



# **Elementary School Parent/Student Handbook 2021-2022**

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**[www.hcarockwall.org](http://www.hcarockwall.org)**

Parents and Students of Heritage Christian Academy,

Welcome to the 2021-2022 school year!

Education is a team effort, and we know that students, parents, teachers and other staff members all working together can make this a wonderfully successful year for our students. The Heritage Christian Academy Parent & Student Handbook is designed to provide a resource for some of the basic information that you and your child will need during the school year. It is our hope that this document will help clarify what is acceptable, expected, and required of our students. The goal of HCA is to provide an environment that will ultimately lead to academic success, while providing the opportunity for our students to become Christ-centered and, therefore, well prepared to serve the Body of Christ and their fellow man as servant leaders in our world. This goal can only be attained when the school works in partnership with families.

We are excited about the 2021-22 school year and look forward to partnering with you in our mission to prepare young people to become Christ-centered future leaders.

In Christ,

Dr. Brad Helmer

## **Mission Statement**

Heritage Christian Academy is a biblically based, college-preparatory private school that desires to work in partnership with families from across the body of Christ to establish a strong educational and biblical foundation that equips students to become Christ-centered leaders who will impact the world.

## **Vision Statement**

Providing an education that is Christ centered, college preparatory and family focused.

## **Non-Discrimination Statement**

Admission to Heritage Christian Academy is open to qualified students of any race, sex (male or female as described in the **Statement on Marriage, Gender and Sexuality**), national or ethnic origin or color with all the rights, privileges, programs, educational policies, admissions policies, financial assistance, athletics, or other school-administered programs generally accorded or made available to students at the school. All prospective and current students must agree with Heritage Christian Academy's mission statement, Statement of Faith, Statement on Marriage, Gender and Sexuality, and they must be willing to conduct their lives in conformity to the school's statement of faith, and the school's declaration and agreement to ethical and moral integrity, serving as a Christian role model..

## **The Ministry of Teaching**

Teachers and school administrators are called by God to help raise up the young in the ways of faith. Jesus, the Savior, was also a teacher. He gathered his disciples and others around him and taught with such conviction and truth that the "many who heard him were astonished, saying, 'Where did this man get all this? What is the wisdom given to him? What mighty works are wrought by his hand!'" (Mark 6:2). His apostles, likewise, were teachers and gave witness "with great power" through their words and deeds, and "gave their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all" (Acts 4:33).

The ministry of teaching obligates the teacher to assist his or her students in understanding not only mathematics or physics, but how the order and discipline of mathematics or physics reveals the mind of God. It obligates one not only to instruct in geography and history, but to inculcate the faith by helping the students know that God created the mountains, the sea, the rivers, the deserts, the forests, the plains, and all the creatures that inhabit them, and to learn that human discoveries, empires, conflicts, and social movements are measured by the divinely ordained order. The

ministry of teaching requires one not only to help students acquire skill in spelling, reading, grammar, and writing, but to understand that human language is a primary means by which students might explore the wonders of poetry and narrative and sacred Scripture itself—all of which indirectly or directly disclose salvation history. Regardless of the subject, true teachers minister to their students by helping them follow Paul's admonition:

Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, do: and the God of peace will be with you. (Phil 4:8-9)

Teachers in a Christian school must be ever mindful that they instruct not only through rational explanation of formal subject material but even more powerfully through word, deed, example, and shared experience. Simply put, they teach the faith by modeling the faith and by modeling faithfulness. This is why all teachers, even before their first meeting with students, must subscribe to the school's Statement of Faith. This is why teachers are required to give a godly example, both at school and away. Teachers must teach the truth and avoid falsehood. "Therefore, putting away falsehood, let everyone speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another. ... Let no evil talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for edifying, as fits the occasion, that it may impart grace to those who hear" (Ephesians 4:25, 29).

Teachers minister to the students by providing them with faith experiences. They lead the youth in prayer, praise, and mercy. Paul urged Christians to "Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander to be put away from you, with all malice, and be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you" (Ephesians 4:31-32). Teachers also model the Christian life by being active in their own church community and by serving as an intermediary assisting their students in becoming active in their respective church communities so that those students might be further nurtured in faith with their friends and family around them.

## Statement of Faith

1. We believe in the verbal inspiration of both the Old and New Testaments, i.e. that the very words of the original Scriptures are infallible and inerrant and that they are our final and absolute authority in every area of life and knowledge. (2 Timothy 3:16-17; Isaiah 40:8)
2. We believe in one God, eternally existing in three equal persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. (2 Corinthians 1:21-22; Ephesians 4:4-6)
3. We believe that Jesus Christ was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, and that He is both undiminished deity and genuine humanity in one person forever. (Luke 1:35; Matthew 1:23; John 1:1,14)
4. We believe that God the Holy Spirit is a personal being who convicts the world of sin, regenerates, indwells, empowers, guides, bestows spiritual gifts on believers, and seals

believers eternally for God. (John 16:8; Titus 3:5; 1 Corinthians 3:16; Acts 1:8; Romans 8:14; 1 Corinthians 12:4; 2 Corinthians 1:22)

5. We believe that man was created by a direct act of God in His image, not from previously existing life; all men sinned in Adam (the historical father of the entire human race) and thus incurred both physical and spiritual death; all men have inherited a sinful nature. (Genesis 1:27; Romans 3:23; Ephesians 2:1-3; Romans 5:12-13)
6. We believe that Jesus Christ died as a substitutionary sacrifice for our sins and that through faith in Him as Lord and Savior, we are declared righteous by God. (1 John 2:2; John 3:16; Romans 3:22)
7. We believe that salvation is by grace through faith in Jesus Christ, totally apart from human merit, and that the experience of regeneration produces a new creature in Christ, eternally secure. (Ephesians 2:8-9; 2 Corinthians 5:17; John 10:27-29)
8. We believe that Jesus Christ rose from the dead, and that He ascended into heaven, where He continually ministers as our great High Priest and Advocate. (Luke 24:1; Hebrews 4:14; 1 John 2:1)
9. We believe that this age will be consummated by the literal, visible, bodily return of Jesus Christ to this earth. (Hebrews 9:28; Revelation 22:12)
10. We believe in the resurrection of the just and the unjust, the everlasting blessedness of the saved, and the everlasting punishment of the lost. (Acts 24:15; John 3:16-18)
11. We believe that all believers are under the mandate of Jesus Christ to proclaim the Gospel to the world. (Matthew 28:19)
12. The statement of faith does not exhaust the extent of our beliefs. The Bible itself, as the inspired and infallible Word of God that speaks with final authority concerning truth, morality, and the proper conduct of mankind, is the sole and final source of all that we believe. For the purpose of Heritage Christian Academy's faith, doctrine, practice, policy, and discipline, our Board of Trustees is Heritage Christian Academy's final interpretive authority on the Bible's meaning and application.
13. We believe that all human life is sacred and created by God in His image. Human life is of inestimable worth in all its dimensions, including pre-born babies, the aged, the physically or mentally challenged, and every other stage or condition from conception through natural death. We are therefore called to defend, protect, and value all human life. (Ps 139.)

### **Statement on Marriage, Gender and Sexuality**

1. We believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God. (Gen 1:26-27.) Rejections of one's biological sex is a rejection of the image of God within that person. HCA recognizes a student's gender as that which is denoted on the student's original birth certificate as presented from a recognized

authority of the State of Texas or other such governing body authorized to issue birth certificates for their citizens.

2. We believe that the term “marriage” has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture. (Gen 2:18-25.) We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other. (1 Cor 6:18; 7:2-5; Heb 13:4.) We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of marriage between a man and a woman.
3. We believe that any form of sexual immorality (including adultery, fornication, homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, and use of pornography) is sinful and offensive to God. (Matt 15:18-20; 1 Cor 6:9-10.)
4. We believe that in order to preserve the function and integrity of Heritage Christian Academy as a local Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to its members and the community, it is imperative that all persons employed by HCA in any capacity, or who serve as volunteers, agree to and abide by this Statement on Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality. (Matt 5:16; Phil 2:14-16; 1 Thess 5:22.)
5. We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sins, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ.
  - a. (Acts 3:19-21; Rom 10:9-10; 1 Cor 6:9-11.)
6. We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity. (Mark 12:28-31; Luke 6:31.) Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture nor the doctrines of Heritage Christian Academy.

## Historical Foundation

In 1995, a dream inspired by God was made manifest by a community of believers who stepped out in faith and worked together to breathe life into Heritage Christian Academy. In August 1995, HCA held its first day of classes with students, K4- 9th grade. Each year a grade was added until its charter class graduated in 1999. In the fall of 2003, HCA acted on a dream to secure its own facilities for the K3 - 12<sup>th</sup> grade students.

## Positional Foundation

A publication of the Council for Democratic and Secular Humanism, entitled Free Inquiry, is premised on the belief that man should search out the multitudinous truth sources available to him. They would consider that exercise to be the goal of academic pursuit.

Heritage Christian Academy, however, is predicated on the Bible as objective, propositional, revealed truth from God. As such, it is considered the foundational document a priori statement upon which the academic curriculum is premised. (All instruction begins with the claim that the Bible is the only inerrant, infallible, God-breathed Word.) Free inquiry is allowed as students

attempt to search appropriate, consistent interpretations of passages and search for the diverse application of the principles ascertained; no leeway is given in the assumption that there are truth claims or truth sources beyond the personal revelation of the living God.

In all academic departments of our school, the Bible and its truth is central in focus. Students are allowed to search for a variety of interpretations within the guidelines of legitimate Biblical interpretation but are not given the option of alternate truth sources. As deemed appropriate in curriculum areas, what HCA would consider to be “unfavored sources of knowledge” are presented in a subject area(s) for the purpose of enlightening the student with regard to the error(s) made in the unfavored sources which is often presented by the educational systems as truth. An example of this would be those who teach the Darwinian theory of evolution as science as opposed to creationism as faith. HCA presents evolution as the science of one faith, secular humanism, as contrasted to creationism, the science of another faith, Christianity. Evolution would be presented as the science of a philosophical worldview with a bias against the revealed God of the universe while creationism would be shown to be both scientifically sound as well as Biblically true.

