



**NORTH RIVER
CHRISTIAN ACADEMY**

ACADEMICALLY EXCELLENT | DISTINCTIVELY CHRISTIAN

**2025-26
Parent and Student
Handbook**

PHILOSOPHIES AND GOALS

HISTORY

In 2022, a group of Christian educators saw the need for an independent Christian school where God would be worshipped and glorified, and that would serve the educational and spiritual needs of their children. They began North River Christian Academy with an enrollment of 12 students in grades PreK through 8 in the Fellowship North Church educational facility. The school was organized under the vision of Tammy Fletcher, who served as head of school.

The school moved to the campus of Highway Baptist Church located at 5847 Roundtop for the start of the 2023-24 school year. NRCA renovated the Education Building, which would house PreK3 through 8th grades, adding 9th grade in the 2024-25 school year.

NRCA has grown to its current size of nearly 80 students. Today, the school exists as a Pre-kindergarten through 11th grade, coeducational day school with selective admissions. The curriculum is rigorous and presented from a Christian worldview.

PHILOSOPHY OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

The educational philosophy of North River Christian Academy is based on a God-centered view that all truth is God's truth (John 17:17; II Cor. 13:8), and that the Bible is the inspired and only infallible authoritative Word of God which contains this truth (II Pet. 2:20-21). It is further based on the belief that God is the creator and sustainer of all things and that mankind's greatest need is to be in a right relationship with Him. We acknowledge that man is a sinner by nature and choice and possessing a fallen intellect cannot, of himself, know God or please Him. This is only possible by choosing to accept the free gift of salvation through His Son, Jesus Christ, thereby committing one's life to the Lordship of Jesus Christ (John 6:40).

We desire for the Word of God to permeate all areas of our curriculum, and not just be a separate subject taught on a purely intellectual basis (Rom. 10:2-3, I Cor. 2:10-16). It is from this view of the spiritual needs of the students that we approach the intellectual, social, emotional, and physical aspects of the whole child.

Intellectually, it is God's desire for His people to learn to love Him with all their minds and be transformed through the renewing of their minds to see all of life and learning from His perspective (Matt. 22:37; Rom. 12:2). Since God has revealed Himself to us, not only through His Word but also through His Creation, a God-focused, thoughtful study of His Creation reveals to us His glory and aspects of His righteous character (Gen. 1; Ps. 19:1; Isa. 6:3; 1Ti. 4:4). This philosophy causes us to diligently study God's Creation and pursue high academic standards as a means of equipping students to become credible, effective, Christ-like leaders in every sphere of influence God has prepared for them (II Tim. 2:21, Phil. 2:15).

Socially, God has created us to live in community (Ps. 133:1) and to function as salt and light in human society (Matt. 5:13, 16). We, therefore, need to provide opportunities for appropriate interaction within the community of believers characterized by purity, forgiveness, and mutual respect, as well as teaching the skills to successfully impact society with mercy, justice and truth. (Gal. 6:10, I Pet. 3:15)

Emotionally, since God desires a relationship with us that is genuine and exuberant (II Sam. 6:5; Mark 14:6-9) and relationships with others marked by humility and selflessness (Phil. 2:3-4), the school must provide emotional coaching and a safe environment through enforcement of discipline policies.

Physically, because we are fearfully and wonderfully made (Ps. 139:14), we must be intentional about using PE, athletics, health, nutrition, and instruction about purity to ensure that we teach good stewardship of our bodies. (II Cor. 6:16)

We further believe that God has instituted the family as the major arena of teaching for children. We, therefore, seek to be of assistance to families by providing a message to students that is consistent with that given in the Christian home and church. We recognize the authority of the parents and do not seek to replace them in authority but to assist only (Eph. 6:1-2). We desire to cooperate closely with parents in every phase of the development of the students within the framework of our stated purposes.

In summary, North River Christian Academy exists to be a biblically-based (Prov. 1:7), academically excellent (Prov. 4:7), assessable (I John 3:17) to Christian families (Deut. 6:7) who want to equip their children to influence the world for Christ and develop leaders with well-trained intellects subject to righteous character (Prov. 4:5, 18).

The following objectives are established in order to implement this philosophy:

1. To teach that the Bible is the inspired and infallible word of God and our guide for faith and practice (II Pet. 2:20-21).
2. To teach that faith in Jesus Christ alone is the only way to have fellowship with God and be assured of salvation (John 6:40).
3. To encourage students to develop godly character traits (Matt. 12:35).
4. To teach students to be transformed by the renewing of their minds by developing in them a biblical worldview (Matt. 22:37; Rom. 12:2).
5. To teach students to develop self-discipline and responsibility from God's perspective (Gal. 6:9; Prov. 24:10).
6. To teach students a right response to authority from God's perspective (I Pet. 2:13-17).
7. To give students a godly basis for thinking by memorization of Scripture (Ps. 19:9-11).
8. To teach students to articulate and defend their faith and to identify and analyze contrasting worldviews (Col. 2:8; 1 Tim. 6:20).
9. To teach students to cooperate with their peers and develop good relationships (Rom. 14:19; Rom. 12:17-18).
10. To encourage physical development by providing opportunities for athletic and recreational activities (I Cor. 3:16-17).
11. To prepare students for higher learning and the pursuit of wisdom and knowledge by teaching them the basic building blocks of learning (Prov. 4:1-9).
12. To instill in students a heart for the lost and for service (John 15:12; Gal. 5:14).
13. To limit enrollment to children of at least one parent or guardian who professes Christ in accordance with the Statement of Faith; and in the case of the upper school, to students who profess faith in Christ (Eph. 4:11-14).

VISION STATEMENT

The vision of North River Christian Academy is to provide an academically excellent education from a Christian worldview. We desire to work with Christian parents to develop students into dedicated disciples of Jesus Christ, so that He will be glorified and His kingdom will be furthered through the next generation.

MISSION STATEMENT

The purpose of North River Christian Academy is, first and foremost, that God may be glorified in all things through His Son, Jesus Christ. *Our mission is to assist Christian families in educating, equipping, and encouraging their children to influence the world for Christ.*

In order to accomplish this in an educational setting, we will first provide a Christ-centered education for the children of the Sherwood area without distinction to race, color, national or ethnic origin. Our aim is to provide an education:

1. That is in accord with the Word of God, the Old and New Testament, which we believe to be the inspired, infallible and inerrant rule of faith and practice;
2. That possesses academic excellence, spiritual depth and moral integrity;
3. That will prepare students for godly participation in society;
4. That trains students in the knowledge of and obedience to the Word of God and promotes loyalty to God and country.

North River Christian Academy exists as a co-educational day school that encompasses grades PreK3 through the 9th grades. It is operated as a non-profit, non-denominational educational ministry and is governed by a school board.

North River Christian Academy acknowledges the trust placed in the school by its parents, and holds in high regard the authority of the home and church to teach those distinctive doctrines held in esteem by a family's own local church. North River Christian Academy does not assume such authority in the school setting and endeavors to teach those fundamentals of the Christian faith which are held common to all in Christ's church.

The goal of the school is, however, to lead each student to a voluntary commitment of his life to the lordship of Christ and to develop his God-given abilities to his fullest potential so that he might influence the world for Christ.

CORE VALUES

Redemptive community. We serve a God who exists in eternal relationship. The Triune God has always existed in community- as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. As image-bearers of God, we are also made for community. We thrive in it; we can only function to the truest extent of who we are when we live together, work together, and do life together. Education is an inherently relational process. It is a form of discipleship, and like all discipleship, the closer and more trusting the relationship, the more effective the educational process. At NRCA, we believe that teachers must love and care for their students. When students sense that caring and concern, they respond to it and genuine learning can take place. Teachers work best in an environment where there are strong relationships among the adults in the building.

A redemptive community that is God-glorifying and Spirit-breathed is the catalyst through which great Christian education happens, through which great living happens. But, it does not JUST happen. It must be fought for, prayed over, contended for, struggled with, celebrated in, reconciled with, unified together, forgiven for, repented over--it is a LOT of hard work; however, it is good, life-giving work.

Educational sanctification. “Sanctification” captures the idea of holiness, to be set apart, completely other from the world. It also connotes the idea of a Holy Spirit-led, continuous process of moving forward, of becoming more in the image of Christ: better, purer, and more holy than we once were. Educational sanctification is the idea that God's Word- the written, revealed Word and the Word made flesh through Jesus Christ- is the foundation of everything that we do as a school. Our policies, our procedures, our practices, our curriculum, our ways of dealing with each other, and everything must proceed from the gospel. Teachers and administrators must see all of life and learning through the eyes of our Father, and must guide our students in the transformation, the renewal of their minds. The goal is for students to understand God's Word and His perspective on all of life and all of creation. We believe that only through this transformation are we able to fully glorify God and enjoy Him forever to the greatest extent He created us to do so.

Educational sanctification is also the idea that we will be continually seeking to be better than we once were, by the power and wisdom of the Holy Spirit. We will ask ourselves the hard questions, challenge the status quo, and be lifetime learners. We will model a passion for learning to our students by reflecting it in our own lives. We will not assume that something is better simply because it is new, but neither will we so assume simply because that's the way we've always done it. If we make mistakes or if we've been slow to change, we'll seek forgiveness and move forward, never being afraid to engage in this continuous process of becoming better than we once were.

Educational sanctification means offering an outstanding academic course of study. While the course is challenging, the school works to provide the support necessary so that students can be successful to the greatest extent that God has wired their minds. “Curriculum” is defined as everything the school does, and school teachers and coaches work just as hard to provide an outstanding array of athletics, fine arts, and other activities that develop all of the aspects of learners made in the image of Christ. All of the school's curriculum is biblically-integrated, and God's Word and His Truth is the foundation of everything the school does.

“Life as worship.” This value captures the idea set forth by Paul in Romans 12:1, when he encourages Christians to “present your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God; because this is your spiritual act of worship.” As followers of Christ, we are called to be God-worshippers, to be restored to that rightful state of being in pure, good, and holy relationship with God. As a school, we will continuously and constantly submit everything that we do- whether it be a student's performance on the field, a teacher's lesson in the classroom, or a difficult conversation between principal and parent- to our God as an act of worship. As a school, we will declare the worthiness of God to be praised, and acknowledge His place as the Lord of our lives and the center of the universe. This school, our studies, our performances, our gifts, talents, and resources, are our sacrifices that we will lay daily before Him, for His use and His purposes. Our entire lives and this entire school are entirely at His disposal.

Human beings are created to worship, and if we are not worshiping God, we will worship something else. Anything, whether it be high grades, strong athletic or fine arts performances, good looks, a great sense of humor, can become an idol if we or our students look to these things as our source of identity. Accordingly, every conversation, presentation, chapel service, teachers' conference, parent seminar, newsletter or update is an opportunity to focus our hearts and minds, our identity, on our relationship with Christ. The school works hard to reinforce this truth by communicating it, and through its faculty and administrators modeling it for our families and students.

STATEMENT OF FAITH - WE BELIEVE:

1. Complete Inspiration of Scripture – In the verbal and complete inspiration of the Old and New Testaments and hold them to be the inerrant Word Of God, the supreme and final authority. Matthew 5:17-18, II Timothy 3:16-17, II Peter 1:20-21, Luke 1:1-3, Luke 16:17, John 10:35, Genesis 3:4-5
2. Father, Son & Holy Spirit – In one God, creator of all things, eternally existing in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. *Genesis 1:1, Matthew 28:19, Isaiah 45:5, Mark 12:29-32, Psalm 90:3, I Corinthians 13:12, John 1:1-20, John 6:27, Acts 5:3-4*
3. Jesus Christ - True God, True Man – That Jesus Christ was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, and is true God and true man. He lived a sinless life and died for our sins according to the scriptures – as a representative, substitutionary and complete sacrifice. He arose bodily from the dead, ascended into Heaven and is today our high priest and advocate. *John 1:14, I Corinthians 15:3-4, John 1:1, John 14:8, Matthew 1:18-25, Luke 1:26-38, Luke 24: 23-40, Isaiah 7:14, I Corinthians 15:22, Hebrews 4:14-16, Hebrews 5:1-10, Hebrews 13:5, Hebrews 7:25, I John 3:5, Romans 5:1-11, Romans 10:9-10, II Corinthians 5:17, Acts 1:1-11, I Peter 3:22*
4. The Holy Spirit - Helper, Teacher, Guide – In the Holy Spirit who came forth from the Father and Son to convict the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment – to regenerate, sanctify, baptize, and empower all who believe in Jesus Christ. He indwells every believer in Christ, and is an abiding helper, teacher and guide. *Ephesians 1:13-14, John 3:5-7, John 14:16-17, John 16:7-11, John 13, Matthew 28:19, II Thessalonians 2:7, I Corinthians 12:13, Ephesians 5:18, Romans 8:26-27*
5. His Sovereign Mercy & Grace – That man was created in the image of God, that He sinned and thereby incurred not only physical death, but spiritual death, which is separation from God; and that all human beings are born with a sinful nature, lost, without hope, except in His sovereign mercy and grace. *Genesis 1:27, Romans 6:23, Genesis 5:1, I Corinthians 11:7*
6. Sin Has Devastated Mankind – That sin is the condition that all of mankind finds itself facing. Sin entered the world through Adam and Eve and affects everyone. It leaves men and women separated from God and facing condemnation and judgment with no ability to remedy the situation on their own. *Genesis 3:1-19; Romans 3:23; Ephesians 2:8,9*
7. Salvation By Faith Alone – That salvation is received by faith alone in the Lord Jesus Christ. All who trust in Him alone are justified and assured of eternal life by His shed blood. *Ephesians 2:8-9, John 3:7, I John 3:1-2, Romans 3:14-17*
8. Live A Holy Life – That Christians are called to live a holy life of service and testimony for the glory of God and the well-being of their fellow man. *I Peter 1:15-16, John 12:25-26, Acts 1:8, I Corinthians 3:12-15*

9. Community Of Believers – The universal church embraces all true believers. It is the body and bride of Christ, formed by the baptism of the Holy Spirit. The local church consists of a community of believers in Jesus Christ, baptized on a credible profession of faith and associated for worship, work and fellowship. *Ephesians 1:22-23, I Corinthians 12:12, Ephesians 4:11-16, Ephesians 5:24 & 30, I Corinthians 12: 13 & 27, Hebrews 10:24-25*
10. His Worldwide Kingdom On The Earth – In the imminent coming of Christ for His church and the visible and personal coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ to establish His worldwide Kingdom on the Earth. *Titus 2:13, Matthew 24:30, I Thessalonians 1:10, 4:13-18, 5:4-10, Matthew 24:21 & 29, Matthew 25:31 & 46, Revelation 3:10, Revelation 20:11-15*
11. The Bodily Resurrection Of All – In the bodily resurrection of the righteous and the unrighteous; the righteous to everlasting communion with God – The unrighteous to everlasting separation from God. *John 5:28-29, I Thessalonians 4:15-18, II Thessalonians 1:6-10, Luke 16:22-28, Revelation 20:11-15*
12. Satan Is Actively Attempting To Destroy The Power & Work Of Christ – That Satan and his demons are about the business of attempting to destroy the power and work of Christ, and the authority of the word of God. *I Peter 5:8, Isaiah 14:12-15, Revelation 14:11, 19:20, Revelation 20:10*
13. Baptism & The Lords Table – The ordinances of the church, given by our Lord, are baptism and the Lord's table. *Acts 2:38, Matthew 26:26-29, Matthew 28:19-20, Acts 2:12, Acts 12, Acts 13, Acts 36, Acts 41, Romans 6:3-4*
14. The Great Mission Of The Church – In the great commission our Lord gave to His church, which is to evangelize and make disciples of all nations, and that this is the great mission of the church. *Mark 16:15, John 20:21, Matthew 28:16-20, Luke 24:44-49, John 12:24-26, Acts 1:8, Acts 36-37, I Peter 3:15-16*

NRCA POSITION ON FAITH AND SCIENCE

Humbly acknowledging the infinite complexity of God and the limitations of human knowledge (Isaiah 55:8-9), concerning secondary doctrine not explicit in the Gospel, we intentionally teach and engage in loving, thoughtful, discussion, and we robustly present different defensible views, modeling Christian unity as we "agree to disagree" Our desire is to equip our students to "pursue wisdom by valuing and practicing intellectual inquiry and critical thinking, seeking to influence their world for Christ as they engage in open, honest, and humble exchange of ideas in the public marketplace" (from Portrait of a NRCA graduate).

