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Student and Parent Resource handbook

DCA School Board Members 2023-2024

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Michael Petit.....	Member
Charley Richardt.....	Member
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DCA Staff

Caitlin Vasquez.....	Headmistress
Ashley Stricker	Pre-K3-Kindergarten
Teresa Petit	First-Third Grade
Caitlin Vasquez.....	Fourth-Sixth Grade

Our Doctrinal Statement

We believe in one God, Creator of the universe, eternally existing as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The Triune God has created *ex nihilo* “out of nothing” all that is. He created the first man, the literal, historical Adam, and the first woman, Eve, *imago Dei* (in His own image). God blessed them and named them Man and called them to manifest and reflect holiness through obedience to His commandments. Because man has woefully fallen in this responsibility and entered into a state of moral corruption, he has subsequently become estranged from his Creator.

- We believe that because of a profound love for His creation, God has initiated a plan of redemption that He has accomplished on behalf of His people in the realm of temporal history. The apex of this redemption is found in the historical incarnation of God in the person of Jesus of Nazareth. We confess Jesus to be the Messiah of Old Testament prophecy, being at the same time fully God and fully man. He was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, and He lived a sinless life of perfect obedience. He was crucified as a substitutionary atonement for sinners. He was raised from the dead on the third day and is sitting at the right hand of the Father interceding on behalf of His people.
- We believe that we receive salvation from the penalty of sin and the just wrath of God by grace alone, through faith alone, on the merit of Christ alone.
- We believe that the risen and ascended Christ has sent His Holy Spirit to dwell in the hearts of His people, affecting their regeneration and operating in their sanctification to enable them to live Godly lives.
- We believe that the Bible in its entirety, being the 66 books of the Old and New Testaments, which are Genesis through Malachi and Matthew through Revelation respectively (the “Bible”), is divine revelation. We submit to its authority, acknowledging it to be inerrantly inspired by God and free from falsehood, fraud, or deceit. The Bible is infallible, true, and reliable, carrying the full weight of God’s authority.
- We believe in the Lordship of Christ over all of life. We believe that God’s commandments are relevant and necessary to our present culture and that our faith should be visible in concrete models of personal and social behavior. We seek to be faithful disciples of Christ, pursuing our callings in love and obedience until He comes again to consummate His kingdom. Therefore we submit to the following truths:
 - God creates all people as divine image-bearers who have inestimable value and dignity from conception to death.
 - God created male and female with the distinct and biological sex of each person immutably determined and manifested at conception by God.
 - God decreed marriage to be a covenantal relationship between one man and one woman that reflects Christ’s relationship with the Church. God’s will for all people is chastity outside of marriage and fidelity within marriage. No affections, desires, or commitments ever justify sexual acts outside of marriage nor do they justify any form of sexual immorality.
 - A Christian’s identity is in Jesus Christ alone, and is not found in a self-ascribed or cultural identity.
- We believe in the resurrection of both the saved and the lost: They that are saved, to the resurrection of life and eternal joy, and they that are lost to the resurrection of damnation.

Philosophy

Classical Christian education is the cultivation of wisdom and virtue through meditation on the Good, the True, and the Beautiful. This is accomplished in two ways; first, through training in the liberal arts; and secondly, through a familiarity with the great books and great thinkers of the Western tradition.

Here at Divine Christian Academy our goal is to give our children a Classical Latin Christian education while allowing them a safe place to worship and learn in small group settings.

We promise to partner with you to give your student education, emphasizing Bible knowledge and academic excellence. We earnestly request your prayers as we strive to provide excellence in education for the Glory of God.

Admissions policy

This school does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, and national or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admission policies, or other school-related programs. Enrollment in Divine Christian Academy is a privilege, and DCA reserves the right to suspend or expel any student, without refund, in accordance with the official policies determined by the Academy. All potential DCA students should adhere to the following requirements.