This position is consistent both with the school’s published philosophy and Statement of Faith. HCA holds the Bible to be the only inerrant, infallible, authoritative, revealed Word of God. This propositional truth is adhered to in every area to which programs of the school speak—including history, science, literature, philosophy, theology, etc.

## **Philosophy of Education**

The Philosophy of Education at Heritage Christian Academy is directly related to our Mission and is an expansion of that document.

## **An Independent Private School**

The independent status of Heritage has allowed HCA (families, faculty, board of trustees) to create a policy governed school that is truly non-denominational. The parents, students, school board, administration, and faculty of Heritage Christian Academy come from a cross section of area churches.

For Heritage Christian Academy the terms independent and non-denominational are not just organizational descriptors. Being independent allows us to ask and answer the question “What’s best for the students?” without the answer being subject to limitations or considerations imposed upon the school by the needs or beliefs of a single governing church. Being non-denominational allows the school to respect and honor the home churches wherein the families of Heritage Christian Academy fellowship and serve.

## **Biblically Based**

There are three distinguishing characteristics of a biblically based, distinctively Christian education:

Internalization refers to the morality, character and spiritual condition of the people involved in the school and particularly of the administration and faculty. For Heritage to describe itself as “biblically based” it must be staffed with people themselves who are “biblically based”.

By this we mean people who:

Are beyond question born again believers;

Know that their personal lives, and the daily quality of their relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ will affect students for generations to come;

Study and use the Scriptures as their guide for life, their source for wisdom and strength, and the standard by which all things must be judged.

In short, these must be people who have “internalized” the Word of God and have allowed the grace of God to produce a living curriculum within them that is evident to all.

Integration is the blending of biblical principles with traditional subject matter areas. It is the tools with which biblically based people create a truly Christian, truly biblical, Christian school.

Within all disciplines there are elements that can point students in the direction of their Savior and Creator. The task of the Christian school teacher is to help students discover those elementary and “integrate” applicable scriptures and scriptural principles with what they are learning in math, science, literature, and indeed all subjects taught within the school. In order for students to develop a Christian worldview, all subjects must be taught, not only by Christians, but from a Christian frame of reference.

Inculcation is the discipleship process whereby the values and beliefs of one generation are continually placed before, and directly taught to, the next generation. An education that purports to name the name of Christ must disciple students by directly involving them with the Word of God and placing before them who the Word of God calls them to “be” and what that Word calls them to “do” in their daily lives.

Through inculcation we endeavor to create a foundation and elicit a response. The foundation is a thorough knowledge of the Bible; the response is the development of character and lifestyle consistent with that knowledge.

The school’s endeavor takes the form of opportunities: Bible class, chapel, community service, mission trips, staff relationships, and positive peer relationships. All of these venues provide students with the opportunity to acquire a thorough knowledge of the Bible and make decisions that shape who they are in Christ today and for the rest of their lives.

- Through internalization we provide students with the developmental influence and role model impact that can only come from mature, born again Christian adults.
- Through integration we want students to discover the hand, heart, and mind of Christ throughout the universe of creation and thought.
- Through inculcation we endeavor to create a foundational knowledge of the Bible and a lifestyle consistent with God’s Word.

### **Family Focused**

An internalized, integrated and inculcated Christian education is attainable only when the school is working in partnership with families. Partnership with families implies a shared commitment to the success and life of the school beyond that which impacts our own child or classroom.

Partnership implies going the extra mile, benefit of the doubt, mutual respect and civility,



allocation of resources, access, accountability, and communication. This sense of “we’re in this thing together” on the part of families, the faculty, administration, and the school board is how “partnership” finds its greatest expression in our school.

### **College Preparatory**

The phrase “college prep” is very often used as a descriptor for the academic standard for many private and Christian school environments. Unless “college prep” is defined in the context of a particular school’s mission it will often be misunderstood.

So what does HCA mean when it refers to itself as college preparatory?

Our guiding assumption is that every student (average, gifted, learning differenced, and all combinations thereof) who walks through our door is college bound and it is our job to provide students with the opportunity to be well prepared to gain entrance and be successful at the college of their choice. Not all of our students will go to highly competitive universities, but for those who can, the education they receive at HCA will be an empowering factor towards obtaining that goal. Education that bears the name of Christ must equip, not hinder.

Success in college involves innate ability, but to a greater degree it requires

- basic academic skills
- advanced academic opportunities
- a strong work ethic
- motivation
- the ability to think
- self-discipline
- ability to acquire knowledge independently and
- a love of learning

HCA will provide all students at all grade levels with developmentally appropriate opportunities to acquire the knowledge and values necessary for success throughout their school years up to and including college. Students who apply themselves to all that we ask of them and who avail themselves of all that we provide for them will indeed be well prepared to make the transition from HCA to college and university level achievement.

We believe that preparing students to fulfill God’s call in all aspects of their lives means we must create a balanced environment that is sensitive to the needs of the whole person.

Partnership with Christian Families in the Body of Christ Implies...

### **Responsibility**

Before God created governments, churches or any other institution, He created the family. Parents are charged with the primary responsibility of the comprehensive well-being of their children. Parents delegate only a portion of that responsibility to a school. HCA accepts the responsibility to educate any one child when, on the basis of informed consent, that child is enrolled as a student.

Informed consent can only exist when parents thoroughly examine the totality of HCA prior to enrollment and have obtained a clear understanding of what HCA expects and provides.



Conversely, partnership can only be said to exist when HCA is attempting in good faith to carry out its responsibility: creating an environment of opportunity wherein the mission statement can become a reality for every student entrusted to our care.

### **Consistency**

Partnership between HCA and the family implies some degree of consistency with what is taught at school, what is taught in the family's church, and what is actually practiced at home.

Consistency (shared standards, beliefs and practices) among the family, the church and the school is an empowering factor in the life of a child.

Parents will often consider enrolling a child in Christian school for reasons that are important to them, but have no relationship to the school's mission (why it exists). The greater the degree of consistency, however, the greater the likelihood that the child will experience HCA as a positive and empowering environment.

Without consistency, there is no partnership. Parents must examine not only HCA, but their own beliefs, expectations, and standards of right and wrong to determine whether or not HCA is the right school for their family. For its part, HCA must do its best to represent the school in a realistic and informative fashion, and, to the degree possible, assess the level of consistency that would exist between the school and the enrolling family.

### **The Needs of the Whole Person**

Children and young people have spiritual needs. Therefore, HCA will work in partnership with Christian families to lead our students to a secure, saving and growing knowledge of and relationship with the Lord, Jesus Christ. In the elementary school, emphasis is placed on evangelism - reaching children for Christ. In the middle and upper high schools, the emphasis is on discipleship of the student believer.

Children and young people have intellectual needs. Therefore, HCA will work in partnership with Christian families to provide our students with developmentally appropriate instruction across the full range of intellectual abilities: knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation.

Children and young people have social needs. Therefore, HCA will work in partnership with Christian families to provide our students with opportunities to develop healthy relationships within the Body of Christ (fellow believers) and with community and society at large.

Children and young people have emotional needs. Therefore, HCA will work in partnership with Christian families to foster a secure environment that creates and reinforces an awareness within our students that they are loved and respected in all circumstances and by all faculty and staff.

Children and young people have physical needs. Therefore, HCA will work in partnership with Christian families to provide our students with athletic and fitness opportunities that emphasize the human body as the temple of the Holy Spirit with the implications this brings regarding health, fitness and lifestyle choices.

Children and young people have creative needs. Therefore, HCA will work in partnership with Christian families to provide students at all grade levels with developmentally appropriate fine arts

opportunities that cultivate and develop their talents while guiding them to an understanding of God as the ultimate source of creative gifts and abilities.

### **Christ-Centered Leaders**

In the book of Daniel we see the account of the three captive Hebrew young people. These young people are described as being widely read in literature and science, quick to comprehend and able to learn. They are also described as wise. These young people had received an excellent education in the context of honoring Jehovah. When it was demanded of them that they worship the god of the prevailing culture, no compromise could be found in their hearts. They remained true to the God of their fathers. In the end, they assumed leadership roles in the midst of a society that did not understand them, but needed what they had to offer.

We believe that all of our students are “Daniels” in training. We believe that our graduates will serve the Body of Christ and their fellow man as Christian leaders and role models in the midst of an increasingly secular society.

Heritage Christian Academy does not represent a guarantee. We provide an opportunity. We provide an education that is distinctively Christian in a school that works in partnership with Christian families. We prepare children and young people for college by providing a high standard for instruction, achievement, and character. We prepare them to fulfill God’s call in all aspects of their lives by recognizing and addressing the needs of the whole person.

In the end, HCA recognizes that “unless the Lord builds the house, the workers labor in vain.” Despite our best efforts and the efforts of those Christian families who partner with us, the only way our mission will be accomplished in the lives of our students is by the grace and favor of our Savior. May His countenance continue to shine on Heritage Christian Academy as it has since the founding of our school.

### **Core Values Stated/Implied By Our Statement of Faith, Vision, Mission and Philosophy**

1. The Bible is the inspired, authoritative, and infallible Word of God and will be taught as such.
2. All truth is God’s truth.
3. Our Christian distinctiveness will not be compromised or de-prioritized.
4. Three characteristics of an education that is distinctively Christian:
  - a. Internalization: developmental influence and role model impact imparted by mature, born again Christian adults.
  - b. Integration: the blending of biblical principles and scripture with traditional subject matter areas.
  - c. Inculcation: the discipleship process whereby the values of one generation continually placed before, and directly presented to, the next generation.
5. Christian education is attainable only when the school is working in partnership with families.
6. Parents are charged with the primary responsibility of the comprehensive well-being of their children.
7. All children admitted to HCA are considered college bound.

8. Education that bears the name of Christ must equip, not hinder.
9. HCA will provide students at all grade levels with developmentally appropriate opportunities to acquire the knowledge and values necessary for success throughout their school years up to and including college.
10. HCA must be a balanced environment that is sensitive to the needs of the whole person.
11. Children and young people have spiritual, intellectual, social, emotional, physical, and creative needs.
12. The greatest need that our children have, relative to HCA, is to know that they are loved and respected by all staff in all circumstances.
13. HCA will address these needs by working in partnership with parents to create an environment of opportunity.
14. All of our children have the potential to serve the body of Christ and their fellow man as Christian leaders and role models.

