



**NORTH RIVER**  
CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

**2023-2024**

Parent & Student Handbook

# **PHILOSOPHIES AND GOALS**

## **HISTORY**

North River Christian Academy (NRCA) was formed in 2022 to provide families an independent, authentic Christ-centered and academically excellent education in central Arkansas.

## **PHILOSOPHY OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION**

The educational philosophy of North River Christian Academy (John 17:17; II Cor. 13:8) is founded on the truth 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 be just 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; 1 Tim. 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 P.E., 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 rather 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 is to be a biblically-based (Prov. 1:7), academically excellent (Prov. 4:7), affordable assistance (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 high school, to students who profess faith in Christ (Eph. 4:11-14).

### **VISION STATEMENT**

The vision of North River Christian Academy is to provide a high quality 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 central Arkansas area without distinction to race, color, or national or ethnic origin. Our aim is to provide an education:

1. That is in accordance with the Word of God, including both 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 Pre-Kindergarten through 8th grades. It is operated as a non-profit, educational ministry. North River Christian Academy is governed by a school board, and 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 care and concern, they respond to it, and genuine learning can take place. Teachers also work best in an environment where there are strong relationships among the adults in the school.

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

**Educational sanctification.** The word *sanctification* captures the idea of holiness - to be set apart and completely "other" from the world. It also connotes the idea of a Holy Spirit-led, continuous process of moving forward, of conforming more to 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, procedures, practices, curriculum, our ways of interacting with each other,

and everything else 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 and 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.

Additionally, educational sanctification is 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 strive to be lifetime learners. Teachers will model a passion for lifetime learning by regularly reviewing and evaluating instructional methods. New methods will not be implemented simply because they are new. Neither will older techniques be used simply because they are traditional. If mistakes occur during this ever-evolving process, we will regroup and move forward. As a school we will not fear engaging in this continuous process of becoming better than we once were.

Lastly, educational sanctification means offering an outstanding academic course of study. While the course is challenging, the school works to provide support necessary for students to be successful to the greatest extent of their God-given abilities. "Curriculum" is defined as everything the school does. Teachers and coaches diligently seek to provide an outstanding array of fine arts, athletics, and other activities that develop all aspects of students as image-bearers of God. The school's biblically-integrated curriculum rests on the foundation of God's Word and His truth and infiltrates all aspects of the school.

**"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-worshipers, 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 a student's performance on the stage or 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. We are entirely at His disposal.

Human beings are created to worship, and if we are not worshipping God, we will worship something else. Anything, whether it be high grades, strong athletic or fine arts performances, good looks, or 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 strives to reinforce this truth by communicating it and 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, and 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 Lord's 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.

## **POSITION ON MARRIAGE AND HUMAN SEXUALITY**

This position statement constitutes the official position of North River Christian Academy of central Arkansas:

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 relationships. God created man and woman in His image, and each reflects 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.

North River Christian Academy 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 to employ only those employees who commit to lives of holiness consistent with biblical holiness, as reflected in the lifestyle statement and the North River Christian Academy position on marriage and human sexuality.

## **ACCREDITATIONS AND AFFILIATIONS**

### **PHILOSOPHY OF CURRICULUM**

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.

Indeed, God is a god of relationship and community. He lived in community with the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, completely and perfectly, before time began. He created human beings in His image to have and enjoy community with Him and with each other, to be whole and complete within themselves, and to live in harmony with the Creator 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 and 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, North River Christian Academy 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 Pre-K through 6**

From our youngest Pre-K students to our older sixth graders, 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 4K, we select robust 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, technology, music, Spanish, and missions/service projects. In all grades, every day begins with the 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 7th-12th**

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

## **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 communication and two websites: FACTS Family Portal (ParentsWeb), the family link to our school information system, [factsmgt.com](http://factsmgt.com), and our school website: [www.northriverchristianacademy.com](http://www.northriverchristianacademy.com). Email is our number one communication tool; it is imperative that the office have the most current email address on file for parents. Students in grades 5-8 will have an NRCA email account; however, grades 5-8 are limited to only corresponding with other NRCA domain accounts. Both students and parents are encouraged to check email often. ParentsWeb provides real-time information about grades, assignments, attendance, discipline, hot lunches, and includes family billing along with 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 North River Christian Academy 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, African cultures generally tend to 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). North River Christian Academy 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 undergird the “what” that is taught.

### **Implications for Explicit Curriculum**

At North River Christian Academy, 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.