POSITION ON MARRIAGE AND HUMAN SEXUALITY

This position statement constitutes the official position of North River Christian Academy.

God exists in three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and has for all eternity, John 1:1. God is, therefore, a relational God, and He creates human beings for relationship. God created man and woman in His image, and each reflect aspects of God's nature and character, Gen. 1:26. God blesses the creation of male and female as separate, physical beings as a creational good, Gen 1:31. These two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God, and one's sexual identity is a reality deeply inscribed in man and woman. Gender is given by God, and humans are not free to choose or to change their sexual identity.

God views marriage as a covenantal relationship created and entered into by God and a man and a woman, Gen 2. He views the consummation of heterosexual marriage with sexual intercourse as creating a binding of the two, a “one flesh” union between man and woman, Gen 2:24. This creational order has given rise to the Church’s traditionally high view of marriage, and negative stance toward divorce, I Tim. 4:15. Historically, the Church has affirmed the marriage between one individual of each gender as the established norm. This standard has served purposes of biological reproduction, and is viewed as supported by Scripture as optimal for nurturing children, Gen. 1 and 2, providing pleasure within the marital context, Prov. 5: 15-20, and gratifying the basic human sex drive, I Cor. 7:1-9. This marital relationship is also metaphorical, in that throughout Scripture it represents, “a profound mystery,” Christ’s love for His Church, as well as God’s love for Israel.

For millennia, the traditional sexual ethic of both the Christian church and the Hebrew people is that God commends and prescribes chastity, for married people through the exclusivity of sex with one’s spouse in marriage, and for unmarried people through celibacy. This view is based upon both commendations of marriage in Scripture (Matt. 19:4-6; Gen. 2:24, Eph. 5:30-33), and prohibitions in both the Old and New Testament of adultery, incest, rape, fornication, homosexual sex, and lust (Ex. 20:14; I Cor. 6:12-20; Heb.13:4; Lev. 18:22; Rom 1:26-27). Sexual sin is a sin like others in Scripture, but Christians are further called to sexual purity and urged to flee sexual immorality.

Christ, the Apostle Paul, and others in Scripture practiced celibacy. Paul cautions against viewing sexual intimacy as a basic necessity to achieve full humanity, I Cor. 7. Thus, sexual behavior or orientation, while something that man does, is not declared by God to be a part of his identity.

NRCA adopts and ascribes to the traditional interpretation of marriage and human sexuality, as set forth above, and as recognized by the Scriptures and the great weight of Church tradition for over two millennia. NRCA will teach according to these God-ordained beliefs, and will employ those who believe and practice according to these beliefs to the greatest extent permitted by the laws of God and man.

NRCA LIFESTYLE STATEMENT

North River Christian Academy's biblical role is to work in conjunction with the home to mold students to become Christlike. This involves the church’s and school’s understanding and belief of what Scripture teaches are the qualities and characteristics that exemplify a Christlike life. These beliefs include scriptural teachings that mankind is created in the image of God; that men and women are created separately, and as a separate creation; that God gave sexual union as a gift, and intended it to be celebrated within the sole context of a man and a woman, joined together in marriage; that God calls us as Christians to holiness, to live according to His design and purposes; and as a church and school, we are called to model and live this holiness.

As a voluntary community associated under a common belief in Christ, NRCA believes that the full and biblically-sanctioned expression of human sexuality is in the context of marriage between one man and one woman. The community depends upon all of its members living according to common principles, in order to inculcate these values in the lives of our children. By enrolling their children in the school, school family members agree to conduct themselves in accordance with these teachings, not engaging in conduct or practice that contradicts or goes

outside this biblically-ordained context of sexual intimacy. School family members understand that his or her continued conduct in accordance with these provisions is a condition of ongoing enrollment in the school.

The school reserves the right, within its sole discretion, to refuse the admission of an applicant or discontinue enrollment of a student if the atmosphere or conduct within a particular home or the activities of the student are counter to or are in opposition to the biblical lifestyle the school teaches. The school also reserves the right, as a church ministry, to employ only those employees who commit to lives of holiness consistent with biblical holiness, as reflected in the lifestyle statement and the NRCA position on marriage and human sexuality.

PORTRAIT OF A NRCA GRADUATE

At NRCA, “Teaching Jesus” means by faith using every resource at our disposal to equip students to “Learn Jesus” as exemplified by the following descriptors tied to the NRCA core values of Redemptive Community, Educational Sanctification, and Life as Worship. A NRCA student who is “learning Jesus” will make progress to:

Life as Worship

1. Understand and commit to a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, submitting to God’s Word and empowered by the Holy Spirit, pursuing a Gospel-driven life of worship, mission, faith, goodness, knowledge, self-control, perseverance, godliness, brotherly kindness, and love.
2. Understand that one’s worth comes from Christ alone, and that he/she is a uniquely designed reflection of His glory, practicing responsible stewardship of all of God’s Creation, including gifts and talents, bodies, finances, time (including discretionary time), digital devices, and community resources.
3. Believe that the “good life” cannot be purchased, but must be cultivated through the discipline and habits of biblical virtue.
4. Understand that work has dignity as an expression of the nature of God and as an act of worship, expecting, accepting, and learning humility from occasional failure and disappointment.
5. Understand that every thought, word, and deed is an act of worship which must be consciously submitted to the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

Educational Sanctification

1. Be well prepared in all academic disciplines, including;
 - a. Proficiency in communication skills (reading, writing, speaking, listening, and digital applications);
 - b. A knowledge and understanding of science, its epistemological limitations, and an understanding of a naturalistic worldview and how it contrasts with a biblical worldview;
 - c. A knowledge of the people, events and movements in history, including church history,
 - d. A facility with and appreciation for the language of mathematics.
2. Appreciate the visual and performing arts, athletics, and other co-curricular activities; and understand how they express and shape beliefs and values.
3. Use biblical discernment in utilizing resources, including technology, to find, analyze, and evaluate information.

4. Understand, articulate, and defend a biblical worldview while having a basic understanding of opposing worldviews.
5. Understand the Bible for its historical, literary, inspirational, transformational, and theological value, acknowledging that only the Holy Spirit can apply truth to the human heart.

Redemptive community

1. Embrace and practice justice, mercy, integrity, courtesy, self-discipline, and peacemaking infused with the Gospel in personal and virtual relationships.
2. Apply spiritual principles of gratitude, humility, forgiveness, submission, other-centeredness, and love.
3. Pursue wisdom by valuing and practicing intellectual inquiry and critical thinking, seeking to influence their world for Christ as they engage in open, honest, and humble dialogue in the public marketplace.
4. Understand the Great Commission as commanded by Christ and develop a desire to respond to that commission locally and globally in a culturally-relevant manner.
5. Understand the worth of every human being as created in the image of God by having a critical appreciation of languages and cultures of other peoples, dispelling prejudice, promoting unity in diversity, and encouraging biblical hospitality for the alien or stranger.
6. Be actively involved in a church community, serving God and others with humility.

Portrait of an Elementary Graduate

At NRCA, “Teaching Jesus” means by faith using every resource at our disposal to equip students to “Learn Jesus” as exemplified by the following descriptors tied to the NRCA core values of Redemptive Community, Educational Sanctification, and Life as Worship. A NRCA elementary student who is “learning Jesus” will make progress to:

Life as Worship

1. Begin to understand the fall of man and his/her individual need for a Savior. *“For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”* Romans 3:23
2. Begin to understand that a right relationship with God can only be accomplished through Jesus. *“But God demonstrates his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”* Romans 5:8
3. Begin to understand that one’s love for God and the authority He has placed over his or her life is demonstrated through obedience to His commands. *“This is love for God to obey his commands, and his commands are not burdensome.”* I John 5:3
4. Begin to develop a thirst for God’s Word and commit His Word to memory. *“I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.”* Psalm 119:11
5. Begin to understand that actions and words are an overflow of hearts. *“A good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and an evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of.”* Luke 6:35

Educational Sanctification

1. Begin to understand that learning is a way to love God with the mind. Mark 12:30 *“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.”*

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2. Be prepared for Upper school in all academic and co-curricular disciplines including:
 - a. Proficiency in language skills (spelling, sentence structure, grammar, reading, and technology applications)
 - b. Knowledge of and mastery over basic math facts, concepts, and procedures (+, -, x, /)
 - c. Knowledge of people, events, and movements in history from a biblical worldview
 - d. Understand that the study of God's creation (its order and design), which leads to greater understanding of God's sovereignty.
 - e. Appreciate the visual and performing arts as well as understand the importance of keeping one's body healthy through regular physical activity.
 3. Begin to understand the Bible for its historical, literary, inspirational, and transformational value acknowledging that only the Holy Spirit can apply truth to the human heart.
 4. Begin to understand that all things should be done heartily as unto the Lord to bring Him honor and glory; including academic work, musical programs, art work, technology, or physical fitness. *"Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men,"* Colossians 3:23

Redemptive Community

1. Begin to understand that a right relationship with Jesus is the foundation for other relationships. *"We love, because He first loved us. If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for the one who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen. And this commandment we have from Him, that the one who loves God should love his brother also."* I John 4:19-21
2. Begin to understand that actions and words affect others so one must learn to be others-centered and treat others the way one desires to be treated. *"Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others. Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus,"* Philippians 2:3-5 *"In everything, therefore, treat people the same way you want them to treat you, for this is the Law and the Prophets."* John 7:12
3. Begin to grow as peacemakers and caretakers. *"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God."* Matthew 5:9 *"As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God."* I Peter 4:10
4. Begin to grow in awareness of the needs of others and respond to opportunities to serve others in our school, community, and world. (Community Service Week, Pastors' Appreciation, Veterans Day, Operation Christmas Child) *"As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God."* I Peter 4:10
5. Begin to demonstrate the NRCA core character qualities: respect, honesty, gratitude, obedience, responsibility, and self-control. *"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit. Let us not become boastful, challenging one another, envying one another."* Galatians 5:22-26

ACCREDITATIONS AND AFFILIATIONS

North River Christian Academy is an independent Christian school located in North Little Rock,

Arkansas. NRCA is seeking accreditation through the Arkansas Non-public school accrediting association. ANSAA provides leadership seminars, teacher conferences, and represents Christian schools in state and national issues concerning Christian education.

PHILOSOPHY OF CURRICULUM AND PEDAGOGY

The course of study at North River Christian Academy is designed to be biblically-integrated, developmentally appropriate and rigorous. The word *curriculum* is derived from the Latin for “running a course” and is composed of WHAT we teach. Curriculum at NRCA is defined as everything we do as a school, whether academic, athletic, fine arts, or other pursuits. Pedagogy means “teaching children” and refers to HOW we teach the curriculum. The course we run at NRCA is designed to contribute to the Portrait of a NRCA Graduate by restoring and fostering relational wholeness in Christ, who holds all things together.

Indeed, God is a god of relationship, of community. He lived in community with the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, completely and perfectly, before time began. He created us in His image to have and enjoy community with Him and with each other, to be whole and complete within ourselves, and to live in harmony with Creation as its perfect caretaker. Through sin, each of these relationships has been fractured and distorted. Christ’s redeeming work on the Cross makes it possible for us to be redeemed and restored in these relationships. We are living in the “now, not yet” of God’s redemptive process, whereby through Christ we can begin and travel the journey of full restoration, a journey that will be culminated and consummated through Christ’s return and the establishment of the New Heaven, the New Earth, and the New Jerusalem. The educational process is a means by which we facilitate the restoration of these relationships in ourselves, in our students, in our families, and in the world.

In short, NRCA exists to *teach Jesus*. Teaching Jesus in the context of relationships is the lens through which we view our entire pedagogy and curriculum. We do those things which best allow us to teach Jesus, and we do not do those things which do not best allow us to do so.

Grades PreK through 5

With our youngest PreK students, our goal is to provide an age-appropriate balance of classroom structure with a gentle, consistent environment which fosters an excitement about learning. Academically, beginning with phonemic awareness in PreK, we select great children’s literature to help elementary students progress through phonics and reading fluency, always including vocabulary and comprehension skills. Students learn cursive handwriting and practice composition skills. Math instruction emphasizes a solid mastery of facts and procedures while also teaching concepts and application. Science and history receive increasing attention with older students; and enrichment opportunities abound in library, computer, P.E., art, music, Spanish, Latin, speech, and missions/service projects. In all grades, every day begins with Bible and every subject is naturally integrated with biblical truth. The discipline system is part of this curriculum and is designed to reinforce family training in other-centeredness and self-control, teaching the need for Christ and dependence on the Holy Spirit.

Grades 6-8

Building on the foundation of the lower grades, upper school students continue to hone skills in grammar, composition, Latin, and math while addressing more challenging content in Bible, literary analysis, science (physical, earth and life), history (world, Texas, and American),

computer and logic. 5th grade is introduced to the fine arts through an exploratory course and can opt to explore various sports through after school intramural sports. More intensive involvement in art, band, orchestra, drama, or choir begins in 6th grade, competitive athletics begin in 7th grade. An emphasis on character training and a reasoned biblical worldview continue.

Grades 9-12

A biblical humanities approach integrates the disciplines of Bible, history, and English; and humanities questions about the relationships among God, man, and creation serve as the unifying framework for the disciplines of math, science, technology, engineering, foreign language, fine arts, and athletics. Dual Credit and Advanced Placement courses are taught by NRCA faculty and are also biblically-integrated. Spiritual formation is promoted through chapel, regular small group meetings, mentoring relationships with teachers, and community service.