A. Agreement with Christian Principles

- a. Each student who is admitted to the school agrees to abide by the requirements, regulations, and policies established by the administration and Board of Trustees in the Parent and Student handbook. This includes following and respecting God's Word and participating in the Pledges to the American, Texas, Christian, and Bible flags. All students must also be able to participate in morning prayer and Chapel services as provided by our Academy.
- b. Continued enrollment for all students and DCA is contingent upon acceptable levels of attendance, behavior, psychological maturity and academic achievement. Acceptable levels will be determined by DCA administration. If at any time the DCA administration determines that a student is not meeting acceptable levels of these criteria, the student will be subject to discipline up to including disenrollment.

B. Incoming transfers/ Enrollees

- a. Application for admission to DCA must show evidence that they are physically and emotionally fit, of good moral character, and academically capable.
- b. All potential DCA candidates for grade 3-6th will be given a grade-specific entrance exam to determine grade placement at our academy.
- c. New enrollees will be taken during enrollment periods, during the summer, and no later than September 30th if in grades 3-6th only unless the student is new to the district and/or at the discretion of the Director and/ or School Board.

C. Health Requirements

- a. Students must provide current health records, including Texas immunization requirements, prior to enrollment. Current immunization records must be maintained and updated in the office as needed.

Please go to or click on this link

<http://www.dshs.texas.gov/immunization/school/default.shtm>

Registration and Fees

Parents/ guardians must register their students. For a student's registration to be complete, the following items must be completed and returned to DCA: enrollment forms, a copy of the student's birth certificate and current immunization record, a signed release of records from the previous school and the non-refundable registration fee.

\$250.00 for new students and \$200.00 for returning students.

PreK 3 eligibility is extended to children who turn 3 years of age on or before September 1st. PreK 4 is extended to children who turn 4 years of age on or by September 1st of the school year. All students starting in PreK 3 must be able to use the restroom independently in order to qualify as well.

Monthly Tuition and Fees

Tuition:

Is due on the first of each month and considered past due after the tenth of each month. Balances remaining unpaid after the tenth of each month will be assessed a service charge of \$25.00.

If tuition is not paid by the 20th of the month and no arrangements are made with the DCA director, then enrollment of students will be forfeited, and students will be dismissed from the Divine Christian Academy program. All decisions will be at the Director/ school board's discretion.

PreK 3 through sixth grade monthly tuition is due August through May, for each student. Tuition amounts are as follows:

PreK 3&4 -\$450.00 per month

First- Sixth- \$400.00 Per month

Scholarships and eligibility

Whenever budget allows, DCA will provide monthly scholarships to financially eligible families. Applications are available twice a year, once for the fall semester and once for the Spring semester. Students who qualify for these scholarships will be awarded in August for the fall and in January for the Spring. No 100% scholarships are available. Interested families may apply by

submitting application and financial documentation in July and again in December. Families should be in good standing with monthly tuition fees or can forfeit their scholarship if tuition is not paid on time. All awarded recipients must reapply for every semester.

Hours of Operation

Please do not drop your students off at school before 0745 unless they are enrolled in before and after school care.

PreK 3 – Sixth Grade 0820-1530

Before and after school hours 0600-0800 and 1530-1830

The last Friday of each month, students will attend a chapel service. Parents are invited to attend.

Holidays

We recognize the following holidays at DCA and parties may be planned in the classroom:

Thanksgiving, Christmas, Valentine's Day & Easter. A parent may also bring items to celebrate a student's birthday with his/her class, with the teacher's permission.

Volunteers

DCA welcomes parents and others to volunteer their time and expertise. All volunteers must complete a criminal background check. All volunteers are under the direction of the Director. All volunteers and visitors must check in with the office upon entering during school hours.

Volunteer hours

Each family is responsible for 25 volunteer hours per year. These hours are accomplished by attending field trips, buying classroom items on teachers list, celebrating birthdays and holiday parties at school. For each \$10.00 spent it will count as 1 hour. Each field trip is worth 4 hours. Parents must keep track of receipts or document attendance or any school volunteer opportunities to be turned in no later than April 1st for credit. Anything not turned in by April 1st will be billed on April 15th for the remainder or uncounted hours.