## **Ethical Foundation**

The Christian educator should strive to create an atmosphere that will nurture to fulfillment the potential of each student in Christ Jesus.

The educator is responsible for standard practices and ethical conduct toward students, professional colleagues, parents, and the community.

The Code is intended to govern the profession, and the Administration and/or the School Board shall determine interpretations of the Code.

The educator who conducts his affairs with conscientious concern will exemplify the highest standards of professional commitment.

### **Principle I: Professional Ethical Conduct**

The Christian educator should endeavor to maintain the dignity of the profession by respecting and obeying the law, demonstrating personal integrity, and exemplifying honesty.

1. The educator shall not intentionally misrepresent official policies, procedures, or beliefs of HCA and shall clearly distinguish those views from his personal attitudes and opinions.
2. The educator shall honestly account for all funds committed to his charge and shall conduct his financial business with integrity.
3. The educator shall not use institutional or professional privileges for personal or partisan advantage.
4. The educator shall fully subscribe to the vision, mission, and philosophy of HCA.
5. As an employee of HCA, the educator shall manifest a positive role model patterned after that of Jesus Christ.

### **Principle II: Ethical Conduct toward Students**

The Christian educator, in accepting that position of responsibility, should measure success by the progress of each student toward realization of his potential as an effective citizen able to abide by Biblical truths and stand alone as a servant/leader for Jesus Christ.

1. The educator shall deal considerately and justly with each student and shall seek to resolve problems, including discipline, according to School Board policy, administrative procedures, and state laws.
2. The educator shall not intentionally expose the student to remarks of a disrespectful, discourteous, or sarcastic nature.
3. The educator shall not reveal confidential information concerning students unless disclosure serves professional purposes or is required by law.
4. The educator shall make reasonable effort to protect the student from conditions detrimental to learning, health, or safety.
5. The educator shall endeavor to present facts without distortion.

### **Principle III: Ethical Conduct toward Parents and Community**

The Christian educator, in fulfilling citizenship responsibilities in the community, should cooperate with parents and others to improve the school.

1. The educator shall not interfere with a colleague's exercise of citizenship and political rights and responsibilities.
2. The educator shall make reasonable efforts to communicate to parents information that should be revealed in the interest of the student.
3. The educator shall endeavor to understand community cultures and relate the home environment of students to the school according to sound Biblical perspectives.
4. The educator shall manifest a positive role in school/public relations.

### **Principle IV: Biblical Position on the Employee as Role Model**

Heritage Christian Academy uses only the Bible as its basis for faith and practice (II Tim. 3:16-17); all employees are required to be born again, to be active in an evangelical church, and to live lives pleasing to Christ as Lord (Col. 3:17). As such, acceptance of employment at Heritage Christian Academy is a ministry position.

As an educational institution, HCA requires that every employee manifest by precept and example the highest Christian virtue and personal decorum, serving as a role model to pupils (I Tim. 4:12) both in and out of school (Luke 6:40), and as an example to parents and fellow faculty members in judgment, respect, and Christian living. This includes, but is not limited to, the refraining from such activities as the abuse of alcohol, tobacco, illicit drugs, pornography, gambling, and the use of vulgar and profane language (Col. 3:17; Titus 2:7-8; I Thess. 2:10, 5:18, 22; James 3:17-18).

The HCA employee agrees that the Scripture dictates standards of sexual behavior. Any promiscuity, homosexuality, or other deviant sexual behavior is forbidden and as such violates the requirement of being a role model. Please refer to the Statement of Faith and Statement on Marriage, Gender and Sexuality.

### **Statement of Cooperation with Agencies and Authorities**

Heritage Christian Academy, as noted in the Mission Statement and Philosophy, seeks to work in partnership with parents. This partnership does not exempt us from the law of the land and does not exclude the school from the necessity of complying with directives from agencies and authorities established to protect and serve the community.

Heritage Christian Academy will proactively cooperate with any lawfully established authority that has determined a need to send a representative of that agency onto our campus or who has come to our campus at our request. In situations involving Child Protective Services, Heritage Christian Academy will never confirm or deny that the school or any of its employees has filed a report with that agency.

Proactive cooperation with authorities will include, but not be limited to, agencies concerned with health and safety issues, law enforcement, building and fire inspections, and child welfare. Communication with specific families regarding the presence or actions of such a representative (police officer, case worker, etc.) while they are on our campus will be determined by the parameters set by the representative on site.

HCA is required to report any indication of child abuse to the proper governmental authority of the State of Texas when HCA has cause to believe that a student's physical or mental health or welfare has been or may be adversely affected by abuse or neglect. HCA is expected by its families to communicate with them regarding the wellbeing of their children

The observing staff member shall, as legally required, inform the proper governmental authorities if s/he has cause to believe that the student's physical or mental health or welfare has been or may be further adversely affected by abuse or neglect.

While there is always a possibility of error, care will be taken to err on the side of student safety.

It bears repeating that HCA personnel never confirm or deny that a report to any governmental authority originated from HCA.

## **Accreditation**

Heritage Christian Academy is accredited through the **Accreditation Commission of the Texas Association of Baptist Schools (ACTABS)**, the **Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI)**, **Cognia (formerly AdvancEd)**, and is on record with the Texas Education Agency as an approved nonpublic school through TEPSAC..

# Financial Policies and Procedures

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The Business Office of HCA exists to serve our families as they seek to fulfill their financial obligations as noted in the Contract of Enrollment. Business Office hours are from 7:45 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on school days. Other times are available by appointment only.

## **Tuition and Fees**

All tuition and fees are paid by electronic bank draft through FACTS on the 5th or the 20th of the month once the Online Enrollment Process is complete. HCA does not accept credit or debit cards for tuition or fees.

The Continuous Enrollment period is from January 1st through January 31st of each school year. On February 1st your Enrollment fee(s) will be assessed and those fees will be drafted on February 20th. Instructional Fees, Activity Fees and Technology Fees will be rolled in with your tuition dollars and drafted according to your payment plan you currently have in place.

FACTS charges a nominal yearly fee for monthly payment plans that will be deducted once your account has been finalized each school year.

Athletic fees are paid via PayIt online forms through FACTS.

## **Refunds**

Tuition for the entire school year is required even though the student never actually enters school in August, or even though the student withdraws, is expelled, or for any other reason fails to continue in attendance at the Academy for the school year.

**ALL fees are NON-REFUNDABLE.**

## **Discounts**

3rd Child Discounts – families with 3 or more students attending HCA will receive 10% off of their youngest student's tuition. Families are expected to pay the full tuition amount for their first two students.

Referral Discounts – 10% off your youngest child's tuition for every new family that enrolls, pays their fees and begins paying tuition. The new family must include the HCA family's name on the Referral section of the Online Enrollment form.

The discount will be paid as follows:

If the referring family paid tuition in full – a check will be issued on November 20th.

If the referring family paid tuition in two payments – the November 20th FACTS draft will be decreased by 10% of the referring family's youngest student's tuition.

If the referring family is paying through monthly FACTS bank draft, the drafts beginning in November – April will be reduced by the referral discount divided by the number of FACTS payments remaining. (Example: November 20 – April 20 = 10% divided by 8 months)

If the referring family is receiving any discounts, the 10% will be calculated on the final tuition amount that the family is being charged. Tuition less discounts = Net tuition times 10%.

### **Family Accounts / Past Due Balances**

The Contract of Enrollment signed by the family and the school calls for timely payment of tuition and allows for the assessment of late fees by the business office. Past due accounts are required to be reported to the Head of School on a monthly basis. Pro-active communication with the Business Office regarding anticipated difficulty in making agreed upon payments is highly recommended.

The family account of all students participating in extracurricular activities must remain current. Once the family account of a student participating in extracurricular activities becomes thirty (30) days past due, the student(s) will not be allowed to participate until the account is brought current; or, in the event of extenuating circumstances, the family submits a written plan, acceptable to administration, that details how and when the account will be brought current. If an account becomes 60 days delinquent or more, the student may not be allowed to continue attending classes until a written plan for becoming current is agreed upon by the account holder and the Head of School.

Exceptions to any of the above may be submitted in writing to the Business Office for consideration.

### **Financial Aid**

Tuition assistance based on financial need is available on a limited basis. The application is part of the Online Enrollment process and there is an application fee assessed by the evaluating company. Families, if approved, should not expect aid amounting to greater than 50% of the total tuition. Financial assistance equaling less than 50% of the total tuition may result from the report recommendation generated by the application process. All fees are due at 100%.



# Academic Policies and Procedures

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## Grading Scale

The following numerical scale will be used for all student academic grades:

100 – 90	A
89 – 80	B
79 – 70	C
69 & below	F

1st-2nd Grade will use the following grading scale for Science, Social Studies, Handwriting, Art, Computer, Music, PE and Conduct:

E – Excellent  
S – Satisfactory  
N – Needs Improvement

1st-6th Grade will use the following grading scale for Computer, Music, P.E. and Conduct:

E- Excellent  
S- Satisfactory  
N- Needs Improvement

Parents may check grades at any time by logging onto FACTS at [www.FACTS.com](http://www.FACTS.com)

## Purpose of Homework

Heritage is committed to enriching students' learning. With that, there will be instances when homework will be necessary to practice, extend and master skills learned in class. This is essential to achieve classroom goals and aid student learning.

## Homework/Long Term Projects Grading Policy

**1st – 6th Homework Grading Policy** – Homework has a definite place in the educational process. It is an extension of the learning experiences from our instructional day. Homework is designed to aid students in achieving classroom and school goals. It will never be used to punish or merely keep students busy. Rather, homework will be used for mastery of skill and preparation for successive grades. Homework will be assigned with full expectation that it will be completed and turned in on the due date. Below is the policy for incomplete homework and does not apply to long term projects:

1st day late – 10 point deduction  
2nd day late – 20 point deduction  
3rd day late – 30 point deduction  
4th day late – a grade of zero will be assigned

**1st – 6th Grade Long Term Projects** - Assigned at least two weeks in advance of the due date. Below is the policy for long term projects not turned in on due date:

1st day late – 10 point deduction

2nd day late – 20 point deduction  
3rd day late – 30 point deduction  
4th day late – a grade of zero will be assigned

The individual abilities and work ethic of children (especially as they move into the upper elementary grades) will cause the amount of time required to finish homework (and unfinished classroom assignments that become homework) to vary greatly. The amount of time required to finish all assignments will also, for some students, be affected by special needs and learning differences (diagnosed and undiagnosed).