COMMUNICATION BETWEEN SCHOOL AND HOME

Communication between school and home is vital to the success of students at NRCA. Central to this communication are both email and two websites: FACTS Family Portal (FACTS Family Portal), the family link to our school information system, factsmgt.com, and our school website, www.nrca-chargers.com. Email is our number one communication tool; it is imperative that the office have the most current email address on file for parents. FACTS Family Portal provides information about grades, assignments, attendance, discipline, hot lunches and includes family billing and other helpful information. The NRCA website provides information about upcoming events, changes, opportunities, and news. In addition, phone calls, notes, and email may be used to communicate throughout the year.

PHILOSOPHY ON DIVERSITY, UNITY AND THE *IMAGO DEI*

As it pertains to NRCA, promoting diversity within the school is a worthy and biblically-necessary goal, regardless of whether it is immediately obvious to our constituents, or makes the school more attractive or marketable in the short term. Fred Smith of The Gathering has said, “Every truth passes through three stages before it is recognized. In the first, it is ridiculed, in the second it is opposed, in the third it is regarded as self-evident. It may be that making the world safe for diversity is the most dangerous, foolhardy and yet heroic task in the world.”

Adequately meeting the needs of diverse students allows the school to fulfill the following goals, deeply rooted in the mission of NRCA: 1) to better and more fully reflect the *imago Dei*, the image of God, as a school; 2) to testify to the unifying power of the gospel; 3) to create a vibrant, rich educational culture that meets the needs of all students, equipping them to live redemptively in an increasingly-multicultural society and to preserve the unity of the Body of Christ; 4) to celebrate the aesthetic of a creator God who made us different in order to reflect His beauty and to teach us to love; and 5) to align our hearts and minds with our Lord as a school community—for those things and people to matter to us who matter to Him. Additionally, promoting diversity is a long-term economic sustainability strategy for the school, giving the increasingly diverse local and national culture.

The NRCA philosophy is to celebrate diversity through the unity that the Church enjoys in Christ. God has designed human beings to look, think, and act differently across cultures, and different cultures reflect the *imago Dei* differently. For example, and speaking broadly, Western

European culture (influenced by the Greeks) is rooted in the life of the mind, a rational, thoughtful expression of God's nature and character. Conversely, most African cultures generally place heavy emphasis on the life of the spirit. In those cultures, the spirit realm, the work of the Holy Spirit, and spiritual warfare are more typically deeply understood and reflected than in Western cultures. These two broad cultural themes, blended with the manifestations from other cultures, more fully reveal and reflect God's nature and character. The same can be said for cultural themes of every cultural group. Therefore, diversity is to be appreciated and celebrated, as various tiles in the beautiful mosaic that comprise the *imago Dei*.

At the same time, followers of Christ are called to be a new nation, a unified people. We are adopted brothers and sisters, joined into one family by our Father's calling, Christ's blood, and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. The unity that the Church enjoys in Christ transcends all differences and binds us one to another. It truly captures what is also the American ideal, reflected on our nation's currency: *E Pluribus Unum*- "out of many, one." Therefore, a biblical philosophy of diversity must encompass the idea of celebrating and respecting diversity as glorifying God more fully, all the while promoting unity and love within the Body as a new culture that both encompasses and transcends the multi-culture.

A Culture that Reflects and Respects the Philosophy

In "The Dimensions of Multicultural Education," James Banks advocates examining cultures and social structures within the school to ensure alignment with principles of diversity. (Banks, 2010). NRCA administrators and faculty must continually seek to examine what underlying assumptions or subconscious practices may be inconsistent with the underlying, biblical theme of unity in diversity. What grouping or testing practices, norms concerning sports, fine arts, or club participation, subtle messages, unexamined assumptions, or "territories and turfs" are conspiring to send signals contrary to those that respect and celebrate diversity, and that promote unity? As these things are considered, it is imperative that we address a common misconception. Diversity is not about having the pendulum swing in the opposite direction or suppressing the culture of those currently in our school family. Rather, diversity is about bringing together multiple cultures in a Christ honoring way that leads to each culture feeling valued, celebrated, embraced, and respected. The school family seeks to engage in healthy, loving, and measured dialogue among teachers, administrators, school families and students to identify contrary messages and deal with them as a necessary precursor to promoting a unifying message.

At the same time, discussion and deep communication among those same stakeholders to understand cultural differences is crucial. What patterns of communication, social values (the dos and don'ts of behavior), preferred ways of learning and values of knowledge, philosophies of child-raising, and outward displays of culture are valuable expressions of each culture represented within the school that should be celebrated, enjoyed, and understood? Communication and teacher training in what is important and what is praiseworthy must underlie the "what" that is taught.

Implications for Explicit Curriculum

At NRCA, curriculum is defined broadly, to include "all of the educative experiences learners have in an educational program," whether considered traditionally curricular or co-curricular. Curriculum that embraces diversity and unity examines content integration, as well as other

aspects. As Banks describes, there are several other dimensions of multicultural education for schools to consider, including knowledge construction processes, prejudice reduction, and equity pedagogy. (Banks, 2010). NRCA leaders must contemplate and align each of these dimensions not only with the theme of unity in diversity, but with the school's biblical philosophy of curriculum and pedagogy.

The first area to consider is content integration. The school's traditionally strong liberal arts focus, with emphasis on "great works" of literature, includes works that are primarily western in origin. Great works of literature are important, but so are great *ideas*. In the humanities, attention should be given to ideas and values that are written on the human heart and that span cultural boundaries. For example, teachers could use works from different cultures that capture the cross-cultural concept of the hero who brings redemption, to deliver his people out of darkness. Or, the school could emphasize multiethnic works that capture ideals of love and integrity, of loyalty and honor; ideals that may be manifested differently among different cultures, but that are prized by all.

If the *imago Dei* is truly manifested differently in different cultures, yet more fully among all, curriculum leaders should seek out those learning experiences and opportunities that capture and celebrate those differences. For example, a social studies lesson or unit on death, demonstrating European-American expressions of grief versus African expressions of celebration, demonstrating how both are necessary and important to what God teaches mankind about the end of this life, could be used to capture this theme.

NRCA teachers must be trained to understand how perceptions are formed and the manner in which cultural assumptions, frames of reference, and biases reflect the ways people interpret the same information differently based on personal context. Teachers' understanding should be coupled with an appreciation for the ways that the Holy Spirit uses a shared biblical framework for interpreting revealed knowledge to unify a community of diverse Christians. Teaching students to understand backgrounds and perspectives of writers and thinkers, and their purposes for writing or thinking, should be compared and contrasted both with those of other cultures, and with a biblical perspective. A biblical perspective is preeminently important, because it allows students not only to examine and celebrate their own culture and those of others, but also to be "appreciative critics" of those cultures. A perspective rooted in absolute truth serves as a reference point allowing students to differentiate what is praiseworthy and what is worthy of criticism within one's own culture, as when examining the European ethnocentricity of historical concepts such as, "the New World" and the "discovery" of America.

Prejudice reduction is another dimension for NRCA curriculum leaders to review and consider. NRCA students should continue being taught from the unifying force of the gospel and its message of love and reconciliation. They have taught that racism and prejudice are sinful, and that when man decries what God creates as good, it hurts the heart of the God we love. This has been an effective way to reduce prejudice in NRCA students. Additionally, other types of experiences or materials, such as multiethnic readers, controlled experiments in experiencing discrimination, and exposure to the food, art, folk dances, and music of constituent cultures within the school may be considered to foster and eliminate prejudice among students.

Finally, NRCA teachers should be trained in equity pedagogy, in identifying those pedagogical techniques and methods of instruction that are most culturally relevant and helpful for students of

different cultures. Here again, in keeping with the idea of unity in diversity, it is important to differentiate at times, but also to underscore the importance for all students of all cultures to learn to work with varied types and methods of instruction.

Conclusion

Thinking through these various curricular implications of multicultural learning is extremely helpful. At the end of the day, helping students, and adults for that matter, to respect and celebrate the differences that God has woven into each of us, while simultaneously enjoying the oneness we enjoy as children of God, is one of the greatest ways our school can prepare its students to appreciate their Creator, and to live in and to impact this increasingly-diverse, multicultural world for Christ.

References: Banks, J. (2010). The Dimensions of Multicultural Education. In *Curriculum Leadership* (9th ed., pp. 88-102). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

PHILOSOPHY ON LEARNING DIFFERENCES

Standard 3.12 “The school provides and coordinates learning support services to meet the unique learning needs of students.”

We are created in the image of God (Genesis 1:26) and are fearfully and wonderfully made (Psalm 139), with innumerable unique manifestations of that image; and each individual is operating with unique gifts and unique challenges. Given the limited resources of any educational system, it is not possible to address every learning difference in a classroom setting – and no one solution fits every individual. A healthy tension between teaching the academic content and teaching the individual child will always exist and needs to be prayerfully managed.

We believe that a *variety* of gifts and abilities - not just academic gifts - are useful in the Kingdom for the glory of God. Therefore, we want to honor, encourage and value those who possess both academic *and* non-academic gifts, and work with them to develop those gifts to God’s glory. That being said, we *are* a school and it is our job, delegated by Christian parents, to equip students academically.

We further believe that a rigorous, biblically-integrated ***“Humanities + STEM”** curriculum will benefit any student – academically gifted or not – to be blessed by the joy of learning and equipped to influence the world for Christ. We desire for every NRCA student to become a literate, discerning lifetime-learning lover of Jesus.

Grades

Grades are used to describe progress toward an academic standard, supply accountability, communicate to parents, and accurately report progress toward the standard to the next grade level. Our challenge is to attempt to meet the individual student where he is *and* accurately report progress in learning the content and skills of the curriculum *at the same time*. Some students may need additional academic support (study skills, organizational help, tutorials, guided study halls, support, interventions), and those services are available as needed. Some students will benefit from greater academic challenge, and those opportunities are available as well (pre-AP and AP courses, electives, TAPPS competitions, test prep). All students should be encouraged to develop areas of strength and improve in areas of weakness. All students and their parents need to be willing to celebrate the rich, biblically-integrated “Humanities +” foundation

even though the grade they earn may not be “A”. It is our desire for students to confidently and victoriously receive worth from their identity in Christ and their unique purpose in bringing Him glory in His Kingdom.

*”**Humanities + STEM**” means that all disciplines, including the STEM disciplines, are biblically-integrated with the same essential questions for biblical humanities.

Definitions and Protocols

Changes in the academic environment, which enable the student to show what he/she knows.

These are significant changes documented on a NRCA Plan in response to a recent diagnosis. Examples are scribing, testing location, fewer items at a time on a test, or extra time on activities for which the target skill is not speed. Classroom level changes or differentiation like preferential seating, movement, tutoring, temporary scaffolding, or options for presentation do not require a NRCA Plan.

Changes in academic expectations.

These are changes in content or skill documented on a NRCA Plan in response to a recent diagnosis. Examples are: use of audio-books while learning to read, decreased number of spelling words, significantly reduced reading level, going “non-graded” in a particular subject during an intervention period, extra time on any activity for which time is a target skill, decreased content or changes in regular assignments and assessments.

All significant changes in content, skill, or environment necessary for student learning are documented on a NRCA Plan. If implemented in the classroom, they may be noted on the elementary report card with the comment “**receiving academic support for learning**”, but the primary method of documentation and communication is the NRCA Plan.

Examples:

1. On a 20 word spelling test, 10 words on Thursday and 10 words on Friday would be a change in environment, but testing on 10 total words would be a change in content.
2. Extra time on a math or history test would be a change in environment. Extra time on a speed drill or “Read and Think” would be a change in skill.
3. Reminding of test taking skills, clarifying a test question, or giving a test one section at a time would be a change in environment. Cuing with content information during a test or reviewing between sections of a test is a change in content.
4. Scribing or typing verbatim from dictation on a student writing assignment would be a change in environment. Writing or typing while composing, coaching, or wordsmithing a writing assignment would be a change in skill and content.

Referral for Academic Support

A teacher, a parent, a student, or a principal may initiate a referral for academic support or the development of a NRCA Plan. The campus principal will arrange a meeting with all parties to suggest a plan for intervention or support. A NRCA Plan requires recent (within 3-5 years for colleges, depending on the diagnosis) psychoeducational testing from a battery of specific tests from a licensed diagnostician. At the elementary and upper school, any change in academic expectations requires enrollment in academic support.

Testing Protocol

- Accommodations are available for testing if a student has a diagnosed learning difference or psychoeducational evaluation which indicates an accommodation or modification which has been documented on a NRCA Plan.
- Students may also occasionally test with accommodations *at the discretion of the classroom teacher if it is deemed an appropriate accommodation and is arranged in advance* (i.e. if a student has an injury or illness which requires a short term accommodation, is a new student, is making up work due to absences, or is experiencing test anxiety). Frequent accommodations as it relates to testing indicates the need for diagnostic testing and the development of a NRCA Plan.
- Extended time is normally time and a half. If extended time is desired for standardized testing, it must be supported by a full battery of diagnostic testing and documented in a NRCA Plan.
- Additional *instruction* on test-taking strategies, on how to understand certain types of questions, or on actual content may occur before or after, but not during, the test.
- The proctor may assist by reading aloud or clarifying a question; by reminding a student to reread and follow directions or to check over for completion; and by reminding a student of test-taking strategies (i.e. “Skip and mark this now to come back to, and read the rest of the test to see if anything there jogs your memory”. or “Remember what we reviewed”.)
- The proctor may only review immediately before the test with explicit permission from the classroom teacher, and may not review within sections of the test unless prescribed by the NRCA Plan. Review may be from notes, books, and other review materials, but never from the test itself.
- The proctor may suggest that students “data dump” memorized information (i.e. “Dump the formulae you memorized for area” or “Dump your conjugations”).
- Any assistance given will be limited to accommodations listed in each student’s NRCA Plan or according to the specific classroom teacher’s instructions. (*If a question arises regarding what is allowed on a test that is not covered under these Guidelines and Procedures or the student’s accommodation sheet, the Instructor will defer to the academic classroom teacher for the answer)
- Tests given orally will be taken in isolation, and the proctor will scribe oral answers verbatim.
- Tests will be administered in one sitting. Students with extended time are permitted to stay until the test is complete. If a student is “chunking” a test or is unable to stay past the end of the class period, the student must share this prior to the start of the test. When this happens, the test will be administered one page at a time in case they cannot be completed in the allotted 50 minutes.
- No cell phones or technology assistance unless otherwise stated from classroom teacher

The above-referenced guidelines are not exclusive; efforts will be made to creatively design a plan that accommodates the learner’s differences within the professional discretion and judgment of NRCA staff and the school’s overall mission. In implementing this philosophy, NRCA hopes to teach each child in the manner that they are fearfully and wonderfully made by God to the greatest extent He has resourced the school to do so.

PHILOSOPHY OF TECHNOLOGY

“Teaching Jesus” in the context of technology requires that we equip our students to discipline their hearts and minds to use new technologies, and particularly digital technologies, in redemptive and effective ways. Teachers are called and expected to use digital applications to support and enhance learning when they are the most pedagogically effective means of instruction or assessment, and students are called and expected to use digital applications for learning, organization, creation, and presentation.

