throughout the school year may jeopardize the re-enrollment option of the student for the following school year. When a student has reached 5 absences/tardies in one semester, a letter will be sent home to the parent/guardian. When the student reaches 8 absences/tardies, a second letter will be sent home. When a student reaches 10 absences/tardies, a parent meeting with the principal is required and the student's ability to re-enroll may be affected.

If a student reaches 15 tardies in one quarter, they will be disqualified for Perfect Attendance for that quarter.

### **BIRTHDAY PARTIES**

Students may bring a special treat for the class on their birthday. We encourage store-bought treats rather than homemade items. **Please notify** the teacher of your plans so he/she can work out the best time and inform you of any student allergies in your child's class. Don't plan a class party, bring special guests, or send telegrams. Please mail invitations when having home parties.

## **CHAPEL**

All grades have weekly chapel services which are scheduled on Wednesdays at 7:45 am. Chapels may be led by teachers, students, and guest speakers. Parents are invited to attend. All parents must sign in at the office prior to entering the gym for chapel.

## **CHILD ABUSE/NEGLECT**

In accordance with state law and school policy, school staff is obligated under penalty of fine and jail term to report the reasonable suspicion of physical abuse, sexual abuse, or child neglect. In this very serious and legally narrow area, the school will not contact parents in advance of making a report to authorities, which would be the procedure followed in most other legal matters. The clear intent of the law, based on the seriousness of the crimes listed above, is to mandate that a report of reasonable suspicion of abuse be made. School staff will make such reports in the best interest of the affected child and do not, once reasonable suspicion is established, have any legal alternative except to make the report to the proper authorities for their investigation and review.

The full Child Protection Policy, adopted by the church and school, can be obtained in the church or school office.

## **CLASSROOM RULES**

Every classroom will have classroom rules posted. Students are expected to follow them.

## **COMMUNICATION**

As a parent, we believe it is your responsibility to involve yourself in your child's education. In an effort to do our part to communicate with families, we use FACTS (formerly RenWeb). This web-based program allows us to be eco-friendly. You are able to check grades, pay tuition, email teachers, view our calendar of events, check for overdue library books, and more.

## **CURRICULUM**

**Bible**-All students in grades 1-8 must have a bible for class. The 1984 Edition NIV is recommended. GFA's Bible program is designed to give children a strong doctrinal and factual background in God's Word practically applied to life. All subjects are integrated with Biblical Truth. The Bible curriculum for kindergarten through eighth grade is Positive Action for Christ.

**Science**-Science is the study of God's World (see Psalm 33). Purposeful Design Publications Curriculum is implemented in grades K-8.

It is the aim of all these science curriculums to develop within each child a meaningful reverence for the almighty power and infinite wisdom of God. This helps the student understand the order and precision of the physical world. In science, the student presupposes the Scriptural teaching that God created the natural world. The world operates in His continual providence, and He reveals Himself in this natural world (see Psalm 19:1).

**History**-This course of study is designed to help the students become geographically aware, historically literate, and politically astute. Abeka Curriculum is used for <sup>K</sup>t-8<sup>th</sup> grade, along with other applicable material.

**Math**- Students and teachers are supported as they advance from concrete to abstract content through the use of models and math talk prompts presented. The Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Curriculum is designed so that teachers can easily create the environments necessary for teaching the standards for Mathematics with depth.

**Language Arts**-The reading curriculum Mosdos from Purposeful Design Publications and Shurley English encompasses reading and literature programs, writing skills, grammar studies, as well as phonics, spelling and language usage. Library skills are taught in all grades.

**Weekly Specials**- Students will have classes such as Library, PE, ART, and STEM. Students will receive conduct grades for these classes. 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade students will participate in sign language.

A Technology Use Agreement signed by the student and parent **must** be on file **before** the student will be permitted to use school technology.

Grades K-5 will have the opportunity to go to the library once each week to check out books. A maximum of two books may be checked out for two weeks at a time. Late fines will incur at **five cents per day** if not returned on time. As in any library, students are expected to choose their books quietly and wait for the librarian or teacher in charge. If a book is lost or damaged, the student will be required to either replace or pay for the book. Reference books may not be checked out.

## **DISCIPLINE**

## **Philosophy of Discipline**

We believe that all children need discipline and that love is an essential element of discipline. Our standards for acceptable behavior are explained to the children frequently throughout the school year.

Mature and appropriate behavior is expected of all students. Acting in a self-disciplined manner is expected. A cooperative spirit is required of all. If, at any time, the attitude of cooperation is lacking, the student may be required to withdraw from GFA.

The authority of the teacher must always be respected. Acts of a threatening or aggressive nature will be dealt with promptly. Every pupil has a right to learn, and any act by a classmate that interferes with this right will not be tolerated.

It should be emphasized that the parents have a prime responsibility in the matter of discipline. GFA will endeavor to be an extension of the biblical discipline that the child is receiving in his/her Christian home.

We believe that God endorses proper discipline. The school will follow the biblical commands regarding respect for authority. Students will be taught to obey their parents, civil authorities, and those who are over them spiritually in their churches. In the classroom, the teacher and the principal represent the parents, and the directives of the Bible about child-parent relationships are applicable during school. The teacher is viewed as a figure of authority by the will of God, so the directives to obey those who have spiritual authority are applicable.

We believe that a minimum number of behavioral rules are necessary to allow students and teachers to live and work together in a peaceful, orderly environment. Respect for these rules is required and students or teachers who refuse to comply will be dismissed from the school. The school will not permit a disruptive student to impede the education of the entire class. This does not imply a fearful, coercive atmosphere that would stifle students. It simply means that education is best accomplished under conditions of specific behavioral standards. Students are actually happier when there are clear rules that are consistently and fairly enforced, for then students know what is expected of them. This gives them security.

GFA believes that the methods of teaching all students behavioral and mental discipline must be the methods that God gives in the Bible for training children. Even though these methods are often rejected by contemporary psychologists and educators, the school supports biblical methods for discipline.

**To illustrate these methods, the book of Proverbs includes the following about discipline:**

- The parent who does not discipline his child hates him, but the parent who loves his child disciplines him. (*Proverbs 12:24*)
- Parents are to chasten their children while there is hope, not spare the soul because the children cry. (*Proverbs 19:18*)

### **Standard of Conduct**

GFA seeks for a tone of the highest personal and group conduct that expresses basic principles of life as found in the Scriptures. Among these are **honesty, respect for one another, property, and authority, a sense of community, stewardship of time, talents, self-control, and creativity.** Just as all staff members are expected to display values consistent with a Christian life-style, students are expected to show traits of Christian character such as **integrity, sincerity and concern for others.** Each student is considered responsible for his/her own behavior. In acting responsibly, the student will observe all the school rules and respect the rights of others.