Cell Phones and Electronic Devices

Students are not permitted to use cell phones, smart watches, or electronic devices at school, with the exception of 5th through 12th grade during their lunch time. Cell phones and all other electronic devices (including smart watches) will be collected by the teacher during the day and may be accessed with Director's permission for emergencies or other needs. Students who do not follow this rule, will lose the privilege of bringing a cell phone or any other electronic device to school.

Dress Code

Uniforms

School colors are Black, Gold, and White

Monday thru Thursday

Boys- Plain navy-blue, black, or khaki slacks or shorts with a plain white, gold, navy-blue or black three button or full button polo. School logo can be embroidered on left chest

Girls- Plain navy-blue, black, or khaki skirt, slacks or shorts with a plain white, gold, navy-blue or black three button or full button polo. School logo can be embroidered on left chest

Cold Weather Clothes- Plain cardigan or V-neck Sweater that is navy-blue, black, white, or gold. School logo can be embroidered on left chest. No hoodies or pullovers are allowed.

Friday

Jeans and school polo shirt or Christian inspired t-shirt or long sleeve. Students can wear a hoodie or pull over if there is something Christian inspired on it. Jeans can not be ripped or tight fitting.

Absences and Tardies

In order for a student to make the most of their education, students will be required to attend classes regularly. A student must attend at least 90% of official calendar school days. If a student's attendance drops to less than 90% but more than 75% of school calendar days, they will be required to meet with the Director and a plan will be set that must be completed as late as 15 days after the end of the final day of the school calendar, per the director's discretion. A final grade and credit will be determined following the assessment of the completion of that plan. If a student attends less than 75% of the days required by the official school calendar will be required to petition the school board to receive credit and final grade. Serious disruption of a student's ability to master the materials is affected by absences. Students and parents must make every effort to avoid excessive absences. **Excused absences require a signed note by the physician or parent that explains the reason for absence.**

Excessive tardiness also interferes with learning. Three tardies in a quarter will represent an absence. A tardy is defined as arriving at the school 10 minutes after the start of the scheduled school day.

In the case of an illness, students infected with a contagious disease are not allowed to come to school while still contagious. If a parent suspects that his or her student has a contagious disease, the parent should contact the director. Students who might have been exposed to the disease will be alerted. Students should remain at home until they have been without a fever for 24 hours without medication assistance.

Homework, Classwork, and Make-up Work

Any student, who has an excused absence, will have one school day for every day absent to turn in make-up work. Homework is a vital part of the learning process. If a student does not turn in his/her homework, they will be required to stay until 1630 for after school detention. Once a student has accumulated three after school detentions, they will serve the third day of detention plus the next day of ISS. If the student is continually negligent at turning in his/her homework, then he/she will be subject to dismissal from Divine Christian Academy. Classwork that is not finished then becomes homework for that night. Then the homework policy above will be followed. No homework will be assigned on Wednesday nights as many of our students and their families attend local church services. Reading and studying for upcoming quizzes and tests will still be assigned.

Medications and Emergency Treatment

Please complete and return the Medical/Consent for Emergency Treatment form. Students are NOT allowed to possess medications. Parents must give prescription items or over the counter drugs directly to their teacher or the Divine Christian Academy Director. Written parental permission is required to administer any medication to your student and must have an adequate plan written and signed by the parent or guardian. All medications brought by parents for their student(s) must:

1. Be in the original container.
2. Be labeled with the student's name.
3. Include directions to administer the medication.
4. Not be expired.

Grading System

A 90-100 B 80-89 C 70-79 D 60-69 F 59 and below

Students who make all "A's" will be placed on the All "A" Honor Roll.

Students who make "A's" and "B's" will be placed on the A/B Honor Roll.

Primary School uses a -/✓/+ system; letter grades or averages are not given on assessments or report cards.

Report Cards

Students will receive a progress report during the fifth week of each reporting period. At the end of each nine week reporting period, a report card will be sent. The parents or teacher may request a conference at any given time. Parents will receive their student's final report card by mail about

one week after the last day of school. Report cards and all other student records will be withheld if tuition or other charges and fees are not current.