Given the vast and well-heralded potential for digital technologies to be used in ways that are not edifying, and even damaging, students must be taught to use them well. For the health of their own souls and for the sake of the gospel, Christian students must employ technologies to glorify God, to accomplish His purposes, and to promote human flourishing. Students need explicit instruction, self-awareness, discussion, adult modeling, and practical opportunities to guide them in practicing self-discipline, wisdom, discernment, and moderation in using digital technology. NRCA will provide those resources and training necessary to equip students to be wise stewards of the technologies God has given for their edification and enjoyment, and for His good purposes. Teaching and practicing the redemptive use of technology, whether a lapboard or a laptop, is a core component of the school’s mission.

NRCA will also assess and employ those technologies which support its mission, not only in the classroom, but in the school’s administrative and financial functions.

At North River Christian Academy, we believe that the weight of Scripture compels us to consider the use of any prospective technology, including, but not limited to, digital technology, through the following four guiding questions:

1. Does the technology under consideration for our school promote incarnational community? More simply, does it detract from or enhance the relationship between teacher and student?
2. Does the technology enhance or detract from student learning?
3. Does the technology aid in teaching the redemptive uses of technology?
4. Does the investment in the technology comport with principles of good stewardship?

In the end, whether it’s the 21st century or the first or, if the Lord tarries, the 31st, great education is about what it’s always been about—great teachers, well-trained and equipped, passionate about what they’re teaching and who they’re teaching, lovingly pouring their lives and their well-developed minds into students who, though prone to wander, are drawn by the power of relationship into engaged learning, all in a strong learning community where *shalom* reigns supreme. The Christian school is mankind’s best hope for education that promotes human flourishing, and any technology that provides means to that noble and God-breathed end should be prayerfully and thoughtfully considered.

NRCA SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY OF STUDENT DISCIPLINE

The Heart of this Philosophy Statement: This statement is the philosophy, the ideal of what we believe God is calling us to achieve through student discipline at North River Christian Academy

(NRCA). We at NRCA realize that we are imperfect image-bearers of God, and we will periodically fail in our attempts to achieve these purposes. We realize that God's grace is sufficient to cover our imperfect attempts to discipline redemptively, and we call on His wisdom, mercy and grace daily.

The Big Idea: NRCA's approach to discipline is *relational* in nature, not *rules-based*. It is an attempt to take a *pastoral*, rather than a *punitive* approach to disciplining the heart of the student. It always seeks to *restore*, because that is what *redemptive* disciplining should do.

Biblical philosophy underlying NRCA's discipline approach: The ultimate goal of the NRCA approach to discipline is to glorify God by seeking out the heart of the student and disciplining that heart toward the nature and character of God.

The Nature of the Student

Students are created in the image of God. As image-bearers, most of whom are redeemed by the blood of Christ, they are called to be God's stewards or co-regents over the earth. Part of the role of NRCA is to equip students to serve in that capacity in a wise and godly manner. NRCA is called to appeal to the responsible aspect of their nature. As such, we do not primarily rely on imposing rules and regulations, coercing or enticing students through threats of punishment or promise of reward, or using carefully devised and executed systems of control. The school's job is not primarily to control behavior for its own sake, but to treat students as free, responsible, creative, rational co-rulers of His creation.

Students are also fallen as a result of sin. Apart from Christ, God's Word, and His Spirit, students will inevitably live out that image in ways that do not honor God and hurt others. NRCA neither assumes that in all cases the freedom that students are given will be used responsibly, or that they will always make the right choices. NRCA strives to intervene in students' lives as incarnations of God's Truth, not to control students but to nurture, love, and discipline them in the midst of their fallen nature.

God's Word is the foundation for all attempts to set policy, to enforce it, to change it when necessary, and to set it aside when appropriate. Boundaries are necessary for students because they provide security. Teachers deal with misconduct because students need to be loved.

The Nature of the Teacher and Administrator

Teachers are also image-bearers of God, fallen in sin, and redeemed by the blood of Christ. Teachers treat students as God treats them, fallen and hopeless apart from His grace, but who are to be dealt with according to what He created them to be.

Teachers are pastoral, operating as prophets, priests and kings in the lives of their students. As prophets, they speak God's Truth, comfort and assurance. They lovingly and purposefully confront when words and actions do not conform to the character of God. They affirm and encourage. Their words and actions suggest that they love the students no matter how they behave.

Teachers act as kings to correct students when they are creating trouble for others or themselves. Once students know and trust the teacher and have learned that they care for them, a mere word of warning or gentle rebuke is usually enough to turn them from folly. If not, further

consequences (in whatever form) are used to make known in no uncertain terms that students must not go further to harm.

Teachers act as priests to comfort their students, and to guide students on the correct path. This may be accomplished through words of encouragement, a hand on the shoulder, engagement in the student's life outside the classroom, or whatever appropriate means create a mentoring relationship between the student and the teacher.

Teachers' authority comes from God. They affirm that authority in the hearts of students when teachers treat students with the love and respect due image-bearers of God. Teachers do not seek to fight for or demand authority, nor are they afraid they will lose it. Those who talk most about being respected very rarely are. God is the source of their authority, and teachers trust in Him.

Teachers do not use their God-given authority to control students, to seek mere compliance with the rules. To do so would be to focus on the rules, rather than people. Rules and policies, which are essential for the smooth functioning of any group, are prayerfully and purposefully designed and enforced at NRCA to promote habits of self-control, other-centeredness, and responsibility. Rules are enforced for the sake of the student(s) rather than for the sake of the rule, and always with a view to developing good habits and inner accountability. While rules exist so that the community of the school and the classroom will function better, they are never mechanically applied without consideration for the students themselves. People determine what will happen to people. Rules do not.

Teachers and students are called to act redemptively. The goal is always reconciliation, not mere compliance. Instead, the goal is obedience. Obedience is different from compliance. Compliance is yielding to external pressure applied to force someone to live up to expectations. Obedience is a loving response to an undeserved act of love from God. It is based in love, not fear. It is learning to live on the outside in a manner consistent with what God is doing on the inside. Those who obey Jesus are those who love Him. Love and obedience are inseparable. Teachers at NRCA are committed to fostering obedience because they first offer love and forgiveness.

How This Philosophy Plays Out at NRCA

Students are image-bearers of God, albeit fallen ones. Although most choose to do what is good and holy much of the time, students do make wrong choices and break the rules. Although there is not a heavy emphasis on the rules, they do exist and are chosen to reflect the character of God, the love that He has for us, and the love we are to have for each other.

Discipline is often a messy process, because teachers and administrators deal with an offender personally, not allowing the system to dictate the consequences for breaking the rules. Teachers and administrators invest the time and energy to investigate the circumstances of the offense and the state of the heart of the student, and they seek to allow the consequences to follow as naturally as possible the offense committed. Therefore, acts of youthful immaturity are treated differently from acts of a rebellious heart. Teachers and administrators seek to model the character of Christ in correcting and chastising, praying earnestly and attempting to strike an appropriate balance of justice and mercy, manifesting consequences, grace, restitution, reconciliation, redemption, and restoration. They seek always to act with a spirit of love and a desire and goal of drawing the student back into a right relationship with God and others.

Only God knows the heart, and the only outward evidence of true repentance is a changed life. Only God perfectly balances justice and mercy; humans will always do so imperfectly, no matter how diligent and prayerful the attempt. Teachers and administrators know that they might do the wrong thing or end up being abused by a student who persists in doing wrong despite being offered grace. They know they might be misunderstood by the community, who does not and cannot know all the facts and sees only the action taken. Sometimes students are suspended or asked to leave for unacceptable behavior, and sometimes the consequences are not apparent to the community. Despite the risk of being abused and misunderstood, our faculty and staff do it anyway, based upon the leading of the Holy Spirit, because they are modeling what God has done for them. They trust in God's affirmation of their authority, and His grace to be sufficient where they fall short.

Consequences naturally flowing from bad choices are not withheld, but forgiveness is always freely given. Forgiveness is an independent act of obedience to God by the party wronged, not a payment earned by the works or sorrow of the offender. While trust must be earned, forgiveness is not withheld until the student deserves it, nor is love withheld until the student earns it.

Teachers and administrators seek not to control students, but to prayerfully help students to learn to control themselves. They always treat students with love and respect, never seeking to shame or embarrass, to undermine the dignity or to deny the image of God in their students. While they are entitled to respect by virtue of their God-given authority, they don't demand it or waste time talking about how they should have it. Instead, they seek to earn it by modeling it, showing respect and love for their students and a recognition of their worth as image-bearers of God. In so doing, they seek to foster obedience in the hearts of their students.

Students fail at NRCA. When they do, they are not shamed. Affirmation, love and acceptance are not based upon good behavior; they are based upon students' positions as children of God.

A Note About Age-Appropriateness

This approach to discipline carries throughout our school, but is manifested in age-appropriate ways. For example, rules that exist in the upper school are more influenced by student input than rules that exist in the elementary school. This is so because, while elementary school students are also image-bearers of Christ, they are less physically, intellectually, and socially mature, and less equipped at their young age to exercise that responsible aspect of their nature. As a student becomes older, he is given more responsibility and input into the process.

Many of the concepts identified in this statement are taken from Don Graham's *Teaching Redemptively*, Purposeful Design Publications, Colorado Springs, CO, 2003.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Parents are expected to support and uphold school policies. Without this cooperation and confirmation from the parents, a double standard exists between the home and school which is counterproductive to the student's development and the school's effectiveness.

If at any time, misunderstandings develop between the school and the home, it becomes the obligation of both to resolve these in a biblical fashion (Matt. 18): that of going directly to the parties involved for clarification and explanation. Only after first meeting with the individual with whom a dispute exists should the aggrieved party go to the individual's supervisor. For

example: if a parent or student has a dispute with a teacher, the correct order of dispute resolution is as follows:

1. A meeting with the teacher at issue
2. If attempts to resolve the dispute are unsuccessful, a meeting with the principal of the school at issue
3. A meeting with the head of school

The school confesses that although all teachers and staff are chosen for their Christian commitment and high ideals, this does not make them immune from error. All suggestions and comments from parents will be examined fully and are welcomed and encouraged for the overall strengthening of the school. Any parent who openly demonstrates to students or other parents a lack of support for school policies is undermining the school's positive intent and thereby hindering its effectiveness.

The school agrees to work closely with the parents in the education of their child(ren). This includes provision of competent teachers, a full and balanced curriculum, regular reporting, proper student supervision, and communication with the home. In full cooperation with the school, parents are expected to attend school meetings and actively support other school-sponsored activities, knowing that parental participation is critical to the health and well-being of the school.

SELF-REPORT POLICY

A student who self-reports to the upper school administration an incident involving drugs/alcohol that the upper school administration is not actively investigating will not receive disciplinary consequences. A system of support and accountability will be implemented, including, but not limited to, ongoing professional counseling and random drug testing at the family's expense. Self-reporting will require full disclosure. If, at any time, information is revealed to the upper school administration that was not originally disclosed, serious disciplinary consequences will be applied. Failure to follow through with the system of support and accountability will lead to serious disciplinary consequences, including possible dismissal. A second drug/alcohol violation will lead to dismissal.

SCHOOL COLORS AND MASCOT

The school colors are navy blue, light blue, and white. Red is sometimes used as an accent colors. The school mascot is the Charger denoted by a horse.

ADMISSION

NONDISCRIMINATORY STUDENT POLICY

North River Christian Academy admits students of any race, color, national, or ethnic origin to all rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, scholarship programs, athletic, and other school administered programs.

ADMISSION POLICIES

The objective of the admissions procedure is to identify and admit mission-appropriate students. North River Christian Academy does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, or ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholastic programs, athletics, and other school programs.

Admission is considered as spaces are available based on the following schedule of priorities:

1. Children of school employees and children of teachers
 - a. Current employees- employment must be confirmed at the time the application is processed. Applications must be submitted no later than March 31 to be given priority consideration.
 - b. Newly hired employees- Priority for admissions will be given provided spaces are available at that time and all other admission qualifications have been met. When spaces are not available, staff children will be placed at the top of the waiting list.
2. Children of families with other students already enrolled
 - a. Application must be submitted no later than March 31 to be given priority consideration.
3. Former students and children of former students
 - a. Former students must have been in good standing (financial, discipline, and academic) at the time they left NRCA to be given priority consideration.
 - b. Former students must have attended NRCA for at least one full year.
 - c. Applications must be submitted no later than March 31 to receive alumni priority.
4. Others (Applications for the Fall of one year are accepted no earlier than the first day of school the previous year.)

In harmony with our purpose of serving Christian families with the education and nurture of their children, the following criteria are applied to admissions:

1. One or both parents of a student, or the student's legal guardian, profess to be born-again Christians and are actively involved in a local church.
2. Parents or guardian agree with the purposes of the school and will agree to work in cooperation with the school to achieve the stated goals and responsibilities of parent and school, as reflected in the parent-school agreement and Parent and Student Handbook.
3. Parents will agree to fulfill their financial responsibilities to the school.

ADMISSION PROCEDURES

1. Visit our website (www.nrca-chargers.com) or call the Admissions Office for information or to schedule a campus tour. 501-902-6755
2. Complete online application (www.nrca-chargers.com) and submit applicable fee and the application. (Applications are valid for only one school year.)
3. Submit all requested information including required paperwork and fees.
4. Testing must be completed and properly evaluated.
5. Transcripts and records from preceding schools must be obtained, where applicable.
6. Immunization records must be on file and up-to-date.
7. A personal interview with the principal will be scheduled when spaces are available.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

All applications are evaluated on the following criteria:

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1. Parent and student application forms
 2. Recommendations from: family's pastor or church staff member, present academic teacher(s) or counselor, and principal
 3. Previous academic records
 4. Entrance exam
 5. Personal interviews with principal

All new students are accepted on probation and the school reserves the right to transfer students to the grade level at which they are performing. The school also reserves the right to release students on the basis of poor academic grades or conduct.

An official immunization record, from the child's doctor or issued by the Health Department, is required before the enrollment process is complete. All immunization records must be kept up-to-date to ensure continued enrollment in the school.

Requirements for Pre-Kindergarten/Kindergarten

1. PreK applicant must be four by September 1.
2. K applicant must be five by August 1.
3. One or both parents of a student, or the student's legal guardian, profess to be born-again Christians and are actively involved in a local church.
4. Applicant must have a satisfactory conduct record.
5. Applicant must have satisfactory recommendations from current principal, teacher, and pastor or church staff member.
6. Applicant must make a satisfactory score on the school entrance test.
7. Parents must interview with the principal.

Requirements for Grades 1-4

1. 1st grade applicant must be six by August 1.
2. One or both parents of a student, or the student's legal guardian, profess to be born-again Christians and are actively involved in a local church.
3. Applicant must provide a report card and achievement test results for the current year and previous two years.
4. Applicant must have satisfactory grades and conduct record.
5. Applicant must have satisfactory recommendations from current principal, teacher, and pastor or church staff member.
6. Applicant must make a satisfactory score on the school entrance test.
7. Parents must interview with the principal.