As a matter of conviction and policy, GFA disapproves of habits that debilitate the mind, spirit, and body. These include the use of illegal habit-forming drugs, alcoholic beverages, smoking, and sexual immorality. Habits and actions which are contrary to Biblical growth and development **are considered unacceptable behavior by GFA.**

Standards apply while on school property, and attending school functions. It is also understood that the actions of students reflect on GFA, as well as on themselves, family, church, peers, and most importantly the Lord Jesus Christ, even when they are not on our campus or engaged in a school activity. Therefore, disciplinary measures may be taken with those students who do not abide by the spirit, purpose, and standards of GFA. **Students, by virtue of their enrollment, agree to accept the responsibility of adherence to the school's Standards of Conduct or to withdraw if they can no longer, with integrity, conform to them.** As God disciplines us in love for our own good, so the school will discipline students who do not adhere to GFA's standards.

## **DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS/CONSEQUENCES TO BEHAVIOR**

Due to their intimate contact with students, it is the classroom teacher who most often is in a position to discipline a student. Students who become involved in areas of problem behavior will be subject to disciplinary actions. The Bible commands us to discipline. It is important for us and for our children:

- “Blessed is the man you discipline, O Lord; the man you teach from your law.” (*Psalm 94:12*)
- “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and discipline.” (*Proverbs 1:7*)
- “Do not withhold discipline from a child.” (*Proverbs 23:13*)
- “He who ignores discipline despises himself, but whoever heeds correction gains understanding.” (*Proverbs 15:32*).
- “No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.” (*Hebrews 12:11*).

Therefore, at GFA, we make the child aware of our expectations both in schoolwork and in school behavior. We have definite standards for the students and work to have children adhere to those standards. GFA’s program of discipline is based on the assumption that the Christian school is the extension of the Christian home. We work cooperatively with families to support the program of nurturing children by the Christian home and the Christian church. Together, we believe that we make a significant difference in the life of your child. Sufficient record keeping will be maintained so that unusual or repetitive disciplinary problems can be identified and productive parent/teacher/principal discussion can ensue.

Corporal punishment will **not** be administered by the school.

### **Discipline Action Levels**

**Category III: Serious Violations** - Serious violations are those that require the immediate attention of the GFA Administrator. Consequences are escalating and include but are not limited to out-of-school suspension and/or dismissal from GFA.

- **Examples of serious violations include but are not limited to:** Theft, extreme language/gestures that are vulgar, obscene, offensive, derogatory or disrespectful, physical harassment, including threats or intimidation of any

nature, or inappropriate verbal or physical conduct which creates a hostile, offensive or fearful environment, deliberate destruction or damage to school, student, or faculty property

**Category II: Moderate Violations** - Moderate violations are those that are either dishonest or affecting the safety and well-being of our staff or students. Consequences are escalating and include but are not limited to detentions, in-school-suspension, out-of-school suspension and/or dismissal from GFA.

- **Examples of moderate violations include but are not limited to:** Misuse of electronic devices, disrespect by word or action toward anyone on school campus, throwing/shooting items in a school building or with the intention of hitting someone, horseplay/roughhousing, dishonesty, cheating, plagiarism

**Category I: Minor/Intermediate Violations** - *Minor violations are behavioral issues that do not immediately warrant a Discipline Support Referral and should be dealt with by the classroom teacher with their escalating consequences.* Consequences are escalating and include but are not limited to extra chores, reflections writings, detentions, in-school-suspension, out-of-school suspension and/or dismissal from GFA.

- **Examples of minor/intermediate violations include but are not limited to:** Failure to meet classroom responsibilities, being disruptive, running in halls, dress code violations

### **Other Items to Note Regarding Discipline:**

**Resetting of Categories:** The following categories will reset after a designated period. Please see below for details.

- **Category III (Serious Violations):** Doesn't reset & follows the student throughout their years of attendance at GFA.
- **Category II (Moderate Violations):** Resets each school year
- **Category I (Minor/Intermediate Violations):** Resets quarterly

### **Further Consequences**

**Honors & Awards:** Students with unsatisfactory conduct/effort marks for the quarter cannot receive the Principal's List or Honor Roll awards.

**Extracurricular Activities:** Students cannot participate in GFA sponsored extracurricular activities & events while on suspension.



**Discipline Tracking:** All discipline violations should be documented via Renweb. This allows parents to see what is going on as well keeps the GFA Administration informed of where each student is at in the process.

### **Other Aspects of Student Behavior**

Students are expected to show respect for authority and for one another. At GFA this includes faculty, staff, and peers. A student is expected to show concern and respect for the person, rights, and possessions of others. In the classroom, students are to demonstrate self-control, compliance with the teacher's directions, and avoidance of anything that will disrupt the teaching-learning process. (see Attachment 1 for Descriptions of Violations)

### **DISCRIMINATION POLICY**

GFA does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admission policies, or its scholarship programs.

### **DRESS CODE**

It is GFA's viewpoint that the learning and spiritual atmosphere of our school is enhanced by student and staff appearance that is neat, orderly, and in moderation. Clothing that is disorderly, non-functional and excessive in style and appearance does not uphold this conviction. We seek a higher level of purpose, that of honoring our Lord in our appearance as well as in our behavior. GFA's standard of dress is intended to honor these convictions without becoming legalistic. Some Biblical principles which GFA seeks to promote are as follows:

- We do all to the glory of God (*1Cor. 10:31*).
- We do not to offend others by being stumbling blocks (*Romans 14:13*).
- We are to be modest, reflecting decency and humility (*1Tim. 2:9, 10*).
- We are to draw attention to God, not ourselves (*John 3:30*).
- We are to do everything in love (*1Cor.16:14*).

GFA also recognizes that Christians can have convictions that differ regarding the application of Biblical principles in the area of dress. If a particular article or style of clothing is not allowed, GFA is not saying the item is wrong to wear at other times- just not to school. The standard is clearly not intended to measure individual spirituality, but rather to serve as a vehicle to promote an appropriate learning and

spiritual atmosphere within our school. The cooperation of students, parents and teachers is necessary in maintaining GFA's dress standard.

Students are expected to live and conduct themselves in a manner that is pleasing to God and glorifying to the name of Jesus Christ (*II Thess. 1:11-12*). To accomplish these purposes, careful consideration has been given to factors such as comfort, safety, modesty, appropriateness, and ease of enforcement. The cooperation of students, parents, and teachers is necessary in maintaining the dress code. (It is especially important to be mindful of this when school clothes are purchased.)