### **Academic Excellence**

To encourage academic excellence, Heritage recognizes students in 1st-6th grade who have done well by awarding a certificate with a seal representing each subject the student received an overall “A” average in for the year.

### **Parent Conferences**

Parent conferences are encouraged and may be requested by the principal, teacher, or parent/guardian. Elementary parent-teacher conferences will be scheduled to take place at the end of the first quarter. Please feel free to request additional meetings whenever necessary.

Please do not attempt to conference with a teacher while he or she is conducting class, supervising student activities, or on dismissal duty. Please do not call or text them at home. Teachers check and respond to their school email during their academic day and parents will find this a dependable method for communication including scheduling a conference. If you email after school hours, you expect a response the following school day.

### **Assignments in Advance**

There is no policy requiring HCA teachers to provide assignments in advance of an absence (family trip, approved absences, or otherwise). Advance assignments are at the teacher’s discretion.

### **Retention Policy**

A strong foundation in reading, writing, and math skills is crucial to later academic success. While most students acquire these skills during the course of the school year, a few students have more than normal difficulty mastering some or all of these basics. This lack of academic success can be attributed to a variety of factors, including poor grade-level placement, lack of maturity, or learning differences.

Through the use of diagnostic tools, teacher recommendation, and parent conferences, the school may determine that retention is in the best interest of the student. Parent input prior to the decision to retain a student will be sought but the school reserves the right to determine if a student should be promoted or not. Students must pass three of the core courses including Math and Reading/Language Arts for promotion. An average of both semesters will be the baseline for passing. Please note: failing one course for the year will result in an Annual Status Review (see Discipline Plan). While the result of this review is not likely to be a recommendation for retention, the question of whether or not HCA is the appropriate academic placement for the student will be examined and appropriate recommendations made to the principal.

### **Learning Differences**

At some point, based on observation, a classroom teacher may recommend that a student be screened for a possible learning difference. Teachers may recommend; they may not diagnose. Parents are encouraged at this point to comply with the recommendation.

At a later point, school administration may *require* a screening as a requirement for continued enrollment if we have reason to believe that the student's academic progress in the traditional classroom is being hindered by a potential learning difference. This is not a prelude to asking for the student to be removed from school.

Without a written diagnosis from a credentialed professional, physician, or clinic, the classroom teacher is not allowed to modify the curriculum or make accommodations for "suspected" learning differences. Documentation is required for enrollment in the Learning Lab and should be current within 3 years.

Once a diagnosis has been made and modifications/accommodations have been prescribed, HCA reserves the right to determine which modifications or accommodations are consistent with our learning environment and which ones are not.

### **Learning Lab**

The Learning Lab is available for students with diagnosed learning differences. In the Learning Lab, an Individual Learning Plan (ILP) will be developed for each student. The ILP will be implemented in both the learning lab and the regular classroom. Student's time in the lab will be scheduled by the Learning Lab teacher and the regular classroom teacher based on the ILP. Additional fees are charged for Learning Lab support.

Every effort will be made to help all students be successful learners at HCA. We will not, however, out of misguided love, deprive students of an education if they have needs we are not equipped or able to meet.

### **Report Cards**

Report cards for PreK3, PreK4, TK and K are issued once a semester. Progress for PreK4, TK and K is reported using a narrative evaluation and a skills checklist.

For grades one through six, Report Cards will be available on FACTS to the parents at the end of each nine week grading period (quarter).

### **Standardized Testing**

The Iowa Tests will be administered in the month of April to 3rd-7th grade students. Planned absences are not allowed during this time. (See page 26) Make-up tests will not be given.

### **Textbooks**

The school issues all basic classroom textbooks to the students for use during the school year. These textbooks remain the property of HCA and should be treated as such. Students are required to keep textbooks covered at all times. The condition of the textbook will be recorded at the time it is issued and examined again at the end of the school year.

Lost and Damaged Books: Whenever a book is lost or damaged, it must be paid for, and a replacement book will be issued. Payment should be made through FACTS Incidental Billing. At the end of the year, report cards or transcripts will not be issued until the student textbook record is clear. If you would like to purchase a textbook, please make arrangements with the business office.

### **Tutoring**

Recommendation to obtain a tutor for your child may be made by the teacher or principal. As a parent/guardian, you may wish to have your child tutored without this recommendation. Your teacher will communicate their set times for tutoring during the week. For additional tutoring times, please contact your child's teachers. Teachers at HCA are prohibited from tutoring students in their own class for pay.

# Library Policies and Procedures

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**Mission Statement:** The mission of the Heritage Christian Academy Library is for every student to become critical thinkers with a Godly view of the world. This is accomplished by introducing and providing a variety of classic and modern literature selections, non-fiction selections, periodicals, computers, and reference materials for students and staff.

## Check Out Policy

In order to check out a book, students must have permission from home and take responsibility for lost or damaged books. Signing the HCA Parent/Student Handbook gives permission for the student to check out items from the library and accepts responsibility for damaged and/or lost materials and books.

- Kindergarten (K3-K5) students do not check out books but rather visit the library for a weekly read-aloud. Books are provided to the teacher for classroom use.
- First and second grade students may select 1 book for check out for up to two weeks.
- Third through sixth grade students may select 2 books for check out.

Books are checked out for a 2 week period and may be renewed for an additional week, if needed, as long as no other student is waiting for the book.

Students may check out and return books during their library rotation time or during open check out times. Students in grades K4 attend library classes as part of the weekly rotation. Fifth and sixth grade students visit the library during open check out and attend as a class if scheduled by their teacher, but do not have a weekly library class.

Any items checked out at the time a student withdraws from school must be returned and/or paid for upon withdrawal.

## Overdue Policy

We do not charge a fine for overdue books at the elementary level. However, students are financially responsible for the cost of lost or damaged books (see Damaged and Lost Books Policy for more information). Overdue notices are sent out on a routine basis. Students with an overdue book or books may not check out additional books until the overdue items are returned. If you notice your child is not bringing home new books, please ask if a book is considered lost or overdue. Sometimes, you send the book back, but it does not make it to the library. If a student has one overdue book, he/she may not take out another book until the overdue one is returned. Students receive a first overdue notice delivered to their classrooms when their book is two weeks past the due date. They receive additional overdue notices every two weeks after that. When a student has received three notices through school delivery and the overdue book still has not been returned, the library sends a notice home. The student is offered two possible solutions: (1) return the loaned book, or (2) replace or pay for the title (and the money will be returned if the book is eventually found in good condition).

No student can take books out of the library until the lost book situation is resolved.

Books may not be kept out over the Christmas or summer holidays. Every attempt is made to instill a sense of responsibility and Godly stewardship for the library and its books. This means

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students are responsible for caring for books, using a bookmark, and renewing and returning books on time, so others may borrow them.

### **Damaged and Lost Book Policy**

Accidents happen! Puppies chew (usually new) books, juice containers leak in backpacks, younger siblings use them for creative art projects, and books get left outside. Most children are responsible and if a book becomes accidentally damaged, we stress the responsibility to report and, if necessary, to replace a book which gets damaged while in a student's care.

If a book page accidentally rips, please do not attempt to repair it at home. We use special book tapes and glue, which resist heat and won't discolor. Return the book with a note and we will gladly repair it. If it cannot be repaired, you may be charged for the replacement cost of the book.

If a book becomes damaged beyond use or lost, you will be billed for the replacement cost. Most of our books are library editions, meant to take heavy use, and not the trade editions sold in bookstores which means the cost of replacement is higher than average bookstore copies. We replace books at the library edition cost.

Notice will be sent home with your child, either by email or in written form, to inform you of the replacement cost. Students with damaged/lost book fees may not check out additional books until the fees are paid or the book is returned in good condition. If the damaged/lost book fees are not paid or the book is not returned, the cost of the book will be added to your FACTS Incidental Billing Account where late fees may apply.

# Attendance Procedures

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Attending class is a critical component in any student's education. Missing class means a student misses the important instructions and the interaction which occurs between students and teachers. Therefore, a minimum attendance policy has been established which determines whether credit is earned in a grade.

**A student who misses more than 10% of the school year will not receive credit for the current school year unless the head of school or principal has approved the student's absences. Planned Absences count towards the 7 absences allowed per semester (totaling 14 absences per year.)**

All absences, whether requested by a parent or approved by the school, will be counted under this policy. School sponsored events are not counted as absences.

School hours are from 8:00 a.m. to 3:10 p.m. on Monday through Friday. Students arriving before 7:55 a.m. must go to the gym.

Students arriving at school before 7:30 a.m. or remaining after 3:30 p.m. will attend the extended care program and the parent/guardian will be billed for that service. Charges for after school care will begin at 3:45 p.m.

**A student arriving after 10:00 a.m. will be considered absent for the full day.**

## Absences

The parent or guardian should call the school office at 972-772-3003 on the day of the absence between 8:30 and 10:00 am. If a phone call is not received, students should report to the school office on the day they return with a written explanation of the absence.

## Reporting Absences

The parent or guardian should enter the absence via the electronic absence note located on the HCA website, or call the school office at 972-772-3003 on the day of the absence between 8:30 and 11:00 a.m. or bring a note the following day.

## Entry After Absence

A student returning to school after any absence must report to the school office to pick up an admit slip. Extended illnesses (four consecutive days) will require a note from the doctor.

**Please note: work missed during an unexcused absence will follow the homework grading policy.**

An admit slip is required to be allowed back in class.

Extended illnesses (four consecutive days) require a note from the doctor.



## Early Dismissals

Early dismissals are granted for emergencies and medical appointments when those appointments cannot be scheduled outside of school hours. **All other activities should be scheduled for after school hours.**

### Please note:

To pick up a student, the parent/guardian **must report to the school office.** The parent/guardian must sign out the student and receive a release slip from the school office. The school office will call for the student to come to the office. In order to keep classroom disruptions to a minimum, we ask that parents not go to the classroom to get their student. We will NOT dismiss students after 2:45 p.m.