Requirements for Grades 5-8

1. One or both parents of a student, or the student's legal guardian, profess to be born-again Christians and are actively involved in a local church.
2. One or both parents of an applicant, or the applicant's legal guardian, must provide a report card and achievement test results for the current year and previous two years.
3. Applicant must have satisfactory grades and conduct record.
4. Applicant must have satisfactory recommendations from current principal, teacher, and pastor or church staff member.
5. Applicant must make a satisfactory score on the school entrance test.

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6. Parents and applicant must interview with the principal.

Requirements for Grades 9-10

The students who are considered for enrollment are people who:

1. Have accepted Jesus Christ as their personal Savior and come from a home where one or both of their legal guardians is a Christian.
2. Along with their parents, are actively involved in a local church whose doctrinal position supports the NRCA Upper school statement of faith.
3. Have demonstrated on a standardized test that they are adequately prepared to achieve well in upper school.
4. Have a satisfactory citizenship record in the school they are presently attending.
5. Are achieving an average of a "B" grade in the present school year and have satisfactory academic performance with no failing marks.
6. Desire to attend NRCA and are willing to comply with the school and the Admission Office standards as printed in the handbook.

Continuous Enrollment

At the time of enrollment, new families pay the enrollment fee and sign a Continuous Enrollment Agreement which states the following, "I understand that NRCA will make staffing decisions based upon my representation that my children will be at NRCA next year. I further understand that it is vital that I meet my financial commitments to NRCA through the timely payment of tuition and fees, so that NRCA can continue its mission and pay its teachers. I understand that tuition is paid to NRCA through FACTS Management Company after enrolling. I further understand that tuition for the school year is due on July 1st. Tuition can be paid in full or paid through a variety of flexible payment plans. *I further understand that the intent of this agreement is to provide for continuous enrollment at NRCA. I understand that my child(ren) will be automatically enrolled from year to year, unless I give written notice during the designated annual enrollment period that we will not be returning to school the following year.* I agree to meet this financial commitment in whole. If for some reason I willingly choose to withdraw my child from NRCA **outside of the designated annual enrollment period**, I understand and agree to be legally and morally bound to pay the remainder of outstanding tuition for the full school year. (Romans 13:6-8; I Cor. 9:7-12)"

Students will be continuously enrolled until graduation from North River Christian Academy.

TUITION

North River Christian Academy is committed to providing students with the most superior education while demonstrating careful fiscal responsibility in its operation. A list of the current tuition rates is available under the Admissions tab on our website, www.nrca-chargers.com, and in the Admissions and Business Offices. The Admissions Office can be contacted at (501)902-6755 ext.100 and the Business Office can be contacted at (501)902-6755 ext.101.

All tuition payments are made through FACTS Management Company. Tuition can be paid in full or through a variety of flexible payment plans. All personal information, including payment information, is protected with the highest security standards in the industry. An account enrollment/maintenance fee is paid annually to FACTS for their services.

Tuition payments not made in compliance with the selected FACTS payment plan will be considered late. A late fee of twenty-five dollars will be assessed if the payment is more than ten days late.

Students enrolling after the start of school will pay an annual tuition amount based on a prorated tuition schedule which is available in the Admissions and Business Offices.

Tuition payments are non-refundable and non-transferable. Students may be refused admittance to class if tuition is more than one month in arrears. Parents are expected to be diligent in meeting their financial obligations to the school. Parents should contact the Business Office when circumstances dictate any changes in normal payment procedures.

Parents withdrawing their student from the school at any point during the school year remain legally and morally bound to pay all outstanding tuition for the full school year in accordance with the signed Continuous Enrollment Agreement.

Student's official transcript and academic record will not be released to parents, another school or university until all financial obligations have been met.

FINANCIAL AID

North River Christian Academy recognizes the financial commitment families choose to make by selecting private school for their children, and we are pleased to offer needs-based financial assistance to qualifying families. Financial aid is intended for parents with financial needs that would otherwise prevent enrollment of their child(ren). Decisions for financial aid are made by the School Board based on the recommendations of an independent consulting firm. Financial aid will not be considered for parents whose financial accounts are in arrears. The link to apply for financial aid is found under the Admissions tab on our website, www.nrca-chargers.com. The application period is January 1st – April 15th.

FEES

All fees are non-refundable and non-transferable.

Parents pay an application fee for each student when submitting their application online. Parents pay an enrollment fee per student at the time they are accepted to the school. Enrolled students may incur incidental fees for extracurricular activities, electives, optional lunches, etc. based on participation. Parents will be billed and make payments through FACTS Management Company.

Payments for the Academic Success Center services are due on the first of the month and are considered late after the tenth of the month unless other arrangements have been made with the Business Office. A late fee of twenty-five dollars will be assessed if academic support fees are more than ten days late. If the tenth of the month falls on a weekend or holiday, late fees will be assessed on the next business day.

ELEMENTARY CAMPUS PROCEDURES

SCHOOL HOURS, ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

The school day begins at 8:00 a.m. for grades PreK through fifth grade. Doors are unlocked at 7:30 a.m.

The school day ends at 3:15 p.m. for PreK-5th grade students and 3:30 p.m. for upper school students. Students should be picked up promptly in the designated pick-up areas.

Before School

Upon arriving at school, students should go directly to the cafeteria. When the teacher arrives in class or at 7:50 students should be seated and stop talking, following normal class procedures.

After School

Each student will wait seated safely away from traffic with his own class in the designated pick up area where his teacher will be there to supervise and may not leave the area without a teacher's permission.

***Parents with children in multiple pick up locations may find it more convenient to park in the upper lot and walk, rather than drive through each pick-up line.**

****No one other than a designated pick-up person may pick up a student unless a note giving permission is sent to school by the parent. The person coming to pick up must provide a valid photo ID and be listed on the student's emergency procedure card.**

NOTE: Children are to be picked up immediately after the time of their dismissal. Parents of students remaining after 3:30 p.m.(PK-5th grades) and 3:45 p.m. (6th-12th grades) Monday-Friday will be assessed a late fee of \$10.00. This late fee must be paid in the office at the time the student is picked up. **Due to classroom responsibilities a teacher may not have time to check or respond to an email before the end of the school day. Please communicate time-sensitive information regarding carpool arrangements via note to the teacher or a call to the office.**

Drivers should not be on cell phones in the drop-off or pick-up line.

ATTENDANCE AND MAKE-UP WORK

Responsibility and others-centeredness are part of the image of God imprinted on each of us, and opportunities to develop those qualities exist in the areas of school attendance and student accountability for schoolwork.

Because arriving late or leaving early are difficult for the student, disruptive to the class, and a hardship for the teacher, we ask parents to please make every effort to see that their child is at school **on time and all day**. A student is considered tardy if he is not in his classroom when the bell rings at 8:00 a.m. **If a student is tardy, he must be signed in by the parent in the office.** If a student leaves before the final dismissal bell, he must be **signed out by the parent in the office**, where the office staff will call him from the classroom. Both tardies and early check-

outs will show up on the report card as “Days Tardy”. After a student has accumulated a total of ten tardies or early check-outs, each third occurrence will be counted as an absence, and parents will be notified. Excessive absences (twenty or more) may result in a student failing for the year.

If a child is absent, parents should call the school **by 9:00 a.m.** to report it and to request make-up work, which may then be picked up **after 2:00 p.m.** Calls after 9:00 a.m. may delay make-up work pick-up until the following day.

Because make-up work can become a burden on both students & teachers, it is preferable that family vacations during the school year be limited to the holiday breaks. However, if families anticipate an absence, work must be requested early in the week **before** the absence and is due **before** or **on** the first day back from the absence (including tests). Late work could receive a penalty.

For unanticipated absences, students will have two days for each day absent to make up work before incurring a late penalty.

Please keep in mind that when a student misses class, he/she is also missing classroom instruction and discussion that cannot be made up by normal homework assignments or within the regular school day. Therefore, it is quite possible that a student’s grades may be lower after an absence. In addition, to help a student get caught up, a teacher may require before- or after-school tutoring. (A tutoring fee may be assessed.) Teachers will not re-teach missed content.

Because of the disruption caused in the classroom, students will not be excused from class to attend siblings' class parties, field trips, or other events. Students may be excused for graduation exercises.

Please be sensitive to the burden placed on the teacher as a result of frequent absences and tardies.

Lesson plans are posted on FACTS Family Portal as a courtesy to parents, but are, of course, subject to change.

Because it is the responsibility of the student to actively engage in learning, teachers may hold students accountable for information clearly and thoroughly covered in class, whether or not the information was sent home.

MEDICAL AND EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Parents will be asked to fill out an emergency procedure card upon registration in the school. In case of a medical emergency, the school nurse or office personnel will follow the procedures outlined on the card. First aid will be administered until action by the parent or physician is taken.

Illness

If a child shows signs of illness (fever of 100⁰ or higher, vomiting, or diarrhea) do not bring him to school. **A child must be free of these symptoms for 24 hours before he returns to school.** Children with a contagious condition should be kept at home until there is no danger of passing the condition on to others. If a child becomes ill at school, the parent will be called to pick up the

child at the school nurse's office. He will remain in the school nurse's office until the parent arrives.

Medication Policy

Students should not bring any medication to school unless it is absolutely necessary. No student may at **any time** give any medication to another student.

All medications **MUST** be administered by the designated office staff and/or nurse and **MUST**:

- Be sent to the office as the student arrives to school
- Have written parental permission before it will be given
- Have the pharmacy label attached (if a prescription)
- Be in the original packaging - loose or bagged pills will not be accepted or administered

Personal inhalers may be kept by students at the discretion of the school and parents. The school office must be notified of all inhalers on campus. Other, regular medication will be kept by the school nurse and secured in the school office.

VISITOR TAGS AND BUILDING ACCESS

All parents and visitors must wear a visitor identification tag. Those who do not have one may secure one from the school office. After morning drop-off and before afternoon pick-up, all visitors will be required to access the building through the school office doors.

SCHOOL PARENT PARTNERSHIP

The mission of our school is to **assist Christian families** in educating, equipping, and encouraging their children to influence the world for Christ. The school **cannot** substitute for a godly Christian home where parents are faithfully exercising their God-given responsibility to train their children in such a way as to encourage in them hearts that fear the Lord. We assume that each parent is taking initiative to continually cultivate his own relationship with Christ through regular Bible study, prayer, and active participation in a local church body.

On any given day, there are dozens of questions and concerns fielded by our administrative staff. Please see "Conflict Resolution" under the "Philosophies and Goals" section of this handbook for guidance as to how to resolve such questions and concerns.

PARENT CONFERENCES

All students will have parent-teacher conferences after the 1st quarter of school. Parent-teacher conferences are also encouraged at any other time during the school year, and may be initiated by the teacher or parent. Parent-teacher class meetings will be conducted at various times during the school year. Both parents are urged to attend. Also, parents may opt to observe their child's class at least once during the school year to get a first-hand view of the benefits of their child's instruction.

CAMPUS PROCEDURES

In the classroom, raising your hand is permitted only with the permission of the teacher. A student should raise his hand and wait for permission to speak.

2. Students should stay seated unless given permission to get up.

3. Students are expected to give their respectful attention to the teacher or other speaker.
4. Students are responsible for knowing and completing all assignments and having necessary supplies.
5. Students are responsible for making up all missed assignments.
6. Late papers, including late make-up work, will incur a grade penalty. Excessive late or incomplete work will be cause for disciplinary action.
7. Students may not write or pass notes in school.
8. Chewing gum and eating candy is not allowed.
9. Students should not bring cell phones to school.
10. Electronic devices (including electronic readers and tablets), toys, games, trading cards, magazines, and comic books should not be brought to school without teacher's permission.
11. Smart watches (Fitbit, Apple, etc.) may be worn if they are used for telling time and tracking steps only. If a student is using a smart watch for any other purpose, (receiving texts, calls, videos, pictures, etc.) the watch will be sent home for the year. As with any accessory, if the child is playing with it and distracted from learning because of it, the smart watch will be sent home for the year.
12. The penalty for cheating is a "0" on the work. Cheating includes copying, forging signatures, and giving answers.
13. Throwing objects that can cause harm or disruption is not allowed.
14. Unkind words or actions, stealing, lying, profanity, vulgar language, or obscene gestures are not allowed.
15. Live animals may be brought to school only at the teacher's initiation.
16. Playing and socializing is not allowed in the restrooms.
17. Students sit with their class during chapel.

Note: It is NRCA policy that siblings not accompany parents on field trips or to class parties.

In the lunchroom:

1. Classroom procedures also apply in the lunchroom, and good table manners are expected.
2. Students are expected to eat quietly for the first ten minutes of the lunch period. Music or a movie is played during this time.
3. Students are responsible for properly disposing of all their trash and for cleaning their place at the table for the next class.
4. Students may eat at the parent lunch table only if their parent or a family member is present. Students are permitted to eat lunch with their parents or a family member at the picnic tables outside the lunchroom. Since lunchtime is so short, if you are bringing lunch to your child, please make sure you arrive at the beginning of the lunch period.

On the playground:

1. Students are expected to play safely on all playground equipment, e.g., one child per swing, no jumping from the swing, no standing in the swings, always sliding feet first, sliding one at a time, no standing or climbing up the slide, etc.

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2. Students are expected to be good stewards of the playground and playground equipment.
 3. Climbing fences and trees is not allowed.
 4. Rocks and sticks are to be left on the ground.
 5. Students must have permission to enter the school building during recess.
 6. Students may not go outside the fence without permission.

STANDARDS FOR DRESS

At NRCA, dress is used to teach students about the nature and character of God, and how we reflect that nature as image-bearers of God. Allowing students to choose what they wear within the bounds of the dress code adds color and variety to the school and celebrates God's good creation of beauty, variety, and color in His world. The dress code provides students with a context for living out biblical principles of modesty, attitude, character, and creates opportunities for "teachable moments" between parents and children, and teachers and students about what is right, pure, and godly. The dress code teaches students to be thoughtful of others, being aware that their clothing choices can offend or cause others to stumble, and prepares students for making responsible, God-honoring choices about dress as a reflection of their position as one who bears God's image.

Standards for PreK through 5TH Grade

Students are asked to dress in a **modest** and **neat** fashion that will help maintain a safe and orderly atmosphere. Parents are asked to assist students in choosing appropriate school clothes and shoes that follow the guidelines below. Parents are also asked to model the same appropriate dress while at school.

- Clothing with inappropriate or disrespectful writing or pictures; or clothing with distracting lights or sounds is not permitted. No pants or shorts with writing across the seat.
- Caps, hats, or bandanas may be worn only on designated days.
- Shoes should fit securely on the foot having closed toes, closed heels, and rubber soles, because students participate in recess every day. No sandals, flip flops, or Crocs. Socks must always be worn with tennis shoes. Tennis shoes must be worn on P.E. days.
- Shorts, skirts, and dresses must be no shorter than three inches above the knee. Shorts or tights must be worn under skirts or dresses for the playground.
- Khaki, denim, cotton, or twill shorts are allowed. Mesh and/or lighter-weight athletic shorts are allowed for PreK and K students ONLY (since it is difficult for younger students to button and/or snap).
- Leggings or legging-style pants (not thin tights) or capri leggings (meeting the length requirement for shorts) are also acceptable if they are worn with shirts/tops that are mid-thigh length or longer in the front and back. Shirts should be at least finger-tip length.
- Necklines should be modest. Midriffs and backs should be covered.
- Unusual or distracting hair colors and styles are not allowed. Hair should be natural and practical, not extreme. Student's eyes must be clearly seen at all times.
- Body paintings and piercings are not allowed, except pierced ears for girls. Face painting may be allowed on designated days. Temporary tattoos are discouraged as they often distract from learning.