North River Christian Academy teachers must be educated in a 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 multi-ethnic 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 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 (i.e., study skills, organizational help, tutorials, guided study halls, support, interventions), and those services are available as needed. 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.

### **Academic Support**

Academic support at the elementary level is defined as the school’s management of student modification plans and ensuring the implementation of those modifications in the classroom. For example, academic support may include an allowance of extra time for a test, the use of special magnification devices for visual impairments, etc.

### **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, or options for presentation do not require a modification plan.

### **Changes in academic expectations.**

These are changes in content or skill documented on a modification plan in response to a recent diagnosis. Examples are: use of audio-books while learning to read, decreased number of spelling words or AR points, 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 are 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.

### **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 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 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 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 an 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, great teachers are well-trained, equipped, and passionate about what they are teaching and who they are 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. 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 primary role is not 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, kings, and priests 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 obedience and reconciliation, not mere compliance. 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 on 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 Manifests Itself 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 in line with 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 leadership 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 sometimes fail. 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 grades are more influenced by student input than rules that exist in the lower grades. This is so because, while elementary 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 as required by Matthew 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 to 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.

### **SCHOOL COLORS AND MASCOT**

The school colors are navy blue, light blue, red, and gold. The North River Christian Academy mascot is the Charger.



## **ADMISSION**

### **NON-DISCRIMINATORY 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 full-time school employees, and children of teachers.
2. Children of families with other students already enrolled.
  - a. Application must be submitted no later than December 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.
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 guardians 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.northriverchristianacademy.com](http://www.northriverchristianacademy.com)) or call the Admissions Office for information or to schedule a campus tour.
2. Complete online application ([www.northriverchristianacademy.com](http://www.northriverchristianacademy.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. Copy of students up to date immunization record or state exemption (which will have to be obtained every school year).
7. Copy of student's birth certificate.
8. A personal interview with the principal will be scheduled when spaces are available.

### **ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS**

All applications are evaluated on the following criteria:

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 interview 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.

### **Requirements for Pre-Kindergarten/Kindergarten**

1. 4K applicant must be four by September 1.
2. 5K applicant must be five by September 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 1st-4th**

1. 1<sup>st</sup> grade applicant must be six by September 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 5th-12th**

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
6. Parents and applicant must interview with the principal.

### **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 1<sup>st</sup>. 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)

## **TUITION**

North River Christian Academy is committed to providing students with the most superior education while demonstrating careful financial responsibility in its operation. A list of the current tuition rates is available under the Admissions tab on our website, [www.northriverchristianacademy.com](http://www.northriverchristianacademy.com), and in the Admissions and Business Offices.

Annual tuition is due by July 1<sup>st</sup>. 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. Graduating seniors must have all financial obligations paid in full two weeks prior to graduation in order to participate in commencement ceremonies.

### **FINANCIAL AID**

NRCA 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. The application period is January 1<sup>st</sup> – April 15<sup>th</sup>.

### **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.

# CAMPUS PROCEDURES

## SCHOOL HOURS, ARRIVAL, AND DEPARTURE

The school day begins at 8:00 a.m. Doors are unlocked at 7:30 a.m.

The school day ends at 3:15 p.m.

### **Before School**

Upon arriving at school, students should go directly to their classrooms and get ready for the school day. Students should wait for the teacher to arrive to get permission to leave the classroom for any reason. Students are not permitted to leave the campus during the school day unless accompanied by a parent.

### **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.

**\*\*No one other than a designated pick-up person may pick up a student unless an email 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 3:35 p.m. 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 a note to the teacher or an email 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 other-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 create 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.** in the office. 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 and 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.)

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

Lesson plans are posted on ParentsWeb 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 100° 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. Medication should be brought to the office by the parent or guardian. No student may at **any time** give medication to another student.

All medications **MUST** be administered by the school nurse and **MUST**:

- Be sent to the school nurse as the student arrives to school.
- Have medication form filled out and signed by students' parents or guardian.
- Have the pharmacy label attached (if a prescription).
- Be in the original packaging - loose or bagged pills will not be accepted or administered.

Medication will be kept by the school nurse and secured in the school nurse's office.

### **VISITOR TAGS AND BUILDING ACCESS**

All parents and visitors must check-in at the front office and wear a visitor identification tag. All visitors will be required to access the building through the main entrance.



## **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**

Parent-teacher conferences are encouraged at any 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:

1. Talking 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 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 zero 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.