Promotion/Retention

The following factors shall be considered in promoting and retaining students:

- Academic achievement
- Attendance
- Age
- Effort
- Maturity
- Long-term effects of repeating the work
- The teacher's decision on passing or failing
- The principal's decision on passing or failing

To be promoted from one grade level to the next, a student shall attain for the year an overall average of 70 or above in the core subject areas of reading and math in grades 1-3 and reading, math, and science in grades above 4th grade. The overall average shall be derived by averaging the final numerical score for reading/language arts, mathematics, and science when the first and second semester grades are averaged for the year. A student may be promoted only on the basis of academic achievement or demonstrated proficiency of the subject matter of the course or grade level.

Evacuation/Fire Drills

Routine fire and armed intruder drills will be practiced. All teachers will receive a red Crisis Management Binder. Teachers and students will follow the evacuation route posted on the inside wall of classrooms and other common areas in the main school building and make their way to the church lot on W. Benton Avenue where they will line up by class and face the church building. Teachers will hold up green, red, or yellow sheet to let the director know the status of their class. Teachers and students will wait for the director's approval or okay when it is safe to come back into the building. At that time, teachers will walk students by class back into the building. The same drill will be used for bomb threats in the building. (See attached building map for evacuation routes.)

During tornado drills, students will come into their assigned locations and sit facing the wall with their heads down between their legs and hands over their heads. Tornado drills will be practiced once or twice a semester.

Discipline

Divine Christian academy takes very seriously our commitment to partner with parents in training their son/daughter. Expectations are high and acceptable behavior is essential. Students

will be expected to conduct themselves in a manner that will contribute to the optimal learning environment. Politeness, cooperation, and obedience are the guiding principles.

Specific guidelines:

A. Students will enter and exit the buildings in an orderly fashion always. They will be expected to act in a safe and responsible way while moving about the campus before, during, and after school hours. We will maintain a safe and respectful atmosphere at all times.

B. Gum chewing is not allowed in any of the school buildings (except on special occasions when the teacher approves it).

C. Hats, hoods or caps will not be worn inside the school buildings--except on special occasions.

D. The personal and property rights of others are always to be respected by all students while under supervision of the school.

1. Fighting, hitting, tripping, shoving and throwing objects or any other horseplay are strictly prohibited.

2. Any student who destroys or defaces property will be subject to disciplinary action. The student's parents will be responsible for repairs and/or the replacement costs.

3. Profanity, vulgarity, threats, sexually explicit and/or abusive language may be cause for immediate dismissal.

4. Students who are disrespectful to adults will be subject to probation, suspension and/or dismissal.

5. Students discovered stealing will be subject to loss of privileges, repayment and/or suspension which may result in dismissal.

6. Any inappropriate sexual contact or behavior will have serious, immediate consequences, which may include dismissal.

7. Any student in possession of or under the influence of tobacco, alcoholic beverages, or illegal drugs will be subject to severe consequences, including expulsion.

8. Any student in possession of any type of weapon (including, but not limited to, knives and guns) will be subject to severe consequences, up to and including expulsion.

E. Academic Integrity: It is our goal that each student at Divine Christian Academy model academic integrity. Academic cheating is the attempt to obtain information, knowledge, or material from any other source and submit it as one's own work. This can be done either by giving or receiving information for homework, classroom assignments, or tests. Cheating in any form is not in keeping with expected moral, ethical, or spiritual values. Academic integrity is an attitude that values honesty above grades, friendship, social acceptance, and peer pressure. Cheating may result in one or more of the following consequences: a parent/teacher/student conference; in school suspension (ISS); out-of-school suspension (OSS); expulsion from the school for the remainder of the academic year; or any other discipline determined appropriate by

the Director. Any such assignment will receive a grade of “0.” Violations noted above will result in disciplinary action. Repeated and/or serious offenses may result in disciplinary action up to and including suspension or expulsion. Each disciplinary referral to the office will be documented and parents will be notified. (Note that the violations listed above are examples. DCA reserves the right to take disciplinary action that it deems appropriate for any behavior that it believes is inappropriate.) It is our desire to teach students to take responsibility for their own actions and to understand that there are consequences to every action. It is important to make good choices in life. Most discipline is handled by the teacher. All discipline will be based on Biblical principles (i.e. restitution, apologies, swift punishment, restoration of fellowship, no lingering attitudes, etc.). Love, forgiveness, and prayer will be an integral part of the discipline of a student.