*Determination of whether a student's dress or grooming is a distraction to the orderly atmosphere of a classroom can be a difficult decision. With input from the teachers, the principal

and assistant principal reserve the right to make final decisions regarding dress code matters. If a child is in violation of the dress code, parents may be called to bring a change of clothes or shoes to school. Continued violations may result in disciplinary action.

GRADING AND REPORTS TO PARENTS

North River Christian Academy uses a skill based report card for PreK and Kindergarten; and uses a combination of numerical and letter grades for report cards in grades 1st through 5th grade. Report cards are issued four times a year. A grade in a course of study represents the teacher's best judgment of a student's academic achievement. Various components of course work, such as class participation, responsibility, projects, reports, homework, daily work, tests, quizzes, etc. may be assigned different weights by individual teachers.

RETENTION AND PROMOTION

Elementary students are promoted based on successful completion of the year's work and when, in the opinion of the teacher, they are ready to move to the next grade. Retention of a student in elementary would occur when the teacher and administration agree that it would best serve the needs of the student to repeat a grade.

In classes where numerical grades are kept, an average of 60 is the minimum grade considered passing. A composite grade below 60 in two or more core subjects could result in retention.

DISCIPLINE

The goal of our discipline is to train the hearts of students in respect, other centeredness & self-control and to maintain the order necessary for academic and social growth. Partnership with parents is essential to this training.

We seek to hold students accountable for displaying behavior such as:

1. Actions that disrupt the class or interfere with the learning process of the child or of his classmates.
2. Actions that could possibly cause physical or emotional harm to the child or his classmates.
3. Actions in direct violation of a well-explained school or classroom rule.
4. A pattern of repeated offenses.
5. Willful disrespect or continued disobedience.
6. Use of profane or unwholesome language.

Most corrections will be handled by the teacher through a verbal reminder, exhortation, or by restricting the child's freedom or privileges. Parents will be notified if problems persist. In cases where a problem persists and there is no behavioral change, a child will be sent to see the assistant principal to discuss the remaining options. If no progress is made after visiting with the assistant principal, the parent will be called to the school to administer a spanking. Students who consistently fail to respond to efforts of correction may be suspended or finally expelled. Much care is taken to ensure that correction is handled properly and without anger.

FIGHTING

Students are prohibited from knowingly, recklessly or intentionally causing bodily harm or threatening to cause bodily harm to any student during, before or after school hours. Students who violate this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action and/or expulsion.

WEAPONS

No guns, knives, mace, chemical weapons, electric shock devices or other weapons are permitted on the school campus. Any such items found on the campus will become the property of the school and the student in violation of this policy will be subject to discipline, up to and including expulsion.

CARE OF SCHOOL PROPERTY

Students should not damage or deface any property belonging to the school, church, or neighbors. Students shall be responsible for the care and return of textbooks and library books and may be charged for damage to, or replacement of, books.

FIELD TRIPS

In order to keep our students safe and secure, parents are prohibited from posting any field trip information or pictures to any social media site, including Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, until students are safely returned to the school campus.

UPPER SCHOOL CAMPUS PROCEDURES

GENERAL STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

North River Christian Academy exists to partner with families to provide students with a Bible-based, Christ-centered, academically-excellent education that will prepare them not only for college but will also promote a healthy relationship with Jesus Christ. Working together with our families, it is our hope to glorify the Lord, encourage parents, edify students, and train up our students to transform the world for Christ. To that end, NRCA is excited that you have chosen us to team with you, and we look forward to working together to pursue God's standards with purpose and joy. The purpose of these policies is to work with parents and students to create reasonable expectations for our community and to uphold the values of honor and excellence upon which the school was founded on and respected for. NRCA hopes to mirror the redemptive character of God in all of its policies and procedures, encompassing aspects of consequences, grace, restoration, and restitution as is appropriate.

SCHOOL HOURS, ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

The school day begins at 8:00 a.m. for upper school students. Students may be dropped off as early as 7:30 a.m. Upon arrival, students must remain in the cafeteria. The school day ends at 3:30 p.m. for upper school students on Monday through Friday. Students will wait for their rides in the cafeteria. Unless attending a scheduled school activity, students should be picked up no later than 3:45 p.m. After this time, students will be signed into extended care, where applicable charges will be assessed.

BEFORE SCHOOL

Upper school doors will be opened at 7:30 a.m. Students are dismissed to 1st period classes at 7:55 a.m. When the teacher arrives in class, students should be seated and stop talking, following normal class procedures.

AFTER SCHOOL

Students will wait for their rides in the cafeteria. Upper school students may only be released to persons specified on the emergency/transportation pick-up list. Upper school students will not be released unsupervised to wait in any other area. Teachers will be in designated upper school areas to supervise. Students should refrain from running or throwing things during this time due to the danger of traffic. Students should not leave the area without a teacher's permission. Students who wait for rides in other areas of the school after the scheduled pick-up time to avoid the late fee will be disciplined.

OFFICE

The NRCA Upper School office is open from 7:30 a.m. to 3:45 p.m., Monday through Friday. If a parent intends to pick up their student prior to school dismissal and have not made prior arrangements with the student, he may call the office and a message will be given to the student. If there is a change in pick-up or transportation plans, please try to let the office know before 2:30 p.m. All students must be picked up by 3:45 p.m. unless they are attending a scheduled extracurricular activity with school supervision. Due to classroom responsibilities, a teacher may not have time to check or respond to an email so if you have time sensitive circumstances, please call the office.

ATTENDANCE

Regular and punctual attendance is essential for success as a student. Absences interrupt the smooth and complete process of learning. Students should be absent only when absolutely necessary. When an absence occurs, the student is responsible for class work missed and must arrange with the teacher to make up assignments, tests, and quizzes. **Parents need to notify the school office by 9:00 a.m. when a student will be absent.**

RELEASE OF STUDENTS

Students will be released only to parents or others listed on the Emergency/Transportation Pick-Up list. Siblings who drive must be listed on the Emergency/Transportation Pick-Up list in order to be able to pick-up their sibling(s) during the school day. Written permission is required if a student leaves with someone who is not on their pick-up list.

TYPES OF ABSENCES

Excused Absences

In most cases, the following reasons constitute an excused absence:

- Doctor/dentist appointment (please try to schedule these outside of class time; appointments should not be scheduled during test times). Students should return promptly with a note from the doctor's office.
- Personal illness: A parent should notify the office on the first day of illness. A note from a doctor should be provided for absences due to illness lasting five or more consecutive school days
- Sickness or death in the immediate family or family emergencies (parents should contact the school as soon as possible)
- Car trouble, or extraordinary weather or road conditions making travel dangerous or impossible
- School-related activity (game, competition, academic meet, etc.)
- Obtaining a driver's license

Work missed during an excused absence may be made up within a one-day-for-each-day-absent window without penalty. Students bear the responsibility of knowing and completing their assignments on time before or after an absence. **Unless the teacher grants an exemption**, all homework due during an absence for school-related activities must be turned in before students leave. A note should be sent with the student when he/she returns to school. The note should contain the dates of absences and specific reason for the absence.

**Students must attend at least half of the school day to be eligible to participate in extracurricular activities that day. If a student leaves school during the day due to illness, they are not permitted to return to school to participate in after-school activities.

“Planned” Absences

Due to the importance of class attendance, excused “planned” absences (including, but not limited to, family trips, church-sponsored events, hunting trips, or any other event within the control of the family/student) are limited. **For the absence to be excused, a planned absence form must be signed by his/her parents, principal, and teachers prior to the planned**

absence. It is the student's responsibility to complete and return the form to the school office prior to the trip. These forms may be obtained in the school office.

Family Trips

Family trips are a valuable part of a student's education; unfortunately, they also place an administrative burden on teachers. In balancing these interests, the school will allow a maximum of five (5) days of excused absences per year for a student to attend a family trip(s). These absences must have prior approval of the principal. The student must obtain and complete a planned absence form before the trip. (Please note: the days missed will count toward the maximum number of days a student may be absent for the year.)

Excessive Student Absences

Since attendance is vital to school success, parents should encourage prompt and regular attendance. Medical appointments and family vacations should affect attendance as little as possible. Excessive absences can be a determining factor in a student passing a course or being promoted to the next grade level. If the number of absences during a given school year exceeds twelve (12) full days, the student may not be promoted. **This excludes absences for extracurricular activities.**

Special consideration may be given to students in the event of extended illness (requires documentation from a physician) or extenuating circumstances (resulting from unplanned or unique family situations). These situations will require consultation and approval by the upper school principal. Parents may submit an appeal in writing to the principal requesting a waiver of this penalty.

Unexcused Absences

An unexcused absence is defined as an absence from class without a valid excuse from either a parent or school official. When a student has an unexcused absence, all missed work must be made up and will be worth up to 50%. Consequences for unexcused absences may include: a student conference with a principal, parent notification or conference, a deduction on graded assignments, or disciplinary intervention.

All students should check in and out with the office any time they miss class time. This will enable the front office to locate students when needed and to answer questions in an informed manner. Appropriate notification to the school office is required in order for this absence to be excused.

Tardy Policy

It is important that students at North River Christian Academy be on time and prepared. Self-discipline in this area is not only important for proper academic achievement and respect for classmates and teachers, but is also essential for the development of good habits, which are characteristic of success and good citizenship in every walk of life. Tardiness is defined as not being in your seat when the bell rings. **Students arriving late for first period must get a tardy slip from the office before being allowed to enter class. Students tardy for more than ten minutes in first period will not be allowed to disrupt the class but will wait in the office until second period begins.**

While it is important to arrive at school on time, unforeseen factors could make even a conscientious student tardy to class. ***Five unexcused tardies will equal an unexcused absence***, which is then subject to disciplinary action. In FACTS Family Portal, an excused tardy is noted in our attendance records as “TE.” Unexcused tardies are noted as “T.” **Parents are encouraged to monitor their children’s attendance and tardies through FACTS Family Portal.**

Please note: weather, unusual traffic situations (not daily traffic) and other events, which may cause students to be late on any given day will be dealt with administratively and will not be reflected on a student’s record. If the tardy is due to a teacher keeping a student late, a tardy slip from the appropriate teacher is required.

MAKE-UP PROCEDURE

When a student misses classes because of an absence, the student is also missing valuable classroom instruction and discussion that cannot be made up by normal homework assignments. Therefore, teachers will hold students accountable for adequate make-up work to cover the missed instruction. Failure to complete the make-up assignments will affect the grade.

Students are responsible for making up all missed assignments due to excused absences from class. Normally, students will have one day to make up work for every day missed. Late make-up work will be treated the same as incomplete assignments.

Students who have been truant or suspended will be assigned a penalty by the principal.

All long-term projects, book reports, term papers, etc., must be turned in on the assigned date even if the student is absent on that day. Failure to do so will subject the project to late grading penalties. Students should arrange to have the project delivered to school on the due date. If the absence has been due to illness or some special emergency and, therefore, has legitimately prevented the student from having the opportunity to complete an assignment or preparing for a test, the parents should submit in writing to the principal a request for special consideration.

ASSIGNMENTS/ASSESSMENTS POLICY

Assignments and assessments (i.e. quizzes and tests) are a regular part of school life, increase with rigor as the student progresses through upper school, and have as their primary purposes to reinforce course content and to give the student opportunity to demonstrate understanding of that content. The amount of time a student spends on assignments depends in large part upon the student’s organizational and study skills, use of time, home study environment, and grasp of content.

Students are expected to complete and submit all assignments and assessments when due. In the case of an excused absence, the student will have one day to submit assignments and complete assessments for every day missed; the exception being long-term projects, major papers, etc. that must be turned in on the due date even if the student is absent on that day. Submitting incomplete or late work, or not taking an assessment on time, may result in a 25% grade reduction each day.

If a student knows he or she is going to miss a class for any reason, and especially a class that has an assignment or assessment due, then he or she is required to have a conversation with his or her teacher(s) prior to missing class in order to know when the assignments or assessments

are due. Failure to comply will result in a 25% grade reduction each day on those assignments or assessments.

Unless otherwise assigned, all assignments and assessments are expected to be the individual work of the student. Copying and plagiarism is a form of cheating; such work will not be accepted and further disciplinary action may result.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY POLICIES: CHEATING AND PLAGIARISM

Academic dishonesty in *any* form is a rejection of biblical values, a breach of personal integrity, and a hindrance to positive student learning. Academic dishonesty is *broadly* defined as:

“Any attempt, whether successful or not, on the part of a student or parent, to falsely represent the student’s level of achievement or mastery in a given course, with regard to any element of that course.”

This definition includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Claiming or indicating that the student has fulfilled any assignment or other academic responsibility, such as reading assigned texts, completing assigned work or engaging in assigned study, when in fact he/she has not done so.
- Using any unauthorized assistance, including but not limited to copying the work of other students, in completing assigned work done at school or at home, in taking quizzes, tests, or examinations.
- Using any unauthorized resources, including but not limited to solution manuals and teacher-edition textbooks to write papers, prepare reports or complete other course assignments.
- Obtaining quizzes, tests, examinations, or other academic materials or evaluation instruments, in whole or in part, created by or belonging to an instructor, other staff members, or the school itself, including but not limited to such materials properly used and in the possession of students currently or previously enrolled in the course, without the teacher’s explicit authorization.
- Plagiarizing, including "the knowing or negligent use by paraphrase or direct quotation of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgment" and "the knowing or negligent unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency" which customarily sells or offers free of charge term papers or other academic materials.
- Altering a graded paper or project for the purpose of misrepresenting the true earned grade or disputing the accuracy of grade.
- Unauthorized collaboration with another student or students during any quiz, test, or examination or in the fulfillment of any other academic assignment or responsibility.

Instances of cheating or plagiarism will be referred to the office for disciplinary action. NRCA is currently developing a policy to address the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI).

MEDICAL AND EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Parents will be asked to fill out an emergency procedure form upon enrollment in the school. In case of a medical emergency, office personnel will follow the procedures outlined on the card. First aid will be administered by the school nurse until action by the parent or physician is taken.

Illness

If the student shows signs of illness (fever of 100 degrees or higher without the use of Advil or Tylenol, vomiting, diarrhea, etc.), he should not come to school. The student must be free of these symptoms for 24 hours before he returns to school. Students with a contagious condition should be kept at home until there is no danger of passing the condition on to others. If the student becomes ill at school, the parent will be called to pick up the student. Students will remain in the school office until parents arrive.