In the lunchroom:

1. Classroom procedures also apply in the lunchroom, and good table manners are expected.
2. Students are responsible for properly disposing of all their trash and for cleaning their place at the table for the next class.
3. 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.
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 School-Wide Student Dress**

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.

- Solid color, collared, uniform style shirts must be worn.
- Uniform shorts or pants in the color of khaki or navy.
- Jeans with no rips may be worn on Fridays only.
- 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.
- Preschool through 4th grade should wear closed-toe shoes only. No flip-flops.
- If pants have belt loops, then a belt will be required.
- Navy or white 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.
- NRCA shirts can be worn any day of the week.

\*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.

## **GRADING AND REPORTS TO PARENTS**

North River Christian Academy uses a skill-based report card for 5K; and uses a combination of numerical and letter grades for report cards in 1st grade and up. 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.

## **HONOR ROLL**

Students in 1st grade and up are eligible for all-A honor roll by earning all A's and all S's each nine weeks. Students must be enrolled the last two nine weeks to be eligible for the A Honor Roll.

## **RETENTION AND PROMOTION**

Students are promoted to the next grade 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 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 70 is the minimum grade considered passing. A composite grade below 70 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 and 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 rules.
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 principal to discuss the remaining options. If no progress is made after visiting with the principal, the parent will be called to the school to administer discipline. 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, pepper spray, 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**

### **SCHOOL HOURS, ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE**

The school day begins at 8:00 a.m. for students. Students may be dropped off as early as 7:30 a.m. Upon arrival, students must remain in their 1<sup>st</sup> period classroom. The school day ends at 3:15 p.m. Students will wait for their rides in the designated areas. Unless attending a scheduled school activity, students should be picked up no later

than 3:30 p.m. After this time, students should be picked up from the school office where a late fee of \$10 will be due.

### **BEFORE SCHOOL**

Doors will be opened at 7:30 a.m. Upon arriving at school, students should prepare for the first period. 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 designated areas. Students may only be released to persons specified on the emergency procedure card and only AT THEIR REGULAR PICK-UP LOCATION. Teachers will be designated in pick-up areas to supervise. 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 North River Christian Academy office is open from 7:30 a.m. to 3:45p.m. Monday through Friday. If a parent intends to pick up their student prior to school dismissal and has 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 1:15 p.m. All students must be picked up by 3:30 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 should contact the office as soon as possible if their child is absent.

### **RELEASE OF STUDENTS**

Students will be released only to parents or others listed on the Emergency Procedure Card. Siblings who drive must be listed on the Emergency Procedure Card 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 - Illness, family emergencies (funerals, etc.), and doctor's appointments that cannot be scheduled after school are considered excused absences. Work missed for these reasons may be made up within the allotted time frames without penalty. Students bear the responsibility for knowing and completing their assignments on time after an absence. A doctor's note will be required.

Unexcused - Other absences than those listed above will be considered unexcused. Missed homework may be turned in the day the student returns.

### **TARDY POLICY**

It is important that students are punctual. Self-discipline in this area is not only important for proper academic achievement, it 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 the first period must get a tardy slip from the office before being allowed to enter class.**

Parents should encourage prompt and regular attendance. Medical appointments and family vacations should affect attendance as little as possible. **PLEASE NOTE: EXCESSIVE ABSENCES (20 OR MORE) MAY RESULT IN A STUDENT FAILING THE COURSE FOR THE YEAR. This excludes absences for extracurricular activities. In case of an extended illness, parents may submit an appeal in writing to the principal requesting a waiver of this penalty.**

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.

### **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.

### **INCOMPLETE ASSIGNMENTS**

Assignments not turned in completed and on time are considered incomplete assignments could be subject to penalties. Test re-takes are normally not allowed, but may be allowed at teacher discretion on an individual basis for extenuating circumstances or if it is determined that the whole class needs re-testing.

### **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, 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**

Students should not bring any medication to school unless it is absolutely necessary. Parents 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 a pharmacy label attached. Loose pills in other containers or Ziplocs will not be accepted or administered.

### **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 at 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**

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. 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 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> 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, in the hallway, or gym lockers if they do not use the lock provided. Backpacks that will not fit in the locker should not be brought to school.
15. Students may not bring backpacks to class.

During passing times:

1. Students should go about their business at breaks quietly without loud talking or slamming of locker doors. Courtesy and other-awareness will be encouraged.
2. Students should use the breaks to get ready for the next class, use the restroom, and eat a snack for energy.
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 someone included on the emergency procedure card**).
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.