A student excused for a medical/dental appointment is expected to return to school at the end of the appointment, if time permits, and is to check in at the office immediately upon arrival. A note from the doctor/dentist is required to admit the student back in to school.

Please remember that students leaving school before 11:00 a.m. and not returning will be considered absent for the full day.

## Absences

The day a student returns to school, he/she is expected to turn in all the previously assigned work that was due on the day of the absence or the returning day. Previously assigned tests can be taken on the returning day or on the following school day at the teacher's discretion. A student has the same number of days to make up assignments as the number of days he/she was absent (i.e. absent three days, three school days to make up). These requirements also apply when a student has missed class due to a special school event. It is the student's responsibility to make up any missed work.

Absences may be excused for the following reasons:

1. Personal illness
2. Illness or death in the family
3. Medical/dental appointments which could not be scheduled after school or during holidays
4. Parent requested absences (SEE PLANNED ABSENCES)
5. Family situations with extenuating circumstances subject to administrative approval

**All other absences are considered unexcused.**

**Three tardies within a nine-week period will be considered as one unexcused absence.**

## Make-up Work/Tests

We request that parents not ask for make-up work for a one day absence since the student will be given the same number of days he/she has been absent to complete missed work upon return to school.

## Planned Absences

Students are allowed a maximum of **five absences per year** for such things as family and/or educational trips, but only at the discretion of the administration. These days count as part of the seven absences allowed per semester (totaling fourteen absences per year.) Any days taken beyond the five days allotted must be approved by the Principal, but the student will be responsible for making up the work. **Planned Absences are not allowed during Iowa Test days or the last week of each quarter.**

A parent/guardian may obtain a Planned Absence Form from the school office. The form is to be signed by the parent and submitted for approval by the administration. Application for Planned Absences must be submitted at least five days in advance of the planned absence. If the request is not submitted at least five days in advance, the administration may choose to deny permission for the absence. At the discretion of the teacher, work may be accepted before the student leaves. There is no policy requiring teachers to provide assignments in advance of a family vacation or planned absence. Advance assignments are at the teacher's discretion.

For work not provided by the teacher, students will have the same number of days he/she has been absent to complete the missed work upon returning from the family planned absence. Students are required to make up any work missed during the absence.

## Tardies

The classroom teacher will escort their students from the MPR to the classroom at 7:55 a.m. Students arriving after 8:00 a.m. are considered tardy to school and must secure an admit slip from the school office. A consequence from the teacher's in-class discipline plan will be assigned. Three or more tardies in a quarter may result in administrative consequences.

Excused tardies include:

1. medical/dental appointments
2. emergency situations
3. tardies approved by the elementary principal

Three tardies within a nine-week period will be considered as one absence. Each tardy will result in a classroom consequence.

Seven or more tardies per semester will result in a status review and consequences may be assigned.

# Philosophy and Application of Discipline

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## Elementary Division Grades PreK3-6

### Part I: Philosophical Basis

The Mission Statement of HCA makes reference to our desire to be a distinctively Christian, college preparatory environment. The goals of our Discipline Plan are an extension of that.

Self-Discipline (distinctively Christian)

A Well-Ordered School (an element of an instructional environment that seeks to be college preparatory)

### Discretionary Authority

Despite our best efforts to be clear regarding rules, requirements, and expectations, the need will occasionally arise for judgment calls to be made and discretionary authority to be exercised by the administration. While we wish to avoid these kinds of decisions, the administration, nevertheless, reserves the right to do so.

### Boundaries, Correction, and Consequence

A discipline plan that works (i.e. helps a student to eliminate behavior that is not in his/her best interest or in the best interest of HCA) involves boundaries, correction, and consequence.

Boundaries are:

- rules,
- expectations,
- guidelines,
- instructions,
- parameters,
- agreements,
- requirements,

and as such must be established, and communicated, for individual classrooms, grades, divisions, and the school as a whole.

Correction is:

- verbally instructing a student regarding their actions
- interrupting their behavior
- redirecting their behavior
- reminding students of expectations and consequences

Most children, especially in the younger grades, respond to corrections out of a desire to please their teacher, and most school situations can be addressed in this manner (most of the time). At other times, however, correction needs to be accompanied by consequence in order to help the

child eliminate behavior that is not in his or her best interest or in the best interest of the learning environment for the other students.

Consequences could include:

- restrictions on, or removal of, privileges and opportunities
- required responses
- impacting events viewed by the child as undesirable
- teacher detentions

Consequences should:

- be appropriate to, and proportionate for, the relative seriousness of the infraction and the frequency of its occurrence
- be taught and communicated, alongside classroom rules and expectations, as clearly as possible
- (when required) be swiftly and consistently applied; accrue and increase over time if the child does not initially respond with improved behavior
- be provided by the classroom teacher and then ultimately by the administration if the child does not initially respond with improved behavior.

The more an infraction can be viewed from the teacher's perspective as minor and infrequent, the more often the consequences can be applied by the classroom teacher.

To the degree that an infraction must be viewed from the teacher's perspective as:

- serious
- repetitive
- disruptive to the learning environment
- the result of a lack of positive response to classroom consequences
- injurious to others
- abusive of others

The more necessary it is then that the child must be referred to the elementary principal or delegated representative for the application of administrative level consequences.

It is important to note here that a well-ordered environment is not the same thing as a harsh environment. A school should certainly have high expectations of students. To the same degree, the school should provide a high level of support in helping children learn, respond to, and ultimately meet those expectations.

At HCA our underlying objective is that, even in the midst of boundaries, correction and consequence, our students will know that God loves them, their parents love them and that we love them.

We will do our best to make sure they have an opportunity to learn that there are times that unconditional love must be expressed in terms of boundaries, correction, and consequences.

## **Part 2: The Elementary Disciplinary Process**

### **Classroom Management**

Children who are four turning five, who are in second grade, who are in fifth or sixth grade, and who are in all the grades in between are all in widely varying stages of development, maturation, cognitive functioning, and reasoning ability. A “one size fits all” approach to classroom management is ineffective.

At HCA, each PK and Kindergarten classroom, each grade level, and where appropriate, combinations of grade levels, have an administratively approved classroom discipline plan. These plans differ from one another and are intended to do so as a reflection of our understanding of the differing needs and abilities of children across the grade level spectrum. The boundaries, the way correction is handled, the form that consequences take, and the manner in which those consequences are applied are all specific to the needs of children in those classes and grade levels.

As a part of Parent Orientation, elementary teachers provide an overview of their specific class rules, procedures, and management plan (elementary teachers usually have a name for their plan: Behavior Bucks, Pull Cards, Smiley Faces, etc.). As mentioned before, for most children, simply knowing about and understanding the plan results in compliance and self-discipline. For some, compliance and self-discipline will be a process that comes through crossing boundaries, receiving correction, and experiencing consequences. For others self-discipline will not be attained by the classroom management process and will require the intervention of the elementary principal and the application of administrative consequences.

HCA reserves the right to address concerns of inappropriate conduct, photographs, videos and/or comments by students via texting, emails, Facebook, or any other form of social networking or communication that is available in the public domain or is sent to others within the school if such issues are brought to the attention of school administration.

### **Administrative Discipline**

For each classroom discipline plan, there is a point at which students must be referred to the elementary principal’s office. This will vary to some degree as a function of our desire to recognize developmental and grade level differences. Some behaviors are chronic, and the classroom plan has not resulted in compliance and self-discipline. Some behaviors, and the degree to which that behavior found expression, do not fall within the parameters of classroom discipline plans but are considered immediate grounds for referral to the elementary principal’s office.

In general, a parent can expect a child’s behavior to be referred to the elementary principal’s office when a minor infraction has been repeated often enough to process the student through available classroom consequences.

In general, a parent can expect the child himself or herself to be sent or taken to the elementary principal’s office when the behavior in question has been, from the teacher’s perspective, to a serious degree:

- disrespectful
- inappropriate
- disruptive to the learning environment

- injurious, or potentially so, to self or others
- abusive

Clearly, the preceding list is one of broad categories that are open to interpretation. It is the classroom teacher who has primary responsibility to manage and provide a well-ordered instructional environment. The classroom teacher must have discretionary authority to involve the elementary principal's office whenever he or she feels that administrative intervention must be taken into consideration.

### **Administrative Intervention**

Administrative intervention is the elementary principal's response to situations that have been referred to him/her by a teacher or staff member. The elementary principal also has discretionary authority to respond to situations referred to him/her by adults who are not on staff (parent volunteers, field trip chaperones, etc.). Additionally, the elementary principal has discretionary authority to initiate administrative intervention processes for situations that have not been referred to him/her but of which he/she has knowledge or reason to have a concern.

### **Process**

Elementary principal meets with the student. For situations that could involve expulsion, the office will attempt to contact one of the parents and invite him/her to be present for the meeting. Parents will always be notified either by email or by phone call that a formal meeting (as opposed to an informal discussion) between the student and the elementary principal has occurred, about the nature of the infraction in question, and regarding the administrative consequences if any.

Elementary principal discusses the referral or incident or behavior with the student and the student is allowed to give their side of the story or explanation. Parents and students should not expect that we will take the word of the student against the word of the teacher or staff member.

Elementary principal will consider the following:

- the student's age and grade level
- the degree to which a boundary was violated
- the student's discipline record for the current school year

### **Referral to the Elementary Principal**

- First referral – principal conference and detention
- Second referral – detention
- Third referral – one day in-school suspension/ parent conference
- Fourth referral – two day in-school suspension / parent conference
- Fifth referral – three days in-school suspension / parent conference
- Sixth referral – four days in-school suspension / parent conference
- Six or more office referrals may result in expulsion
- Days of in-school suspension and/or out-of-school suspension will result in suspension from school activities before, during and after school on days coinciding with the time period served.
- A student on suspension from class can complete assignments without penalty for the period of suspension, if done so within a time designated by the teacher.

Clearly, the elementary principal reserves the right and has the responsibility to exercise Discretionary Authority in assigning consequences.

### **Consequences Can Be Appealed**

Occasionally a parent or student questions whether or not the disciplinary action taken by the school is warranted. The following procedures should be followed:

- If there is a question as to what happened or why the referral was written, or why the student was taken to the office, the parents must contact the teacher or staff member for clarification (the exception to this would be when discipline was initiated by the elementary principal without referral from teachers or staff members).
- If there is a question regarding consequences (what was assigned and why), the parents must contact the elementary principal for clarification.
- Parents may set up a conference with the teacher by email or through the office. Again, please do not call or text message the teacher at home or try to conference while the teacher is in the classroom, lunchroom, or in the hallway.