While on campus, students must be in dress code. The school administration reserves the right to make modifications to the dress code for special occasions such as field trips, spirit days, or other fun/reward situations.

**Solid:** The same color throughout the article of clothing. No variation of the color. e.g. ombre or tie dye

**Finger-Tip Rule:** The article of clothing must be at or past the tips of the students fingertips when arms are down to their sides.

● **Pants/Shorts/Capris: Solid color khaki or black pants and shorts, or blue denim jeans.** (No jean shorts except for on Thursdays)

-Black and khaki pants may be a jean type of material.

-Dri-fit material is acceptable but must not be gym/athletic style shorts or pants.

-Pants must be worn at the waist or hips. Clothing that exposes midriffs or underwear is not acceptable.

-Pants and jeans may not have any embellishments, rips, holes, or be frayed in any way including at the ankles.

-Shorts must pass the "Finger-Tip Rule" (description above).

-Ponte uniform style jeggings in black or khaki are acceptable for girls. (Must have pockets)

-Any type of leggings, yoga pants etc. are **unacceptable** attire as primary pants.

-**Solid color khaki, black, or navy blue leggings/tights** may be worn under shorts (must still meet the length requirement).

● **Skirts/Skorts/Jumpers: Solid color khaki or black uniform style with no embellishments, glitter, sequins, etc;**

-**Solid color red, black, or gray polo dresses.** Hemlines, including slits, are to pass the finger-tip rule.

- Girls are encouraged to wear shorts under jumpers and skirts for modesty.
- Solid color khaki, black, or navy blue leggings/tights** may be worn under skirts/skorts/jumpers (must still meet the length requirement).
- **Shirts: Solid color red, black, or gray polo.** Standard uniform dress shirts may also be worn.
  - All shirts must be plain with **NO** embellishments, logos, rhinestones, decorative stitching, etc..
- **Outerwear:** During the cooler months, **solid color red, black, or gray** jackets, sweatshirts, vests, or school issued sweatshirts may be worn.
  - Logos and graphics are **NOT** acceptable unless it is GFA issued.
  - Jackets and sweatshirts may be worn in the classroom but may not be worn in place of the uniform polo shirt.
  - Outdoor rain/snow jackets may have patterns. They may not be worn in the classroom.
- **Footwear:**
  - Tennis shoes, dress shoes, and sandals with a back strap are acceptable. Laces must be tied securely.
  - No heels higher than 1 inch.
  - No crocs, flip-flops, slippers or shoes with wheels.**
  - Tall graphic socks are not to be visible and may only be worn under pants or on free dress day.
- **Hats/Caps/Beanies/Bandanas/Kerchiefs:** May be worn outdoors only and must be taken off when entering buildings and during prayer and pledge.
- **Girls:** Excessive cosmetics are not allowed (includes face glitter). Jewelry should be kept to a minimum. Earrings should not hang but be solid posts. This protects ears during PE and recess. Body piercing is not permitted. No tattoos (permanent or temporary) are allowed.
- **Boys:** No earrings, excessive jewelry, chains or studded bracelets. No tattoos (permanent or temporary) are allowed.
- **Hair:** Hair for both girls and boys is to be neat and clean. **No extreme cuts or unnatural colors are permitted.**
- Any attire not specifically covered in this policy is not allowed.
- **Book bags, hats, notebooks, sweatshirts, or other paraphernalia with inappropriate messages or pictures are not allowed.**

#### **Thursday Dress Code:**

- Regular uniform Dress Code
- Any GFA issued T-shirt with jeans or jean shorts (no embellishments, rips, holes, or frays of any kind)

## **Free Dress Day (See Page 22)**

### **DRESS CODE VIOLATIONS**

*The Administration will enforce the dress standard; however, it is NOT the sole responsibility of the school. We expect parents to cooperate in monitoring their student's daily attire to assure compliance with the dress standard.*

Classroom teachers are asked to monitor their students' adherence to the GFA dress standard. Violations will follow the escalating consequences for Category I offenses.

### **EARLY PICK UP**

If your child is to be picked up during the day, please first report to the school office. **Do not** go directly to the classroom to get your child. When the parent arrives in the office, the teacher will be called and the parent sent to the classroom to pick up the student. If someone other than the parent is to pick up a child that is not on his/her pick-up list, the office must receive a note from a parent/guardian prior to the releasing of the child, or the parent must call the office giving definite verification of the individual that is picking up their child.

### **FIELD TRIPS**

Classes take trips to interesting and educational places as a vital part of the instructional program. Student fees for up to 2 field trips per year are included in the tuition fee (not including meals and the FMSC service trip). Parents are notified in advance and are encouraged to help chaperone. All volunteer drivers must have the online volunteer screening completed, and a copy of their driver's license and current insurance card on file in the school office at least one week prior to the field trip. The Attendance/Tardy Policy is in effect even on field trip days.

### **FINANCIAL AID & SCHOLARSHIPS (Pending Changes)**

A limited amount of student financial aid is available. Eligibility is based on the financial need of the family as well as the academic, citizenship, and positive spiritual impact of the student. Additional information is available in the school office.

School Tuition Organizations (STOs) are established to receive income tax credit contributions that fund scholarships for students to attend qualified private schools. Arizona Christian School Tuition Organization (ACSTO) and School Choice Arizona scholarships are awarded based on recommendations, financial circumstances, and the personal narrative. School Choice Arizona also has scholarships for low-income, disabled and displaced students. Many GFA families receive tuition scholarship funds through these organizations. Information on these and other STO scholarships is available in the school office and on our website.

### **FINANCIAL SUPPORT**

GFA is a ministry of Grace Fellowship Church to Christian families. Our support comes through tuition and private donations. Various fundraising projects are conducted to help offset operating costs, capital improvements, special activities, and projects. All voluntary contributions are income tax deductible and may qualify for employer/employee matching donations.

### **FREE DRESS DAY**

The last Thursday of each month will be a free dress day for all students. However, the items of clothing must still abide by the standards set by the school. This means all clothes must be modest in nature and there should be no inappropriate words or pictures on the clothes.

-Tank tops, spaghetti straps, halter tops and backless tops would all be considered not acceptable for our campus.

-“Sleeveless” shirts must have a 3-inch wide or larger strap.

-Jeans, pants, or shorts may not have any rips, holes, or frays of any kind.

- Any type of leggings, yoga pants etc. are **unacceptable** attire as primary pants.

-**Solid color** leggings/tights may be worn under shorts.

-Shorts, skirts, dresses, jumpers, etc. are to pass the “finger-tip rule” described under dress code.