## **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.

It is our desire that students should dress attractively and appropriately. We do caution against extreme fads because they often conflict with our dress standards. Also, 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 offense will result in a lunch detention and the third offense will result in an after school detention. Any additional violations may result in a suspension

### **General Guidelines for Boys and Girls**

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.

- Solid color, collared uniform style shirts must be worn.
- Uniform shorts or pants of any solid color.
- Jeans with **no** rips, holes, or tears may be worn.
- 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 the jumpers and skirts.
- Preschool through 4th grade should wear closed-toe shoes only. No flip-flops.
- If pants have belt loops then a belt will be required.
- 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.
- NRCA shirts can be worn any day of the week.
- Hair styles must be natural and practical, not extreme, Hair should not be dyed in unnatural hair colors.
- Extremely tight pants, leggings, or jeggings are not proper wear on campus or at any school function.
- Shoes are to be worn at all times. Sandals are acceptable. At no time are bare feet permitted on campus( including after school hours). Cleated shoes or house slippers may not be worn in the building.
- Boys' 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.)
- "Body piercing" of any kind is not allowed except for girls' earrings.
- Jeans may be worn on Fridays only. They should have no rips, holes, or frays above the knee.

- Students may not wear caps or hats to school except with specific permission from the principal for a special event.
- Clothes should fit properly and not be excessively baggy or tight.
- No tattoos should be visible while on the school campus or at a school activity off campus.

\*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.

#### **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. The school reserves the right to inspect phones at any time for inappropriate content, such as, explicit photos, photos of tests, and the like. If a student brings his/her cell phone to school they will need to leave it turned off and stored in their locker or in the office during the day.

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 3:25 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 taken up and turned into the office. Phones that are taken up by a teacher can be picked up after school in the front office. 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 letter 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 middle school, the following NRCAle is used in determining letter grades: 90-100: A, 80-89: B, 70-79: C, below 70: F.

## **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.

## **RETENTION AND PROMOTION**

Students are promoted based on their successful completion of the year's work. All 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 North River Christian. We do not see discipline as punishment, but rather as correction. North River Christian 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.

### **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.

## **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.

## **GENERAL SCHOOL POLICIES**

### **STANDARDS FOR DRESS**

At North River Christian Academy, 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, and prepares students for making responsible, God-honoring choices about dress as a reflection of their position as one who bears God's image.

As we all know, the standards of dress in society are extremely varied. It is the desire of North River Christian Academy to maintain a standard that will promote the modesty to which we have been called by God and exemplify our identity in Christ. Equally important is maintaining an environment conducive to learning – low cut tops, short skirts, low riding pants, short shirts, low pants, etc. detract from a productive learning environment. Likewise, a dirty or unkempt appearance is a distraction and reflects poor stewardship over one's body, which we are called to offer as a living sacrifice to God. The NRCA dress code is based upon the following foundational principles:

- Modesty- As sons and daughters of God, we are called to dress in a manner that edifies each other and gives glory to our Lord. Biblically, modesty calls for an attitude of dress that does not flaunt the student's sexuality and is not revealing.
- Identity with Christ- As those who belong to the Lord, we are to dress in a manner that connects us outwardly (as inwardly) to Him. We are called to bear witness to His holiness through our inward and outward appearance.

Violations of the dress code will result in a loss of privileges. If the violations persist, the student will be subject to further administrative interventions. The principals reserve the right to make final decisions in all dress code matters.

### **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 NRCA, 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:

### **Lower Campus**

- **Internet Use**- Lower campus 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.
  - 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 without permission from the students teacher or principal.

### **Upper Campus**

- **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.
  - Use of student-owned equipment for the purpose of taking notes or other classroom activities is allowed only with teacher permission. ASK FIRST or your equipment will be taken up.

- 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- 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

## **MEDICAL AND EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

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

### **Illness**

If a 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 or the school nurse's office until parents arrive or until transportation can be arranged.

### **Medication Policy**

Students should not bring any medication to school. Any medication to be given to the student must be brought to the office by the parent. A medication form must be filled out and signed by the parent. All medication has to be in the original, in-date package. Prescriptions must be in the prescription bottle, with current prescription label. No student may at any time give medication to another student.

### **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.

## **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.. 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.

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 card 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,our churches, and ourselves.
- 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.