After meeting with the teacher, if the parent does not feel the question has been resolved, then, and only then, will a meeting be set up with the parent and the elementary principal. After that meeting, if the parent does not feel that the question has been resolved, then a meeting will be set up with the parent, teacher, and the elementary principal. The previous meetings must have been held to reach this level.

For disciplinary consequences other than expulsion, there is no appeal beyond the elementary principal. His/her decision is final.

### **Status Reviews**

#### **Quarterly Status Reviews**

At the end of each quarter, students who find themselves in the following categories will be subject to a review of their status as students of Heritage Christian Academy:

- students who, from the elementary principal's perspective, have multiple visits to the elementary principal's office for infractions considered by the elementary principal to be serious
- students who have been absent from school for more than ten percent of the calendar school days for that nine weeks
- students who have failed one or more subjects for the nine weeks

#### **Initial Review**

The review process is as follows:

This review is carried out by the elementary principal and is automatic for any student who falls into one or more of the categories outlined above. The elementary principal will examine the academic/behavioral/attendance record of all students on the review list for that quarter and



determine if any action needs to be taken.

The elementary principal has discretionary authority to decide that, beyond an informal conversation with the student, no administrative action is warranted and may therefore terminate the review process. No student file will reflect an initial review wherein the process is terminated in this manner.

The elementary principal may decide that the student and family is best served by taking administrative action and will therefore initiate the second level of the status review.

### **Student/Family Consultation**

In this stage of the process, the student, one or more of the parents, and the elementary principal meet together to discuss the reasons for the status review (behavioral/attendance/academic) and how the situation can be remedied for the future. The elementary principal has the discretionary authority to decide that no further action is warranted and may terminate the review process and, indeed, this is the goal of the consultation. Alternatively, the elementary principal has discretionary authority to exercise other options:

- additional consequences from the Process section of the Discipline Plan
- Discipline Committee Review

The elementary principal may decide that the needs of Heritage Christian Academy are best served by taking more serious administrative action and will therefore inform the parents regarding the initiation of this third level of the status review.

### **Discipline Committee Review**

If the status review reaches this stage in the process, it is to determine whether or not Heritage Christian Academy is still the appropriate placement for the student in question.

The elementary principal has discretionary authority to call for a Discipline Committee Review if an infraction has occurred that in and of itself is grounds for removal from school.

A committee of HCA administrators and/or teachers (no less than three, plus the elementary principal) will review the student's academic/behavioral/attendance record for the current and previous, if any, grading period(s). The student and parents will be invited to address the committee and state what they believe to be a compelling reason to allow their student to continue at HCA. The family will be excused, and the committee will then begin deliberations leading to a recommendation to the elementary principal regarding the student's continued enrollment at HCA.

Upon review, the committee may recommend that no further action is required and that the elementary principal should terminate the status review process. Alternatively, the committee may recommend that the elementary principal exercise additional options from the second stage of the process. Finally the committee may recommend that the student be removed from HCA.

The elementary principal is not bound by the committee's recommendation but would only set it aside in the rarest of cases. If the recommendation is for removal from school the parents may, of course, appeal that decision to the Head of School of HCA. Upon final appeal to the Head of School, his/her decision is final.

## Annual Status Review

At the end of each school year, students who find themselves in the following categories will have their re-enrollment (or promotion/retention) status placed on hold pending an annual status review:

- students who, from the elementary principal's perspective, have multiple visits to the elementary principal's office, over the course of the year, for infractions considered by the elementary principal to be serious
- students who have been absent from school for more than fourteen
- days of the calendar school days for that year
- students who have failed one or more subjects for the year

At this point, the student is questionable for consideration for enrollment for the next year. All such students will undergo an Annual Status Review to determine if there is any compelling reason to set aside questions and restore the student to eligible status.

Often, a student will have one or more areas that are questionable but do not rise, in and of themselves, to the level of automatic ineligibility. HCA reserves the right to conduct an annual status review for any student, if, in the judgment of the elementary principal, the student's academic, behavioral, or attendance record warrants such a review.

An ad hoc committee of HCA school board members (no less than three, plus the elementary principal and the Head of School) will review the student's academic/behavioral/attendance record for the year and for the totality of the student's time at HCA.

The student and the parents will be invited to address the committee and give what they believe to be a compelling reason to set aside questions regarding the student's eligible status. The family will be excused and the committee will then begin deliberations resulting in a recommendation to the Head of School regarding the student's status.

Upon review, the committee may recommend that the student be declared eligible for re-enrollment with probation or to declare the student ineligible to return. The Head of School is bound by the committee's recommendation, and there is no appeal beyond this level.

**Please note: HCA reserves the right to refuse re-enrollment for any student when, in the judgment of the administration, that re-enrollment would not be in the best interest of HCA, its students, or faculty. Previous attendance does not guarantee re-enrollment.**

## General Boundaries and Expectations of Elementary Students

ANY OR ALL OF THE BEHAVIORS LISTED BELOW CAN RESULT IN THE STUDENT RECEIVING CONSEQUENCES/REFERRALS FROM THEIR SPECIFIC CLASS DISCIPLINE PLAN OR FROM THE ELEMENTARY PRINCIPAL. WHILE THE LIST IS SUBSTANTIAL IT IS NOT INTENDED TO REFLECT ALL SCHOOL RULES FOR ALL SITUATIONS.

- Tardy to any class
- No hall pass or being in a location not accounted for by the hall pass
- Chewing gum
- Talking in class without permission or excessive talking
- Rude or discourteous behavior to another student
- Littering

- Dress Code Violation
- Bringing electronic devices, games, etc. to school without permission
- Disorderly Conduct (horseplay, roughhousing, excessive noise, running in the buildings, throwing small objects, paper wads, etc.)
- Use of cell phones or smart watches (making or receiving calls, texts, etc.) while under teacher supervision, during class, chapel, assembly and before or after school care
- Failure to leave campus in a timely fashion when not scheduled for class or engaged in supervised activity
- Failure to report to authorized “before school” and “after school” locations
- Addressing staff informally (failure to use Yes Sir, No Ma’am; failure to use Mr., Mrs. Ms. Etc.)
- Failure to follow the rules established by individual teachers for their classroom
- Disrupting the classroom (two or more requests to stop talking during one forty-five minute period)
- Taking other actions that delay, interrupt, or distract from instruction or assigned class activity
- Lying
- Hazing, bullying, or carrying out practical jokes and pranks on other students
- Any form of harassment, sexual or otherwise
- Profanity/Vulgarity
- Refusal or delaying to follow a teacher’s correction and/or direction
- Carrying or possessing any object construed as a possible weapon, but not listed as such in state penal codes
- Fighting
- Unauthorized alteration to school property
- Leaving campus without permission
- Unauthorized possession of, access to, or use of, unauthorized information or resources/assistance with regular school work, tests, quizzes, etc.
- Contributing to an unsafe environment by reckless/careless actions
- Sacrilegious/irreverent actions or references
- Unauthorized possession of another individual’s property
- Unauthorized possession of school property
- Injury to another person by a purposeful act
- Inappropriate physical contact
- Elementary Principal Discretionary Issue
- Cheating – automatic zero on test and/or daily work

# Health Information

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## **Injuries sustained on HCA grounds or HCA sponsored events**

A student participating in any particular sport or any physical activity is aware of the risks inherent to that sport and/or physical activity. By participating, the student and financially responsible parent(s) is showing that he/she understands and has assumed all of the risks inherent to that sport and/or physical activity and the potential for injury. HCA does not assume any financial responsibility for such risk or injuries. All injuries occurring on HCA grounds or HCA sponsored events are the financial responsibility of the financially responsible parent(s).

## **Illness or Injury while at School**

The school staff will administer minor first aid. In the event of a serious injury or illness, 911 will be called. Parents are required to submit a signed Authorization for Emergency Care form which list phone numbers for emergency contacts in the event that the parents cannot be reached. This authorization must be kept current. If any changes such as address or phone numbers occur during the school year, notification must be given to the school office immediately.

If a student becomes ill or is injured during school, the parents will be notified. Students that are ill or not feeling well should see the school nurse prior to calling parents.

A student with a fever above 100.0 degrees or who has vomited will be sent home. The student may not return to school until he/she has been fever-free without the use of medication for at least 24 hours or there has been no more vomiting for at least 24 hours.

A student may have to be sent home with a rash or eye infection if there is a question of contagion. The student may return to school when a physician states the student may return when he/she has been fever-free for at least 24 hours and all scabs are dry. Students should not be sent to school with a communicable disease.

Students entering PreK3 must be fully potty trained. Students with repeated incidents may be asked to leave the school.

## **Head Lice Infestation**

In the event of head lice being found, even if there is just one live bug, the child's parents will be called, and the child will be sent home for proper treatment. When the child returns to school, he/she will be checked again. All eggs which are attached to the hair, ¼" from the scalp, must be removed prior to the child being readmitted. If one active case has been reported, all parents in that classroom will be notified.

## **Dispensing Medicines**

Occasionally students are required to take medicine during the school day. The procedures relating to medicine are as follows:

- **All medication is to be kept in the school nurse's office, not with the student.**
- **Prescription and non-prescription medicines must be sent in the original container.**
- Parents/guardians must provide the school with written instructions regarding the administration of medication. Instructions should include the student's name, the name of the medication, the dosage, the frequency of administration, the duration, any other special instructions, and the parent's signature.
- Only topical and oral medications will be dispensed. The school nurse will administer insulin injections.

Medication may be returned to a student with parental permission. A parent or other adult may come to the clinic to pick up any unused medication. All medications not picked up will be thrown out at the end of the school year.

### **Immunizations**

Students should provide the school with a record of immunizations as required by the current Texas Department of Health, Education, and Welfare laws. These medical records must be on file and up to date by the beginning of school each year and at the beginning of January. Students with incomplete records will not be allowed to attend classes. Texas State law requires that a school receive proof of a student's immunization within 30 days of its due date for the student to be allowed to attend school. New students will be provisionally enrolled with thirty days allowed for records to be received from their previous school. Students failing to acquire the needed immunizations will be removed from the classroom until the office obtains verification.