-Jogger style sweatpants, and athletic wear is acceptable but must be modest in nature and not resemble PJs.

-No PJs on free dress day.

### **GRADING**

Grades are the record of a student’s achievement in school and their importance is obvious. The following is a description of the grading system used at GFA.

A grade in a course of study represents the teacher’s best judgment of a student’s academic achievement. Various components such as class participation, projects,

reports, homework assignments, tests, quizzes, etc., may be assigned different weights by individual teachers. The grade assigned represents a student's achievement in relationship to the expectation of the teacher of that particular subject.

The Letter Grading Scale will be used in the following subjects: Bible, Reading, Arithmetic, Language Arts, Spelling, Science, and History. The Effort Grading Scale will be used for Obedience, Self-Control, Responsibility, Effort, and Cooperation, all Specials classes and all subjects for Kindergarten.

**Letter Grading Scale**

A+	98-100
A	93-97
A-	90-92
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D+	67-69
D	63-66
D-	60-62
F	59-0

**Effort Grading Scale**

E = Excellent
S = Satisfactory
N = Needs Improvement
U = Unsatisfactory

**GUIDELINES FOR PARENT VISITS**

- Parents have an open invitation and are encouraged to visit the campus. All visitors must sign in at the office when on campus during school hours for purposes other than dropping off or picking up children.
- Visits to the classroom must be arranged in advance via the principal and teacher.
- The principal welcomes parents and encourages good communication. Appointments with the principal can be arranged through the office.
- We ask that all parents and visitors dress in modest attire while on school grounds.
- Smoking is not permitted on the grounds at any time.

**HEALTH REQUIREMENTS & ILLNESS**

1. An up-to-date immunization record for each child must be on file in the school office. Immunizations must be completed according to the Arizona School/Child Care Immunization Law. Check with the school office for the requirements.

2. All students must have a pass from their teacher to go to the Nurse's office, unless they are bleeding or vomiting. After a pass is obtained, students are to go to the nurse's office and the office will determine if a call home is recommended. Students are not to call parents to pick them up until the office is consulted.
3. Students are not allowed to carry prescription medication on their person, with the exception of an inhaler for asthma.
4. Every possible provision is made to provide a wholesome, healthy atmosphere at school. There is a correlation between a child's health and his enjoyment of school and ability to profit from it. A sick child cannot learn effectively and is unable to participate in classes in a meaningful way. **If your child appears to be ill, please do not send him/her to school.** Keeping a sick child home prevents the spread of illness in the school community and gives the child an opportunity to rest and recover.

*The following guidelines should be considered when making the decision as to whether your child should come to school:*

- **Fever:** The child should remain at home with a fever greater than 100 degrees. The child can return to school after he/she has been fever free for 24 hours (**without** the use of fever reducing medication).
- **Diarrhea/Vomiting:** A child with diarrhea and/or vomiting should stay at home and return to school only after being symptom free for 24 hours.
- **Conjunctivitis (eye infection):** Following a diagnosis of conjunctivitis, the child may return to school after the first dose of prescribed medicine.
- **Rashes:** Common infectious diseases with rashes may be contagious in the early stages. A child with a suspicious rash should return to school only after a healthcare provider has made a diagnosis and authorized the child's return to school.
- **Colds:** Consider keeping your child at home if he/she is experiencing discomfort due to cold symptoms, such as nasal congestion and cough. A continuous green discharge from the nose may be a sign of infection. Consider having the child seen by your healthcare provider.
- **Communicable Diseases:** The State Health Department requires written permission from a private physician or the Health Department to return to school after having a communicable disease, including, but not limited to, measles, chicken pox, mumps, scarlet fever and impetigo.
- **Lice:** The incubation period for lice is 6-14 days. As long as live lice are present on the head, the student may not return to school. The student will be checked upon returning to school to be sure they have been treated and are clear of all nits (eggs).

## **HOMEWORK**

A general rule of thumb is that students will be assigned 10 minutes of homework for each grade level. A first grader should be expected to do about 10 minutes of homework, second graders 20 minutes, third graders 30 minutes, and so on. If your student(s) is spending more than 10 minutes per grade level on homework, please schedule a time to discuss with your student's teacher. It is possible your student may not be spending class time wisely.

## **HONOR ROLL & PRINCIPAL'S LIST**

The Honor Roll and Principal's List begin in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade. Honor Rolls are published at the end of each quarter. To recognize students and provide an incentive for achievement in academics, the following criteria apply:

**Principal's List:** Students must obtain all A's (4.0 GPA) in all graded subjects, and have no unsatisfactory conduct/effort marks.

**Honor Roll:** Students must obtain a 3.0 GPA, with no marks lower than a B- in all graded subjects and have no unsatisfactory conduct/effort marks.

To qualify for the principal's list/honor roll, the student must be enrolled for the entire quarter and **CANNOT receive 2 or more detentions.**

We do not have the Principal's List/Honor Roll for Kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> Grade because:

- Most of the work is done by the class as a whole as they follow the step-by-step instructions given by the teacher.
- The emphasis is on the learning of concepts with material being reviewed over and over until the student has completed the assignment correctly.
- Learning the material in these grades is of greater importance than making a "good grade" since this will be the basis for all future academic progress.

## **LOST & FOUND**

All personal items should be labeled with your child's name. Articles found in and around the school should be turned in to the lost and found bins in the school office. The owner may claim the property by identifying it. Any articles that have not been claimed by the last day of school will be donated to a charitable organization.



## **LUNCH**

Children must bring a sack lunch each day. Caffeinated soda, energy drinks, and candy are **not** allowed, except with the teacher's permission. Please note: there is no refrigeration available for your child's lunches.

GFA will be partnering with My Hot Lunchbox ([www.myhotlunchbox.com](http://www.myhotlunchbox.com)) to provide hot lunches to students on Tuesdays and Thursdays. They have an on-staff nutritionist who works with our local restaurants to design healthy, affordable options. Parents will create an account online to view the menu, place and pay for orders.

## **MAKE UP WORK**

When a student is absent, it is his/her responsibility to make up for missed work. A student will have two days for each absent day to make up work when they return to school. For example, if your child is absent on Monday and returns on Tuesday, work needs to be completed and turned in before the student leaves school on Thursday. If the work is turned in after the allotted time, the student will receive half credit. The student will attend Study Hall during Specials to make-up the work and to receive help learning concepts missed during the absence. For prearranged absences, work should be collected from the teacher before the absence. This work will be due when the student returns to school.

If a student is absent the day before a long-term project is due, it is still due on the original assigned date. Long-term assignments are to be turned in the day they are due. Students must make arrangements to have projects delivered to school if they are absent.