Medication Policy

Upper school students should not bring any medication to school unless it is absolutely necessary. Students need to turn in all medication to the school nurse to be administered there. No student may at any time give medication to another student. Medications must be in original packaging with pharmacy label attached. Loose pills in other containers or Ziplocs will not be accepted or administered. Students may carry and manage their own prescribed inhaler.

PARENT CONFERENCES

Parent-teacher conferences are encouraged at any time during the school year and may be initiated by the teacher or parent. Parent Teacher Conferences of students who are performing or below D level on a semester basis will be scheduled by the teacher. A parent or teacher may request a meeting as often as needed during the school year.

CAMPUS PROCEDURES

Each teacher has his or her own classroom guidelines that are designed to promote respect and an environment conducive to maximum student learning. The classroom teacher is the one placed in authority over the individual classroom. Students should respect his or her authority. Students should respond quickly to the teacher's directions for quiet in the class. Conduct that is disrespectful to the teacher is not permitted.

In the classroom:

1. Talking in class is only permitted with the permission of the teacher. Students should respond quickly to the teacher's directions for quiet in class.
2. Students must receive permission from the teacher before getting out of their seat or leaving the classroom.
3. Students are expected to give their full attention to the teacher when he/she is speaking. Sleeping in class is not permitted. Students who do so may be asked to go to the office and will receive an unexcused absence from class.
4. Students are responsible for taking the initiative to make up all missed assignments due to excused absences. (See "Make-Up Work" section)
5. Students are responsible for knowing and completing all assignments given by the teacher.
6. Students are responsible for bringing everything they need for each class.
7. Students may not write or pass notes in class.
8. Chewing gum, eating candy, or other food, or drinking beverages other than water is only permitted in class on special occasions with the teacher's permission.
9. Magazines and other non-school related items are not to be brought to school.
10. iPods, MP3's, other music players, and any other electronic entertainment equipment should not be brought to school. Such devices will be taken up and kept by the principal until they are satisfied the student will comply with the rule.

Phones with music/video capability may not be used with headphones on the school premises during class time.

11. Toys, cards, and games may not be brought to school. If these items appear at school, they will be taken up and will not be returned.
12. Students may not enter or tamper with another student's locker without his/her permission. Adhesive stickers or tape should not be used. The administration reserves the right to inspect the contents of student lockers. Students may use a lock on their locker if a key or combination is provided to the office. No markings may be made on school lockers, even with erasable markers.
13. Breaks between classes are five minutes long. This is enough time to get supplies from the locker, travel to the next class, and use the restroom. The break between 2nd and 3rd period is 10 minutes to allow for snack time and/or a bathroom break. If a student realizes he/she will not have enough time to complete all that needs to be done without being tardy, he/she should go to the teacher and ask permission to be late.
14. Students should not leave personal items in the restrooms or in the hallway.

During passing times:

1. Students should go about their business at breaks quietly without loud talking or slamming of locker doors. Courtesy and others-awareness will be encouraged.
2. Students should use the breaks to get ready for the next class and use the restroom. Snacks should only be eaten during morning break or lunch.
3. Restrooms should not be used as a place to visit. Horseplay of any kind is not allowed in the restrooms.

During lunch break:

1. Students are expected to clean up their own lunch trash. Students will be assigned clean-up duty during the school year, and a duty roster will be posted.
2. Students may not leave campus for lunch unless they are picked up by their **own** parent or grandparent (**with parent's permission or someone included on the emergency/transportation pick-up list**).
3. Students are not allowed to call in orders for lunch to be delivered to school. Food may be delivered to students, provided parents call in the order and pay for it in advance.
4. Students are expected to use good manners and show common courtesy during lunch. Throwing anything during lunch is a detention offense.
5. All students are required to eat in the lunchroom unless a specific teacher or coach has requested to meet with a group of students. The teacher or coach will assume responsibility for those students.
6. A student who forgets his lunch may purchase one when extras are available.

MUSIC AND DANCING

NRCA recognizes music, dance, and art have been given to us by God to help us express our creative nature, to use for our enjoyment, and His ultimate glory. Music and dance should be evaluated in the same manner that we evaluate other art forms. They have the potential to reflect either the beauty of God's creation or the fallen nature of man. Dance which accentuates the nature of fallen man, which appeals to the physical appetite, or is sexually suggestive, does not reveal the image of God created in us and is not acceptable. Likewise, we believe music that

promotes violence, sexual perversity, disrespect for authority, promiscuity, vulgarity, suicide, or satanic activity is not an acceptable form of entertainment. Students who do listen to such music or have in their possession songs, magazines, tee-shirts, notebooks, or other personal items that promote this type of music will be counseled not to bring those items to school. If the items return to school, they will be confiscated and will be returned to the parents. The third time, they will be confiscated until the end of the school year.

STANDARDS FOR DRESS

Clothes and how one wears them are very much a matter of personal taste and make a strong statement about a person's attitudes and interests. One's dress also greatly influences the impression an individual makes on others. In the same manner, the way our students appear at school makes an impression and establishes our reputation with parents' peers, neighbors, and business people in this community. Since we are a Christian school, we have a special responsibility to be sure that our dress reflects our Christian standards. Parents are also asked to model the same appropriate dress while at school and school-related events.

It is our desire that students should dress attractively and appropriately. A student should not dress in such an unusual manner that undue attention is drawn to him or her or that the academic atmosphere is disrupted.

Modesty, neatness, cleanliness, appropriateness, and safety are the basic premises upon which the dress code has been developed. It is not meant to imply that certain clothes are good or bad, but that some styles are appropriate for NRCA and others are not.

When students do not meet our dress standards, they will be required to correct the offense before returning to class. The first offense will result in the student calling a family member to bring an appropriate change of clothes to school. The second and third offenses will result in lunch detention. Any additional violations may result in a suspension.

General Guidelines for Boys and Girls

- Solid color, collared, uniform style shirts may be worn.
- NRCA shirts can be worn any day of the week.
- Solid color uniform style shorts, pants, or jeans should be clean, neat, hemmed, and not frayed or torn.
- Girls may wear khaki or navy color uniform style jumpers, skirts, and skorts. They should be no shorter than 3 inches above the knee. Shorts or bloomers need to be worn under jumpers and skirts.
- Solid colored leggings can be worn under jumpers and skirts.
- Only NRCA hoodies may be worn.
- Coats and jackets can be any color. They should have only a small logo. No graphics will be allowed.
- Students should not wear oversized or excessively baggy clothing. Alternatively, they should not wear clothing that is too small or excessively tight.
- Excessive jewelry accessories such as chains should not be worn.
- "Body piercing" of any kind is not allowed except for girls' earrings.
- Students may not wear caps or hats to school except with specific permission from the principal for a special event.

*Determination of whether a student's dress or grooming is a distraction to the orderly atmosphere of a classroom can be a difficult decision. With input from the teachers, the principal reserves the right to make final decisions regarding dress code matters. If a child is in violation of the dress code, parents may be called to bring a change of clothes or shoes to school. Continued violations may result in disciplinary action.

Girls' Dress Code

Girls should take care that they appear neat and well-groomed. **Clothes should be modest**, meaning that they should fit well and not be provocative or revealing. These are guidelines for school and school-sponsored activities.

1. Dresses, skirts, shorts, and pants should not be excessively tight. Dresses, skirts, and shorts **MUST** be no shorter than three inches above the knee when standing.
2. **Tops, blouses, and shirts should have a complete sleeve.** Sleeveless shirts, shirts that hang off the shoulder where straps of undergarments (including sports bras) are showing are not allowed. Shirts that have hollowed-out shoulders are not allowed. Neck-lines should be modest, and midriffs should be covered when standing or bending. Tops should not be excessively tight or sheer.
3. Hair styles must be natural and practical, not extreme. Hair should not be dyed in unnatural hair colors.
4. Extremely tight pants, leggings or jeggings are not proper for wear on campus or at any school function, unless they are covered by a shirt, sweater or dress which is no more than three inches above the knee.
5. Shoes are to be worn at all times. Sandals are acceptable. No flip-flops. At no time are bare feet permitted on campus (including after school hours). Cleated shoes may not be worn in the building.
6. Capri pants are acceptable provided they meet all guidelines for pants, except length.

Boys' Dress Code

Boys should take care that they appear neat and well-groomed. **Clothes should be modest**, meaning that they should fit well and not be tight or revealing. These guidelines are for school and school-sponsored activities.

1. Regular style shoes or tennis shoes are generally the best shoe to wear to school. Sandals are acceptable. No flip-flops. At no time are bare feet permitted on campus (including after school hours). Cleated shoes may not be worn in the buildings.
2. The general principles of neatness and simplicity should govern hair styles. Hair should be natural and practical, not extreme. It should be kept trimmed and combed. Hair should be of conservative length (not over the eyes, in a pony-tail or longer than the collar of a shirt.)
3. Long dress shorts (trouser shorts) or loose-fitting hemmed denim shorts that include pockets and zipper are permissible. Shorts **MUST** be no more than three inches above the knee when standing. Sport shorts, wind shorts (Umbros, Adidas, Nikes, etc.), biking shorts, boxer shorts, athletic shorts, and baggy shorts are not appropriate or allowed during the academic day.

CELL PHONES/COMMUNICATION DEVICES

Cell phones or electronic communication devices are for emergency situations only and not for casual, personal communication during the school day. Cell phones must be turned off during the school day and checked-in to the designated teacher if a student brings a cell phone to school. The school reserves the right to inspect phones at any time for inappropriate content, such as explicit photos, photos of tests, and the like.

It is against policy for students to **send their parents a text or receive a text from their parents** between 8:00 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. The office phone is available to students who need to contact their parents.

Parents should know that such devices are capable of being used for cheating and serve as a huge disruption to and distraction from the normal school day. Please assist our efforts and help reinforce the proper use of your child's cell phone while they are on campus during school.

Students whose phones are turned on, go off during class, who are observed using their phones during school hours, or who have their phone on their person will have them confiscated and turned into the office. Phones that are confiscated by a teacher will cost the student \$15 to reclaim. Repeated abuse of this privilege will result in our keeping the phone and not returning it until the end of the school year. If necessary, additional disciplinary action will be taken.

GRADING AND REPORTS TO PARENTS

North River Christian Academy uses numerical grades for achievement on report cards. Report cards are issued four times a year. A grade in a course of study represents the teacher's best judgment of a student's academic achievement. Various components of course work, such as class participation, projects, reports, homework assignments, tests, quizzes, etc. may be assigned different weights by individual teachers. In upper school, the following scale is used in determining letter grades: NRCA Grading Scale A+: 96, A: 95, A-: 90, B+: 86, B: 85, B-: 80, C+: 76, C: 75, C-: 70, D+: 66, D: 65, D-: 60, F: 0-59.

HONOR ROLL

An upper school student will earn the A-honor roll by earning a 90% or higher grades in each subject and each grading quarter. A student will earn the A/B honor roll by earning a 80% or higher in each subject and each grading quarter.

RETENTION AND PROMOTION

Upper school students are promoted based on their successful completion of the year's work. All upper school students must pass English and math for the year AND for the second semester. Students who fail either of these subjects must attend summer school. In addition, science or history must be passed to be eligible for promotion. In classes where numerical grades are kept, an average of 60 is the minimum grade considered passing.

DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES

The purpose of our school is to provide students with a quality education which, while upholding high standards of scholastic excellence, is grounded in the Word of God and fosters vital Christian living. These standards can best be achieved in an environment that promotes cooperation and Christian conduct among students. Students are expected to behave in an

appropriate manner and strive to be a good example of Christian men and women to the community both on and off the campus.

Students are expected to maintain high biblical standards off campus, as well. As a student of NRCA, each is not only an ambassador of Christ, but a representative of NRCA to the community. For this reason, NRCA reserves the right to work with parents to take disciplinary action when off-campus activities violate these standards.

General Guidelines

The goal of our discipline is to direct students toward acceptable behavior which helps develop self-control and to maintain the order necessary to accomplish the academic and social growth required to flourish at NRCA. We do not see discipline as punishment, but rather as correction. NRCA will work with parents to help students learn and grow from mistakes, if and when they are made. Students may be corrected for displaying behavior such as:

1. Actions that disrupt the class or interfere with the learning process of the child or of his classmates.
2. Actions that could cause physical or emotional harm to the student or his classmates.
3. Actions in direct violation of a well-explained school or classroom rule.
4. Disrespect toward the teacher or a classmate.
5. Inappropriate activity with members of the opposite sex.
6. Actions or attitudes which are spiritually detrimental to the school.

Most corrections will be handled by the teacher through a verbal reminder, exhortation, by the assigning of a lunch detention, or by restricting the student's freedom or privileges. Parents will be notified if problems persist. In cases where a problem persists and there is no behavior change, a student will be sent to see the principal to discuss the remaining options. If no progress is made after visiting with the principal, the parent will be called to visit with the principal and teachers to determine an action plan. Students who consistently fail to respond to efforts of correction may be suspended or expelled. Much care is taken to ensure that correction is handled properly and without anger. We do not expect perfection from our students but reasonable cooperation.

Specific Guidelines for Discipline

The following offenses are considered serious discipline offenses. Each situation will be reviewed and consequences will be assigned by the principal. These offenses include:

1. **Cheating:** Copying another's work, giving one's work to be copied, or using outside resource materials in an inappropriate manner.
2. **Stealing, vandalism, or destruction of property.**
3. **Profanity, vulgar language, or obscene gestures, "sexting" or cyberbullying.**
4. **Fighting:** Knowingly or intentionally causing bodily harm or threatening to cause bodily harm to any student during, before or after school hours.
5. **Tobacco, electronic cigarettes, alcohol or drugs:** Possession, use, or transmission of tobacco or tobacco products, electronic cigarettes, alcoholic or intoxicating beverages, controlled substances, prescription, or dangerous drugs.
6. **Firearms or other weapons:** Possession on campus or at school events.

These offenses may result in immediate expulsion. If a criminal offense has occurred, police will be notified.

Note: The school administration reserves the right to impose discipline for off campus/non-school standards violations under the following circumstances:

1. If the action of the student is in violation of the law (excluding non-alcohol or drug-related moving violations).
2. If the action of the student is a blatant violation of the moral standards required of a follower of Christ.
3. If, by determination of school administration, the action of the student has a negative impact on the morale and spirit of the student body.

Detention

There are two categories for which a student may be assigned detention. The first is an accumulation of offenses for which teachers call a student down for misbehavior or for unexcused tardiness to class. This would include, but not be limited to, behavior such as excessive talking, throwing things in class, roughhousing, or other foolishness.

The second category is for more blatant behavior such as talking back to teachers, disrespect or direct disobedience, fighting, lying to a teacher, cheating, bad language, class disruption, etc. These students will be given a detention notice by the teacher or principal.

Any student who earns detention three times during the school year will receive an in-school suspension on the third occasion. A fourth detention will result in a one-day suspension from school. A student receiving a detention after being suspended could be a candidate for expulsion.