### **Screening for Vision, Hearing and Spine Abnormalities**

Each year all new students and students in grades PreK3, PreK4, KT, K, 1st, 3rd, and 5<sup>th</sup> will be screened for vision, hearing and Acanthosis Nigricans abnormalities. Students in 6<sup>th</sup> grade will be screened for scoliosis.

# Dress Code

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We are justifiably proud of the students at HCA and the vast majority of our students proactively dress in a manner that represents their family, their Savior, their school, and, indeed, themselves in admirable fashion. Our desire is to provide reasonable, affordable, and enforceable standards that are consistent with our Vision, Mission, and Philosophy. Such standards will quite often differ from those encouraged by media influences and popular culture.

The Mission Statement notes our desire to create an environment that is Christ-centered and college preparatory. The goals of the HCA Dress Code are an extension of that same mission:

- Modesty (a distinctively Christian principle)
- Minimal Distraction (an element of an instructional environment that seeks to be college preparatory).
- Establish and teach hygiene.
- Instill discipline and teach respect for authority.

## **Discretionary Authority**

Despite our best efforts to be clear regarding details, requirements, and options, the need will occasionally arise for judgment calls to be made and discretionary authority to be exercised by teachers and the administration. While we wish to avoid these kinds of decisions the school, nevertheless, reserves the right to do so.

## **A Requirement of Our Students**

Student compliance with the dress code is required. Appropriate and consistently applied consequences for non-compliance are clearly outlined in the Discipline section of the Handbook and the Handbook itself is considered a warning. In general, however, students who do not consistently and proactively comply with that which we ask them to do will find their dress code options replaced with individualized dress code restrictions.

## **A Partnership with Parents**

Parental support of the dress code is essential. The more effort parents expend in this area before their young person leaves the house, the more time we can invest in instruction and be about the business of teaching and learning. This is best accomplished by the attitude you model for your student and by carrying out the responsibility you have for sending your student(s) to school in compliance with the code.

Occasionally parents question whether or not the dress code is being enforced and consequently require less compliance from their own child (nobody wants to be the only bad guy). Rest assured, parents, that appropriate consequences are consistently being assigned, particularly for the few chronic offenders we may have. You, or your student, may not see them corrected in public but this should not be interpreted as an absence of consequence.

## Uniform Dress Code

A list of uniform items is available in the school Office. Uniforms for students are to be purchased at Academic Outfitters, which has a copy of our policy at the store, or may be accessed via our website at [www.hcarockwall.com](http://www.hcarockwall.com). **Any uniform item that differs in style, color, or fabric from the official uniforms sold by Academic Outfitters, is unacceptable.**

Call the office if you have questions. Accessories such as socks, belts, and shoes may be purchased anywhere.

## Uniform Items

### GIRLS

- Required Chapel Uniform
- Non-Uniform Day (With \$2.00 coupon)

### Required Chapel Uniform for PreK3 – 3rd grade:

- plaid jumper with modesty shorts or plaid skirt
- black polo

### Required Chapel Uniform for 4th – 6th grade:

- plaid skirt with modesty shorts
- black polo

### Available from Academic Outfitters PreK3 – 6th grade

- plaid skirt, jumper - PK - 3rd grade (skirt for 4th grade - 6th grade)
- khaki shorts and pants
- black, red, and white polo
- red t-shirt for field trips
- black cardigan, black vest, black V-neck pullover sweater and jackets

### Other notes PreK3 – 6th grade

- black or white turtlenecks
- if there are belt loops, a belt must be worn in grades 2-6

### BOYS

- Required Chapel Uniform
- Non-Uniform (with \$2.00 coupon)

### Required Chapel Uniform:

- PreK3 – 6th grade
- khaki pants or shorts (weather permitting)
- black polo
- belts for grades 2-6 if there are belt loops

### Available from Academic Outfitters PreK3 – 6th grade

- khaki shorts
- khaki pants



- black cardigan, black vest, black V-neck pullover sweater
- red, white or black polo shirts
- HCA jackets and sweatshirt

### Other notes PreK3 – 6th grade

- black or white turtlenecks
- belts must be worn in grades 2-6 if there are belt loops

### Special Notes:

- **Skirts, jumpers, skorts, and shorts must be no shorter than 3 inches above the middle of the knee (in front and back).**
  - Skirts and jumpers must be longer than modesty shorts.
  - No oversized/baggy shirts allowed. No midriffs are to be showing **at any time**.
  - Any t-shirt worn under clothing must be plain white or an official HCA t-shirt
  - No layering under uniform shirts. All t-shirts, tank tops or camisoles must be shorter than the uniform shirt.
  - If there are belt loops, a belt must be worn in grades 2 - 6.
  - Only official Academic Outfitters jackets and sweaters with the HCA crest may be worn in the school building. Other jackets may be worn to and from school and on the playground but not inside the building.
  - During cold weather, solid black, solid grey, solid red or solid white \*leggings/tights with no lace trim may be worn under shorts, culottes, skirts, or jumpers.
  - Written graffiti on clothing is not acceptable.
  - No cuts/tears allowed in pant legs. Pants must be hemmed. No stains of any kind on skirts or pants.
  - Make-up is not allowed on girls in PreK3-5th grade. Sixth grade girls may wear foundation or cover up. Jewelry should be modest; with no oversized earrings (these may cause injury to the ear lobes during play).
  - Earrings for boys are not allowed on campus or at school related events.
  - Hair length, style, and color must be a natural hair color as determined by the Administration, in good taste, clean, neat, and well groomed. Boys' hair should be no longer than mid-ear, middle of the collar, and above the eyebrows.
  - Shoes: no metal adornments, flip-flops, house shoes, slides, crocs, sandals, untied tennis shoes or Vibram skele-toes shoe or any similar shoe that shows the toes individually. Shoes should be closed toed and closed heel. NO heels of any type.
  - Hats may not be worn in the building.
  - Scarves may not be worn.
  - Vests may not be worn.
  - Visible tattoos, permanent or temporary, are not allowed on campus or at school events.
- \*\*Leggings are not pants, they are form fitting at the ankle area, and do not flare at the bottom. Solid black or solid white only with no lace trim.

### A non-uniform day allows the following observance of dress code:

- Girls may wear dress code approved dresses, skirts, skorts, pants, loose fitting Capri pants, or shorts that are no shorter than 3" above the knee (in front and back). **No athletic shorts or sweatpants.**
- Boys may wear jeans, pants or shorts that are no shorter than 3" above the knee. **No athletic shorts or sweatpants.**

- Students may wear any color jeans/pants. Students may not wear jeans/pants that are frayed, ripped, torn, patched or that are baggy/sagging.
- When leggings are worn, the shirt must be long enough to cover the bottom when arms are raised.
- T-shirts/golf shirts may be worn. No secular rock groups, inappropriate pictures, or slogans are permitted.
- Tank tops, bare midriff shirts, and oversized shirts are not allowed.
- Sleeveless shirts must have a minimum of 2" on the shoulder.
- Shirts must allow the student to raise his/her arms without revealing skin.
- Shoes: no metal adornments, flip-flops, house shoes, slides, crocs, sandals or untied tennis shoes. Shoes should be closed toed and closed heel. NO heels of any type.
- No low-waist pants/jeans are permitted.
- Necklines should be no lower than two inches below the clavicles (lowest portion of the collar bone)

Parents: When in doubt, don't let your child wear it. Bring the item(s) to the school and you will be directed to the appropriate personnel for approval or lack of the same. Parents will be contacted to bring a change of clothing when their student(s) is in violation of the non-uniform dress code.

# General Information Policies and Procedures

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Change of address, email address, or telephone number should be reported to the school office as soon as the change is made. It is important that the office records contain the correct information at all times. The school directory is available for purchase from the PTF. A dependable email address for one or both parents is required for the purpose of school communications. Mail outs and backpack notes will be the exception and email will be the rule.

## Cooperation with School

As stated in the enrollment contract, Heritage believes that a positive and constructive working relationship between the school and a student's parent/guardian is essential to the accomplishment of HCA's educational mission.

HCA accordingly reserves the right to terminate or not renew a student's enrollment contract if the school reasonably concludes that the **actions of a parent/guardian** make the relationship impossible or interfere with the school's accomplishment of its mission.

## Fundraising

All proposed fund raising activities by student organizations or parent support organizations must be submitted in writing to the school office for approval before implementation.

## Inclement Weather

In the event that school will be closed or have a delayed opening because of weather related conditions, the announcement will be made on one or more of the following: KLTU (94.9 FM) KRLD (1080 AM), and TV Channels 4, 5, 8, 11 and 21. **Parents will also receive a FACTS parent alert text message.**

Every effort will be made to make this decision early enough to avoid confusion.

When the outside temperature ranges from 40 degrees (F) to 98 degrees (F), elementary students will have regularly scheduled recesses. Please dress accordingly.

**In the event of severe or dangerous weather activity, we constantly monitor and have access to information that advises us of approaching weather situations. We will implement emergency procedures as necessary. We request that during these situations, parents not come to take their students off campus.**

## Lost and Found

Please check Lost and Found for missing items. The Lost and Found is purged periodically.

The students may bring their own lunch or participate in the hot lunch program. Microwave ovens will be available for student use. **Items requiring more than one minute to heat are discouraged.** All lunches will be eaten in the campus lunchroom unless permission has been obtained by the teacher from the elementary principal.

Students are not allowed to leave campus for lunch. However, parents/guardians may bring a lunch for their child and are welcome to have lunch with him/her **(must sign in)**. If bringing lunch for your child, please plan to arrive before their scheduled lunch time. If lunches are not here 5 minutes into the student's scheduled lunch time, lunch will be provided at your expense. Parents/visitors have a designated table that they will sit at during lunch. PreK3-5 grade students may not purchase or bring soft drinks for lunch. However, 6th grade students may bring or purchase a soft drink for their lunch. Students are expected to keep the lunchroom clean.