## **MANNERS & COURTESY**

Students are expected to be courteous to one another and to their teachers, conducting themselves in a way that demonstrates respect and consideration for others. In doing so, we reflect Christ's command to love one another. The following are specific directions on showing good manners and courtesy:

1. Listen attentively and speak politely.
2. Greet visitors and one another politely.
3. Acknowledge responses with 'please' and 'thank you.'
4. Enter buildings quietly.

## **MEDICATION DISTRIBUTION**

All medication sent to school must accompany a signed “Medication Consent Form”, which lists the dosage and time of distribution. Prescription medication should be in its *original* container, with student name and dosing instructions. All medicine will be kept in the school office and administered by the office staff. GFA is not responsible for loss or damage to any medication or medical equipment brought to school.

### **MISSION PROJECT**

The school board of GFA has designated the importance of including short-term mission projects as part of the educational and spiritual training for our students on an annual basis. Each year the seventh and eighth grade class will have the opportunity to go on a mission trip in the second semester. Specific details of this mission project will be formulated and will be distributed to the applicable parents and students during the school year.

### **MOVIE/VIDEO POLICY**

On occasion, GFA teachers show movies and/or videos. At times, videos are used to enhance the curriculum. Other times, movies/videos are used as a classroom reward. Movies are to be rated G. If a movie/video is rated PG it is to be previewed and cleared by the administration prior to student viewing. All content used for curricular purposes is to be previewed by the classroom teacher prior to showing students.

### **PARENT'S COVENANT**

- I will pray earnestly for Grace Fellowship Academy.
- I will cooperate fully in the educational functions of GFA, doing my best to make Christian education effective in the life of each of my children so that he or she may love and serve the Lord Jesus Christ in all of his or her life.
- I will maintain a Christian lifestyle corresponding with biblical values.
- I will pay all of my financial obligations to GFA on or before the date due.
- I will support the school by gifts in addition to my tuition payments and fees, as the Lord enables. (As God has prospered us, may we be faithful to Him.)
- I will be responsible for fulfilling 10 hours of service each semester, or be billed in January and May at a rate of \$10/hr. for any hours not fulfilled per semester. I will record my service hours in the service log located in the office. Please note that we at GFA are very grateful for the giving of your precious time. (This applies to K-8<sup>th</sup> grade parents only.)
- I will recommend GFA to other Christian families as the occasion occurs.

- I will make every effort to attend parent/teacher meetings and other functions of the school regularly.
- If I become dissatisfied with the school in any respect, I will seek to resolve the matter with the person or persons involved rather than begin to spread criticism or hold a negative attitude in my heart.
- I will seek the advancement of GFA in all areas, spiritually, academically, and physically.

Parents/Guardians who break the Parent Covenant are subject to having their student(s) removed from the school. The School Board will make the decision to remove a family at the recommendation of the School Administration.

## **PARENT GRIEVANCES**

GFA is committed to positive communication and to the resolution of potential conflicts before they arise. When there is a misunderstanding or potential conflict, the principles and procedures of Matthew 18 are to be employed by everyone involved to guide the sequence and attitude in resolving the concern.

- **Privacy (Matthew 18:15)**

Difficulties are always compounded when we include those who were not directly involved in a problem. Care must be taken to keep the circle of involvement to the relevant parties.

- **Direct Information (Matthew 18:16)**

Communication is never 100% accurate. Therefore, we must not draw conclusions based on second-hand information regardless of the reliability of the source. Draw conclusions *only* upon what you have seen and heard.

- **Resolution (Galatians 6:11)**

Restoration of relationships and resolution of the problem must motivate all we do.

- **A Spirit of Gentleness**

The attitude with which we approach people is of utmost importance.

- **Looking to Yourself**

Self-examination must always precede any attempt to correct a problem. Check your motive and your attitudes before any action is taken.

- **Application of Matthew 18 Procedures**

The first step involves self-examination and prayer. The second step is to meet privately with the person involved to seek resolution. If the grievance is not resolved, meet with the principal to seek resolution. If resolution is not achieved, a request to meet with the School Board can be submitted. The request must be in writing and include a clear statement of the grievance, the present status of the

grievance, and the settlement desired. The grievance must be received by the principal or School Board President within two weeks of the occurrence. Every effort will be made to handle all conflicts according to biblical guidelines, with the expected result being the edification of all involved.

### **PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES**

A formal parent/teacher conference will be scheduled regarding each child following the first and third quarter of the marking period. The report card is given to parents at this conference and the student's grades, conduct, and progress are discussed. Parents are welcome to meet with their child's teacher for a conference at any time during the school year. We encourage parents to bring their concerns to the teachers. It is our desire that parents and teachers work together in the education of their respective child. If further assistance is required, the principal is to be contacted. Conferences may be arranged by sending a note to your child's teacher, emailing the teacher, or by calling the school office.

### **PARTNERS IN EDUCATION/SERVICE HOURS**

Part of our mission at GFA is to partner with families as we educate students with whom we have been entrusted. Families are needed in the partnering process in order for GFA to function at a high level of efficiency. Each is needed to assist in this process. Although we realize that many families in the school are already volunteering and assisting in their children's education, we need every family to assist in this effort.

Along with the payment of tuition, we ask that each GFA family serve 10 hours per semester. These hours can be used in classroom assistance, special projects, fundraisers, cleaning, field trips, CC meetings, etc. Any unfulfilled hours will be billed at a rate of \$10/hr at the end of each semester.

### **PERSONAL BELONGINGS**

No radios, gaming devices, CD players, mp3 players, iPods, cell phones, or other electronic devices are allowed in school except for a specific class project with teacher approval. Toys, including trading cards, should not be brought on campus unless special permission is given by the principal or teachers. **The school is not responsible for loss or damage to any personal items brought on campus.** Students are not permitted to use bicycles, skateboards, scooters, or roller skates on campus at any time.

### **PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION**

- The primary purpose for establishing Grace Fellowship Academy is to fulfill the scriptural commands (*Dt 6:5-7; Pr 22:6; Matt 28:19-20*).