Dismissal:

The DCA School Board realizes that expelling a student is a very serious matter and should always be carefully dealt with on a case by case basis. Forgiveness and restoration are fundamental to our total discipline policy. However, should a student and his/her parents be unable to eliminate behavioral problems after repeated administrative intervention, dismissal may be necessary. Should a student commit an act with such serious consequences that the Director deems it necessary, suspension or dismissal may be imposed immediately. Examples of such serious misconduct could include acts endangering the lives of other students or staff members, gross violence, vandalism to the school facilities, or violations of civil law.

Re-admission:

Should a student desire to be readmitted to DCA, the school board will make a decision based on the student’s attitude and the circumstances at the time of reapplication.

Probation/Dismissal

The two categories under which a student would be placed on probation and consequently dismissed from DCA, are academic and behavioral.

Academic:

If a student’s performance is consistently below a grade of 70, he/she may be placed on academic probation. This decision is made by the Director, with consideration from the teacher(s). Previous interventions, the student’s abilities, performance, and effort are all taken into consideration, when making this decision. When a student is put on academic probation he/she will be given a specified period of time in which to show improvement. If adequate improvement is not made; the student shall be subject to dismissal at the recommendation of the school board.

Behavioral: If a student shows consistent unwillingness to follow school and classroom rules and is unresponsive to discipline for such infractions, he/she will be placed on behavioral probation. The student will be given a specified period of time in which to correct behavior and show improvement. If adequate improvement is not made, the student will be subject to dismissal at the recommendation of the school board.

In-School Suspension:

There may be situations that require a student to be isolated from regular class routines and activities. On the day ISS is assigned, the student will report directly to the office by 15 minutes before the 1st period begins. All books and assignments should be with the student. The student may be given a reading/writing assignment due at the end of the school day. Restroom breaks and a lunch break will be the only times the student in ISS will be permitted to leave the assigned area. The student will not have any contact with other students during the day.

Out-of-School Suspension:

Suspension, either on a short-term or long-term basis, may be implemented for flagrant violation of school policies. Students will be responsible for all course assignments and work during a suspension. Any assignment or work not completed will receive a grade of zero. The student may be given a reading/writing assignment due upon return to school.

Divine Christian Academy's Daily Schedule

6:00 Before School Enrichment *

7:45 School Begins/Office Opens

7:50 Breakfast/Prayer/Announcements

8:20 Classes Begin/Tardy if not in class

12:00-12:45 Lunch

3:45 School Dismissal

3:50 Begin After School Enrichment *

4:10 Staff Dismissal

6:30 End after School Enrichment *

*Before and after school enrichment available weekly. Please make sure to inform the teacher or Headmistress if this is needed for your student. The cost is \$50 per week for DCA students.

2023-2024 Calendar

1-7 Staff Work Days
8 First Day of School for Students

AUGUST 2023						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

FEBRUARY 2024						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	↗	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29		

16 Half Day for Students
19 Presidents Day

1 Half Day for Students
4 Labor Day

SEPTEMBER 2023						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					↗	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

MARCH 2024						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	↗	29	30
31						

11-15 Spring Break
28 Half Day for Students
29 Good Friday

27 Half Day For students
30 Conference Day (Student Holiday)

OCTOBER 2023						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	↗	28
29	30	31				

APRIL 2024						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

1 Easter Monday
8 Solar Eclipse

17 Half Day for Students
20-24 Thanksgiving Break

NOVEMBER 2023						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S

MAY 2024						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S

24 Last Day of School- Half Day

			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	↗	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

20 Half Day for Students
 21-29 Christmas Break

DECEMBER 2023						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	↗	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

JUNE 2024						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

1-5 New Year's Break
 8 Staff Work Day
 9 Students Return

JANUARY 2024						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

JULY 2024						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			