### **Off-Campus Activities/ Field Trips**

- All HCA activities/field trips must be planned through the sponsoring faculty member and approved by the administration. Sponsors and/or chaperones are required for these activities, and the purpose for the activity should be in keeping with the philosophy of the school.
- Due to many variables, siblings are not allowed to accompany sponsors and/or chaperones on school sponsored field trips which include ACSI or any other school sponsored event.
- Heritage Christian Academy does not accept responsibility for activities of a social nature which may include HCA students, but were not planned under the direction of the administration. HCA reserves the right to take disciplinary action regarding off campus events and issues that reflect poorly, from our perspective, on the mission of our school.
- Heritage Christian Academy will require all chaperones attending an overnight field trip to complete a background check form and submit it to the office. You must submit the background check 7 business days in advance prior to the field trip. Only parents with satisfactory background checks will be allowed to attend the field trip in any official capacity. HCA administrators reserve the right to not allow a parent or guardian to act in the capacity of chaperone or volunteer if any potential risk is present given the information we have at that time.
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### **Telephone Calls**

In emergencies, students may use the school office telephone with office staff permission. The following rules apply:

- Any phone usage should be a call of extreme importance i.e., cancelled practice, missed carpool ride or other emergencies such as a forgotten lunch.
- Students need a phone pass from their teacher during school hours.

Please note: Calls about school work, books, etc. left at home or arrangements with a friend, etc. will not be allowed.

### **Toys/Valuables**

Toys or electronic devices are not allowed at school unless a teacher has given special permission for a particular day. Small toys or electronic devices **may NOT** be brought to before & after school care.

Heritage will not be responsible for lost or damaged items. Students are strongly cautioned against bringing valuables, cash, or jewelry to school. No poker chips or the game of poker may be played.

### **Cell Phones and Smart Watches**

Cell phone/smart watch use is not allowed on the elementary campus during the school day, during school hours. Use of audio accessories are not allowed on the elementary campus. If a cell phone or smart watch is seen or heard without permission, it is taken up and turned into the associate principal's office. The following consequences apply to violation of phone policies:

- **1st offense by semester** – the student must go to the principal to retrieve their phone at the end of the school day, and parents are notified.
- **Subsequent offenses by semester** – the student's parents must come to the school to retrieve the phone and pay a \$10.00 fine.
- Repeat offenders and their parents will meet with the principal to determine next possible consequences up to and including administrative withdrawal.

Cell phone usage on an HCA school field trip is prohibited without teacher permission.

### **Transportation**

Your child's safety is our highest priority. Elementary age students may not leave the HCA campus without an adult or older sibling. Please notify the office and the teacher if someone other than yourself is to pick up your student after school. If you do not have advance notice, please call the office before 2:00 p.m. It is important that your elementary students be instructed regarding after school transportation.

### **Grievance Process Steps for Helping Students Handle Their Concerns about School**

The following is our standard procedure for handling student or parent concerns about teachers or other staff members:

- The parent/guardian must set an appointment with a staff member to discuss the concern.
- If the above has not been done, and the principal is contacted, the principal will offer to arrange contact or appointment so that the concern can be addressed between the parent and the staff member.
- If a parent/guardian believes that the issue has not been resolved after meeting with the staff member, then he/she may make an appointment with the staff member's immediate supervisor (usually the principal).
- The principal will meet with the parent/guardian to discuss the concern.
- The principal will meet with the staff member for a response to the concern.
- The principal will then:
  - Direct the staff member to make specific changes or to take specific actions or to continue the process or procedure that has raised a concern.
  - Report back to the parent regarding specific changes, or specific actions, and/or the administrative decision to allow or continue that which raised a concern.

- Prior to this, the principal may elect to have a meeting with the staff member and one or more parents present to discuss the concern together.
  - If the parent/guardian still has a concern, then he/she may make an appointment with the Head of School. This is the final course of appeal.
  - Parents/Guardians who take concerns to the Board of Trustees will always be referred back to the Head of School since the Board sets policy decisions and does not rule by directive unless there is a question of a policy not having been followed and therefore not resolved at the previous levels of the grievance process.
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# Harassment and Abuse Policy

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All HCA staff are trained to recognize and deal appropriately with harassment. HCA is committed to maintaining an academic environment in which all individuals treat each other with dignity and respect, free from all forms of intimidation, exploitation, and harassment, including sexual harassment. The school is prepared to take action to prevent and correct any violations of this policy. Anyone who violates this policy will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination or expulsion.

Sexual harassment from employee to employee, from employee to student, from student to employee, or from student to student is PROHIBITED.

As required by law, HCA administration will report suspected child abuse cases to the proper authorities. If asked by a parent or any other individual not associated with the proper authorities, HCA will never confirm or deny that a report of potential child abuse originated from the school.

## **Bullying Defined – All Grade Levels**

Bullying is defined in Section 37.0832 of the Education Code as a single significant act or a pattern of acts by one or more students directed at another student that exploits an imbalance of power and involves engaging in written or verbal expression, expression through electronic means, or physical conduct that:

- Has the effect or will have the effect of physically harming a student, damaging a student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of harm to the student's person or of damage to the student's property;
- Is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive enough that the action or threat creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for a student;
- Materially and substantially disrupts the educational process or the orderly operation of a classroom or school; or
- Infringes on the rights of the victim at school.

Bullying includes cyberbullying. Cyberbullying is defined by Section 37.0832 of the Education Code as bullying that is done through the use of any electronic communication device, including through the use of a cellular or other type of telephone, a computer, a camera, electronic mail, instant messaging, text messaging, a social media application, an Internet website, or any other Internet-based communication tool.

The district is required to adopt policies and procedures regarding:

- Bullying that occurs on or is delivered to school property or to the site of a school-sponsored or school-related activity on or off school property;
- Bullying that occurs on a publicly or privately owned school bus or vehicle being used for transportation of students to or from school or a school-sponsored or school-related activity; and
- Cyberbullying that occurs off school property or outside of a school-sponsored or school-related activity if the cyberbullying interferes with a student's educational

opportunities or substantially disrupts the orderly operation of a classroom, school, or school-sponsored or school-related activity.

Bullying is prohibited by the HCA and could include hazing, threats, taunting, teasing, confinement, assault, demands for money, destruction of property, theft of valued possessions, name-calling, rumor-spreading, or ostracism.

If a student believes that he or she has experienced bullying or has witnessed bullying of another student, it is important for the student or parent to notify a teacher, school counselor, principal, or another employee as soon as possible to obtain assistance and intervention. The administration will investigate any allegations of bullying or other related misconduct. HCA will also provide notice to the parent of the alleged victim and the parent of the student alleged to have engaged in bullying. If the results of an investigation indicate that bullying has occurred, the administration will take appropriate disciplinary action and may notify law enforcement in certain circumstances. Disciplinary or other action may be taken even if the conduct did not rise to the level of bullying. Available counseling options will be provided to these individuals, as well as to any students who have been identified as witnesses to the bullying.

Any retaliation against a student who reports an incident of bullying is prohibited.

## **Confidentiality**

Every effort will be made to protect the privacy of the parties involved in any complaint; however, the school reserves the right to fully investigate every complaint, and to notify a student's parent/guardian and appropriate government officials if the circumstances warrant such notification. The faculty and staff will be expected to maintain confidentiality on matters pertaining to HCA staff and students.

## **Sexual Harassment**

Sexual harassment refers to any unwelcome advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, visual or physical conduct of a sexual nature, made by anyone from or in the work or educational setting, under any of the following conditions:

- Submission to the conduct is explicitly made a term or condition of an individual's employment or academic status or progress.
- Submission to, or rejection of, the conduct by an individual is used as the basis of academic decisions affecting the individual.
- The conduct has the purpose or effect of having a negative impact upon the individual's performance, or of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment.
- Submission to, or rejection of, the conduct by an individual is used as the basis for any decision affecting the individual regarding benefits and services, honors, programs, or activities at or through the school.



## **Examples of Sexual Harassment**

Unwelcome sexual conduct of this type includes a wide range of verbal, visual, or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Among the types of conduct that would violate this policy are the following:

- Unwanted sexual advances or propositions offering academic benefits in exchange for sexual favors.
- Making or threatening reprisals after a negative response to sexual advances.
- Visual conduct such as leering, making sexual gestures, displaying sexually suggestive objects or pictures, cartoons or posters.
- Verbal conduct such as making or using derogatory comments, epithets, slurs and jokes.
- Verbal abuse of a sexual nature, graphic verbal commentaries about an individual's body, sexually degrading words used to describe an individual, suggestive or obscene leers, notes or invitations.
- Physical conduct such as touching, assaulting, impeding or blocking movements.

## **Protection against Retaliation**

It is against the school's policy to discriminate or retaliate against any person who has filed a complaint concerning sexual harassment or has testified, assisted or participated in any manner in any investigation, proceeding or hearing concerning sexual harassment.

## **Sexual Harassment/Abuse Reporting Policy**

Heritage is committed to maintaining an academic environment in which all individuals treat each other with dignity and respect, free from all forms of intimidation, exploitation and harassment, including sexual harassment. The school is prepared to take action to prevent and correct any violations of this policy. Anyone who violates this policy will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination of employment or expulsion.

Sexual harassment from employee to employee, from employee to student, from student to employee, or from student to student is PROHIBITED.

What to do if you experience or observe sexual harassment:

Employees or students who feel that they have been subjected to conduct of a harassing nature or who have observed conduct of a sexually harassing nature should promptly report the matter to an administrator or counselor.

## **Where to Report Sexual Harassment**

The Head of School and the principals are specifically authorized to receive complaints and to respond to questions regarding sexual harassment. These individuals may be contacted through the school at: 972.772.3003.

## **Procedure for Investigation of the Complaint and for Taking Corrective Action**

When any faculty/staff member receives a complaint, he or she will immediately inform the principal. The principal will inform the head of school and then direct an investigation. The individual who suffered the harassing conduct will be informed of the corrective action taken.

In addition, any employee or student found responsible for sexual harassment in violation of this policy will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action up to and including expulsion or termination. The severity of the disciplinary action will be based upon the circumstances of the infraction.

### **Withdrawal Procedure**

Parents will fill out a withdrawal form in the school office, return all books, athletic uniforms, and school property to the secondary office. The school principal may conduct an exit interview and sign the withdrawal form. Withdrawal from the school is complete when the business office clears the student's account. Transcripts, records, and grades can be released upon completion of the withdrawal process.