- God is the ultimate source of all truth (*John 14:6*).
- GFA is an extension of the Christian home in training young people in a Christian environment to reap eternal gains.
- GFA is a ministry being offered to the people of God whereby the school and the home become co-laborers in fulfilling the word of God in training children.
- Parents bear the primary responsibility for the education of their children. Christian parents, in particular, should be aware of their duty to raise and educate their children in accordance with God's way. Parents will experience the resulting blessings of obedience or consequences of disobedience, which will result from their decision regarding the provision of a God-honoring education (*Dt. 4:10, 6:6-7, 20:17-18; Ps. 106:34-37; Jer. 10:2; Matt. 12:30; 2 Cor. 6:17; Eze. 4:5; Ezra 7:25; Pr. 22:6*).
- God has ordained marriage, the family (*Gen. 2:27-28, 3:18-24*) and the Church (*Matt. 16:18; Eph. 5:23-32*) as the institutions which He desires to use to accomplish His divine will on earth. Local gatherings of believers called churches, the visible entity of the universal Church, serve their families in the area of education, by training and equipping parents to be the primary providers of spiritual instruction for their children. To assist parents in this area there are two types of schools: the Sunday school and the weekday Christian school. The Christian school also provides a well-rounded program of Christ-centered academics. The goal of the three (parents, church, and Christian school), is to work together to carry out the mandate of Scripture to "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it." (*Pr. 22:6*).

## **PHOTOGRAPHS**

Photographs may be taken at GFA during the year for use on our website, Facebook page and in various promotional materials. Names will NOT be posted with any picture or group that appears on our website. By enrolling your student at GFA you give permission to use pictures. If you do not wish to have your student's picture used, you must notify the school office in writing.

## **PLAYGROUND RULES**

Safe equipment and adult supervision are maintained on playgrounds during school hours. *GFA playground rules are as follows:*

1. Be respectful of others, and have good sportsmanship.
2. Use all equipment safely, and for its intended purpose
3. Stay in designated areas at all times.

4. Stay away from non-playground equipment.

**\*Kindergarten students are restricted to the small playground at all times.**

## **PLEDGES**

### **Pledge to the Christian Flag**

I pledge allegiance to the Christian flag and to the Savior for whose Kingdom it stands, one brotherhood uniting all Christians in service and love.

### **Pledge to the Bible**

I pledge allegiance to the Bible, God's Holy Word. I will make it a lamp unto my feet, a light unto my path, and will hide its words in my heart that I might not sin against God.

### **Pledge to the American Flag**

I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

### **Parent Teacher Fellowship (PTF)**

The PTF is an integral part of Grace Fellowship Academy. All parents are members of the PTF by virtue of their children attending GFA; all faculty members are also part of this fellowship.

This fellowship is only as effective as the involvement of all parents and teachers. Parents are encouraged to take part in prayer meetings, fundraising events, and regularly scheduled quarterly meetings all aimed at enabling, maintaining, and improving the spiritual and academic environment of Grace Fellowship Academy. The PTF is instrumental in facilitating healthy, open communication between parents, teachers, and staff. The PTF also provides funds for student scholarships as well as for special projects, which enrich the spiritual and academic life at the Academy.

Meetings are scheduled to be held quarterly at minimum. If you are unable to attend a meeting, but would like to get in touch with a PTF Chairperson, please email [akline@gracefellowshipacademy.org](mailto:akline@gracefellowshipacademy.org).

## **RE-ENROLLMENT POLICY**

Students are enrolled for one academic year at a time. Students will be invited to return if they are succeeding academically, have no attendance or behavioral

issues, and if the student and parents continue to be supportive of the spiritual mission of the school. Your school account **must** be current for your student to be enrolled for the coming school year. This invitation may be revoked at any time at the discretion of the School Board if the family is not following school policy, *including but not limited to*, the Dress Code, Guidelines for Parent Visits, Tuition Payment Policy, or Parent's Covenant.

The School Board reserves the right to not re-enroll a student for the following year if, on the recommendation of the faculty or administration, the Board believes the student has educational or behavioral needs outside the mission of the school, or the student and/or parents are no longer supportive of the mission of the school.

### **REPORT CARDS**

The purpose of our reporting system is to give parents and students an indication of the progress being made. Report cards are issued four times a year at the end of each quarter. **A student's 4<sup>th</sup> quarter report card and/or diploma will not be issued until all accounts are paid in full.**

**Although report cards are given only four times per year, grades may be checked at any time online at [www.renweb.com](http://www.renweb.com), using your parent login.**

Students must maintain satisfactory grades for promotion. Students may be retained in a grade if, after a conference between principal, teacher, and parents, it is agreed that retention is for the best interest of the student.

### **SCHOOL BOARD INFORMATION**

The board position comes with a significant humility of heart and submission to God. It is self-perpetuating which means that prospective board members neither ask for the position, nor are they nominated. The board itself submits the candidate for prayerful consideration. Prospective members are observed by the board and/or the administrator displaying leadership, consistency, the fruit of the spirit, a servant's heart and a desire to be involved in children's education. The primary purposes of the board are as follows:

- **Govern:** To determine God's will for the school and govern accordingly (by seeking God through prayer and wise counsel).
- **Leadership by example:** To take the lead by serving others (displaying positive servant leadership) and articulating the future vision for the school.
- **Grow a strong relationship with the administrator:** To project the administrator as the head of the school and to be aware and responsive to the administrator's needs and expectations of the board.

- **Equip:** To equip the staff and faculty spiritually and financially so that they can accomplish the goal of providing excellent academic and spiritual training to the students of GFA.

## **SPORTS**

Grace Fellowship Academy offers girls' volleyball, boys' basketball, and flag football for grades 5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>. The teams play in the White Tanks Athletic Conference. A \$75.00 fee per athlete/per sport is collected to cover the cost of equipment and referees for the games. Students will need to maintain a minimum 2.0 GPA to participate in games. However, if a student has an F, he/she will be unable to participate in games *regardless* of overall GPA. Reports will be given to the coach each Monday.

## **STATEMENT OF FAITH**

- The Bible is inspired by God and is the only infallible, inerrant, authoritative Word of God (*2 Tim. 3:15-17; 1 Peter 1:23-25; Heb. 4:12; John 20:31*).
- There is One God eternally existent in Three Persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit (*Matt. 3:16-17, 28:19; Luke 1:35; 1 John 5:7; 2 Cor. 13:14*).
- Jesus Christ is God (*John 1:1-2, 14*) who came in the flesh through the virgin birth, (*Isaiah 7:14; Matt. 1:23*); lived a sinless life (*Heb. 4:15*); performed miracles (*John 2:11; Luke 1:1-4*); died for the sins of the world (*Rom. 3:23-26; 1 Cor. 15:3; Col. 1:14; 1 John 1:7; Hebrews 10:19*); bodily rose from the dead (*Matt. 28:6; Rom. 1:4, 8:1*); ascended to Heaven and intercedes for us with the Father (*Luke 24:50-51; 1 John 2:1-2; Heb. 7:25*); will return in power and glory to judge all creation and to establish an eternal kingdom (*Acts 1:11; Titus 2:13; Rev. 1:7, 11:15; Php. 2:9-11*).
- Man and woman were created in the image of God, were tempted by Satan, rebelled and sinned and experienced spiritual and physical death. As a result, all people are born with a sinful nature and, apart from Jesus Christ are eternally lost. (*Gen. 2:17; Rom. 5:12-19; Eph. 2:1-3, 4:18-19, 6:10-19; Mark 7:20-23; Rev. 12:9; 1 Peter 5:8*).
- A person becomes a Christian by personally receiving Jesus Christ as an act of faith, a willful commitment to trust and follow Him. All who believe are assured that Christ comes into their life (*Rev. 3:20*); sins are forgiven (*Col. 1:14, 2:13-15*); the believer becomes a child of God (*John 1:12*); a new life with Christ begins (*2 Cor. 5:17; John 10:10*); and eternity in Heaven is assured (*John*