In-School Suspension

Students assigned to in-school suspension are required to spend their school day in isolation while they do their assignments from each class. They are not allowed to share regular breaks or lunch with their classmates, or participate in school-sponsored extracurricular activities during that time. They are allowed to turn in their work and make up assignments.

Suspension

Suspension from school is a result of repeated minor infractions or a major infraction of the NRCA community standards. The length of suspension will be determined by the administration. All work missed during the suspension is to be made up. Any assignment or work not completed and turned in the day following the suspension will receive a grade of zero. It is the student's responsibility to collect class work prior to the suspension. Suspended students are not allowed to be on campus during their suspension without administrative approval, nor are they permitted to participate in or attend extra-curricular activities during that time. Students may be required to go through a restoration process prior to his or her return.

Expulsion

Students expelled for disciplinary reasons may not return to school or attend any school functions.

CARE OF SCHOOL PROPERTY

Students should not damage or deface any property belonging to the school or church. Students shall be responsible for the care and return of textbooks and may be charged for damage to, or replacement of, textbooks.

CELL PHONES/COMMUNICATION DEVICES

See "[Acceptable Use Policy](#)."

ACADEMIC PROBATION

A student who is failing two or more courses at the published 9-week points will be placed on academic probation. In order to provide the student the opportunity to give his or her full attention to their studies, a student placed on academic probation is ineligible to participate in co-curricular competition or performances including, but not limited to athletics, cheerleading, fine arts, student government, and school clubs for a period of two-weeks. Ineligibility will begin the next school day after the 9-week point; likewise, the student's eligibility will not be reinstated until the next school day after the 2-week period ends.

If, at the end of this two-week period the student is no longer failing two or more classes, then he or she will be eligible to participate once again in co-curricular competition or performances. Students who come off academic probation may immediately lose their eligibility again if administration determines their grades are beginning to drop significantly. If the student is again failing two or more courses, then he or she will remain ineligible to participate in co-curricular competitions or performances for an additional two-week period.

A student who fails two or more classes at the end of the first semester will be placed on academic probation. While eligible during the holiday break, a student will be ineligible to participate in co-curricular competitions or performances during the first two weeks of the second semester. A student who fails two or more classes at the end of the second semester will not be placed on academic probation at the beginning of the next school year.

ACADEMIC FAILURE/REPEATING FAILED COURSES

Students who have a final class average below 60 are considered to have failed that class. Students who have failed three or more classes during a school year will not be permitted to return to NRCA. Students who have failed one or two classes will be required to make up these courses by completing credit recovery through an approved and accredited course. The students must provide proof of the successful completion of the failed course by submitting a transcript to NRCA by August 1 in order to return the next school year. The failing grade earned at NRCA will be calculated into the GPA, and the grade earned in credit recovery will be noted as pass/fail on the student's transcript. The grade used for GPA purposes will be for the courses taken at NRCA, rather than in summer school.

NEW STUDENT ACADEMIC WATCH

Occasionally a student will be accepted to NRCA on academic warning when reservations exist about the student's ability to perform well at NRCA. These students are placed on academic watch for at least 9 weeks in order to evaluate whether NRCA is a good emotional, social, academic and spiritual match for them. If not, the administration may work with the student, the grade level teachers, and the parents to consider available options, up to administrative withdrawal of the student.

TEXTBOOKS

The school issues most basic classroom textbooks to the students for use during the school year. These texts remain the property of NRCA and should be treated as such. In some cases, students are encouraged to purchase books that will be used in their classes because having a personal copy may be of greater use in some classes. Every attempt should be made to protect textbooks from damage and abuse. If a book is damaged or destroyed, a student is responsible for the damage and fined according to the damage or replacement cost.

Students enrolled in dual-credit courses must purchase their own textbooks from the college bookstore, an online bookseller, or any other source approved by their college professor.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

To maintain our biblical distinctive, all courses required for graduation must be taken at NRCA.

Subject Area	Required Program
Bible	1/year
English	4
History	4
Math	4
Science	4
Foreign Language	1
Computer Science	1
Physical Education	0.5
Fine Arts	0.5
Oral Communication	0.5
Personal Finance	0.5
Health & Safety	0.5
Elective	1.5
Total Credits	26

ACCESS TO EDUCATIONAL RECORDS

Students and their parents may have access to a student's educational records. All others must provide a written authorization signed by the custodial parent or the student, provided that the student is eighteen years of age or older. Individuals with a subpoena or other court order may also have access to a student's files.

GRADING

NRCA Upper school uses a numerical grading system. The cumulative grade average is determined by adding the numeric grades and dividing by the number of semester courses. Grade averages are computed on all subjects, grades 9 through 10 (and 8th grade Algebra 1, if applicable). Only grades earned at NRCA are computed in the grade average – transfer grades will appear on the student's transcript, but will not be averaged together with NRCA grades. Some of the more rigorous upper school courses receive a weighted average by adding points to the earned numeric grade which will be reflected on the HS Transcript as weighted GPA and Cumulative Average.

CLASS RANK

North River Christian Academy provides a rigorous college preparatory curriculum for all students and does not report class rank outside of the top ten percent. Students are ranked based on their weighted cumulative numerical averages for all classes completed at NRCA in grades 9-10.

ATHLETIC PROGRAM

NRCA sports program currently includes volleyball, cheerleading, and basketball. It is our aim to continue to expand the athletic program.

DRUG AND ALCOHOL TESTING

NRCA desires to support and assist families whose students may be struggling with substance use or abuse. The intent of the following policy is neither to entrap nor to discourage, but to foster good stewardship and accountability of our students' bodies and lives, allowing them to make those bodies "living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God" (Romans 12:1). For the welfare of our students and to promote the school's role as an assistance to Christian parents, NRCA reserves the right to require a student suspected of using illegal drugs or alcohol or of other substance abuse to be evaluated at any time by a physician or medical technician of NRCA's choosing, including but not limited to, drug testing. NRCA may also require random drug testing of its students to provide accountability, within the discretion of administration.

By being enrolled at NRCA, students and parents agree that:

1. Students shall submit to any reasonable laboratory testing that within NRCA's discretion is deemed necessary.
2. Students and their parents understand the purpose and reason for the tests, and give their consent thereto.
3. Students and their parents will hold harmless NRCA and its employees, and any other professional agency or business that NRCA deems necessary to carry out this policy.
4. Students and their parents waive any privilege of confidentiality that might exist, or come into existence with respect to said NRCA-required testing, including, but not limited to, any doctor-patient relationship.

Community and Parental Responsibilities

For the welfare of students and NRCA, and to promote and insist on a drug-free environment, the entire NRCA community, including parents and guests, should not be in possession of alcohol or illegal drugs during any activity on NRCA campus or at any student event, athletic or otherwise, at any other school campus. The cooperation of parents and guests is needed to promote and send a strong message to our student body with regard to NRCA's position regarding drug and alcohol usage.

GENERAL SCHOOL POLICIES

CELL PHONES/COMMUNICATION DEVICES

See “[Acceptable Use Policy](#).”

STUDENT GUIDELINES FOR SCHOOL COMPUTER USE

Computers are supplied by the school for academic use and are not to be used inappropriately. "Inappropriate Use" may be defined as, but not limited to the following:

- Accessing internet sites containing controversial material, sexually explicit material, destructive information, material inconsistent with the purpose of North River Christian Academy, material determined to be illegal.
- Downloading music, software, movies or any other copyrighted material.
- Game playing is not allowed on school computers, except as a formal component of an academic subject or through a school-sponsored event.
- Installation or use of peer to peer file sharing programs such as BitTorrent, are not permitted on computers connected to the school network.
- Any use that is not considered academic use.

Parents and students should be advised that internet access is filtered, but no filter is 100% effective. If a student unintentionally accesses a bad site, they MUST “back out” immediately or turn off the monitor and notify the teacher/school personnel without drawing another student's attention to the computer screen.

North River Christian Academy reserves the right to access and monitor e-mail, web sites, server logs, and electronic files, and any computer or electronic device connected to the school's network including personally owned equipment, should it determine that there is reason to do so. Such reasons would include, but not be limited to, suspected or reported breaches of this Acceptable Use policy, or breach of any policies of the school, or suspected breaches of the law.

The following guidelines are to be followed by students using school computers in the following venues:

Elementary

- **Internet Use**- Elementary students may not access the internet unless specifically directed to do so by a teacher.
- **Library**- Library technology is made available to students under the supervision of the library staff. All other use is prohibited.
- **Classroom**
 - Most classrooms are equipped with a student computer for the purpose of taking Accelerated Reader quizzes. Any other use is prohibited without teacher permission.
 - Students are not permitted to use the teacher's computer under any circumstance.
- **ComputerLab**
 - Students may not alter any program or configuration in the computers or otherwise tamper with software or hardware.

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- Students must stay within the programs or activities assigned by the teacher and may not seek to gain entrance to other areas within the computer or network.
 - Students may not bring games or disks from home to use on school computers.
 - Students may not download anything onto the computers without the teacher's permission.
 - Causing the computers to display, record, or print material that is dishonoring to God, the school or other individuals is not allowed. Students doing so will be subject to serious disciplinary action.
 - **COMPUTER LAB COMPUTERS ARE MONITORED!**
 - **Tablets and E-Readers-** Tablets and electronic readers (such as Nook, Kindle, tablets or any device with Internet capability or a camera) may not be used at the Lower Campus or Upper school. With permission from the building principal, E-readers without Internet connectivity may be used if extraordinary circumstances dictate and always at the Principal's discretion.

Upper School

- **Media Center**
 - Internet use in the library is for school related research. Using the internet without permission or accessing inappropriate sites as outlined above will result in discipline. All sites accessed are logged for review.
 - A printer and copier are provided and may be accessed only by school computers in the Media Center. There is no charge for the printer and/or copier by students for school related work.
 - Computers have word processing programs for students with assignments that need to be typewritten. Students who want to save their documents may do so in their Google Drive.
 - When in the library, students must follow the instructions of the media-center personnel.
 - A wireless network is available for students on school provided devices only. Students who bring their own equipment must use their own data plan and abide by all school rules regarding computer use.
 - Attempting to access any other computer without permission will result in disciplinary action. Any expense incurred as a result of student tampering with the school's computers will be passed on to the student and/or parents of the student at fault.
 - Students may not alter any program or configuration in the computers or otherwise tamper with software or hardware without specific directions from the teacher.
 - Students must stay within the programs or activities assigned by the teacher and may not seek to gain entrance to other areas within the network.
 - Students may not bring games or disks from home to use on school computers without appropriate permission.
 - Students may not download anything onto the computers without the teacher's permission.
 - Causing the computers to display, record, or print material that is dishonoring to God, the school or other individuals is not allowed. Students doing so will be subject to serious disciplinary action.

- COMPUTERS ARE MONITORED!
- **Classroom**
 - Student use of a teacher's computer is strictly forbidden. Any access will result in severe discipline.
 - Certain classrooms have been equipped with student access machines for specific tasks such as yearbook and newspaper production. This equipment is to be used only for the tasks provided. Any other use is prohibited and will be disciplined.
- **School-Assigned iPads-** Students who are assigned an iPad must abide by all student guidelines contained in this handbook in order to maintain the privilege. In order to receive an iPad, the student must meet the following conditions:
 - View the iPad video and complete the accompanying form
 - Student and parent must agree to the iPad Acceptable Use Policy

VISITOR TAGS

All visitors must check in with the office staff upon arriving on campus. All parents and visitors must wear a visitor identification tag. Those individuals who do not have one may secure one from the school office.

LOCKERS

Lockers are assigned on a random basis prior to open house. Lockers cannot be traded without prior approval by the assistant principal. The school reserves the right to inspect lockers at any time. Cubbies can be used for items such as coats, backpacks, bags, and lunch boxes. They are not to be used to store books and notebooks that can fit in student lockers.

LOST & FOUND

Lost and found items are located in the school office of each school campus. To discourage students from leaving their belongings in the hallway, items left in the hall during the day, before or after school will be placed in lost and found.

PARENT CONFERENCES

Parent-teacher conferences are encouraged at any time during the school year and may be initiated by the teacher or parent.

OFF-CAMPUS TRIPS

Class trips and field trips are designed to enrich curriculum, promote spiritual growth, establish friendships, and help develop leadership and unity. They also provide an opportunity for students to interact with the teachers and the administration outside a school environment. They are an important part of our curriculum. Students are expected to attend unless a written request is submitted to the principal and approved in advance. Unexcused absences will be treated as those on a regular school day.

If there are extenuating circumstances, medical issues, family issues, etc. that need to be considered, please present the situation to the administration, as soon as possible, so that we can help determine that best course of action.

Efforts are made to keep costs down and financial assistance may be available for trips where necessary. Please contact the trip organizer for details.

Guidelines for Field Trips

- The parent authorization/emergency procedure form must be on file before a student will be allowed to travel with the school.
- Parents, sponsors, students are to behave in a manner that is pleasing and honoring to God. We are representing God, NRCA, our families, ourselves, and our respective church families.
- Staff sponsors and chaperones are responsible for the behavior of all students while under their care and have the authority and responsibility to correct a student.
- In order to keep our students safe and secure, parents are prohibited from posting any field trip information or pictures to any social media site, including Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, until students are safely returned to the school campus.
- Students are expected to follow the directions of the adult leaders.
- Students are to be supervised at all times. Students will be responsible for being where they are supposed to be on time and doing what is expected.
- Students are not allowed to leave early without NRCA staff member approval.
- Students must wear required field trip attire unless special permission has been obtained from the trip leader.
- NRCA trips are for current NRCA students only.
- Any student on disciplinary or academic probation may be excluded from a field trip.
- School policies are in effect on all field trips on or off campus.
- Students who attend field trips must have attended school at least four periods on the day of the activity.
- Students are responsible for any academic material missed while on a school field trip or school activity.
- If a student misses a scheduled test because of a field trip or school activity, the student will be responsible to take the test the very next day.
- It is unacceptable to bring weapons (knives, firearms, sling shots, etc.), matches, lighters, water balloons, laser pointers, etc. on class trips. Use of electronic entertainment devices may be limited at the discretion of the trip leader. If restricted items are brought, they will be confiscated. Additional discipline may also occur.
- It is unacceptable to have possession of or use of alcohol or drugs on trips.
- Possession of weapons, drugs, or alcohol may result in immediate expulsion.
- Boys and girls are not allowed to enter the rooms/cabins of the opposite sex. Leaving rooms/cabins after hours is not permitted.
- Class trips are not times for dating, and public displays of affection are not acceptable.
- All students are required to be present and attentive at trip chapels/devotions.
- The basic school dress code applies, unless specific instructions have been given otherwise.

SEARCH AND SEIZURE

Authorized school personnel may conduct a reasonable search of a student, staff member, vendor or visitor or his/her locker, vehicle, and/or belongings at any time.

CARE OF SCHOOL PROPERTY

Students should not damage or deface any property belonging to the school or church. Students will be charged for repairs (parts & labor) of damaged property resulting from their inappropriate behavior.

ASBESTOS MANAGEMENT PLAN

NRCA works diligently to maintain compliance with federal and state law governing asbestos in school buildings.