*11:25-26, 17:3; 2 Cor. 5:1-10; 1 Th. 4:13-18*). Salvation is a gift from God (*Eph. 2:8-10*).

- The Holy Spirit indwells the Christian and is actively ministering in the world today enabling and empowering the living of a life pleasing to God; He gives gifts to every believer for building up the Body of Christ (the Church) (*Rom. 8:9; 1 Cor. 6:19, 12:1-14; Gal. 5:22-23; Eph. 5:18; Rom. 12:6-8; 1 Peter 4:1-10*).
- All people will be resurrected, the believers to everlasting life in Heaven and eternal rewards; the non-believers to everlasting death in Hell and eternal punishment (*John 5:24-29; 1 Cor. 15:20-28; Rev. 20:11-15*).
- There is a spiritual unity of believers in Jesus Christ; many churches but one Lord (*Eph. 4:4*). The Church is made up of all who put their faith in Jesus Christ and is to give praise to God, build up believers and proclaim the Gospel (*Matt. 16:16-18, 28:19-20; Acts 1:8; 1 Peter 2:9-10; Rev. 1:4-8*).

## **SUPPLIES**

All personal desk supplies for the student are to be provided by the parents. A list of all necessary supplies for each grade is sent home in the summer to begin preparing for the upcoming school year. Commonly used supplies are: 1984 edition NIV Bible, pencils (#2), crayons, non-permanent markers, ruler, lined paper, glue/glue sticks, composition notebook, pencil box, 2-pocket folders, and scissors.

## **TESTING**

Grace Fellowship Academy participates in various testing throughout the school year. In order to evaluate the student's capability to learn and his/her progress, the following standardized tests are used:

- *MAPS Testing* *Grades K-8*
- *Quarterly Skills Test* *Grades KG*
- *Dibels* *Grades K-5*

## **TUITION FEE**

A \$50.00 Application Fee for **each new student** enrolled must be received at time of application. A \$150.00 Tuition Fee per **new student** is due upon acceptance. A \$100.00 Tuition Fee is due with **each returning student's** re-enrollment application. *Application and Tuition fees are non-refundable.* The fee covers the initial cost of curriculum, fees, and expenses.

## **TUITION PAYMENT POLICY**

Our school is a non-profit Christian ministry that depends on timely tuition payments to maintain affordable tuition rates. It is, therefore, imperative that we receive payment of all fees and that it is understood that the payment of all fees is the responsibility of the parents/guardians. The tuition payment policy for GFA is as follows:

- Tuition may be paid in full.
- Tuition may be paid in 10 equal monthly payments, due by the 1st of each month. The first payment is due August 1 and the final payment is due May 1. There will be a returned check fee of \$25.00 for insufficient funds. Monthly statements showing the total outstanding balance are emailed to parents for their records and do not affect when payments are due. To help parents keep up regular payments, to prevent occurrence of insurmountable past due balances, and to enable GFA to meet its financial obligations in a responsible fashion, the following delinquent account process has been established:

**15 days past due**            The account is considered delinquent and a late fee of \$35.00 will be assessed each month the account remains past due. (*\$75 assessed quarterly for ESA invoices.*)

**30 days past due**            These accounts will receive a phone call from administration.

**60 days past due**            The student may be suspended and student records held until the account is made current.

**90 days past due**            The account may be referred for collection. If this occurs any additional collection charges will be added to your account.

All accounts must be paid in full by May 1 of the current school year. Students will not participate in year-end promotion ceremonies or receive any records until accounts are current.

Tuition payments do not completely cover the cost of educating your child(ren) at GFA. The difference is covered by donations and fundraising. In order to lessen the budget deficit faced each year, please consider adding an additional dollar amount to your tuition payment. This extra amount would be considered tax deductible. When making a donation please designate the amount on your monthly tuition statement.

Cash or check payments may be dropped off in the office or made online through the link in your invoice email, where you may pay by debit or credit.

All families receiving ESA are under a 2-strike policy. Families are asked to remain in contact with the finance office, and submit invoices in a timely manner. Stewarding the funds appropriately keeps your ESA account in good standing. Please use caution when submitting invoices for multiple children. Anything that could put the school at risk of not being an ESA Vendor would lead to strikes. After 2 strikes, the family will be required to pay out of pocket and submit to ESA for reimbursement.

## **VISITORS**

All visitors, including parents, must sign in and sign out at the office if they are visiting during school hours. Be sure to bring your Drivers License or State ID to sign in to our Visitor Management System. This procedure will help us better protect our children from unwanted visitors and also help us know who is on campus at all times. Exceptions to the sign-in procedure are programs and school-wide events. Parent involvement is welcomed and encouraged for all activities.

## **VOLUNTEER SCREENING**

At GFA, we take very seriously our responsibility to safeguard students while they are in our care. Unfortunately, in this day and age, not everyone's intentions are genuine, and GFA cannot, in good conscience, overlook the possible threat to student safety that could be posed by people in the school building. To protect against that risk, GFA is completing yearly volunteer screenings. Anyone interested in being a school volunteer needs to complete an application online at <https://www.ministryopportunities.org/Application.aspx?oid=22896>. The background check only looks for criminal history, not financial or civil matters. Information from the screening and background check will be kept confidential. Only the principal will have access to the information, and safeguards are in place to ensure its security.

Volunteers are anyone who will be serving in the school on a regular basis and/or plans on attending or driving on field trips. School visitors do not need to complete the form. Visitors would be guest speakers, those attending a large group function (programs, school picnics, or chapel) or parents visiting just their own student, for instance to have lunch with them.

## **WITHDRAWAL & REFUND POLICY**

GFA recognizes there may be circumstances when a family chooses to petition for early withdrawal. Any family that desires to withdraw their student(s) must notify the school in writing two weeks prior to the student's final day. Any student that attends at least one day of class for that month is charged for that month's tuition. All accounts must be paid in full at the time of withdrawal or we will be unable to release school records. Refunds are conducted in accordance with this policy regardless of circumstances or reason of withdrawal or removal of students from GFA. Additionally, if a student, after leaving the school, returns for re-enrollment, a \$150.00 tuition fee will apply.

- Families that have paid the entire year in advance that withdraw prior to the first school day are refunded the amount of tuition paid for the current school year. \*It is important to note that repayment of these funds must wait until funds become available.
- Families that have paid the entire year in advance that withdraw after the first day of school are refunded the amount of tuition *minus* the monthly tuition for any month the child attended, even if he/she only attends one day for that month. \*It is important to note that repayment of these funds must wait until funds become available.
- Any money received from GFA scholarships will be forfeited.

### ***Attachment 1: Discipline Policy - Description of Violations***

Category	Description/Examples	Consequence
<p><b>Category III: Serious Violations</b></p> <p><i>Serious violations are those that require the immediate attention of the GFA Administrator.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Theft</li> <li>● Extreme language/gestures that are vulgar, obscene, offensive, derogatory or disrespectful</li> <li>● Physical harassment, including threats or intimidation of any nature, or inappropriate verbal or physical conduct which creates a</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. First offense               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Immediate referral to a GFA Administrator.</li> <li>b. A conference with parent(s), student, teacher and Administrator.</li> <li>c. Out of school suspension for 1-3 days*.</li> </ol> <p><i>*The number of days will be determined by the Administrator based on the severity of the offense.</i></p> </li> </ol>

	<p>hostile, offensive or fearful environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Deliberate destruction or damage to school, student, or faculty property</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Second offense <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Immediate referral to a GFA Administrator.</li> <li>b. A conference with parent(s), student, teacher and Administrator.</li> <li>c. Out of school suspension for 3-5 days*. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*The number of days will be determined by the Administrator based on the severity of the offense.</li> </ul> </li> <li>d. A Behavior Management Contract will be implemented.</li> </ol> </li>   <li>3. Third offense <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Immediate referral to a GFA Administrator.</li> <li>b. A conference with parent(s), student, teacher and Administrator.</li> <li>c. Board decision: If serious violations continue beyond the acceptance of the Behavior Management Contract, the parent(s) and student will go before the board (during Executive Session) to discuss further necessary action. Based on that discussion and the recommendation of GFA Administrator, the board will make the final decision to release the student from GFA or to allow them to stay while on a probationary contract.</li> </ol> </li> </ol>
<p><b>Category II: Moderate Violations</b></p> <p><i>Moderate violations are dishonest behaviors, or those that can affect the safety and well-being of our students or staff.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Misuse of electronic devices</li> <li>● Disrespect by word or action toward anyone on school campus</li> <li>● Throwing/shooting items in a school building or with the intention of hitting someone</li> <li>● Horseplay/rough housing</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. First offense <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Student will serve a detention.</li> <li>b. Parent(s) will be contacted.</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. Second offense <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Individual student will have a conference with GFA Administrator.</li> <li>b. Parent will be contacted.</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. Third offense</li> </ol>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Dishonesty, cheating, plagiarism</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. A conference will be held with parent(s), student, teacher and Administrator.</li> <li>b. A Behavior Management Contract will be implemented.</li> </ul> <p>4. Fourth offense/Board decision: If serious violations continue beyond the acceptance of the Behavior Management Contract, the parent(s) and student will go before the board (during Executive Session) to discuss further necessary action. Based on that discussion and the recommendation of GFA Administrator, the board will make the final decision to release the student from GFA or to allow them to stay while on a probationary contract.</p>
<p><b>Category I: Minor/Intermediate Violations</b></p> <p><i>Minor violations are behavioral issues that do not warrant a Discipline Support Referral and should be dealt with by the classroom teacher with their escalating consequences (*See GFA Behavior Management Plan #3).</i></p> <p><i>Once the child has completed all steps of the GFA Classroom Management Plan, they will move to step 2 of additional consequences for category I: minor/intermediate violations.</i></p> <p><i>A student who chooses to not follow any reasonable</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Failure to meet classroom responsibilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Examples include, but are not limited to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Leaving seat without permission</li> <li>▪ Talking out of turn</li> <li>▪ Disrupting the class</li> <li>▪ Failing to follow directions</li> <li>▪ Behaving impolitely</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>● Running in halls</li> <li>● Disrupting chapel</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Completion of the discipline process with teacher. <i>*See GFA Behavior Management plan #3 for more details.</i></li> <li>2. First offense <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Individual student conference with Administrator.</li> <li>b. Parent(s) will be contacted.</li> </ul> </li> <li>3. Second offense <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Conference with parent(s), student, teacher and Administrator.</li> <li>d. A Behavior Management Contract will be implemented.</li> </ul> </li> <li>4. Third offense/Board decision: If minor/intermediate violations continue beyond the acceptance of the Behavior Management Contract, the parent(s) and student will go before the board (during Executive Session) to discuss further necessary action. Based on that discussion and the recommendation of</li> </ul>

<p><i>step in this process can receive a Discipline Support Referral per the teacher's discretion.</i></p>		<p>GFA Administrator, the board will make the final decision to release the student from GFA or to allow them to stay while on a probationary contract.</p>
<p><b>Violation of Dress Code</b></p>	<p>Please see the GFA handbook for more details.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. First offense <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Individual student conference with teacher.</li> <li>b. School administrator will be contacted.</li> <li>c. Parent(s) will be contacted.</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. Second offense <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. School administrator will be contacted.</li> <li>b. Parent(s) will be contacted.</li> <li>c. Student will serve an in-school suspension for 1 day.</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. Third offense <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Immediate referral to a GFA Administrator</li> <li>b. conference with parent(s), student and Administrator.</li> <li>c. Out-of-school suspension for 1 day.</li> </ol> </li> <li>4. Fourth offense/Board decision: If serious violations continue beyond the acceptance of the Behavior Management Contract, the parent(s) and student will go before the board (during Executive Session) to discuss further necessary action. Based on that discussion and the recommendation of GFA Administrator, the board will make the final decision to release the student from GFA or to allow them to stay while on a probationary contract.</li> </ol>



Dear Parent/Guardian,

It is imperative that parents apprise themselves of the contents of this handbook each year and review the appropriate sections specifically with their children.

After reviewing the Parent/Student Handbook with your child(ren), please sign this form and return it to the school office or your child's teacher **the first week of school.**



